

From Ghosts to Shadows

**Parties, Interest Groups,
and the Rise of Political Action**

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Abstract

The development of the party system from one characterized by weak, “ghostlike” national parties existing in tension with interest groups, to one marked by prominent, centralized organizations surrounded by interest group allies – a “shadow” party – is one of the most striking changes in American politics over the past century. Indeed, interest groups were once viewed as nonpartisan actors for whom a close relationship with a particular party would be strategically dangerous. Yet explanations for the changing party orientation of groups, and even recognition of the significance of this change itself, have been absent from existing scholarship.

In this dissertation, I explain the larger shift in party-interest group relationships in terms of the rise of “political action” – a new mode of interest group involvement in elections, first fully realized in the 1940s, and foundationally associated with a partisan strategy. From a tendency to operate as bipartisan “lobbies” in the legislative sphere, the changing political context wrought by the New Deal encouraged some interest groups to embrace electioneering, and altered the incentives involved in working with only one side. Emerging first within the labor movement, the new ideas, organizational forms, and partisan tactics of political action would be adopted over the next two decades by newly-formed liberal and conservative ideological groups, and ultimately by major business associations – forging organizational alliances with the Democratic and Republican parties respectively, and seeking to *reshape* those parties into disciplined vehicles for realizing group policy goals. In so doing, interest groups helped to forge more cohesive parties at the national level, while contributing to a gradual polarization of the political world over time.

In sum, I argue that the rise of political action was associated with a characteristic form of organization – the political action committee or “PAC” – a specific strategy of political action focused on a single party, and a set of arguments justifying that partisan strategy, which would have

profound effects upon the nature of election campaigning, on party-interest group relations, and on the broader contours of the party system. Political action would be the tool through which a new vision of party politics was forged.

Dedication

There are many people who have helped to make this dissertation a reality. I am grateful to my committee members for their advice and support, and to my colleagues at the University of Virginia for their friendship and encouragement as we have pursued this path together. I want to especially thank Dr. Kathryn Dunn Tenpas of the University of Pennsylvania, and Dr. Barbara A. Perry of the University of Virginia's Miller Center, who have inspired me along the way. I am grateful also to my family, for keeping my spirits up from afar. Most of all, I want to thank my mother, who probably feels she has written every word with me, and so she gets the last ones: I dedicate this work to you.

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Introduction

Surveying the political scene in 1942, E.E. Schattschneider presented a vision of weak national parties existing in a state of tension with “pressure groups,” as he labeled the many groups pursuing their policy aims in Washington, D.C.¹ Where the state and local party organizations were strong, little more than “the ghost of a party” could be discerned at the national level on both sides, Schattschneider observed.² In contrast, an abundance of pressure groups were visible – organizations that cut against the grain of party politics, as he saw it. They professed “non-partisanship,” and pursued their aims by applying “pressure” on any and all lawmakers – irrespective of party affiliation – trying to entice, cajole or threaten them into supporting the group’s favored policy positions.

This “pressure” primarily involved *lobbying* activities, though a handful of groups might occasionally dip their toes in the electoral waters – using threats to rally electoral opposition to bring a wavering congressman into line.³ But electioneering was also a controversial form of activity, deemed as likely to backfire on a group as benefit them – especially if any “partisan” overtones were apparent. As Schattschneider saw it, pressure groups had “sound strategical reasons for avoiding affiliation with either of the major parties” – whether in the legislature, the electoral realm, or both.⁴

Schattschneider’s depiction stands in stark contrast to the contemporary political scene, in which alliances between political parties and modern-day pressure groups abound. From the NRA to NARAL, the Christian Coalition to the Rainbow Coalition, the Club for Growth and the Sierra Club, and many others beside, each party has close relations with a range of groups that offer support for its policy initiatives, and take to the electoral battlefield to promote its cause. A whole new vein of scholarship has even emerged in recent years in which these alliances take center stage. Parties have been reconceived as national “networks” consisting of official party committees and supportive “interest groups” – broadly conceived – forged around basic economic interests,

professional identities, broad ideologies, or specific policy issues of concern.⁵ Residing beyond the formal or “official” apparatus of the party, they constitute what is often labeled a “shadow party.”⁶

Understanding the changing configuration of party-interest group relations – from an apparently competitive one in the early 20th Century, to a largely cooperative one today – is the main objective of this dissertation. For the origins of “shadow parties,” and the meaning of this development for political life, remain shrouded in darkness. As Tichenor and Harris lamented in 2002, the state of knowledge on party-interest group relationships was “one of the most glaring lacunae of the discipline.”⁷ A decade on, our understanding of contemporary alliances has deepened, but the question of change has been pushed further from sight.

Most empirical studies of party networks have look only to recent years, while the most prominent theoretic effort in the network vein offers an understanding of parties in which alliances with interest groups are a *timeless* feature of American politics.⁸ In the vision presented by Bawn, Cohen, Karol, Masket, Noel, and Zaller (2008; 2011; 2012), interest groups have *always* sought to realize their aims through the vehicle of a political party. And the theoretic logic underpinning this vision implicates interest group *electoral action* in forging those alliances.

Where Schattschneider saw bipartisan legislative lobbying as the primary means by which interest groups achieved policy aims, Bawn et al. see lobbying as an inferior strategy in general. Far better to help get a sympathetic legislator elected in the first place, then try to bargain with an unknown quantity afterward. This strategy, they suggest, leads inexorably in a *partisan* direction – since the electoral logic they lay out leads interest groups to effectively *create* party coalitions, building in the notion of party-group alliance from the start.

We are left with one perspective on party-group relationships that seems unable to capture the empirical reality of the past, and another that cannot explain the emergence of a very different configuration of that relationship today, and of a dramatically changed polity overall. It is the kinds

of interest group *behavior* at work in each perspective that, I argue, helps to bridge the gap between them, and illuminates the features of contemporary party competition – nationalized, polarized, and often waged by interest groups both inside and outside the Halls of Congress. It is the recognition of a new kind of *electoral* strategy – neither irrespective of context nor determined by it – through which interest groups might pursue their aims, and its reverberations throughout the polity, that holds the key. In short, my explanation for the party networks we see today, and the party system they inhabit, lies in the rise of “political action,” and its organizational expression: the rise of PACs.

The Rise of Political Action

Much of the contemporary scholarship on party networks is focused on the operations of political action committees or “PACs” – a phenomenon typically traced to the 1970s, and to a series of campaign finance reforms that began with the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971.⁹ That law, and its subsequent amendments, was but one of a series of major changes in the social and institutional fabric of American life occurring in that decade – changes that brought interest groups more aggressively into the electoral scene, and seemed to foster the party polarization so evident in contemporary politics.

Reforms to the presidential nominating system in the wake of the disastrous 1968 Democratic convention, for example, made primaries much more important in presidential elections, opening up that process – and the parties – to greater outside influence. The increasing importance of “social” issues at this time, and attendant “explosion” of advocacy groups – a type of interest group dedicated to promoting issues rather than economic interests – created new actors that wished to exert such influence. On an individual level, the infusion of issue activists into presidential and congressional primaries has been linked to the emergence of elite level polarization, where issue activists pushed candidates to take more distinct and opposing stances.¹⁰

On an organizational level, FECA encouraged the formation of PACs through which such activists increasingly worked, since many kinds of collective organization are legally barred from direct financial participation in federal elections.¹¹ PACs are vehicles through which corporations, incorporated associations, and labor unions can avoid those restrictions.¹² From the 1970s, then, interest group electioneering through PACs expanded dramatically, and is often implicated in the trend toward party polarization.

But the origins of this form of “political action,” and even its partisan dimensions, run much deeper. Indeed, an important basis for the kind of politics so overtly exhibited from then on can be found in the new actors, behaviors, and shifts in political culture inaugurated in an earlier era.¹³ For while the Federal Election Campaign Act (FECA) authorized and *codified* the PAC concept, it did not invent it, or create the activities of political action that would be embraced under its rubric. Those developments can be traced instead to the political upheavals sparked by the New Deal – to the economically-rooted conflicts among business and labor groups and their increasing expression as ideological worldviews, and the move away from an emphasis on nonpartisan lobbying toward a much more partisan and *electoral* vision of how interest groups might best achieve their goals.

From hesitant, controversial beginnings stretching back to the turn of the century, interest group electioneering would expand dramatically in the 1930s and over the next several decades – even as new legislation regulating campaign finance sought to constrain it. Indeed, partially in response to such measures, interest group electioneering would become more formalized and specialized, and much more important to the achievement of interest group goals. This would be particularly apparent in 1943, when labor unions were brought within the scope of federal campaign finance law. At that time, just a year after Schattschneider made his initial claims about pressure groups and their distaste for elections, the Congress of Industrial Organizations would create the very first political action committee – *the P.A.C.* – which would play an important role in forging this

new electoral orientation, and would inaugurate a new stage in interest group development more generally.

Where earlier interest group electoral experiments had been sporadic, temporary, and conducted on a largely *punitive* basis, the P.A.C. would mount a systematic, permanent and positive electoral effort, adopting the mantra that “elections are won between campaigns.”¹⁴ Where previous groups made no organizational distinctions between their lobbying and electoral activities, the CIO would separate them out, and place only the latter in the care of P.A.C. Where parties themselves had formed or funded temporary campaign committees that might appeal to certain interest-based communities, the P.A.C. would be financially *independent*, becoming a net *contributor* of electoral resources. And while earlier groups would all claim to be “nonpartisan” in their operations, that term would shift in meaning as the P.A.C. adopted a strategy in which the Democratic Party took center stage.

Indeed, earlier electioneering had been largely justified by staying *out* of party conflict – adopting a *non-partisan* stance where groups were prepared to “reward or punish” candidates of either party persuasion, depending on their policy stances on the group’s issues of concern. But the P.A.C. would adopt what I label a strategy of “partisan political action” – one that drew on the new resources, techniques, and organizational capacity embedded in the political action committee concept, and tried to *remake* a particular party into the tool for achievement of the parent group’s aims. Such a strategy thus progressively *builds* an alliance with a particular party, as its composition comes to reflect and internalize a group’s particular policy goals. In so doing, P.A.C. proceeded to operate much more like the groups envisaged in the newer theory of party networks – to emphasize partisan electioneering over non-partisan lobbying, getting the “right man” elected in the first place rather than persuading an incumbent of the “right policy.” And increasingly, that would mean getting the “right” party into office overall.

And this form, strategy, and attitude would not be confined to the CIO P.A.C. Emulated first within the labor movement, but soon adopted by newly-formed liberal and conservative ideological groups, and ultimately embraced by major business associations – long regarded as the doyennes of the lobbying world – the PAC idea, and often the partisan strategy accompanying it, would diffuse through the interest group realm.¹⁵ By 1964, there were at least 56 such committees active nationally, and by 1970, just a year before passage of FECA, the number of national PACs had reached 141.¹⁶ This was small compared to the subsequent explosion of PACs (608 by the end of 1974, over 2000 by the end of that decade, and over 5000 in the most recent count).¹⁷ But it nonetheless points to a new stage of interest group organization and activity.

Not all of these early PACs were discernably partisan in orientation, but many of the most important ones were – as I demonstrate in the empirical chapters of this dissertation. And the entry of each group into the partisan fray altered calculations for other interest groups. Shaped by the configuration of competition within the interest group environment itself, the partisan strategies these groups employed would hew in opposite directions. Labor and liberal groups sought to reshape the Democratic Party into a more cohesive and consistent advocate for their concerns, while conservative, professional, and business groups looked to the Republican Party as a counterweight. By the mid 1960s, therefore, an environment characterized by more distinctive party positions and nascent party networks, underpinned by partisan interest group electioneering, had begun to emerge.

From Rivalry to Alliance

It is the strategy of partisan political action, I argue, that helps bridge the theoretical divide between Schattschneider and Bawn et al., and the two different empirical environments they seem to best describe. A key question, therefore, is why groups like P.A.C. adopted this strategy in the first place, and why other groups would come to make a similar decision.

Though reflective of the logic underpinning Bawn et al.'s view, partisan political action was not automatically apparent to interest group leaders, or always *available* for them to implement – contextual, capacity-based, and cultural constraints served to shape the strategic possibilities they saw and could realize. The political context in which Schattschneider offered his perspective was one in which parties had *not* served as an effective vehicle for the consistent expression of interests, where the political structure afforded alternative paths to influence, and where the guiding concern was of *isolation* on the political scene by backing the *wrong* party team.

Partisan political action only came to be *recognized* as an alternative possibility in the late 1930s, I argue, through certain contextual changes, particularly at the presidential level; made *possible* in the early 1940s through the creation of PACs; and increasingly *accepted* as a legitimate form of interest group activity from the late 1950s and beyond, through the rhetoric interest group leaders employed to describe, justify, and explain it. Indeed, though interest group electioneering would never entirely lose its controversial edge – particularly in its partisan form – its basic premise would attain a veneer of acceptability, even respectability – suggesting a major *cultural* shift, in addition to the major organizational and strategic changes it channeled.

In sum, PACs reflected a new, overtly electoral form of interest group activity embedded in permanent, dedicated organizations that would keep electoral objectives in sight even in the lengthy interludes between elections. Their formation would institutionalize a major strategic shift away from the prevailing emphasis among interest groups on legislative persuasion and the art of lobbying. And they would inaugurate a broader shift toward partisan electioneering and alliance as a means of obtaining group objectives. Through a process of competitive emulation, the adoption of a partisan strategy by some groups induced others to adopt the same. In so doing, partisan political action became self-reinforcing over time, and expansive in its reach.

Implications

The rise of political action as a particular form and set of activities, and the partisan variant with which it was foundationally associated, is an important – and neglected – stage in political development. It is also one that has, I argue, profoundly altered politics in the United States – altering the relationships of interest groups with political parties, and reconfiguring the party system more generally. Through the cultivation of supportive candidates and the provision of selective financial support, the interest group political action committees forged in this period helped to *create* more ideologically cohesive national parties, and to shift the internal distribution of power within the formal party apparatus toward the national level. In doing so, the rise of PACs helped to shape a much more nationalized, programmatic, and polarized party system overall.¹⁸

Schattschneider, in fact, had long hoped that parties would become more nationalized and programmatic, if not quite polarized – “responsible” as termed it.¹⁹ But interest groups were supposed to be *constrained* by this development, in his formulation. Parties have ultimately become more “responsible” in Schattschneider’s sense – but not in opposition to interest groups – as he had first suggested in 1942 – or always in *command* of them, as would later reformulate his ideas, but in *alliance* with them, even at their *behest*. A particular irony of this development, therefore, where groups “outside” the formal structure of the party have often served to create and enforce programmatic discipline within them, is that the system itself has lost coherence.

With interest group electoral actors now critical electoral allies of the national parties, arguably more important than the state and local party organizations in campaigns, the party system has not so much become more *centralized*, but merely exhibits an altered form of decentralization. Where the party system once appeared horizontally divided, layered hierarchically into geographic tiers, it now spins out vertically, across the numerous organizations committed to the its cause. As

such, these “shadow” parties, as they have been labeled, lack a critical feature of the party “responsibility” Schattschneider so desired – the ability for the public to hold them to account.²⁰

Overview of Dissertation

To ground the developmental discussion offered in this dissertation, Chapter 1 offers a theoretical assessment of interest group electoral activity and its connection to partisanship – exploring the competitive and cooperative perspectives on party-group relations associated on the one hand with Schattschneider – along with his contemporaries V.O. Key and David Truman, with Bawn et al. on the other.²¹

Stressing the rise of a partisan form of political action among interest groups as a link between these two perspectives, I offer a framework through which to understand that development. Conflict within the interest group community, the extant distribution of issue positions among the parties, and the feedback effects of initial group forays into the electoral sphere are important factors in driving forward this new form of activity, I suggest. Critical to this transition, however, were the ways that early interest groups navigated the normative, legal, and strategic constraints on their entering the electoral fray, setting in motion the major cultural shift that underpins contemporary attitudes toward political action.

Chapter 2 offers a conceptual overview of the political realm prior to the 1930s – examining the major categories in which interest group actors were understood – as legislative “lobbies” or “pressure groups” – the extent to which these conceptions extended to electoral activity, and the “non-partisan” forms through which that could be realized.²² The “non-partisan” claim, in fact, would serve an important role in justifying early lobbying activity, and would continue as an important rhetorical thread in subsequent stages of development. The conceptions presented here

serve as a baseline for understanding the subsequent appearance of new types of interest group actor, including political action committees, to which I turn in Chapter 3.

There I offer an overview of the national lobbying and electoral actors that emerged from the turn of the 20th Century up to the 1960s, drawing upon a series of congressional investigations into lobbying and campaign expenditures conducted throughout this period, and through special “political committee reports” that were submitted to the Clerk of the House of Representatives.²³ This chapter fulfills an important empirical goal, since there are no systematic lists of organizations active in elections prior to 1974, when the Federal Election Commission was established to register and monitor PACs, and ensure compliance with FECA more generally. Part of the reason for the neglect of interest group electioneering prior to the 1970s, I argue, is the very lack of systematic data with which to assess it.

The analysis in this chapter also provides the basis for the empirical chapters that follow. Having identified a comprehensive range of electorally-relevant organizations in this period, I narrow my focus to those appearing in both lobbying and electoral expenditure hearings over time – as a way to better understand the organizational features and developmental contours associated with these different strategies. This comparison highlights the importance of labor and business organizations, including the American Federation of Labor (AFL), the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) – and after 1955, the merged AFL-CIO – alongside the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) and the United States Chamber of Commerce. It also points to a particular sequence of PAC development among these actors, in which business organizations are more hesitant to adopt this organizational form, and to engage overtly in electioneering. Only the NAM does so within the period examined – forming its Business-Industrial Political Action Committee (BIPAC) in 1963. Agricultural interests, intriguingly, do not appear in this comparison data – a

notable absence suggestive of a largely legislative but non-electoral approach to political influence, one that I consider further in this chapter and in my conclusion.²⁴

The comparison also points to other groups connected to these economic interests, such as Labor's Non-Partisan League and the Liberty League – both of which appeared before congressional investigating committees related to the 1936 election – along with a range of later ideological groups, often identified with these economic interests in a broader sense. Thus liberal organizations such as the Americans for Democratic Action and the National Committee for an Effective Congress appear, as do conservative groups such as the Committee for Constitutional Government and the Americans for Constitutional Action – groups that could differ in their approach to politics as much as their ideology. Two further organizations which do not fit along an economic-ideological dimension are also notable: the Anti-Saloon League and the Association Against the Prohibition Amendment – both concerned with temperance issues, and possessing opposing views.

Since the labor-Democratic relationship is a prominent one that offered an early and important challenge to conceptions of party-pressure group competition, the comparison of selected business organizations is particularly apt. “Business,” though a dangerous term to wield, is regarded as the economic counterpart to labor, and often treated as a contemporary *partisan* equivalent in some sense – typically viewed today as an “ally” of the Republican Party.²⁵ The full extent of that equivalence, however, remains unclear. Stressing mass membership, for example, groups associated with the religious right are sometimes seen as a better comparison.²⁶ My case studies thus offer insight into the comparative nature and development of these purportedly “equivalent” party-group relationships. (Another note on terminology is also relevant here, since economic interest groups, ideological groups, and narrower advocacy groups do appear throughout the project, I often use the shorthand “groups” to embrace all three types).

In the subsequent chapters, I weave examination of these groups into a broader developmental narrative tracing out the rise of political action and its implications for the party system. I utilize a primarily qualitative approach, though offering quantitative indicators of financial relationships or endorsement patterns where possible to reconstruct them from archival data.²⁷

Chapter 4 looks to the 1936 election, in which two crucial interest-based electoral actors appeared: Labor's Non-Partisan League (LNPL) and the Liberty League, the latter having roots in the business community. Backing Democratic and Republican candidates respectively, they waged a new kind of campaign "outside" of the regular party organizations, and attempted to break the cultural understanding that support for a presidential candidate was an expression of broader partisanship. Both also attempted to sustain their organizations beyond the 1936 election itself, with Labor's Non-Partisan League, in particular, expanding its concerns to legislative initiatives, and extending its electoral engagement into the 1938 midterm elections. Neither organization would survive past 1940, but changes in campaign finance law that year would serve to encourage campaigning "outside" of the regular party apparatus, leading to a proliferation of campaign groups in that election, which I consider in Chapter 5.

These electoral experiments set the stage for the emergence of P.A.C. in 1943, the subject of Chapter 6. There I provide a detailed assessment of the P.A.C., its organizational form, legal status, the rhetorical justifications it offered for engaging in elections, and the contours of its activity in the 1944 presidential race. In Chapter 7, I look to subsequent labor organizations created by the AFL (Labor's League for Political Education), and the merged AFL-CIO (the Committee on Political Education, or COPE). While all of these PACs maintained the claim of "nonpartisanship" that had been proffered by earlier interest groups, they moved closer toward the Democratic Party – using a series of rhetorical arguments that connected support for particular issues to support for individual candidates, and cast any apparent partisan bias in essentially "accidental" terms. Yet their

commitment to the Democratic Party would become anything but accidental – as they set out, along with a growing number of allied “liberal” organizations, to actively reshape the party’s contours in a direction amenable to their cause.

In Chapter 8, I turn to the actions of business groups like the NAM and the United States Chamber of Commerce across this same period. Despite conflict with labor organizations, and the emergence of an increasingly ideological divide shaped by economic interests, business organizations actually *avoided* direct political action in the electoral realm for most of this time. Instead, they launched a campaign of “political education” as I label it – publicity designed to shape an electoral context, without explicitly offering support to candidates or parties. This is similar to the “issue advertising” over which contemporary campaign finance controversies have revolved.

The chapter explores why business groups adopted this approach – one that conservative organizations more generally seemed to channel – and rejects explanations based on legal or resource constraints alone. Instead, I point to the lessons of the failed Liberty League, the traditional advantages of business in the lobbying realm, and aspects of the conservative ideological viewpoint they hewed to. Political action committees were attacked, in fact, as coercive, collectivist, and even contrary to the spirit of local self-governance. An ideological aversion to the direction of individuals *en masse*; and a particular view of the business position within society and politics, served to inhibit political action by these groups. This universalist view of business and society, in fact, underpinned a more bipartisan view of political strategy within the business community. While Republican leanings among business leaders were evident, their thinking was also marked by the expectation that *both* parties should be responsive to the needs of business.

Yet by 1963, the National Association of Manufacturers did ultimately create its own Political Action Committee – BIPAC. And BIPAC would adopt the kinds of partisan strategy that had animated labor PACs, only now it would aim to reshape the Republican Party into a

counterweight. As part of a broader mobilization on the right in the early 1960s, it would succeed in doing so – with recent historical scholarship tracing the ways “business conservatives” in the 1960s helped lay the foundations for the more ideologically cohesive GOP of the 1980s and beyond.

Thus in Chapter 9, I explore the hesitant embrace of political action by the NAM and even by the Chamber of Commerce through the 1950s and into the early 60s (though in the latter case, it did not move all the way to creating a national PAC until 1990).²⁸ Increasingly concerned with labor’s mobilization, and the changes they were trying to impress upon the Democratic Party, these business groups launched “businessmen in politics” programs aiming to turn middle-level corporate managers into a political force. As more strident conservative voices entered the political arena in the late 1950s, calls for a more aggressive and direct business response in the *electoral* arena became more regular. Amid a changing political environment, and the competitive pressures to respond to apparently successful political techniques in kind, the NAM made its decision to “enter politics.” I conclude my historical analysis, therefore, with a brief examination of business and labor forces in the 1964 election, now channeled through the medium of PACs.

What this developmental arc suggests is a process of competitive emulation whereby the PAC form and the partisan strategy diffused across the interest group environment, and the scale of interest group electoral activity accordingly escalated. As I discuss in the conclusion, my dissertation essentially traces the first “cycle” of this process – as labor groups mobilized for partisan political action, as liberal and conservative groups joined the fray on different sides, and business groups moved to counteract in like form. This is not to say that this “partisan turn” was entirely *complete* across the interest group spectrum at this point, but the emphasis of interest group activity had distinctly shifted.

The cycle I identify played out over twenty years – between the formation of the first labor PAC, and the first formed by a business organization. But we have seen a similar process of

mobilization and counter-mobilization at work in the “explosion” of single-issue advocacy organizations since the 1970s, or the successive embrace of different PAC-like forms, such as 527s, 501(c)’s, and in recent years, “SuperPACs.” Only now the cycles are much more rapid. The earlier developments I trace help to explain not only the process at work in these more recent cycles, but the political environment in which they take place. The electoral engagement first systematically evident among business and labor organizations in the wake of the New Deal, were a critical means of reconfiguring the polity around the ideological divisions it had awakened. The party-group alliances built through such partisan political action have thus involved a major shift in the party system, and in political culture more broadly.

Contribution

By exploring interest group electoral action, this dissertation helps to partly address the “glaring lacunae” identified by Tichenor and Harris – the origins, development, and impact of party-interest group alliances.²⁹ In so doing, it offers an empirical contribution by tracing the appearance of a critical form of political organization that has been largely neglected. Theoretically, it tries to bridge very different perspectives emanating from rational choice scholarship, in the case of Bawn et al., to early behavioral perspectives, as offered by Truman and Key, to American Political Development.

More generally, it tries to bring the study of electioneering into American Political Development in a substantive way. Campaigns have consequences, and not simply in terms of the candidates elected. How they are waged can be just as important. In numerous ways, the contemporary polity bears the mark of interest group political action. From the strong emphasis on issues and individuals in election campaigns, to the complexity of the electoral environment itself, the convoluted legal framework governing campaigns, and the glaring contradiction of SuperPACs maintaining a notional independence from the candidates they so clearly promote.

What I offer, then, is an account of an emerging vision of interest group “political action” over time, the vehicles employed to implement it, how it shifted in a more partisan direction, and its broader impact on the polity. That account involves an organizational transition in which financially “independent” political actors first emerged, a strategic shift which saw non-partisanship replaced with a more partisan orientation, a legal framework that has become increasingly unwieldy as it tried to deal with escalating electoral activity, and a cultural context that now accepts the fundamental fact of interest group activity in elections, even if it does not always like it.³⁰

1. Competitors or Collaborators?

In 1948, a seven-page article appeared in the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, written by E.E. Schattschneider. Its pithy title, “Pressure Groups Versus Political Parties” encapsulated the influential viewpoint expressed therein: that political parties and “pressure groups” – interest groups, broadly speaking – were *competitors* on the national stage.¹ “The effectiveness of pressure groups in American politics is related directly to the condition of the parties,” Schattschneider asserted. “That is, the pressure groups thrive on the weaknesses of the parties.”²

As a general statement on party-interest group relations, Schattschneider’s formulation would reverberate in political science for decades. And it was one that wove empirical, theoretical, and normative strands together. “Pressure groups” pursued policies of benefit to their members, at the expense of the public good, Schattschneider argued – challenging the emerging pluralist viewpoint in which the contest of interests was simply the American way.³ They did so, Schattschneider described, by appealing to lawmakers of any party persuasion to vote in accordance with their desires, through non-partisan lobbying, in essence.⁴

Only “responsible” national parties could offer the kind of cohesive and programmatic governance Schattschneider felt was necessary for a modern nation. Only political parties conceived on such lines were capable of reconciling the many competing interests in society with the public good. Yet such parties were absent from the American political scene. Where the state and local parties might be thriving, “only the transparent filaments of the ghost of a party” were visible at the national level, as far as he could see.⁵ Without a strong national arm to impose order, the parties were diffuse and ill-disciplined. In such circumstances, nationally-active interest groups had no need or reason to associate themselves with a particular side – there were no obvious advantages to doing so, and it might risk political isolation if they picked the side that lost. Since elections were the most

obvious arena in which they might express such a preference, interest groups generally avoided involvement there.

This perspective, suggesting a general rivalry between interest groups and national parties, and the kinds of behaviors associated with it, presents a stark contrast to an important vein of contemporary research, in which a much more *collaborative* vision of party-interest group relationships is offered. In recent years, the national parties have been reconceived as “networks” of formal party committees and groups “outside” of that official structure – including interest groups – woven together by their mutual efforts to promote a particular set of policy aims.⁶ Those efforts, moreover, include a significant electoral component. This perspective accords with a much different empirical political scene today: one in which strong and coherent national parties seem to work side-by-side with pressure group allies in both the legislative and electoral arenas, and in which the party system as a whole has become much more nationalized and polarized.

Yet despite the significant change these contrasting perspectives on party-group relations suggest – in both theoretic and empirical terms – they have existed largely in isolation. Schattschneider’s basic conception of “rivalry,” at least, was largely abandoned in the early 1980s, as it became apparent that national parties had strengthened in the previous decade, while pressure groups had seemed to expand in influence too, and their relations were often anything but competitive.⁷ Most empirical studies of party networks, moreover, focus only on recent years, and thus have little to say on the origins of the collaborative relationships they examine, or any change they might involve.⁸ At the same time, an important theoretical contribution appears to deny there has been any change at all – or at least makes it difficult to see how party-interest group relationships could ever be characterized as competitive in the way Schattschneider described.

In the network-based theory of parties presented in Cohen, Karol, Noel, and Zaller (2008), and developed in a series of papers with Bawn and Maskett (2006, 2011, 2012), the party is simply “a

coalition of interests that band together to nominate and elect candidates for office.”⁹ Since the “coalition of interests” *is* the party, the notion of basic conflict or tension between them is quite alien. Moreover, this conception of parties applies across time, they argue, an assessment they rest on the innate superiority of the *electoral* mode of interest group activity underlying it. The coalition of interests exists to install candidates into office *who will serve in their interests*. They do so, Cohen et al. argue, because it is more efficient and advantageous to install a favorable lawmaker from the start than try to persuade them later.¹⁰ The logic underlying this strategy, they suggest, is applicable over time – partisan electioneering, in essence, is always superior to nonpartisan lobbying.¹¹

At heart, each theoretical perspective on the relationships between parties and interest groups offers different ideas about how interest groups can best secure their goals and the role of political parties therein. But neither perspective applies perfectly across the changing contours of party competition and interest group behavior of the 20th Century. In this chapter, I aim to bridge the gap between the two perspectives, explaining the appearance of a more partisan and electoral form of interest group activity – in line with the type Cohen et al. suggest – while drawing upon some of the insights of Schattschneider’s approach to do so. I suggest that the desirability of the interest group strategies they suggest are each conditional upon certain features of the political context, the extent to which these reveal or obscure alternative strategies of action, the internal capacity actors have to implement alternative strategies, and the external constraints they may face in doing so.

For while the case Cohen et al. offer for the essential superiority of electioneering over lobbying, and the partisan direction in which it would proceed, has much to recommend it, it is not one that applies irrespective of key considerations relating to the political context and group capacity. Their theory rests on critical assumptions about the electoral resources controlled and deployable by “intense policy demanders” that they do not always possess, I argue, nor know how to

utilize. In sum, for much of the early 20th Century, formal interest groups lacked the organizational capacity to mobilize resources in the manner a partisan electoral strategy requires – that is, to proactively select, and financially support a party’s electoral candidates. The political and cultural environment, moreover, placed further constraints on the ability of group leaders to pursue – even to *recognize* – a strategy that looked to parties as the vehicle for the achievement of group aims. Given the political context that Schattschneider describes, in which the parties were diffuse and lacking in clear policy commitments, and in which cultural suspicion of interest group electioneering accompanied the risks of isolation it involved, a full partisan electioneering strategy is unlikely to have seemed the most effective approach, however superior its underlying logic in an abstract sense.

Indeed, Schattschneider’s initial perspective was distinctly premised upon the configuration of national party competition he observed – with national parties so indistinct, a form of nonpartisan or bipartisan *lobbying* was the best means of achieving a group’s aims. But an assessment of Schattschneider’s later work – along with that of his contemporaries V.O. Key and David Truman – actually points to some reasons why interest groups would move toward closer relationships with parties – though they are reasons that tend to privilege changes in the nature of party competition itself.¹² If parties were more cohesive and divided on a group’s issue(s) of concern, then the group would be *forced* to pick a side, making the risks of electioneering irrelevant.¹³ In this depiction, changes in the parties themselves could induce interest groups to serve as a party’s electoral allies – to aid its candidates in financial and other ways – though this was not a *preferred* scenario from the group perspective (since parties would be calling the shots), so much as a necessary response to new circumstances that rendered bipartisan lobbying ineffective.

In the account I offer, *suggestions* of change in a more partisan direction serve to open up new possibilities for interest group leaders, allowing them to *recognize*, contemplate, and choose to pursue

a strategy more along the lines Cohen et al. lay out – a choice that is determined neither by context, nor by the innate superiority of partisan electioneering, but involves a complex interplay of both.

In the last part of the chapter, I construct a framework for understanding the formulation of interest group strategy and tactics that seeks to capture this interplay, blending the importance of context with room for group agency and innovation. That framework emphasizes the importance of initial contextual changes that make it seem *possible* and maybe even desirable to move in a more partisan direction, for at least *some* groups – that is, it begins to alter the risks and rewards of partisanship such that a group might *choose* to ally itself with a particular party. But it also stresses the cultural and legal norms they have to negotiate in doing so, and the broader impact that decision can have. When applied to a given context in which the parties are not perfectly cohesive and divided, the kind of strategy at work in the Cohen et al. conception does not produce a passive alliance, so much as an active effort to reshape a party in accordance with the group’s goals. To the extent a group is successful in doing so, it can alter the context and calculations for *other* groups. In this regard, I emphasize the configuration of competition within the interest group community as an important feature shaping how other groups respond when particular groups become more partisan. In this depiction, interest groups do not solely *respond* to the dynamics of party competition, but their actions can also shape it – setting in motion an interactive process of diffusion, through which interest group electoral activity becomes more widespread and more partisan over time.

Drawing on this framework, I offer a specific developmental narrative tracing the rise of partisan political action, its implications for party-group relationships, and for the party system as a whole. I locate the initial contextual changes in the presidential politics of the New Deal, and the ideological conflict it began to generate, as beginning to change perceptions of strategy among some interest group actors, particularly within the labor movement. In terms of capacity, I point to the rise of a new form of interest group organizations – one explicitly dedicated to electoral activities – the

political action committee or “PAC.” First created by labor unions in the early 1940s, though with important precursors associated with both labor and business interests in the previous decade, PACs would develop the capacity for large-scale involvement in elections. As the competition between major economic interest groups themselves migrated to the electoral realm, PACs would increasingly direct their activity on a partisan basis. The emergence of PACs, however, was neither inevitable nor uncontested – generating hostility and confusion within political circles, and among the public at large. Subsequent chapters will thus explore the process by which PACs appeared on the political scene and gradually gained legitimacy in the electoral sphere. Their very organizational structure would serve to draw conflict to the national level, while their emphasis on electing candidates committed to particular policy positions would serve to reshape the composition of the parties in a more cohesive, and ultimately more polarized direction – offering an important mechanism through which the New Deal realignment would unfold.

Understanding the shift from non-partisan lobbying to partisan electioneering by interest groups, then, is crucial for understanding the transformation of party-interest group relations from broadly competitive to much more collaborative, and the resultant transformation in the party system as a whole. The argument I will build throughout this dissertation suggests that in adopting a new strategy of partisan political action, and new organizational forms through which to pursue it, interest groups helped to *push* the party “responsibility” that Schattschneider longed for, though with ultimate results he would not have desired.

Parties and Interest Groups: An Electoral Connection?

The Perils of Partisanship

Five years before he penned his famous article on party-pressure group conflict, Schattschneider had already offered a sketch of that relationship. In *Party Government* (1942), he argued that pressure

groups had “sound strategical reasons for avoiding affiliation with either of the major parties,” and so adopted a neutral posture toward them.¹⁴ To do otherwise could jeopardize the attainment of preferred policy objectives by the group, he argued, undermining the very *raison d’être* for any and all interest groups.

These strategic calculations were based on two key features of the American party system – the absence of comprehensive or cohesive conflict between the major political parties in terms of issues and policies, and their pronounced organizational weakness and decentralization. Thus on the one hand, the lack of real divisions presented opportunities for groups to gain support from legislators of either party. In such circumstances, there was no obvious reason to side with a particular party and to do so could only diminish their efforts. If the “opposition” party gained control of the government, the group would be *isolated*, Schattschneider warned, unable to achieve its aims. On the other, the lack of cohesion or discipline meant that parties were not reliable vehicles through which to pursue policy goals anyway. The separated and divided American political system only exacerbated these calculations, rendering the prospect of unified governance unlikely, and thus ensuring the “opposition” party would always be in control somewhere. This basic framework offered “strategical reasons,” Schattschneider argued, for interest groups to avoid exhibiting preference toward one side – it risked alienating potential allies for little perceivable benefit.¹⁵

Of course, one might point out that these various concerns were partly at odds – that is, if a party is so ill-disciplined that it cannot reliably promote a group’s aims, then we might suspect it would be unable to muster the cohesion to entirely *exclude* an interest group deemed friendlier to the “other side.” Still, in none of these scenarios was taking sides a preferable course of action: party ties were at best irrelevant, and at worst dangerous to the achievement of pressure group policy aims.¹⁶

Schattschneider was by no means alone in describing interest group strategy in such essentially “non-partisan” terms. Schattschneider’s contemporary V.O. Key, also writing in 1942,

offered a similar analysis. From the interest group perspective, it was often “unwise to back either party,” Key observed; far better “to have friends in both camps,” he continued, “for the group must promote its objectives whatever party is in power.”¹⁷

If the rejection of partisan affiliation was a strategic imperative, however, it was usually assured through the rejection of certain kinds of *tactics* – especially *electoral* ones. For all partisan labels might not mean much in terms of content, they were important in electoral contests in a manner not replicated in the legislature. Indeed, the term “partisanship” itself was infused at this time with electoral meaning, viewed as “taking sides” in a particular contest, as “backing” a particular party’s candidates.¹⁸ Lending support to any particular candidate might be interpreted in partisan terms, but backing a presidential candidate, especially, was viewed as a definitively “partisan” act. In part to avoid any taint of partisan appearances, therefore, Schattschneider observed that “pressure groups generally ignore elections.”¹⁹

But if pressure groups largely stood apart from “party politics” in the electoral realm, they did not stand apart from *all* politics. As Schattschneider acknowledged, they “avoid one type of politics merely to participate more effectively in another” – “pressure politics.”²⁰ Through direct appeals to legislators, or indirect appeals communicated via constituents, interest groups sought to pressure office-holders into voting in particular ways on specific pieces of legislation. They *lobbied* legislators, in other words – and on both sides of the aisle. Thus in Schattschneider’s schema, the basic features of the party system – national party weakness and ill-discipline – suggested the superiority of a particular strategic orientation – partisan neutrality – which in turn suggested the superiority of a particular tactical approach – legislative lobbying.

Electoral considerations were not entirely irrelevant to pressure politics, however. Even Schattschneider admitted that pressure groups only *generally* ignored elections, acknowledging a handful of groups that had participated in elections at various points prior to 1942, such as the

American Federation of Labor (AFL) – the national federation for craft-based unions – and especially the Anti-Saloon League, which had promoted temperance since the turn of the century. But even their efforts were limited in scope, largely avoided the presidential contest, and were invariably described as “non-partisan” in aim and deed – a suggestion that only *policy* considerations, not any concern for party affiliations, drove their support or opposition for candidates.²¹

The basic electoral approach of these groups involved the mobilization of their members to vote as a cohesive bloc – swinging for or against a candidate depending on their stance toward the group’s issues of concern. It was a “friends and enemies” approach, as the AFL labeled it. As Odegard (1928) described the Anti-Saloon League’s orientation, it was “non-partisan, bi-partisan, omni-partisan,” considering itself “free to support any candidate it approved” such that it “frequently supported both Republicans and Democrats in the same election.”²²

But equally frequently, it might not actively support or oppose anyone at all. Indeed, the underlying *aim* of this approach was less a particular electoral outcome than a *legislative* one – to induce support for their favored policies, among those legislators in whose election contests they intervened, but also among legislators in general. As Key (1942) explained, “[t]he theory underlying such a campaign is that the threat of retaliation at the polls makes an official more sympathetic toward the viewpoint of the organization concerned.”²³ That is, all officials might worry about the prospect of an electoral intervention, and would thus be more likely to *vote* as the group wished. As such, the point of the entire exercise was less *actual* electoral involvement than the threat of it. Indeed, both Schattschneider and Key agreed that the extent to which most groups could actually deliver on these threats was questionable – though lawmakers often seemed to view them as credible.²⁴

In sum, “pressure politics” was non-partisan in orientation and largely non-electoral in practice. It was, in effect, conducted *outside* of the party system. And this made it beyond the reach

of democratic accountability, in Schattschneider's view. By targeting any legislator a group felt was persuadable, pressure groups achieved policy concessions at the expense of the public good, he argued. And in the aggregate, their efforts rendered the government's policy positions unsystematic and incoherent – a situation unfit to deal with the critical problems facing modern societies.

It was in *Party Government* that Schattschneider first attributed this undesirable state of affairs to the weakness of the national Democratic and Republican organizations – a level at which, he claimed, “only the transparent filaments of the ghost of a party” were visible.²⁵ “The role of the pressure groups in American politics is directly and intimately related to the condition of the major parties,” he observed then, attributing pressure group dominance at the national level, in fact, to the dominance of the state and local parties elsewhere.²⁶

The parties might be associated with certain general ideas and commitments, but state and local party leaders cared much less about policy than they did about *patronage*, and thus gave little concern to how their congressmen voted on particular issues.²⁷ Despite this indifference to policy, however, local leaders were also hostile to any proposals that might strengthen the national party machinery. The kinds of institutional changes needed to enforce congressional discipline on programmatic issues, they feared, would also make the national party committees strong enough to cut off the patronage on which they thrived.²⁸ In decentralized institutions like the U.S. Congress, in which legislators were afforded some independent power, the lack of party guidance on meaningful issues meant that “congressmen escape[d] from the discipline of the local bosses only to fall prey to the pressures of organized special interests,” as Schattschneider lamented.²⁹

With local leaders stymying any efforts at reform, the national parties were thus rendered incapable of fulfilling the role for which Schattschneider considered them best suited in a democracy – managing societal interests so as to make their aims compatible with the broader public interest, and formulating cohesive policy programs around which government could operate.³⁰ This was a

version of the “responsible parties” ideal that Schattschneider would champion throughout his career. National in scope, centralized in organization, programmatic in orientation, and disciplined in implementation of their program, such parties would protect the public good by channeling, organizing, and prioritizing competing demands. They would ensure democratic responsiveness, moreover – enabling voters to make a meaningful choice at elections and hold their government to account.³¹ And pressure groups were detracting from that aim.

As Schattschneider summarized in his 1948 article, speaking of the *national* parties: “[t]he effectiveness of pressure groups in American politics is related directly to the condition of the parties. That is, the pressure groups thrive on the weaknesses of the parties.”³² This statement would subsequently enter into the canon of political science as a strong statement of “rivalry” between the two types of actor – usually interpreted in organizational terms as claiming their inverse relative strength.³³ In reality, it was a more limited claim – interest groups might *take advantage* of national party weakness, but they did not directly *cause* that weakness. Though of course, they did not exactly help it either.³⁴

Still, Schattschneider’s formulation offered a prediction of sorts in one direction, at least – if the national parties somehow did manage to gain in strength, then they would inhibit the effectiveness of pressure groups, even push them off the scene entirely. “If the parties exercised the power to govern effectively,” he asserted in 1942 – that is, managed to become stronger and more ideologically cohesive at the national level – then “*they would shut out the pressure groups.*”³⁵ The competition would then be over. Parties would have *won*.

In Partnership with Parties?

The weakness of the national party committees remained a perpetual complaint of political scientists for many decades, but in the early 1980s, scholars began to discern a strengthening of party

institutions at the national level – changes they traced back to the previous decade.³⁶ In numerical terms, at least, this strengthening was accompanied by an *explosion* of interest groups, not the decrease that Schattschneider’s formulation would have predicted.³⁷ The new groups appearing were primarily issue-based *advocacy* groups, formed around new kinds of concerns – such as identity, consumer, or environmental issues – rather than traditional material or professional interests.³⁸ Sometimes labeled “citizens” groups, they were typically single-issue vehicles, but located that issue within a larger, often quite rigid, ideological worldview.³⁹ Faced with this seemingly contradictory phenomenon – a kind of “stagflation” for political science – Schattschneider’s vision of inverse rivalry went from being a “common wisdom” in the discipline, to one that was widely rejected.⁴⁰

Both the strengthening of parties, and the explosion of advocacy groups, were linked to important institutional changes in the 1970s – changes that dramatically impacted the conduct of elections in particular. The Democratic presidential convention of 1968 had descended into chaos as Hubert Humphrey, Lyndon Johnson’s vice president, secured the nomination despite popular opposition to his stance on the Vietnam War. And this apparent contravention of wider sentiment prompted an inquiry into the selection process – the McGovern-Fraser commission – which recommended greater popular input, inaugurating a more general shift to primaries as the dominant method of selecting federal candidates.⁴¹ At the same time, the campaign finance framework regulating federal elections had been substantially altered by the Federal Elections Campaign Act of 1971 (FECA), major amendments in 1974, 1976 and 1979, and several important legal decisions.⁴²

The effects of these changes had a somewhat mixed impact on the political scene. The emphasis that primaries placed on candidates, for example, was said to undermine the value of the party label, and empower personal campaign organizations at the expense of the party (particularly the *state and local* party organizations).⁴³ At the same time, these changes also increased the importance of other organized groups that might offer support for candidates in primaries, where

the formal party committees could not overtly participate. FECA, in fact, was initially viewed as weakening the political parties, since its system of public financing further loosened party control of presidential candidates, and its financial constraints restricted parties almost as much as other electoral participants.⁴⁴ In the long run, the national parties would claw back some advantages through the “soft money” loophole, and generally gain prominence as coordinating bodies providing money and services to candidates.⁴⁵ But the recognition and status accorded to other electoral actors in the FECA amendments of 1974 was an important development in itself, since it brought Political Action Committees or PACs explicitly within the statutory framework of campaign finance, offering a definitive legal statement on who might create them, how they should be organized, and what they were permitted to do. Though PACs had existed since the 1940s, their form and status had not been clarified, or authorized by statute, until this point.

Accordingly, the number of PACs grew dramatically and, in so doing, drew increased attention to the electioneering role played by interest groups. Using the data made available by the Federal Election Commission after 1974, designed to monitor and enforce compliance with FECA, a wave of scholarship on PACs, and especially their finances, appeared. FEC data, in fact, showed distinctly partisan patterns became apparent among many PACs associated with major economic interests, or with those either created by, or constituting advocacy groups in themselves.⁴⁶ Indeed, the apparently partisan leanings of many advocacy groups had generated attention in the 1970s – their ideological quality was often invoked as encouraging a more partisan stance, though the longtime depiction of American parties as non-ideological raises questions as to who was attracting whom.⁴⁷ Whatever the source of appeal, these non-party organizations came to be viewed, over time, as particular “party allies” or even “party-connected committees,” as Herrnson (2009) recently labeled them.⁴⁸

It was in this context that a new perspective on parties began to emerge. First put forth by Mildred Schwartz in *The Party Network* (1990) and gaining ground in the last decade, “the party” is understood to be much broader than the formal apparatus of state, national and congressional party committees.⁴⁹ Indeed, these scholars include “interest groups typically affiliated with each party,” and other similar types of organized actor, within the definition of “the party” itself.⁵⁰ Such networks are not diffuse and boundless, however – members are identified by tangible connections such as patterns of communication, shared personnel, and, especially, *financial ties* such as campaign donations.⁵¹ An interest group could be considered part of the network, Schwartz explained, “when its political actions are directed solely or largely on behalf of a given party.”⁵² Network scholarship at the national level thus focuses heavily on electoral organizations such as PACs, whose contributions can be directly measured and analyzed as an indicator of connections between formal party committees and their allies.⁵³ And it also focuses heavily on recent electoral cycles.⁵⁴ Skinner (2004) offers one of the few comments pertaining to development when he speculates that the network concept may have “validity across time,” but “probably applies better to today’s politics than to that of a generation ago.”⁵⁵

But a more theoretically-focused vein of network scholarship sets its sights on a much broader swathe of history. Developed in a series of working papers by Kathleen Bawn, Martin Cohen, David Karol, Seth Masket, Hans Noel, and John Zaller (2006; 2011; 2012), and underpinning Cohen, Karol, Noel, and Zaller’s (2008) work on presidential nominations (on which the following discussion is primarily based) – their “group-centered” theory of parties makes collaborative dynamics into a *permanent* feature of the American party system.

In doing so, it targets the dominant theoretical vision of party organizations, developed most comprehensively by Aldrich (1995) and associated with a longer stream of rational choice scholarship, which sees political parties as the creatures of individual (rational) legislators.⁵⁶ The

formation of parties is thus explained in terms of the advantages they provide to such individuals – since parties stabilize decision-making processes, help to avoid cycling majorities, and generally enhance an individual legislator’s chances of achieving his or her aims. In this perspective, parties form first in the legislature and expand outward.

Cohen et al. (2008), in contrast, emphasize the role of *groups* rather than individuals, and place actors *outside* of the legislature at the heart of their model. Parties, as they see them, are not the creatures of individual legislators, but of “intense policy demanders” – groups of citizens who pay particular attention to politics and desire specific policy outcomes (effectively, individuals associated with different societal interests, or committed to particular issues for some other reason, though not necessarily organized into formal interest groups). These groups will work together to form parties, Cohen et al. argue, as a way of ensuring that individual legislators promote the policies they desire – that legislators *serve in their interests*.⁵⁷ At base, a party is simply “a coalition of interests that band together to nominate and elect candidates for office,” they claim.⁵⁸ It will necessarily be a coalition of various groups, they argue, because no societal interest is large enough to be effective alone. Instead, groups of policy demanders will seek allies with whom they can work to nominate and elect candidates, with two distinct and opposing coalitions ultimately forming.⁵⁹ Thus are parties – and a two-party system – brought into being.

In offering an alternative to the rational actor-centered model of Aldrich – the “textbook view” of parties in current scholarship as they label it – Cohen et al.’s account does help to explain important features of the contemporary party system that have proved problematic for those emphasizing individuals.⁶⁰ The very polarization of the contemporary party system, for example, contrasts with the expectation that parties composed of rational individual office-seekers will converge on the median voter, as famously expressed by Downs in 1957.⁶¹ To explain party divergence, Aldrich already makes a turn to individual issue activists (individual “policy demanders”

in Cohen et al.'s terms) and their impact through institutional mechanisms like the primary.⁶² As developed by Fiorina (2006), issue activists hold more extreme views than the general public, and are able, through primaries, to select more extreme candidates. The general electorate is thereby presented with a polarized *choice* of candidates for office, even if they themselves hew to more moderate views.⁶³

In contrast, divergence is an *expected* outcome of Cohen et al.'s theory, built into the theory itself. Issue activists are not “outside” of the party as in the Aldrich/Fiorina view, grafted on at a later point to help explain contemporary outcomes.⁶⁴ Rather, issue activists as “policy demanders” are a constituent element of parties – a status central to Cohen et al.'s larger argument that “parties” writ large still control nominations, despite the shift toward primaries.⁶⁵ Cohen et al. thus explain divergence in terms of the more extreme preferences of the policy demanders that forge and populate parties – they *want* policies to be as close to those extremes as possible. They are often able to achieve this because average citizens are much less attentive to politics – they have an “electoral blind spot,” as Cohen et al. label it, which enables demanders to pushing the direction of policy away from the median without the broader public taking note.⁶⁶ The blind spot is not infinite, however – demanders cannot necessarily push things as far as they want. The implication, however, is that parties will, as a matter of course, seek to gain the most for the interests that compose them, consistent with the acquiescence or indifference of the general public.

In this sense, Cohen et al. present parties in a sharply different normative light to Schattschneider, who saw them as a way of reconciling different societal interests with an overall public good. Yet Cohen et al. also *invoke* Schattschneider as one source of inspiration for their theory, as suggesting a more “group-based” theory of parties in whose line they follow.⁶⁷ Yet in their depiction, parties are simply a vehicle through which intense policy demanders pursue their own interests.⁶⁸ Schattschneider's parties were much more than the sum of their parts.⁶⁹ And their

presentation differs starkly from Schattschneider's in other ways. For Schattschneider, "intense policy demanders" (where organized as *pressure groups*) pursued their selfish aims in spite of, rather than through, the parties. And they did so primarily through non-partisan legislative lobbying. Cohen et al., however, stress the importance of *electoral* activity (however "policy demanders" might be organized) and build their account of party formation on the explicit *rejection* of legislative lobbying as an adequate means of achieving policy results.

Offering a "founding myth" analogous to Aldrich's stylized account of party formation, Cohen et al. envisage an imaginary society governed by a single elected "policy dictator." What is the best way for policy demanders to ensure the dictator promotes their preferred policies, they ask?⁷⁰ One possibility is for groups to employ their persuasive skills – essentially to lobby the dictator, whoever he or she may be. Or they could find a candidate already sympathetic to their views, and work to get that individual elected in the first place – a policy dictator who will be a "reliable agent" once in office.⁷¹ The choice, as Cohen et al. depict it, is between "buying policies one at a time from independent officeholders after they have taken office" versus "funneling their resources through a party coalition to nominate and elect officeholders friendly to their interests" from the outset.⁷²

As Cohen et al. quickly conclude, the electoral approach makes the most "political sense."⁷³ Waiting until after the election increases uncertainty and gives the dictator the upper hand in negotiations, they point out. Policy concessions may become more *expensive* to secure, and success is not guaranteed.⁷⁴ As such, at least one group of policy demanders will see the potential benefit of an electoral strategy, they argue. But because their candidate must *win* the election for this strategy to succeed, groups seek allies to enhance their prospects.⁷⁵ This sets up a chain reaction by which numerous groups will "enter the electoral fray," building up a coalition and seeking a candidate committed to their mutual aims (as best as they can be reconciled).⁷⁶ Thus the nomination contest

becomes an important focus for activity – to *select* a reliable candidate – following which an effort to *elect* that candidate will be mounted. As Cohen et al. summarize their view:

“Groups of policy demanders focus on nominations because it is easier to achieve their goals by electing politicians who share their views than by winning over truly independent politicians after they have taken office. They form parties because they need to cooperate with one another in order to get their candidates elected.”⁷⁷

This partisan electoral strategy is “easier,” Cohen et al. claim: a cheaper, more efficient, or more beneficial way for policy demanders to realize their legislative aims: it is the *rational* strategy.⁷⁸ This electoral logic is so powerful, they claim, that it explains the nature of American parties and the operation of the policy demanders underpinning them *across time*.⁷⁹ In effect, partisan electioneering should *always* be recognized as superior to non-partisan lobbying. Societal interests should *always* pursue their policy aims *through* parties rather than apart from them. How then, should we understand the empirical conclusion drawn from Schattschneider, that interest groups did not always pursue this rational strategy – largely *avoiding* the electoral arena and engaging in exactly the kinds of inferior lobbying strategy Cohen et al. reject?⁸⁰ Conversely, how can we account for the fact that interest groups clearly *do* begin to operate more along the lines Cohen et al. lay out – becoming much more assertive and *partisan* electoral actors?⁸¹

Theory and Strategy

In a sense, what Schattschneider described, to the extent he acknowledged interest group engagement in elections, was an “access, or legislative strategy” – one that “uses electoral activity as an adjunct to lobbying efforts” as Rozell, Wilcox, and Franz (2011) describe.⁸² In this conception, electoral activity is designed to aid lobbying activities. The classic example would be the Anti-Saloon League, which would threaten to call on its large membership to punish any legislator who was not receptive to their entreaties on temperance, or who voted the wrong way on legislation with which

they were concerned. Electoral punishment in one case should have the salutary effect of encouraging other legislators to adopt the “correct” position – that is, to be an aid to persuasion.

PAC donations can also be viewed as part of a legislative strategy. The idea of the *quid pro quo* – of legislator support in return for campaign contributions – has not been born out in the data available since the 1970s.⁸³ But less direct exchanges have also been suggested. Campaign contributions might purchase “access” to a legislator, which as Hansen (1991) emphasizes, is a necessary prelude to persuasion – the chance to make your case to a legislator, in order to persuade them of your favored legislative position.⁸⁴ Hall and Wayman (1990), however, conclude that PACs are giving contributions to legislators *already* supportive of their policy aims, thus rendering persuasion unnecessary.⁸⁵ In their assessment, campaign contributions still have a legislative aim, however – serving to encourage a supportive legislator to take the *time and energy* to actively promote the group’s issue agenda, particularly at the committee stage. Recognizing that lawmaking is a complex, multi-layered process that requires initiative as well as majority support, PAC contributions in their view become a way of influencing the congressman’s *priorities*, not so much his opinions, or his ultimate vote.

But in linking campaign contributions to legislators who are *already* supportive of group goals, an alternative strategic understanding is also possible. Rozell et al. also describe an “electoral strategy,” which they define as “one that is designed to change the personnel of government.”⁸⁶ Understood from this perspective, PAC donations to supportive legislators can be viewed as an effort to ensure the continued election of *reliable* allies for a particular group. Such a strategy looks to the electoral result as a sufficient goal, where the “right” legislative results will automatically flow from the installing the “right” legislators in the first place. (Indeed, in its most perfectly realized form, an electoral strategy would make legislative lobbying unnecessary). Cohen et al.’s analysis of

the way intense policy demanders should pursue their policy aims recommends just such an electoral strategy – one that, in their depiction, must necessarily become a *partisan* electoral strategy.⁸⁷

Context and Capacity

A way of reconciling the two perspectives offered by Schattschneider and Cohen et al., therefore, might be to see their theories as suggesting particular kinds of interest group strategy that only make “political sense” in a certain context, or where certain assumptions are fulfilled. Though Cohen et al. suggest their theory applies across time, their stylized “founding myth” finds policy demanders facing a blank slate on the political scene and ultimately *building* a polarized two-party system through their actions – a situation in which the intrinsic benefits of partisan electioneering come to the fore. Its superiority is based upon efficiency, the greater reliability of the desired outcome – and even, as they indicate at some points, the greater policy *rewards* such a strategy might bring.⁸⁸ But how does this play out amid a particular party context, rather than a blank slate? Are the basic assumptions that Cohen et al. bring to bear in their model always empirically appropriate?

On the contemporary political scene, with its clear and significant party divisions, the case is quite clear. Since one party is generally more sympathetic toward the aims of particular organizations, it makes sense to help install as many of those legislators as possible from the outset. The reality is that any kind of lobbying will be ineffective without a large enough base of supportive, partisan legislators, to work from. Thus a typical interest group trying to formulate a strategy will face incentives to work with a particular party coalition.⁸⁹

In the era Schattschneider described, however, the incentives might look quite different. With the early 20th Century marked by sectional dynamics, the structure of party conflict did not line up neatly with any particular configuration of issues or interests. Taking the case, for example, that a new group emerged to face this political context for the first time, what would make “political

sense” for them to do? If party identity offered little meaning in terms of policy positions, or in shaping legislative majorities in predictable ways, then why pursue an electoral strategy based on installing members of only one party? Would it even make sense to engage in elections at all?⁹⁰

According to Cohen et al., joining a coalition is supposed to give each group the best chance of achieving its aims – but this would still only work out 50% of the time, the amount on average that their coalition will achieve electoral victory.⁹¹ The fact that electoral outcomes are not guaranteed suggests that the “best” strategy in cases of victory, might easily turn to the “worst” in times of loss. Consider Dayton David McKean’s (1949) analysis, in which he described the “ideal relationship to party from the point of view of a pressure group” as one “in which a major party, firmly in power, was in turn dominated by the group on the issues in which the group was interested.”⁹² This, he suggested, had been the situation for the Grand Army of the Republic and the Republican Party after the Civil War, but was hardly a common occurrence. The key point was the firm grasp on power. Being “closely allied to the fortunes of one party” that was not “firmly in power” was not a desirable relationship at all. It meant achieving *none* of your aims. This was the very danger of “isolation” that Schattschneider and Key had highlighted. Such risks were not worth taking, in McKean’s estimation. Something would need to change in order to make such a step worthwhile – a belief that you were unlikely to achieve your aims anyway if one side got elected, for example, or that you might achieve far *more* by backing a side, even at the risk of isolation if they lost.⁹³

Beyond external context, another concern with the applicability of Cohen et al.’s perspective across time rests in their assumptions about the *resources* interest groups can bring to bear. A key feature of their model is the control intense policy-demanders have over the resources necessary for election campaigns – a combination of money and manpower – and are able to deploy them effectively.⁹⁴ As summarized in the 2011 paper with Bawn and Masket: “Interest groups and activists

control parties by supplying endorsements, campaign workers, and cash to candidates for elections and especially by managing party nominations.”⁹⁵ This kind of emphasis on resources is prominent feature of interest group scholarship more generally – with less tangible resources such as information and expertise often considered relevant to political activities too, alongside money and manpower.⁹⁶ But for all Schattschneider’s emphasis on pressure group effectiveness in the lobbying arena, he gives no indication that the interest groups he perceived had any such electoral *capacity*. Non-partisan lobbying, it seemed, was not merely the safest, but also the most feasible approach for them to pursue.

If, however, a particular group did somehow determine upon – and was able to pursue – a partisan electioneering strategy, in a situation where the parties were not yet clearly divided, we might infer that such an approach could help to *push* the parties in such a direction. Whether alone or in coalition with others, the group’s activities would be designed to *make* a particular party’s candidates more uniform proponents of a particular set of issue positions, and thereby encourage the parties to become more programmatically distinctive. Conceived on a group level, this is not too far from what Aldrich and Fiorina suggest that individual issue activists began to achieve in the 1970s – by operating in primaries and pulling the positions of candidates apart.⁹⁷ Yet other scholars, as noted earlier, indicate it is polarizing tendencies within the parties themselves that served to pull various groups *in*. It would seem, therefore, that at least some interest groups had begun to pick sides and work for that party in the electoral context by the 1970s – but whether changes in the party system had preceded and encouraged this, or whether the activity of such groups had actually served to shape a more divided partisan context is unclear.

A closer examination of the earlier wave of scholarship on party-group relationships can, in fact, offer a picture of change in the preceding decades, and shed some light on these issues. Though his statement of party-group competition had an enduring impact in the discipline, Schattschneider’s

work when considered as a whole suggests an empirical and to some extent theoretical, *evolution* away from a stark formulation of rivalry between the two. Indeed, a closer examination of his initial perspective suggests it was never quite as stark as much subsequent interpretation took it to be.

At the start of the 1950s, Schattschneider began to describe certain changes on the political scene that seemed to suggest more collaborative relations between at least some interest groups and political parties – changes that Key would also emphasize in the many subsequent editions of his textbook published after 1942. By the 1960s, Schattschneider would observe that “each of the major parties attracts its own loose constellation of pressure groups,” while Key would make a similar observation in 1964, adding that “the traditional conception of pressure groups as nonpartisan organizations” had been applied far too widely. Their contemporary, David Truman, seemed to capture both competitive and collaborative dynamics in his 1951 contribution, providing the most comprehensive analysis of the *conditions* under which each was more likely to appear – suggesting internal, structural, and even cultural incentives and constraints that informed interest group decisions about strategy and tactics. Reassessing their work helps to build a picture of a changing interest group strategy and practices and their connection to partisanship prior to the 1970s.

An Empirical and Intellectual Evolution

Capacity and Constraints

In a little-noted aside within Schattschneider’s 1948 article, alongside the seemingly stark formulation of interest group-party rivalry, he also hinted at a nascent empirical change involving exceptions to the supposed “non-partisanship” of interest groups. *Some* pressure groups, he noted, seemed to “thrive” more when a particular party was in power, and he even deemed it “probable” that “each of the major parties carries in its entourage its own characteristic array of pressure

groups.”⁹⁸ Still, Schattschneider acknowledged that “[t]he studies necessary to make a conclusive demonstration of the proposition have yet to be made.”⁹⁹

By 1950, when he chaired the American Political Science Association’s Committee on Political Parties, the number of “exceptions” to the non-partisan rule seemed to be growing. “One of the noteworthy features of contemporary American politics,” the Committee observed in its famous report, *Toward a More Responsible Two-Party System*, “is the fact that not a few interest groups have found it *impossible to remain neutral* toward both parties.”¹⁰⁰ A case in point was “the entry of organized labor upon the political scene” – a change that had definitively *electoral* and *partisan* dimensions, with unions becoming major players in federal election campaigns, and becoming closer to the Democratic Party.¹⁰¹ Labor’s political mobilization had also sparked a reaction from unnamed but “antagonistic special interests,” the Committee suggested, though they offered no further elaboration on this point.¹⁰² They did, however, generalize from the labor example to suggest that interest groups with similarly large memberships – such as agricultural groups – were more likely to develop “explicit and continuing” relationships with the political parties than those without (namely business groups, whose membership was much smaller, and often composed of corporate entities rather than individuals).¹⁰³ But the emphasis remained on the voting strength such mass-membership groups could theoretically mobilize, as opposed to the *manpower* they might provide to a campaign more generally.

It was Truman (1951) who offered the most extensive analysis of these nascent changes, drawing together external features of the political environment, with internal features of interest groups themselves, to suggest occasions when some might involve themselves in the electoral realm and “pick a side.”¹⁰⁴ Yet for all Truman explored the circumstances under which groups might back a party, he still suggested that neutrality (and electoral avoidance) would be the default position of most interest groups, and that any “alliance” so formed would be a temporary one.¹⁰⁵

Truman's account elaborated upon and augmented the basic strategic calculus offered by Schattschneider, identifying several "strategic considerations" governing interest group strategy and tactics, embracing a combination of factors both internal and external to the group itself. These included "[c]onstitutional arrangements in the United States, the character of American parties and of individual attachments to them, the problem of group cohesion, and the exigencies of group strategy in the legislative arena" as the most relevant.¹⁰⁶ Thus fundamental features of the constitutional system – the separation of powers and federalism – served to inhibit interest group partisanship, Truman claimed, by making unified party control of government (vertical or horizontal) less likely. In line with Schattschneider's concerns over "isolation," these fundamental features rendered it more "dangerous" for an interest group to pick a side.¹⁰⁷ The decentralized nature, geographic variation in strength, and lack of discipline of the parties themselves, moreover, made them unreliable potential allies and further discouraged interest group partisanship.¹⁰⁸

A lack of "discipline" within the interest group itself had a similar effect. The fact "that an individual can affiliate with many potentially conflicting groups" was an "essential characteristic" of group politics, Truman said, such that no group would have a perfectly uniform membership in terms of the causes and candidates they might like.¹⁰⁹ Schattschneider and Key had earlier critiqued the "friends and enemies" concept of interest group electoral action on similar grounds – casting doubt on any group's ability to deploy the kind of cohesive bloc of voters necessary to "swing" the election one way or another.¹¹⁰ Truman invoked the lack of internal unity among pressure groups as a warning against *any* electoral activity, not just that of an avowedly partisan variety – any expression of preference by the group presented a threat to its internal cohesion, though the threat would accordingly grow the more extensive and one-sided that electoral activity became.¹¹¹

But there were also "more subtle" ways in which the threat of partisanship to internal cohesion might present itself, Truman observed, depending on how the members' themselves

conceived the group's appropriate role and behavior.¹¹² Here again, the linkage between “partisanship” and electoral expression was clear: “To what extent do their conceptions of the group and of the electoral process make partisan activity seem “proper?”” was an important consideration. “Is it “right” for group leadership to tell the members to back a particular party or, for that matter, a particular candidate? Is such political activity what the group was “set up to do?”¹¹³ How members felt about these questions – their “psychological” disposition in Truman’s terminology – involved attitudes toward the group’s posture and activities we might deem *normative* or *cultural* in source.

Such attitudes might stem from internal norms within the group, as with the typical union member who “tends to look upon collective bargaining and the strike as the proper sphere of union activity and upon election activity, especially partisanship, as outside this sphere.”¹¹⁴ Or, they might be channeling broader cultural views – such as “a general disposition against partisanship” that Truman discerned among the public at large.¹¹⁵ In either case, such norms served to constrain interest group actors to particular kinds of tactics and spheres of activity – they generated particular “logics of appropriateness” as organizational sociologists would conclude.¹¹⁶

Given these normative qualms, groups were “timid about admitting” to involvement in elections at all, Truman noted, and they placed “a high premium on what is known as ‘keeping out of politics.’”¹¹⁷ “Keeping out of politics” did not require the avoidance of *all* electoral activity, as Truman learned from his investigations, so long as its partisan implications could be diminished in some way. It really meant keeping out of *party* politics – “avoiding complete identification with any one political party organization or faction.”¹¹⁸

This was most difficult to achieve if contemplating *national* electoral activity – that is, participation in the presidential contest. “A national party in fact, is chiefly significant as a device for electing the president,” Truman explained. At the national level, therefore, “the temptations toward partisanship and the dangers of isolation occur principally in campaigns for the presidency.”¹¹⁹ With

only two major candidates choose from, each perceived as the standard bearer for their party brethren, it was difficult to avoid the partisan implications of electioneering. As such, the dangers of isolation were “usually great enough so that a group will hesitate to take sides unless it is fairly certain that access to one of the candidates is likely to be denied anyhow and nothing is to be lost by backing his opponent.”¹²⁰ By an inaccessible candidate, Truman meant one whose hostility to the particular group’s aims was already well established – whether as a matter of personal belief, or, more likely, as a general *party* stance. The general dangers of partisan electoral activity were rendered moot by such circumstances.

Truman’s discussion suggested, on the one hand, that where national parties took strong positions on particular issues, the strategic incentives of related groups would be altered accordingly. Indeed, he asserted at the state level that “[t]he varying nature of the political party at different times and different places significantly conditions the kind of election activity engaged in by interest groups.”¹²¹ Differences “in the completeness of party organization, the incidence of localism...in the interest-group character of local party organizations, and the extent to which the party is a governing as well as an electioneering device invite or discourage various forms and degrees of group election participation,” he explained.¹²² The basic implication remained that the national parties themselves, in their ideological and organizational properties, could condition interest group behavior.

On the other hand, Truman’s discussion of groups “taking sides” in the presidential contest also suggested that such cases remained rare – still the exception rather than the rule. He did contemplate whether “[t]he sharp extension of Federal authority since the 1930’s” might be modifying “[t]he centrifugal influence of the federal system” to some extent – reducing the power of states enough “to make group partisanship on the national level more advantageous and less hazardous than in the past.”¹²³ But he ultimately rejected this possibility, at least in the foreseeable future: “The basic difficulties are likely to remain...since the States’ spending and taxing powers will

continue to have sufficient importance to require the concern of national as well as State and local interest groups.”¹²⁴ In other words, while national politics and the presidency were becoming more important, it was not the be-all and end-all of American governance – not important enough to offset the constitutional considerations warding against partisanship more generally.¹²⁵

At the presidential level, the preferred strategy for the typical interest group was still a non-partisan and largely non-electoral one, in Truman’s depiction. Only if circumstances *beyond the group’s control* made this impossible, would they enter the presidential electoral fray. If circumstances rendered support for a particular side unavoidable, groups might throw their electoral caution to the wind. But even if they did so once, they might try to avoid doing so again. Avoiding “open or continuing” party commitments was still “generally characteristic of interest group politics,” Truman concluded.¹²⁶

Still, if group activity in presidential campaigns might remain somewhat rare, in accordance with its partisan implications, Truman acknowledged that “a very large number of groups” were now participating in election campaigns at other levels – through endorsements, financial contributions, publicity, voter mobilization efforts and so forth.¹²⁷ Nonetheless, they still tried to avoid partisan appearances in doing so, with the larger number of candidates and contests affording greater flexibility in this regard. Yet Truman’s emphasis remained on the factors that would *discourage* such activity rather than encourage it. “Strategic considerations not only discourage groups from openly identifying themselves with a particular party,” he explained, “but also are responsible for keeping some groups entirely out of election campaigns, even in a non-partisan role.”¹²⁸

Again he pointed to external and internal factors that shaped a group’s outlook on electoral tactics, this time independent of those conditioning their orientation to partisanship. Electoral institutions like primaries were important, with Truman suggesting that groups were *less* likely to be active in primary contests than general elections, given the greater risk of backing an unsuccessful

candidate at this stage.¹²⁹ Other legal frameworks, such as the tax code, were also relevant: non-profit groups would be especially wary of electoral involvement, he said, given the risk of losing their tax-free status, which was premised on their being “non-political” in some sense.¹³⁰ For unknown reasons, the statutory framework specifically designed to regulate financial participation in elections – campaign finance legislation – does not warrant mention in Truman’s overview.¹³¹ Yet corporations (and therefore incorporated associations) had been prohibited from making direct contributions in federal campaigns since 1907, a ban extended to labor unions in 1943, placing important external constraints on the electoral activity of these two types of organization.¹³²

Critical internal considerations included a group’s size and the nature and extent of its resources, which conditioned whether a group had the *capacity* to engage in the electoral realm in the first place. “[T]hose groups with small memberships, those whose members are thinly spread over a number of constituencies, and those representing interests which are comparatively peripheral even to their members will be likely to find any sort of election activity unrewarding,” Truman observed.¹³³ Much like the APSA committee, therefore, he linked effective electioneering (if not partisanship explicitly) to *manpower* – thus business groups like the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), whose “members” were trade associations and individual corporations, would be unable to engage in direct electoral operations, as Truman saw it.¹³⁴ Their significant *monetary* resources, however, could facilitate large lobbying staffs and fund substantial publicity campaigns, suggesting their innate capacity encouraged the adoption of particular tactics.¹³⁵

Indeed, for Truman, electoral activity was merely one of several techniques groups could adopt in an effort to gain “effective access” to lawmakers, and was by no means an essential one.¹³⁶ Where undertaken, it had to serve “the exigencies of group strategy in the legislative arena” – that is, it should not endanger a group’s ability to attract support from both sides, unless such support was unlikely to be forthcoming anyway.¹³⁷ Truman’s ideas thus accorded with an “access, or legislative

strategy,” to use the Rozell et al. term, where electioneering was very much designed to serve “as an adjunct to lobbying efforts.”¹³⁸ The default strategic position for an interest group should remain neutrality. The dominant tactic they employed should be lobbying. “Friendly legislators of whatever party are...the principal concern of most interest groups,” Truman concluded, “they have nothing to gain and everything to lose by consistent partisanship.”¹³⁹

Partisan Pressure Groups?

If this was the perspective at the outset of the 1950s, partisan electioneering would gain increasing recognition in scholarship as the decade progressed. By 1956, in fact, Schattschneider was describing a party system in flux – where party competition at the national level seemed to be moving in a more overt and cohesive direction, and in which interest groups seemed to be playing a new role. In a contribution to an edited volume, where he tried to make sense of these developments, Schattschneider observed: “[A] shift in the locus of power or a revision of party functions may leave the formal structure untouched,” he now observed, “or new structures may arise without being recognized as parts of the party system.”¹⁴⁰

Far from competitive or even neutral actors, Schattschneider now claimed that “pressure groups may become so partisan that they might properly be described as ancillary organizations of one or the other of the major parties”¹⁴¹ Indeed, they appeared to have created the very “new structures” that might now be recognized as important actors *within* the party system.¹⁴² “[T]he labor movement has become involved in Democratic party politics, in fact if not in theory,” Schattschneider now asserted definitively – a significant acknowledgment of the deficiencies of extant theories, *including his own*, to explain it.¹⁴³ And “party politics” meant *electoral* politics. Labor unions had created new organizations to conduct their electoral activities, he observed – organizations like the “Political Action Committee” or P.A.C., created by the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in 1943,

or “Labor’s League for Political Education” which the American Federation of Labor had formed shortly thereafter. These groups were created to enable their labor federation “parents” to continue participating in federal elections, after legislation in 1943 prohibited their making direct campaign contributions to candidates, extended an existing ban that had placed the same restrictions on corporations. Both of these entities “engage[d] in activities that parallel closely the functions of the regular Democratic organization in getting out the vote, raising money, and propaganda,” Schattschneider reported, though he offered little further exploration of their form and function.¹⁴⁴ This “*conversion* of the labor movement to party politics,” Schattschneider concluded, was “significant evidence” of a broader transformation of the party system.¹⁴⁵

As Democratic allies, of course, these labor organizations would likely encounter hostility from formal Republican party committees. But what of *other interest groups*? The APSA committee, after all, had noted a reaction to labor’s mobilization from unnamed but “antagonistic special interests,” and the idea of a generally cyclical quality in interest group organization was widespread in the extant scholarship.¹⁴⁶ Key (1942) had suggested that political power in the hands of labor leaders “would probably engender reprisals against organized labor,” thus being “offset by defensive measures in other quarters.”¹⁴⁷ Truman described the tendency for organization itself to encourage further organization, whether “parallel” associations that reinforced a particular group’s mission – such as the formation of associations within particular professions along gender or religious lines – or “defensive” groups that worked to counteract them.¹⁴⁸ As such, the process of associational growth was characterized by “waves of association-building,” he said.¹⁴⁹ The very “establishment of an association” itself, Truman explained, was “an innovation in technique that has effects in tangent institutionalized groups quite as disturbing as do changes in technology.”¹⁵⁰ The “disturbance” in the interest group environment prompted other groups to recalibrate or stimulated creation of explicitly “defensive” groups, which in turn would cause the initial group to modify its tactics.¹⁵¹

Not all groups were likely to face a “defensive” counter-mobilization, however. Groups like the American Legion, for example, had a “special claim on their country” Key noted, and enjoyed consistent legislative success since it had “no compact and active counter-pressure group against which to work.”¹⁵² “If the A.F.L., for example, strikes out for legislation,” Key compared, “its lobbyists will likely be met head on by the lobbyists and publicity experts of the National Association of Manufacturers.”¹⁵³ Whether the NAM was meeting the A.F.L. head on in the electoral field was less clear, however. But Schattschneider did point to a counter-mobilization of some sort in 1956: “On the Republican side,” he said, “there has been so great a mobilization of economic groups and financial resources within the party that the formal committee structure reveals very little about that actual locus of power.”¹⁵⁴ In this regard, he hints toward an expanding conception of the party, more in line with that Cohen et al. depict. Indeed, by 1960, he would be describing formations on the national scene that appear much like nascent party “networks.”

Thus in 1960, Schattschneider noted “loose constellations” of pressure groups that surrounded the major parties at the national level.¹⁵⁵ Similarly, in 1964, Key recognized an altered “national scene” in which “certain major pressure groups cluster about each party.”¹⁵⁶ Among the Democratic allies he identified was the now merged labor federation, the AFL-CIO, while business groups like the Chamber of Commerce and the NAM were arrayed on the Republican side.¹⁵⁷ “[M]any pressure groups—perhaps most of the more important ones—have a partisan orientation,” Key now affirmed.¹⁵⁸ Given the sentiments expressed in this edition, it is perhaps unsurprising that Tichenor and Harris invoke Key alongside Truman as an advocate of a more “interdependent” vision of party-interest group relations than that Schattschneider offered.¹⁵⁹ Some groups “tend to operate in the closest communication with one or the other of the political parties,” Key now observed, such that “[t]heir relationship may be one not only of parallelism of objective but of active

collaboration.”¹⁶⁰ But this had *not* been Key’s position from the start. More accurately, it seems that Key’s position had *evolved* along these lines – as, indeed, had Schattschneider’s.¹⁶¹

This strategic change in party orientation went hand in hand with a new tactical emphasis on electioneering: “Alliances of opinion and attitude between party and pressure group are supplemented by relations of mutual defense and offense in the legislative and electoral field,” Key summarized.¹⁶² Their electoral activities supplemented and even replaced efforts of the formal party organizations, he noted – something particularly evident in the case of labor union mobilization.¹⁶³ Lobbying activity had not disappeared, but now it might “re-enforce” party leadership on an issue, rather than cutting across and subverting party discipline as traditionally conceived.¹⁶⁴

Indeed, the old rationale behind bipartisan lobbying had fallen away for these groups. He explicitly noted “the traditional conception of pressure groups,” which saw them “as *nonpartisan organizations* that pursue their objectives by building fires quite impartially under legislators of both parties.”¹⁶⁵ “Since, so the reasoning went, *major policy questions cut across both parties*, their settlement required the construction of bipartisan legislative coalitions,” Key explained – which had seemed to capture important dynamics in the activities of the organizations pushing for woman suffrage, for example, or the Anti-Saloon League.¹⁶⁶ But it did not seem to accurately depict the contemporary scene. Neutrality was an “old stereotype,” Key concluded, one that had “been extended far more generally to group activity than the facts seem to warrant.”¹⁶⁷

Schattschneider had a similar epiphany. “Theoretically, pressure groups are nonpartisan (i.e., neutral in party conflict),” he explained in 1960: “The *ancient assumption* is that they reward their friends and punish their enemies regardless of party affiliation by throwing their weight either way as the circumstances warrant,” he continued, invoking the classic Anti-Saloon League model of operation. But “[a]ctually the neutrality of pressure groups in party politics is largely a myth,” he now concluded, “because *political alignments are not as fluid as this concept implies*.”¹⁶⁸ That is, pressure groups

were not able to flit back and forth as electoral calculation recommended. Instead, they leant toward a particular side, part of a competitive alignment on the national scene, which pitted “the Democratic party and its ancillary groups against the Republican party and its affiliates.”¹⁶⁹ “*The parties compete with each other,*” Schattschneider now concluded, “they do not compete with pressure groups.”¹⁷⁰ This was a stark reversal from the position he had put forth just over a decade earlier, which had considered “Pressure Groups *versus* Political Parties.” Using Key’s terminology, the implication was that “major policy questions” no longer cut across party lines.

But what had brought this reversal about was less clear. *How* had some interests become so “completely identified” with a particular party, that old calculations based on neutrality and flexibility no longer applied? How had parties and interest groups, in general, gone from enemies to allies?

The Party as First Mover?

To the extent Schattschneider, Key, and Truman offered any *causal* account of these developments, they tended to privilege changes in party competition – with more nationalized and cohesive political parties somehow altering the nature and form of interest group political activity, rather than the other way around.

Truman had already raised the possibility that “[t]he centrifugal influence of the federal system” may have been sufficiently augmented in the 1930s as “to make group partisanship on the national level more advantageous and less hazardous than in the past.”¹⁷¹ But in 1951, he had ultimately rejected the possibility that it might so outweigh the relevance of state governments (and thus additional arenas for divided government) as to alter interest group calculations of danger. In a paper written more than thirty years later, however, he appeared to revise these conclusions. Offering perspective on the McGovern-Fraser reforms of the early 1970s, Truman (1984) pointed to

a nationalization and centralization of the political system that had rendered states (and their party organizations) far less relevant:

“[I]n straight political terms, the locus of the stakes had shifted from the states to the federal government, from divided policy responsibility in which the states could be major actors to a pattern in which the national authority was not just the dominant partner but essentially the sole proprietor. A whole new game had been started, and it was playing out of Washington, not primarily, or even significantly, out of the state capitals.”

His emphasis, however, is still on the party changes this inspired – interest groups are nowhere to be seen in this article. One might infer from his earlier framework, nonetheless, that such changes to the structure of governance and the concentration of power within the parties would alter interest group calculations surrounding group partisanship.

Indeed, Schattschneider and Key in their later work, would make claims that suggested national partisanship had not so much become “more advantageous” or “less hazardous,” but simply *unavoidable*. Key (1964), for example, speculating on the kinds of groups that were likely to take a partisan stance, suggested that those concerned with a large number of issues might turn to a party for an “ideological rudder” – a way to organize and make sense of their expanding remit.¹⁷²

The party offered the “rudder” here, the interest group sought the guidance. Similarly, he explained elsewhere the attractive force that forged alliances: “The contention is not that either party commits itself unreservedly to its camp followers among the pressure groups,” Key began, but that “*given the drift of policy of either party, it attracts some groups and repels others.*”¹⁷³ Thus if party policy drifts in divergent directions, we would surmise, then an interest group would likely align itself with that exhibiting greater support for its favored policy position. Such divergence, moreover, along with enhanced cohesion, would be necessary for a party to serve as an “ideological rudder.”

At the same time, where parties were *not* divided, interest groups would still largely avoid partisan affiliation and, significantly, electoral activity too. “A comparatively weak group *whose objectives stir no great partisan issues* may be far better advised to remain completely quiet during campaigns,” he observed – thinking, perhaps, of those like veteran’s organizations who still enjoyed

widespread support on both sides of the aisle.¹⁷⁴ In contrast, he continued, “the interests of some groups are so completely identified with those of a party that *they might as well* join the fray and risk the consequences.”¹⁷⁵ In sum, party division shaped interest group strategy and tactics – but Key did not explain what was shaping those party divisions themselves.

For Schattschneider, the changing level and lines of party conflict were also critical for understanding the shift in interest group strategy away from partisan neutrality, and by extension, their greater orientation toward electioneering. “Any tendency in the direction of a strengthened party system encourages the interest groups to align themselves with one or the other of the major parties,” the APSA committee had succinctly explained in 1950.¹⁷⁶ Such a tendency he had begun to discern even in 1948. By the 1950s, he would link it directly to the “critical election” of 1932, which had prompted a realignment of party competition along *national* rather than *sectional* lines.¹⁷⁷

In 1956 and more comprehensively in 1960, when he published *The Semisovereign People*, Schattschneider pointed to the extension of two-party competition across previously one-party areas of the country since 1932 (though the “Solid South” remained something of an exception), a general upsurge in competitive districts, and more “frequent alternation of the parties in power,” which served to stimulate party organization everywhere, while sectionalism had depressed it.¹⁷⁸ The resulting increase in national competitiveness, “[w]here the shift of only a few percent of voters could now produce turnover,” had also “greatly enhance[d] the importance of elections and of electioneering political organizations.”¹⁷⁹ The stronger national party system exerted a centripetal effect, he concluded, that drew all political organizations – including pressure groups – “into the vortex of party conflict.”¹⁸⁰

This argument differed somewhat from the “prediction” contained in Schattschneider’s rivalry thesis of 1948 – in which stronger national party *committees* would “shut out” the pressure groups. On the one hand, the type of organizational strengthening that he now observed was a

horizontal one, with robust local and state party committees being formed where none had before existed, and he gave little indication of increasing strength at the national committee level. On the other, pressure groups were not so much *shut out* by these stronger parties, as yoked to one or the other – and, by extension, to that party’s vision of the public good. Pressure groups were being incorporated into the party system: pulled in by, and harnessed to, the dynamics of stronger party conflict.¹⁸¹

To summarize the key features derived from Truman’s analysis, along with Schattschneider and Key’s later contributions, structure and context drives interest group strategy and tactics. When the parties were ideologically diffuse and lacking in discipline – that is, when support for issues of concern to interest groups cut across the parties – then pressure groups could be most effective through bipartisan lobbying. They tried to persuade a majority of legislators to support their preferred policy positions, irrespective of party affiliation, and largely avoided elections so as not to appear partial to one side. Where they lacked other means of persuasion or saw a good opportunity, they might become involved in elections – on a non-partisan basis. But this would be undertaken in the service of the lobbying goals primarily – as an inducement that a legislator support a particular line, or a *threat* if he did not.

In contrast, when support or opposition for particular issues appeared to line up with party affiliation in a systematic way, then pressure groups would ally with the party promoting “their” issue and engage in partisan electioneering to help ensure that party’s success. Such electioneering is repeatedly described as a *response* to circumstances that make partisanship *unavoidable*.¹⁸² It is a second choice strategy only adopted when other avenues of influence are shut off – you may as well “enter the fray” at this point. Once unavoidable, then, partisanship could encourage electioneering as much as the fear of such appearances could inhibit it in other circumstances. But partisan divergence

might also *necessitate* it – as the achievement of your policy aims comes increasingly to rely upon the *number* of partisan legislators elected. In a situation of extreme party polarization on your issue area – where all lawmakers from one party are favorably disposed toward your policy aims, and all members of the opposing party are intransigent opponents, then partisan electioneering becomes not simply unavoidable but *imperative* – the group must ensure more supporters being installed in the first place – persuasion is not going to work at all. In such circumstances, partisan electioneering seems less like a second-choice than the *only* choice.

Partisanship as Imprisonment?

Such a perspective raised new questions about pressure group “effectiveness.” Indeed, the *Semisovereign People* appeared to replace the old danger of group isolation with the new prospect of subservience. Alliance with parties served to *constrain* pressure groups rather than entirely *exclude* them, Schattschneider now clarified.¹⁸³ When they abandoned their traditional “neutrality,” parties became *dominant* in their relationship – the selfish aims of pressure groups were harnessed, and subordinated to, the broader aims of the parties themselves. Or at least this was the revised theoretical suggestion he offered. Party dominance, he explained, stemmed from the lack of bargaining position the allied pressure group now had. In a divided system, the party had no need to bargain with an allied group for its support, nor concede everything it might want in policy terms, as the pressure group had *nowhere else to go*.¹⁸⁴ In such circumstances, we might label the group as “captured” – a status that Frymer (2008; 2010) has explored with regard to African-Americans and the Democratic Party in recent decades.¹⁸⁵

In developing this analysis, moreover, Schattschneider finally offered a detailed comparison to the emerging labor-Democratic relationship he had described over the course of the 1950s – providing a stylized assessment of the Republican Party’s relationship with business interests.¹⁸⁶ The

GOP enjoyed “substantial latitude” in its relationship with business, Schattschneider argued, because “business has no party alternative.” “If business groups can do nothing but support the Republican candidates, *the Republican party dominates the pressure groups.*”¹⁸⁷ In this sense, “[t]he relation of business and the Republican party is much like that of organized labor and the Democratic party,” Schattschneider continued – while critics might like to portray labor as exerting control *over* the party, “it usually has no place else to go.”¹⁸⁸ Schattschneider thus offered his analysis as a theoretical rejoinder to those who would claim that where pressure groups and parties appeared in alignment, it was the pressure groups “capturing” the party.¹⁸⁹

It is not my purpose here to definitively resolve questions of influence entirely in favor of parties or interest groups.¹⁹⁰ As Hennessy (1968) concluded, such power dynamics could vary widely according to issue area and context.¹⁹¹ But I do suggest that interest groups *can* have an important influence upon the parties, even when they have “no place else to go.” And that potential relates to a different conception of interest group strategy than that Schattschneider supposed.

For Schattschneider’s conception of party dominance rests on a traditional *electoral* logic. The group’s influence within the party is conceived in terms of its bargaining power. And that bargaining power, as Schattschneider depicts it, depends on its ability to make credible electoral *threats*, to command the support of voters whom they could direct elsewhere if their policy goals were not respected.¹⁹² Thus, even as he had once expressed skepticism of the ability of interest groups to truly mobilize and deliver voter blocs, he implicitly builds it into his revised understanding of the party-group relationship. This kind of threat-based electioneering was the essence of the non-partisan strategy pursued by groups like the Anti-Saloon League. But where a group could not conceivably direct its voters to the other side – that is, where the parties were largely divided on the group’s issues of concern – then its ability to bargain was accordingly diminished. Without the threat of *exit*, it must simply accept whatever policy concessions the party was prepared to offer. This was, in fact,

an important reason why Schattschneider continued to accord the parties superior normative status – for in its advantaged bargaining position, the party could ensure that it balanced concessions to its allied groups with a broader concern for the public good. It did not have to go as far as the group might like. Hence Schattschneider’s vision of competition between “responsible” parties, clearly divided and offering *principled* conflict, was never one that hewed to the extremes.

But what if interest group influence could be built in a different way? Even as he argued that party alliances would constrain interest group effectiveness, Schattschneider also offered hints in 1960 of an alternative interest group approach – one with potential to dramatically alter the power dynamics he had so carefully laid out.¹⁹³ For as he observed in an offhand remark, business groups might still have an important influence on the Republican party – even though they could not credibly threaten to support anyone else – because “Republican members of Congress are *committed in advance* to a general probusiness attitude.”¹⁹⁴ “The notion that business groups coerce Republican congressmen into voting for their bills,” he added, simply “underestimates the whole Republican posture in American politics.”¹⁹⁵ As Zeigler (1964) noted, in the course of discussing Schattschneider’s analysis, where “the legislator and lobbyist have similar goals, then it is quite possible that the notion of ‘pressure’ will be foreign to both.”¹⁹⁶ But this suggests a very different conception of interest group influence – one that rests upon the party’s *internalization* of group concerns. If a group could ensure that a party’s legislators were sufficiently “committed in advance” to their goals, then its inability to throw support elsewhere would be irrelevant. And such a conception brings attention back to the electoral arena. As Zeigler noted elsewhere, interest groups had already begun to recognize that “if the “right” man can be elected, their task of persuasion will be simplified.”¹⁹⁷ Indeed, they may not even need to “persuade” at all.

Zeigler’s comment suggests an emerging strategy much more in line with that Cohen et al. present, underpinning their vision of a party: one that stresses the installation of a supportive

candidate over post-hoc persuasion, the superiority of partisan electioneering over non-partisan lobbying. The Anti-Saloon League type strategy used the threat of electoral punishment to keep legislators in line, so as to enhance their influence in the legislature as a whole. When the threat was actually acted upon, it was generally *reactive* and *negative* – seeking to mobilize a voting bloc in the general election, against a particular party’s nominee. The Cohen et al. type strategy is a purely electoral one, emphasizing the *proactive* selection of pre-committed candidates by engaging in party nomination processes – primaries – and resting on *the reliable provision of campaign resources* by which to elect those candidates to office. When viewed in a dynamic fashion against an existing party context, this strategy suggests a very different way of building influence – one that rests on shaping the composition of the party itself, such that its candidates, and thus its elected officials are pre-committed to a group’s goals.

This conception of a proactive partisan strategy provides a mechanism for party change *via* interest group action, rather than interest groups simply ending up on one side or another because the party itself had changed, and the constraints on electioneering were thereby diminished (i.e. they “might as well” join the electoral fray at that point). And it is the emergence of a strategy along these lines, I argue, that brings together the two basic perspectives on party-group relationships, and the very different empirical realities they seem to capture. It is the interplay of contextual change and the internal logic of electioneering, I suggest, that helps illuminate the reconfiguration of party-group relationships. Some change in the political context, some indication of party division, is important for opening up the strategic horizons of interest group leaders, and enabling them to recognize an alternative, and potentially superior path to influence that involves closer alliance with a particular party. But the adoption of a more partisan approach, and its electoral implementation, also required *choice* on the part of interest group leaders, since the kind of distinct party change that Schattschneider, Truman, or Key’s accounts seem to privilege does not appear quite so distinct in

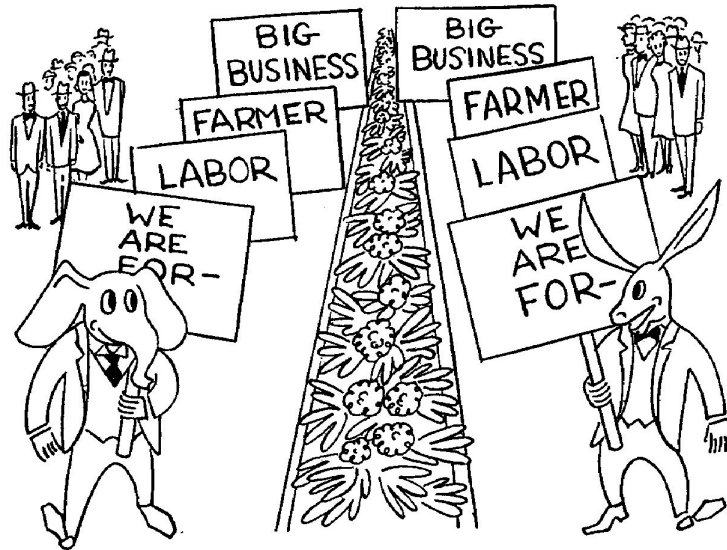
reality strategy. If interest groups were picking sides, they were doing so *before* each side was entirely cohesive, as an examination of party dynamics themselves in this period suggests.

The Nature of Electoral Influence

Schattschneider's stress upon 1932 as a "critical election" stimulating systematic change is subject to Mayhew's (2002) critique of the notion of critical elections itself.¹⁹⁸ At the very least, it is unclear *how* an electoral outcome translates into substantive party change of the sort Schattschneider envisages – as no real mechanism of change is described. Moreover, much of the period between Schattschneider's first intimations of party-group rivalry in 1942, and his partial rejection of that idea in 1960, is often dismissed as one of "tweedledum and tweedledee" politics – with a Republican President, Dwight D. Eisenhower, embracing the core tenets of the New Deal at the executive level, while an alliance of Southern Democrats and conservative Republicans in Congress – the conservative coalition – served to blur the lines of legislative division.¹⁹⁹

Indeed, measures of congressional polarization, were actually *declining* in this period after 1932.²⁰⁰ In 1949, Arthur Schlesinger had celebrated the "vital center," while Downs (1957), as noted earlier, spoke more pragmatically to the "median voter" – the individual whose support a party would need to capture in order to claim electoral victory.²⁰¹ And as the illustration shown in Figure 1.1. suggested, drawn from a 1955 textbook, there was still a sense that the parties were trying to appeal to *all* major interests. The notion of a generalized party divergence at this point is thus difficult to support.²⁰²

Figure 1.1. Party Similarity in the 1950s



Source: Joseph C. Harsch. *The Role of Political Parties U.S.A.* (New York: Carrie Chapman Catt Memorial Fund, Inc. 1955), p. 10. Illustration by Virginia S. Jackson.

Party positions on *particular* issues, however, may have begun to differ in more substantial ways – where at least certain *elements* of particular parties seemed to be carving out a distinctive stance, perhaps sending “signals” to which interest groups could respond. Recent historical scholarship, in fact, has found evidence of growing ideological antagonism underneath the surface of the consensual 1950s – centered around specific policies associated with, and broader attitudes toward, the New Deal “welfare state.”²⁰³ This antagonism would explode to the surface in the presidential election of 1964, and expand thereafter.

The public, moreover, seemed to recognize some important differences between the parties on particular issues – differences that were, significantly, often expressed in terms of the *interests* whom voters felt that party most aided. Even if the parties claimed they appealed to all interests, perceptions that the GOP was the party of “big business,” or that the Democrats looked out for the “working man,” were quite early established.²⁰⁴ Thus Bailey (1959) concluded from an examination

of Roper opinion polls (beginning in 1946), that “[a] consistent majority—at times as high as two-thirds to three-quarters—of the adult population of the United States perceives a clear distinction in *ideological and interest-group propensity* between the two major parties.”²⁰⁵ Green, Palmquist and Schickler (2002), moreover, have emphasized the importance of such group perceived “propensities” toward particular societal groups as centrally important to people’s sense of the parties and their own party identification.²⁰⁶ In 1969, Theodore Lowi even asserted that “[t]he most important difference between liberals and conservatives, Republicans and Democrats—*however they define themselves*—is to be found in the interest groups they identify with.”²⁰⁷ But which came first? The ideology – a more cohesive set of party issues – or the interest group “propensity”?

Still, the breadth and variation of party views was noted well into the 1960s.²⁰⁸ On the eve of the 1964 election, a divisive contest now seen as a formative moment for the modern conservative movement, a professor of history and provost of Rutgers University, Richard Schlatter, could write in the *Partisan Review*, no less, that the American polity still exhibited “no basic disagreements between intellectuals, bankers, trade unionists, artists, big businessmen, beatniks, professional people, and politicians, to name a few, or between the economic classes.” “There are no real critics, no new ideas, no fundamental differences of opinion,” he emphasized, presumably nonplussed by Republican nominee Barry Goldwater’s highly “ideological” campaign.²⁰⁹

The point is that there were mixed signals – some suggesting divergence, some convergence – thus some definitive change in the party system, imbued with comprehensive explanatory power for reconfigured party-group relations and the rise of interest group electioneering, is noticeably absent. Evidence of partial division could coexist with an overall lack thereof, because that division was as much *within* the parties as much as between them – even if the *momentum* might be discerned in a particular direction. Thus a liberalizing tendency within the Democratic Party caucus may have been discerned in the early 1950s, for example, but not until the latter part of that decade –

particularly the 1958 midterms when an influx of younger, liberal Democrats were elected – did a clear “ideological gap” between junior and senior members become apparent, as Rohde (1991) has detailed.²¹⁰

Indeed, what Schattschneider really seems to point to is a *trend* toward the clearer lines of national party division that he desired – but by no means one that had been fully achieved. But this is an important difference, because if “the party” is not yet distinctively divided on an issue, but in a transitional stage, where certain *elements* within particular party coalitions have begun to appear more favorable to certain points of view, then there is much more choice and agency on the part of an interest group in terms of how it proceeds. It is not necessarily that the group is “pulled in” by the party’s cohesive and definitive stance, but that a group discerns momentum in a particular direction, or even hopes to create that momentum, and orients its activities accordingly. At the very least, then, some interest groups seem to be switching strategies – reorienting in a more partisan direction – *before* the parties were comprehensively or clearly divided on even their particular issue. In sum, the interest group can make a *choice* to pick a side – and it is the party itself that is impacted.

That choice, however, may not be easily implemented, nor must it automatically translate into a particular form of action. And context and capacity, moreover, can condition whether a group *sees* that partisan strategy as a feasible option – even recognizes it as an option at all. As argued earlier, partisan electioneering is not *automatically* superior irrespective of context or capacity. On the one hand, extant party divisions will factor into assessments of appropriate strategies. On the other, the capacity to actually *engage* in electioneering will also be important.

Basic resources are an important aspect of that capacity, and may be significant factors shaping its formulation – as both the APSA Committee and Truman suggested. But the connection between particular kinds of resources, and particular kinds of strategy, is not always as straightforward as they depicted (indeed, the connections they suggested sometimes went in

opposing directions).²¹¹ The point is that resources are not simply available *raw* – they must be channeled and directed. Groups that appear to have fewer resources might sometimes be able to deploy them more effectively – a small membership group acting in a targeted fashion, for example, over a large but unwieldy mass membership organization. Nor indeed, is a group’s resource portfolio always *fixed* – they might seek to build up new resources that at first glance are not a natural “fit” for them. Thus the important questions to consider concern why groups begin to *use* resources in a certain way, how they *channel* them, and why they might *cultivate* certain resources.

For Cohen et al., at least one group will recognize the benefits of channeling their resources into an election campaign, rather than trying to persuade an elected policy dictator at a later point – setting in motion something of a “contagion” effect by which others will enter the fray and party coalitions will form. But they also seem to assume the basic capacity to do so – that raw resources will automatically be deployable. Yet the kind of electoral strategy they outline actually requires significantly greater organizational capacity than traditional non-partisan electioneering based on “rewarding and punishing” – much greater than that which interest groups in the early 20th Century possessed.

Electioneering engaged in to support lobbying – where the electoral activity is a bolster to persuasion – need only be temporary. It operates on the basis of vote blocs deployed to reward or punish electoral candidates, and thus need not make efforts to influence who those candidates might be – though nomination contests may offer another opportunity in which to deploy for or against a candidate, this might actually *increase* the cost of activity – for why act upon the threat at that stage, most likely in *two* different primary contexts (unless it appears that *neither* party will nominate a candidate acceptable in terms of your issue positions). Indeed, channeling Schattschneider’s concerns about isolation, Truman suggested that interest group activity in primaries would be *less* likely than in general elections, given the greater risk of backing an unsuccessful candidate at this

earlier stage.²¹² Preferably, then, you will mobilize for or against a candidate in the general election only. Ideally, you will not need to do so at all, if your threat has been sufficiently credible as to make *both* party nominees toe your line. In this sense, such an electoral strategy is *reactive* – it responds to whatever candidates and opportunities presented.

In contrast, a purely electoral strategy, in which the selection and election of reliable agents is essential, requires long-term attention to the electoral realm, outside of normal “election” periods, even if it does not necessarily require “follow-up” lobbying, if implemented effectively. In stressing candidate selection and support over reward and punishment, it puts interest groups in a proactive rather than passive or reactive position. But to do all of this requires distinctive organizational *capacity*. It requires ongoing monitoring of candidate potential and legislator performance, on the one hand – to assess actual and potential reliability – and consistent mechanisms of resource aggregation on the other, by which to ensure sufficient resources for the campaign. It requires some amount of permanent election-oriented activity, in other words.

Thus even if intense policy demanders technically control campaign resources, they might not know how to channel and deploy them effectively. And it might not even occur to the leaders of formal interest groups to do so at all. At the same time, groups might face certain constraints on deploying resources – such as legal barriers to corporate contributions in elections. Truman also suggests the importance of *cultural* barriers to the use of group resources in elections – it was not always considered an “appropriate” forum in which interest groups might act. In essence, Cohen et al. assume a willingness and ability to engage in electoral activity that was not always legally, practically, or normatively possible. Thus the “rational” partisan electoral strategy they outline might not always be *perceived* as rational, or even be perceived as an option at all.

Yet it clearly *becomes* an option (one that is pursued ever more aggressively), suggesting that capacity has been developed and constraints overcome. Some of the very groups deemed *most*

constrained by cultural restrictions, in fact, would be at the forefront of partisan electioneering. Labor unions, for example, which were particularly emphasized by the APSA Committee and Schattschneider's later work as becoming Democratic allies in the electoral sphere, were the very organizations whose members, Truman noted, tended to regard "election activity, especially partisanship," as outside of "the proper sphere of union activity."²¹³ The medical profession was another "interest" singled out by Truman in this regard. Public attitudes toward the medical profession he claimed – as well as the views of doctors themselves – would likely "not permit that body to engage in open partisanship or open electoral activity on an extreme scale." The bottom line for Truman was that "Doctors aren't expected to act that way."²¹⁴ Yet we know from recent experience that doctors have mobilized electorally and typically direct their activity on a partisan basis.²¹⁵

Reassessing Schattschneider and Key's later scholarship gets us some way toward the "network" perspective offered by Cohen et al. in empirical terms, and illuminates the theoretical differences in play.²¹⁶ Each suggests different *strategies* that groups might pursue and the differing tactics associated with them, and places differing emphases on exogenous or endogenous factors in conditioning their adoption. I suggest a middle-ground between the intrinsic strategic superiority of partisan political action, and the determination of interest group strategy by a particular party context.

In my account, what makes "political sense" for interest groups to do is partially conditioned by context. Where parties are evenly weighted and open to all, non-partisan lobbying presents the greatest opportunity for reward with the least risk. Where parties appear divided along issue-specific lines, the risks of partisan electioneering are rendered moot. Where party dynamics are unclear, however, perhaps one is perceived as leaning in a more favorable direction, then the benefits of partisan electioneering might begin to outweigh those of non-partisan lobbying. The adoption of

such a strategy, in turn, can serve to shape that partisan context – making it clearer where the interests of other groups lie.

The important questions for considering changing party-group relations, then, concern when and how a group determines that its interests are best served by one party, and what it does having determined it. In the next section, I try to illuminate that process, and offer a developmental account of the important change in party-interest group relations in the mid-20th Century.

Explaining Change

A Strategic Framework

Drawing from the various literatures reviewed above, I suggest four main factors that condition the strategy and tactics of interest groups in the political sphere, and thereby condition their relationships with political parties. These are, firstly, a group’s position in relation to others in the interest group community, essentially whether they face distinct opponents or not; secondly, the group’s perceived position in relation to party politics – that is, how does party conflict interact with their issues of concern; thirdly, the perceived efficacy of current tactics, which might be influenced to some extent by a fourth factor, what other interest groups are doing (particularly opposing groups). While there may be objective indicators in regard to each of these factors, I emphasize *perception* and *interpretation* by interest group leaders as the most relevant consideration.²¹⁷

Figure 1.2. *A Framework of Political Action*

| <i>STRUCTURE</i> | <i>TACTICS</i> |
|--|---|
| Position in interest group world | Perceived efficacy of current tactics |
| Position in relation to party politics | Activity of other groups - especially <i>opponents</i> |

In terms of the first factor, the position of a group in relation to others in the interest group community, the Anti-Saloon League type model assumed that the pressure group in question has no great rival within the interest group environment itself – because such an opponent would tend to limit the flexibility of a group in its dealings with legislators. That is, *in general*, if another group is promoting opposing policy aims among legislators, then the combined activities of the two groups might produce two persistently opposing ‘blocs’ of congressmen, which could be only a step away from a *party* division. The presence of organized opposition, therefore, suggests a competitive dynamic within the interest group realm that has the potential to map on to party conflict.

Secondly, a group’s perceived position in relation to party politics is a critical structural factor. How does party conflict interact with their issues of concern? I stress *perception* here because a *belief* that there is greater *potential* for support from one side can be *as* important as if the parties are already clearly, cohesively divided.

Alterations in either of these first two factors might provide the initial impetus for involvement in the electoral sphere. But neither of these factors is entirely exogenous; they do not suddenly and distinctly come into being at a given moment. Rather, they are interwoven: societal divisions can encourage party divisions, for example, party divisions can exacerbate societal ones. And crucially, they are interwoven with the actions of interest groups themselves.²¹⁸ In short, while these basic properties of the party and interest group world continue to guide interest group decision-making, so too will the decisions of *other* groups shape that context – both in the ways they offer an alternative and available model of political action, and in the ways their actions feed back into those basic features in the first place.

The perceived efficacy of current tactics is also important from the perspective of determining future courses of action. Is the group getting what it wants? Does it think it can get *more* by other means? Where obvious hindrances have been excluded, attention may fall to the

group's *approach* as the area of concern. This is again an issue of perception because extant tactics may come in for criticism less by their objective deficiencies in securing particular aims than by the concern that *other* groups utilizing different tactics might be getting *more*, or are likely to do so.

Perceived efficacy thus relates to a final consideration – what *other* interest groups are doing, particularly opposing groups. What others are doing suggests the repertoire of possible approaches a group might take, and can influence their assessments of efficacy. As Truman noted the adoption of “new practices” by established groups “may have the same effect if they invite or compel other groups to utilize the same methods.”²¹⁹ Organized opposition, for example, can encourage a search for a more successful alternative approach if it renders a group's extant approach redundant. Most importantly from a developmental standpoint, I argue, the activities of other groups can actually alter the way an actor sees their position in relation to *party* conflict. In sum, examples drawn from other groups play a central role in my argument – inspiring complementary or competitive *emulation*.

In this respect I build upon Clemens (1997), whose important work on the emergence of “modern” interest group politics at the turn of the 20th Century does much to illuminate the political scene Schattschneider would later describe. In the next chapter, I consider the developments she highlights in greater depth – the hostility of certain popular associations toward the extant 19th Century party system, and their creation of nonpartisan lobbying techniques as an alternative mode of political activity. But the *mechanism* by which she suggests these techniques spread beyond their original innovators is an instructive one here.

The Power of Example

Drawing from organizational sociology, Clemens emphasizes the critical role of norms in shaping, replicating, and constraining organizational behavior according to particular “logics of appropriateness” – much as Truman pointed to the importance of internal and external cultural

considerations for how interest groups chose to act.²²⁰ In Clemens' depiction, however, norms need not be entirely *constraining*, but can actually serve to promote enduring change – if actors can subtly build from their accepted cultural realm into new arenas of action. To successfully challenge the “logics of appropriateness” that bind them to particular forms of action, then, Clemens recommends “oblique” strategies of cultural negotiation – where groups artfully recombine new tactics with old, or even hide the new within those already considered culturally appropriate for the group.²²¹ Using this approach, Clemens argues, popular associations were able to forge a new cultural consensus around their involvement in the political sphere as lobbies – an activity which had itself long been disdained.

These popular associations shared and copied each other's innovations, suggesting the importance of “mimetic isomorphism” – the tendency to for actors to emulate each other, and for organizational innovations to thereby diffuse beyond their creator.²²² Simply by a form *existing*, then, certain potential for it to be copied exists.²²³ Clemens describes how their new tactics became “modular” – easily appropriated by other political actors, even *opponents* of those who originated them.²²⁴ Thus sympathetic interests might copy a group's innovation – they may even feel compelled to do so if those new tactics appear successful, as leaders want to ensure that they can deliver the same benefits as other groups with whom they may be competing for members. But processes of emulation and diffusion may also be “agonistic,” Clemens explains, involving “competitive, combative—and ultimately innovative—imitation.”²²⁵ In this case, groups with *opposing* agendas to an initial innovator might also copy and adapt its techniques.²²⁶

Both of these insights inform my account of partisan electioneering – in terms of its emergence and impact. “Oblique” cultural negotiation is apparent in the emphasis on “education” and “non-partisanship” interest group rhetoric even as their electoral engagement is increasingly oriented toward a particular party. As Key noted when describing the groups within the party

clusters in 1964, the groups he identified as party allies still maintained “a façade of nonpartisanship.”²²⁷ And, much as Schattschneider and Key noted the tendency of groups to copy each other’s practices, and cycles of organization and counter-organization characterizing interest group development in general, my account is animated by a cyclical or *reactive* diffusion process.

The Capacity for Action

In his classic study of labor unions in politics, Greenstone (1969) emphasized the important ways in which they were actively reshaping the political environment.²²⁸ I take a similar position, suggesting that changes in the party alignment were crucially influenced *by* interest groups – including, but not limited to labor unions. The “electioneering political organizations” that Schattschneider (1956) had depicted as *evidence* of a stronger party system, are cast in my account as important players in its construction. For the capacity to engage in partisan political action is primarily forged through a particular form of political organization, noted throughout this discussion – the political action committee or PAC.

PACs served both legal and normative purposes that enabled interest groups to build electoral capacity and overcome various constraints – pooling and channeling resources into the electoral sphere. The emergence of this organizational form, I argue, is a major new stage of interest group development that plays a critical role in the reconfiguration of party-group relations in the mid-20th Century and beyond. PACs channeled new ideas about “political action” into an organizational reality, and in many cases adopted a “preemptive” partisan strategy that sought to *encourage* one party in a particular direction, to *create or enhance* division on particular issues.

Political Action and Partisanship

My broader developmental argument thus rests on the idea of competitive emulation and feedback effects – that actors in a competitive political environment will tend to copy organizational innovations that they perceive to be effective. Where features of the interest group environment and party characteristics encourage one group to experiment with a more partisan strategy, groups with identical or complementary agendas (who presumably face the same structural incentives) will be more likely to do the same – they now have an alternative model through which to try and achieve their aims, and may feel pressured to adopt it if it appears successful.

While structural features can encourage such initial experimentation, adoption of a partisan strategy can be “preemptive” in the sense that it precedes wholesale evidence of change in the party itself. By working to select pre-committed candidates in a particular party’s primary elections, interest groups can help to reshape the composition of that party in accordance with their preferred issue positions. “Partisan political action” as I present it, does not so much produce an overt, instantaneous, or uniform “affiliation,” but can create a strong alliance over time through successful reshaping of the party delegation (across various government institutions, but especially at the national level in terms of Congress and the president).²²⁹

The adoption of such a strategy by one group, or several groups associated with a particular interest, can profoundly reshape the strategic context in which their *opponents* operate. Once a particular interest group sees its goals as best served by one party, and begins to transform that party in its image, then any interests *opposed* to that group in some way, will find themselves increasingly cut off from one of the parties. Even if they should wish to remain neutral, their own “non-partisan” strategies may no longer *work*. Alternatively, awareness of partisan electoral mobilization by one group may induce anxieties in opposing groups, who then perceive changes in partisan dynamics where none have objectively occurred.

In either case, opposing groups are likely to turn to the opposing *party*, and seek to transform it into a counterweight. This sets in motion a process of *competitive emulation* – one characterized by reaction, counter-mobilization, and competitive escalation as early innovators strive to maintain an advantage. As more and more groups find their strategic context altered, and work to push one party in a particular direction, the party system as a whole will become increasingly divided at the national level.

A Developmental Narrative

The particular developmental narrative I build in this dissertation places important weight on “first movers” – the groups that pioneered new organizations and strategies of political action, which other groups then came to emulate. In line with the observations of Schattschneider, a key “first mover” I point to emanates from the labor movement, with the creation of the first “Political Action Committee” in 1943, but the account I offer situates that moment within in a broader stream of development, and explores both its origins and impact. To preface that account, I offer a summary of its main contours here.

Faced with a seemingly stark choice in the 1936 presidential election, in which Democratic incumbent Franklin Roosevelt was viewed as much more sympathetic to their interests than his Republican opponents, the nascent CIO determined to enter the presidential electoral fray – as in Key’s assessment that they “might as well” do so in such a case. But the Democratic Party was by no means entirely sympathetic to labor at this point. And there was still an important strand of thinking on the labor left that looked to a third party as the key to the full achievement of their goals. It was, to some extent, Roosevelt’s own activities that would begin to reveal new strategic horizons to CIO leaders – his efforts to imprint the New Deal onto the Democratic Party, through the unsuccessful “purge” campaign of 1938, in particular, began to suggest the possibility of *making* the Democratic

Party more cohesively amenable to labor's aims, through proactive intervention in primary campaigns and the broader provision of electoral support – what I label a “partisan electoral strategy.”²³⁰ The creation of the P.A.C. in 1943 would help build the capacity to realize this strategy over the long-term, and quickly attracted imitators within the labor movement and the left more generally.

The pursuit of this strategy served to alter perceptions among opponents of labor in the interest group realm: primarily business organizations, and conservative groups more generally. To the extent they perceived the Democratic Party becoming more committed to labor goals, the more a commitment to nonpartisan lobbying would seem less effective. This begins to happen in the 1950s, I suggest, but it does not immediately result in the embrace of electioneering, and adoption of a counteracting partisan strategy focused on the Republican Party. Rather, shaped by longtime experience in which *both* parties had been largely receptive to business goals, the particular nature of their membership and resources already available to them, along with ideological objections to the overt direction of a voter's choice, business organizations exhibited reluctance to enter the electoral fray. Instead, they directed their hostility to labor and growing opposition to Democratic candidates through publicity campaigns intended to influence the broader electoral environment, without explicitly connecting them to particular candidates or contests. By the early 1960s, however, amid increasing anxiety over labor political action, perceptions of a liberalizing trend among congressional Democrats, and calls for more direct action from a burgeoning conservative movement, the National Association of Manufacturers determined to fight fire with fire, creating the “Business-Industry Political Action Committee,” and committed itself to the effort to streamline the Republican Party into a vehicle for business conservatism.

As these economic interest groups pursued this approach, surrounded by a growing array of ideological groups, they would help to reorient the party system around the basic conflict over the

New Deal. They would, in essence, be an important part of realizing the New Deal realignment. The kind of permanent political action the P.A.C. developed had been designed with that goal explicitly in mind – looking to *reshape* the Democratic Party as a whole in accordance with the presidential vision that had initially attracted them to the fold. But the P.A.C. form was not fore-ordained by legislation, or other features of the institutional environment.²³¹ Nor was the partisan strategy it adopted intrinsically irresistible or automatic. It had to be recognized as a desirable alternative to other approaches, the capacity to make it possible had to be developed, and it had to be *justified* as an appropriate form of interest group activity. The P.A.C.’s innovations in these areas would provide an organizational blueprint, a new idea of how to pursue interest group aims that could be copied, and a language of justification, based on a new understanding of “non-partisanship,” that could be employed by other groups.²³² This approach would diffuse across the interest group realm in the ensuing decades – beyond the basic economic actors and ideological groups considered here, to the new wave of advocacy organizations forged in the 1970s and beyond.

In sum, as conceived here, partisan political action has powerful feedback effects: it sets in motion a reactive cycle of opposition and escalation that encourages more groups to engage in electoral activity, and to do so on a partisan basis.²³³ It can serve to *create* and strengthen a nascent sympathy between party and group, rather than respond to one already established. If implemented effectively, partisan political action by interest groups becomes, over time, *constitutive* of their alliance with a favored party – it is self-reinforcing. This account also stresses subjective perception as much as objective measurement. The power of example can become a force independent of the initial structural features of the party and interest group environments – altering perceptions of those basic structural features, and ultimately their objective reality itself.²³⁴

While the P.A.C. is a critically important moment in this development, it was not one cut entirely from whole cloth, or indeed, from *labor* cloth alone. In the first half of the dissertation, I

explore earlier conceptions of interest group activity and previous experiments with electioneering, with particular attention to those associated with both labor *and* business in the 1936 election. In subsequent chapters, I note important developments beyond P.A.C. that complicate any straight line emanating directly from its formation to the kinds of polarized political action we see today. Still, the creation of P.A.C. is a watershed moment, and understanding the background to its creation, the formulation of its partisan strategy, and its ensuing impact upon the political scene, is an important step that helps us begin to understand the contemporary configuration of party competition.

2. “Pressure” as Prologue

If America has long been viewed as a nation marked by the competition of multitudinous “interests,” the way those interests have organized for political purposes has changed substantially over time. Political scientists have traced the appearance of new kinds of interests and more formalized organizations with national scope in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries, suggesting waves of mobilization that are often reactive in nature.¹ Historians have also traced an important shift in the nature of lobbying activity in the ‘teens and twenties – as lobbyists drew upon new mediums and publicity methods to expand their appeals beyond legislators, to the public at large.² Thus the interest group realm that Schattschneider described in 1942 had already undergone one major transition, from a world of “lobbies” to one of “pressure groups.”

These differing organizational conceptions implicated electoral activity – and party relationships – in different ways. While “the lobby” would largely be identified with a vision of “bipartisanship” and a behind-the-scenes approach to elections, “pressure groups” would become more associated with a “non-partisan” orientation, or even an “anti-partisan” one – an orientation that could allow for occasional electoral involvement in certain circumstances. In this chapter, I sketch out these initial stages in interest group development over the course of the late 19th and early 20th Centuries, and explore the meanings and particular methods with which terms like “bipartisan” and “nonpartisan” came to be associated. This discussion provides a rhetorical and organizational grounding against which to understand the developments that would follow – on which I focus in the next chapter – as the interest group realm transitioned again, from a world of “pressure groups” to one involving PACs.

Lobbying and Electioneering

“What is a Lobby?” In 1913, an investigating committee formed by the House of Representatives took a look at the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), and wrestled with this question in the process. They conceded that even “eminent authorities entertain wide differences of opinion as to its correct definition.”³ For their part, the committee determined to treat it “as having the broad meaning of a person or body of persons seeking to influence legislation in Congress in any manner whatsoever.”⁴ But the “manner” of seeking legislative influence was traditionally viewed in a limited way – involving the direct interaction of lobbyist and the lobbied, with no real role for electoral activity, or for the public at large for that matter.

As James Bryce described the concept in the first volume of his magisterial *American Commonwealth* (1888): “The lobby’ is the name given in America to persons, not being members of a legislature, who undertake to influence its members, and thereby to secure the passing of bills.”⁵ His definition conjures up a classic image of “the lobby”: one of face-to-face entreaties, of back-slapping and deal-making in the proverbial smoke-filled room. It was a term for the Gilded Age, and one infused with negative connotations.⁶ Such negativity related, in large measure, to the “special interests” with which the early lobbies were associated: the major industrial giants of post-Civil War America. This was the age of “big business” after all, with the great railroad, oil, steel and banking operations controlling the nation’s rapidly expanding wealth on an unprecedented scale. National trade associations had also emerged in this period, seeking to bring the economic and *political* benefits of coordination to firms that might not enjoy the market share of the major “trusts.”⁷ The United States Brewers’ Association, for example, had appeared in 1862, while the NAM – the first major industrial “peak” association – emerged in 1895.⁸ It would swiftly become one of the most important lobbying organizations on the national political scene, operating a permanently staffed

bureau in Washington, D.C., to monitor legislation of concern to its member corporations, and deploy the persuasive arts of its lobbyists when necessary.⁹

The Quintessential Lobby

It was the persuasive lengths the NAM went to on the Underwood Tariff bill that attracted congressional notice in 1913. Tariff issues had been an important impetus for the formation of the NAM, though it had quickly found a more rousing battle cry than protectionism – calling for the “open shop” in the face of a burgeoning labor movement.¹⁰ Debated and ultimately passed in a special session of Congress called by President Woodrow Wilson in April 1913, the Underwood bill imposed a major across-the-board reduction in tariff rates (plus an income tax to make up the resulting difference in federal revenues).¹¹ Of course, “across-the-board” rarely means *universal* in the political lexicon. Accordingly, various “interests” descended on Washington to secure exemptions and special schedules for particular products of concern – the NAM among them.

In late May, partly to generate a popular outpouring in support of his prime legislative concern, President Wilson charged in the press that a nefarious “tariff lobby” was seeking to influence the content of the bill. And in June, the *Chicago Tribune* and *New York World* ran a series of sensational stories exposing the role of one Martin Mulhall, sometime employee of the NAM, in strong-arming legislators to toe its line.¹² The president’s entreaties and the press attention prompted Congress into action. Both the House and the Senate would form committees to investigate the various charges swirling around the tariff bill, and particularly the activities of the NAM.

Over ten years as its agent, the *Tribune’s* front-page spread had claimed, Mulhall had been involved in three distinct streams of activity for the NAM: “lobby, political, and strike breaking work.”¹³ The latter, of course, indicated the extent to which labor issues had come to infuse the NAM’s outlook and operations. And indeed tariff issues seemed to get less than top billing in the

NAM's lobbying work too. In 1908, the NAM had created the "National Council of Industrial Defense" – an idea Mulhall claimed to have originated – which was an ostensibly separate alliance of more than 200 local manufacturers' groups and citizens' organizations, forged around commitment to the "open shop." In reality, it was a "paper organization" serving as a supplementary lobbying arm for the NAM itself, with the two maintaining the same office in Washington.¹⁴ In pursuit of their aims, Mulhall alleged that the NAM/NCID lobby had sought to shape the composition of key committees in both chambers, such as Judiciary and Labor, and placed certain congressional personnel – such as pages and elevator operators – on an unofficial payroll in order to keep tabs on internal activities.¹⁵

But Mulhall's "political" work had brought him outside of the legislature too, and into the world of campaigns. For the meaning of "political" was distinctly *electoral* in this period, and the NAM had a "system of campaigning" in which they helped to finance the campaigns of legislative allies, Mulhall claimed, while rallying members against legislative opponents – using their insider sources to maintain a "blacklist" of those working against them in Congress.¹⁶ This "political" work, therefore, was designed to aid the NAM's lobbying efforts, to ensure more allies in Congress and thus presumably enhance its chances of legislative success. And the "medium" of this political work was distinctly *financial*. Mulhall himself claimed he had handled "close on to \$200,000" in the course of pursuing the NAM's objectives – both for "lobby work in Washington and in state capitals," and also, he claimed, for "corrupting voters."¹⁷ For all the sensationalism surrounding his allegations, then, they spoke to an unedifying but distinctly limited conception of interest group involvement in elections, focusing on *narrow* types of financial exchange between lobbyist and legislator, or special interest and voter: the direct purchasing of support.

Money in Politics

A persistent strain in American political life, the impulse against *corruption* had found a new target in the late 19th Century, as the rise of big business raised new concerns about its relationship with government.¹⁸ And there were plentiful reasons to fear that financial dominance might be translating into political dominance. During the 1870s, a series of major scandals involving legislators and executive officials exposed the seamy side of government relations with big business. The *Crédit Mobilier* scandal, for example, which broke in 1872, had revealed numerous congressmen profiteering from the construction of the trans-continental railroad. Three years later, the “Whiskey Ring” scandal revealed members of President Ulysses S. Grant’s administration who had colluded with whiskey distillers and distributors to divert liquor tax revenue for their own personal benefit.¹⁹ Entire state legislatures, moreover, and certain Congressmen too, were said to be “bought” by railroad companies or other corporations – language that had clear implications about the nature of the transactions involved.

For “corruption” went hand-in-hand with the idea of *bribery*, and big business certainly had ample financial resources on which to draw for such purposes, and agents – their lobbyists – through which to present them. Nor were public servants the only individuals on the receiving end – members of the public too might find themselves benefiting from the largesse of special interests. Mulhall, after all, had spoken of “corrupting voters” – purchasing the votes of citizens in order to ensure favored legislators were installed or returned to office. In either case, a direct and explicit transaction with an individual was involved – a *quid pro quo* – with money exchanged for some form of political support.

Of course, a bribe might not always appear in an overt form. In an earlier age, when President Andrew Jackson was attacking the Bank of the United States as a “hydra of corruption,” it was the Bank’s ability to extend financial *favours* rather than outright bribes that had especially enraged

Jackson.²⁰ During the congressional debate over its re-charter, the Bank had extended a much-needed commercial loan to a hostile legislator, for example, who then proceeded to switch his position. As Jackson's lieutenant (and future Supreme Court Justice) Roger Taney observed of the congressman in question, the Bank's action had inspired in him "a feeling of dependence or even gratitude without the direct and offensive offer of a bribe."²¹

It was in light of such considerations that a broader concern about special interest contributions toward election campaign expenses emerged.²² Could campaign contributions serve as an *inducement* for legislators to favor certain measure? Did they create feelings of dependence and gratitude? For a new and influential wave of civic reformers in the late 19th Century, whose taste for moral improvement now centered on government, there were any number of ways in which campaign donations and legislative outcomes might have an unsavory connection.

These reformers had, ironically, helped to exacerbate the potential for such implicit electoral corruption, through their efforts to reform the party patronage system that underpinned the federal civil service. The patronage system had both rewarded supporters with jobs, but also provided reliable streams of income for the parties, through assessments levied on office-holders.²³ But in introducing a more meritocratic civil service, the Pendleton Act of 1883 would serve to cut off this source of party revenue.²⁴ It was big business that filled the void, becoming by the 1880s "the chief source of funding for political campaigns" for *both* parties, as Urofsky (2008) concludes, though moreso for Republicans.²⁵

Indeed, in the 1890s, the connection between corporations and campaign finance took on a more systematic and partisan aspect, when Marc Hanna became chairman of the Republican National Committee. An Ohio politician with a background in the coal and steel industries, Hanna established a system of assessments on major corporations to promote the 1896 presidential candidacy of his fellow Ohioan, William McKinley.²⁶ The unabashed populism of his Democratic

opponent, William Jennings Bryan, made it easy to sell McKinley as the best defender of business interests.²⁷ Under Hanna's system, "banks were assessed one quarter of one percent of their capital, and other businesses were assigned flat amounts based on their ability to pay," as Urofsky explains – thereby collecting \$250,000 just from Standard Oil, a contribution that almost equaled Bryan's entire campaign war chest. Hanna proceeded to raise at least \$3 million, and perhaps as much as \$10 million, for McKinley's campaign – exacerbating concerns over the role of money in elections.²⁸ Though Hanna promised a pro-business administration, he denied that contributions would permit any special favors – thus denying an explicit *quid pro quo*. Corporate donors were investing in the best governmental prospect *in general*, not for particular cases, he claimed.²⁹

Such arguments did little to assuage the concerns of those determined to root out government corruption in all its forms, and the vast increase in campaign expenditures itself would spark increasingly loud calls for regulation.³⁰ During the 1904 elections, McKinley's successor in the White House, Theodore Roosevelt, would face sustained criticism for the large corporate contributions his party continued to receive. When a 1905 investigation into the political activities of life insurance companies in New York revealed the vast extent to which they simply "bought" the support of state legislators, and at the same time uncovered huge donations to the Republican National Committee, such criticism reached the level of scandal.³¹ In early December, Roosevelt used his annual message to Congress to try to remedy the damage, urging a ban on corporate contributions in elections, along with the public financing of federal candidates.³² It would take two more years before the first of these measures, at least, was put into place (and almost seventy before the latter was).³³

Named for its Senate sponsor, South Carolina Democrat "Pitchfork" Ben Tillman, the Tillman Act of 1907 was the first Federal legislation to regulate campaign finance, aiming to stem the tide of corporate campaign contributions by prohibiting them in federal elections altogether.³⁴

The “Publicity Act” of 1910 and Amendments of 1911 swiftly followed, both of which included provisions for the *disclosure* of campaign contributions and expenditures.³⁵ The 1910 Act introduced the term “political committees,” which were subject to its disclosure provisions – a term defined as including the national party committees and their congressional campaign counterparts, but also “all committees, associations, or organizations” seeking to influence federal election results in at least two states.³⁶ The Amendments, moreover, added the first limitations on campaign *expenditures* – restricting the amount that *candidates* could themselves spend in their campaigns, and brought primaries under the auspices of the Publicity Act, at least temporarily.³⁷ In 1921, the Supreme Court would rule in *Newberry v. United States* that Congress lacked the authority to regulate primary elections, prompting a reformulation of the campaign finance laws that culminated in the Federal Corrupt Practices Act of 1925.³⁸ This legislation strengthened disclosure requirements (requiring itemization of contributions over \$100) but also raised campaign spending limits.³⁹ Otherwise the campaign finance framework would remain untouched again until 1940.⁴⁰

A “System of Campaigning”

As an incorporated association, the NAM itself was subject to the Tillman Act’s prohibition on direct contributions to federal candidates. And yet across the ten years in which Mulhall had done the NAM’s bidding – stretching both before and after 1907 – he made no claim that the money he handled for “political” work had come from the NAM’s organizational accounts. Indeed, a year prior to the newspaper exposés, another congressional investigation had already served to shed some light on the NAM’s so-called “system of campaigning,” both in terms of the particular modes of activity it involved, and the broader context in which they were understood.

Following its spate of legislative activity on the campaign finance front, the U.S. Senate decided in 1912 to examine how well the various provisions were working. The dynamics of the

1912 election itself were part of the impetus, since the Republican presidential nomination contest, at least, was shaping up to be a particularly dramatic one – with a past president, Theodore Roosevelt, challenging an incumbent one, William Howard Taft. Chaired by Senator Moses E. Clapp (R-MN), the committee was also authorized to investigate past campaign expenditures in the 1904 and 1908 presidential and congressional campaigns, alongside the presidential nomination campaigns that were taking place as the committee began its hearings. Taking place from June 1912 to February 1913, those hearings would feature over one hundred witnesses, compiling nearly 1600 pages of testimony.⁴¹ And among those called to testify was Ferd C. Schwedtman – the personal secretary of the NAM’s former president, James Van Cleave, and an individual featuring prominently in Mulhall’s allegations the following year.⁴²

Schwedtman acknowledged that NAM officials had provided some financial support to various political candidates over the years, especially to presidential contenders. But the NAM had not participated in the electoral sphere *as an organization*, he claimed.⁴³ It had neither contributed such money from its organizational accounts – even prior to 1907 (when to do so would not have been illegal)– nor had it ever formally *endorsed* particular candidates for office.⁴⁴ “[Q]uite the contrary,” Schwedtman explained. “At various times, when that matter was discussed, it was clearly brought out that *we are not a political association* and that *we are not interested in politics*, and it was out of the question, under our charter, to do anything of that kind.”⁴⁵ It was *principles* in which the NAM was interested, Schwedtman said – particular policy issues, in essence. “Mr. Van Cleave was very outspoken in advocating the principles for which the association stood,” Schwedtman noted, “and he time and again advocated that candidates supporting certain principles should be given the moral and other support *of the members who felt so inclined*,” but they did not receive that support from the NAM as a group.⁴⁶ Without the provision of “official” support in word and deed, Schwedtman essentially proposed, the NAM was not really involved in “politics” at all.

Encouraging “members who felt so inclined” to act was, in fact, the main task Mulhall had undertaken when working outside of Washington, D.C. His role had often been that of a go-between, taking letters from NAM officials to local industrialists, appealing for funds for particular candidates, or simply spreading the word of their support. As Schwedtman explained to the Overman Committee the following year – the Senate’s broad lobbying investigation before which he had also been asked to appear: “we had repeatedly consulted our attorneys, and we were told that while under our charter we must not engage in political activities, the activities of a field man who might go into the district to call the attention of the manufacturers to the qualifications of a man, and who might raise among those manufacturers local funds, *would not come under the description of political activities.*”⁴⁷ While the committee raised the prospect that this might be a “circumvention” of the law to some extent, several of the contests Mulhall discussed had occurred in 1906, *prior* to passage of the Tillman Act. And the congressional primary and gubernatorial general election campaigns they may have assisted in 1908, moreover, were beyond the law’s reach at that time.⁴⁸

Whether a circumvention or not, the *number* of contests in which the NAM had involved itself in this way were quite limited. The NAM’s “system of campaigning,” in fact, rested more on reputation than reality. As NCID president (and former NAM president John Kirby Jr.) testified before the Overman Committee in 1913, as *individuals*, he and his fellow officers had “endeavored both to elect and defeat candidates for office” – to reward those “known to possess the courage of their convictions” (that is, “who fearlessly opposed the legislation we have been opposing”), and “to defeat men who have openly done the other thing” (whether they were exhibiting the courage of their own convictions or not). “[A]nd that we propose to continue as a duty which we owe to our country,” Kirby concluded.⁴⁹ And it was a reputation for *defeating* candidates that could be most valuable. The NAM accordingly looked to a handful of selected constituencies where its intervention on such a basis might serve as a warning to others. “When the N.A.M. defeated a candidate...it

spread the knowledge in every direction,” Mulhall explained. “By using these tactics and intimidating weak-kneed members of congress that are elected by small majorities in other districts, the N.A.M. compelled them to vote the ways its lobby wished them to...”⁵⁰

The threat of punishment at the ballot box as a way to keep legislators in line would be an important feature of most interest group forays into the electoral realm in this period, as I discuss below. The intention was – like the lobbying or access-based strategy that Rozell, Wilcox, and Franz (2011) described, to utilize electoral activities to serve lobbying aims. The threat of electoral punishment was a tool of legislative persuasion. And yet, despite instances of such linkage, the realms of electioneering and lobbying were broadly viewed as separate and distinct in this period. Indeed, the fact that these congressional investigations into lobbying activities and campaign expenditures were constituted *separately* was testament to such a perspective – despite the fact that at least some overlapping activity was apparent in the testimony.⁵¹

This distinction was also reflected in rhetorical terms – for when Schwedtman claimed the NAM was not really “in politics,” he meant it did not engage directly in the *electoral* arena. But the term “politics” was also infused with a *partisan* dimension. In avoiding “partisanship,” therefore, by justifying whatever support it did direct to candidates on the basis of their issue stances, not their party persuasions, and in avoiding any official pronouncements of support to any particular “side,” the NAM’s “non-political” claim was bolstered. “[T]he word “politics,” of course, we know, is a very broad term,” Schwedtman mused. “We were interested in promoting certain economic and political principles, but not partisan politics, and that is the difference.”⁵²

“Politics” is “Partisan”

That was not to say that individual officials of the NAM were lacking in partisan proclivities, of course. Schwedtman acknowledged before the Clapp Committee that the campaign contributions of NAM officials (at least those of which he was aware), had mostly gone to Republican candidates.⁵³

In this the NAM officials were reflective of a broader tendency among “big business” leaders to exhibit Republican leanings in presidential politics. The GOP’s commitment to a high protective tariff was generally to their benefit, after all, with this policy serving as the key to the GOP’s sectional appeal since industrial and manufacturing concerns were largely concentrated in their Northern and mid-western base.⁵⁴ The Democratic Party’s commitment to free trade, in contrast, reflected its sectional base in the rural South, since the export-oriented farmers there suffered from retaliatory measures in their destination markets. The concern over the tariff that had impelled the NAM’s formation in the first place, after all, had been sparked by the election of Democrat Grover Cleveland to the presidency (for a second time) in 1892.⁵⁵ And the nomination of Bryan in 1896, as noted earlier, had done little to assuage the concerns of the NAM leaders or other liked-minded businessmen that a populist-leaning Democratic Party had their best interests at heart.⁵⁶ Indeed it was the “silver question” in the 1896 election moreso than tariff issues, and Bryan’s selection as the party’s candidate again in 1908, that had shaken some NAM members of previously Democratic sensibilities, Schwedtman explained.⁵⁷ As he noted: “Prior to 1896 Mr. Van Cleave was a very ardent Democrat, and so was I.”⁵⁸

Indeed, Schwedtman admitted to internal discussions at times, over whether more official support to the Republican presidential candidates might be extended. But it had “invariably taken the idea of *supporting the platform and not the candidate.*”⁵⁹ That is, the NAM’s officials might express support for the basic principles embraced in the Republican platform – its tariff position, for example, its support for labor injunctions and repeal of the Anti-Trust laws, and its commitment to

a “sound” currency.⁶⁰ They would not, ultimately, take even this step, but their immediate unwillingness to lend support to the party’s standard-bearer directly is telling, since it was considered in this period to be a definitively “partisan” act. As I expand throughout the dissertation, this kind of argument, which attempts to separate issue stances in some sense from partisanship, is a recurring theme in interest group rhetoric, though its configuration changes in significant ways – particularly as regards the “partisan” nature of supporting individual candidates.

It is important to note, moreover, that the business-Republican connection was not entirely monolithic. Indeed, the broader perspective on political-business relationships at this time was one animated by *bipartisanship* – and a distinctly pragmatic variant thereof. A 1916 *Wall Street Journal* article pointed out that “Wall Street puts up the money for both political parties in a national campaign,” a truth it hoped would stem a recent spate of Democratic attacks upon bankers, or embolden Republicans to respond.⁶¹ More likely, it would simply add fuel to the rhetorical fire of attacks on “corruption” – since “bipartisanship” in campaign contributions, giving to both sides in a particular race, could only point to base motivations. As Representative John L. Cable (R-OH) observed in 1924, as he proposed new disclosure legislation, there had been newspaper stories telling “of large contributions given by certain wealthy men to both political parties,” without proper reports being filed. “The evil does not lie so much in the contribution as in its purpose,” Cable noted. “Such a donor expects some return, a favor for his contribution.”⁶² By hedging his bets and trying to “bribe” both congressional candidates, the bipartisan donor seeks a return from whichever man wins, thus ensuring corruption in the system whatever the electoral outcome. Such pragmatic bipartisanship was accordingly decried as unprincipled, and unwelcome – by exposing this kind of conduct to public disapproval, disclosure legislation was to be the remedy.⁶³

At the congressional level in particular, legislative lobbying was distinctly bipartisan too – involving entreaties to any legislator deemed sympathetic or persuadable to the preferred position of

a particular corporation or business association, irrespective of the partisan persuasion of that legislator. And in the states, business concerns were prepared to work with (or purchase) whichever party was dominant. As Jay Gould, then president of the Erie Railroad and a robber-baron *par excellence*, once explained his political stance: “In a Democratic state, I am a Democrat; in a Republican state, I am a Republican; in a doubtful state, I am doubtful, but I am always for Erie.”⁶⁴

Given its association with such a source, it is perhaps unsurprising that this approach elicited far more negativity than the reverence with which the idea of “bipartisanship” is greeted today. Criticized as unprincipled and undemocratic, the ruthless pursuit of their “special interests” irrespective of any inconvenient considerations like partisan affiliation was the distinctive trait of big business political operations in the late 19th Century. It was the receptiveness of both parties to their entreaties (and their cash), in fact, that generated a growing hostility from civic reformers at that time – the “mugwumps” – toward the parties themselves, and the notion of “partisanship” more generally.

For it was the *parties*, after all, who were the recipients of these campaign contributions by and large (where not directed toward individual candidates or used for more nefarious purposes). It was the *parties* that were the actors actually contesting the elections. “Party politics” had an electoral meaning because it was the environment in which party organizations came face to face. Thus while the lobbies might loom large in electoral terms through their distribution of *money*, they were neither broadly active nor visible organizational *participants* in elections *per se*. It was the formal party apparatus – the local, state, and (to some extent) national party committees – that offered the predominant conception of *electoral* organization throughout the 19th and early 20th Centuries.

Parties and Electioneering

The national party organizations, Schattschneider had concluded in 1942, were a ghostly presence on the national political scene. Most of the time, “only the transparent filaments of the ghost of a party” were even visible, he claimed.⁶⁵ The national conventions provided the only moment at which “the party” as a whole could be said to exist, he said, while its central institutions were “amazingly feeble and discontinuous.” Cranking slowly into gear for their quadrennial electoral exercises, the national committees amounted to little more than “part-time service agencies” to the state and local parties – where the *real* power within the party apparatus lay.⁶⁶ The national congressional committees, such as they were, warranted barely an afterthought.⁶⁷ Only during presidential election years, did the national parties come to life.

But for much of the 19th Century, the state and local party organizations were also the workhorses of presidential electoral campaigns, and of party “life” more generally. Indeed, the presidential campaign was the only arena in which the “national” party could be said to exist, and for much of the century, this had been a highly decentralized affair. A layer of national party machinery had begun to emerge in the late 1860s, and the creation of separate congressional fundraising committees was an important development around this time.⁶⁸ And by century’s end, the national party committees had begun to assert themselves in coordinating and overseeing presidential campaigns – exerting more top-down authority over, and imposing more uniformity upon, the traditionally diffuse, and sometimes divergent, efforts of state and local parties.⁶⁹ Mark Hanna’s business outreach, in fact, testified to the newfound prominence of the Republican National Committee in this arena. Nonetheless, the “reach” of the national committee was still limited outside of the presidential campaign.⁷⁰

There were some organized actors outside of the regular party structure, but they were primarily of the party “club” type, often arising at election time and separate from the ward

organizations. The campaign “militias” and their torchlight parades in the 1840 election – the “log cabin and hard cider” campaign – are but one prominent example.⁷¹ They served “the purposes of publicly displaying party strength and arousing enthusiasm” during the campaign, explained Republican politician Daniel J. Ryan in 1888, looking back across such efforts. But in each case, “their torches went out with the canvass.”⁷² In contrast, Ryan pointed to a new effort to establish party clubs on a permanent and nationwide basis at this time. A “Republican Club Convention” had been held in December, 1887, in New York City, out of which would ultimately emerge the ‘National Republican League.’ The Democrats were on the club bandwagon too, organizing their ‘National Association of Democratic Clubs’ on July 4th, 1888, following an April conference that had also been held in New York. Writing in the *North American Review*, Ryan suggested that “[t]he best generalship of politics has changed their course completely” – with a view to creating clubs “directed toward work and education in the interests of party politics.”⁷³

Enthusiasm for the project was evident in the next issue of the *Review*, which included a symposium on the subject of “Permanent Republican Clubs.”⁷⁴ Henry Cabot Lodge was among a number of prominent Republicans to offer his endorsement, commending clubs as a source of energy and enthusiasm in elections, helping to augment the regular machinery and mobilize voters.⁷⁵ But their commitment must be “to the party and its principles,” he emphasized, and should remain above the fray of factional fights or nomination contests.⁷⁶ “The moment the league or any considerable number of the clubs advocate the selection of any particular candidate, whether State or National,” he warned, “their power or usefulness in the only true sense of the word is gone.”⁷⁷ In this sense they were to be disciples of the regular party committees: committed to ‘toeing the party line’ and getting behind whomever the official party authorities might choose to select.

For Robert La Follette, also participating in the symposium, such clubs should move away from an electoral role altogether. “To secure permanency in political clubs,” La Follette argued,

“their point of objective interest must not be the offices and elections, except as they serve to insure the application of correct policies and principles in government.” They could “only sustain a continuing interest in politics by studying present political issues, reviewing political history, holding regular discussions on pending and proposed legislation.” “If permanent, *they must become centres of political education and exchange,*” he said.⁷⁸ Betraying his proto-Progressive sympathies, La Follette saw such clubs as promoting a more intellectual vision of political life, inhibiting corruption and actually reducing the prospect of factionalism, by substituting “intelligent interest for unthinking enthusiasm.”⁷⁹ They would, in sum, exchange “the lamp of reason for the torchlight...”⁸⁰

The point was that the national party committees themselves were *not* permanent, and these kinds of clubs were envisaged as a way to fill the gap – since all agreed that sustained activity was becoming more essential to political success.⁸¹ As a National Association of Democratic Clubs pamphlet explained in 1900, its work as a “union of Democrats for practical and aggressive campaigning every year, and every day in the year,” was critical, since the Democratic National Committee could not undertake such a task.⁸² “Its own doors, like those of the Congressional Campaign Committee, are closed, except in the heat and clamor of national campaigns.”⁸³ One might suspect that the doors remained closed, and the club path made the more feasible alternative, for the same reasons that Schattschneider pointed to in the 1940s – the disinclination of state and local party leaders to permit a more robust national organization to develop, at the risk it might pose to their control over patronage.

In presidential campaign season, at least, the doors flung open – and there were other parties that set up shop then too – as was particularly evident in the 1912 presidential election (which the Clapp Committee would investigate). In addition to Republican and Democratic tickets, the Socialist Party, the Socialist Labor Party, and the Prohibition Party fielded candidates – with Socialist candidate Eugene Debs gaining almost 6% of the popular vote, the highest ever for a Socialist

candidate.⁸⁴ And, of course, there was the Progressive Party – with former President Theodore Roosevelt at the top of its ticket. TR had bolted the Republican Party when he failed to secure its nomination, and would go on to beat that nominee – incumbent president William Howard Taft – in the popular vote (though losing out to Democrat Woodrow Wilson overall).⁸⁵

Third parties had, in fact, become a regular feature of national American politics since the Civil War. They had been an important signal of the political turmoil in the run-up to that conflict, and emanated largely from the sectional antagonisms slavery had wrought (though nativist sentiment was also an important strain).⁸⁶ In the aftermath of the war, however, third parties began to emerge around other issues.⁸⁷ Indeed, it was largely through such vehicles that electoral opposition to the dominant business interests of the period would manifest itself. Much as corporate giants and national trade associations had arisen, so too did the great fraternal associations – such as the Grange and the Knights of Labor in in the late 1860s, with their popular base in the agricultural and laboring communities respectively.⁸⁸

Representing communities of material interest and forged around “solidary” incentives, these fraternal associations first sought to achieve economic advancement through “private” channels – fostering cooperation and mutual support among their members, and trying to deal directly with the various corporate interests whose actions most affected them – the bankers, railroads, manufacturers and so forth. But as Clemens (1997) argues, they found their efforts in this direction frustrated.⁸⁹ But when they turned to the political sphere, they were stymied too. The sectional two-party system, Clemens explains, served to inhibit the expression of their concerns rather than direct them. Thus the *political* expression of these societal interests tended to translate into feverish third party efforts, rather than the behind-the-scenes and bipartisan forms of influence pursued by corporate interests. From the 1870s onward, reformist sentiment associated with agricultural and labor interests burst forth in a series of third party efforts – the Greenback Party, the Socialist Labor Party, and the

“People’s Party,” the latter culminating in the “fusion” of Populists and Democrats behind William Jennings Bryan’s 1896 presidential candidacy.⁹⁰ Even reformers dedicated to a non-economic and narrow cause – temperance – sought to push back against the brewing interests via the ballot box, creating the Prohibition Party in 1869.

Indeed, the third party was the only real vehicle that “reformist” interests could conceive – at least initially.⁹¹ Of the major fraternal associations, only one had taken a different, and more successful, political track: the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), formed in 1866. But the GAR was uniquely positioned to do so: composed solely of Union army veterans, its members had an especially powerful claim for support from politicians within the ascendant Republican Party, with whom it pressed its cause relentlessly, and effectively.⁹² But the third party approach to which other groups turned was relentlessly ineffective. Excluding the Prohibitionists, these parties were never quite able to forge the alliances across region and economic interest – uniting West and South, farm and labor – that would be necessary for national success.⁹³ The resultant electoral failures would do much to undermine the fraternal organizations themselves – with the Grange’s membership declining precipitously after 1880, and the Knights of Labor after 1886, at which point the AFL was founded.⁹⁴

An alternative approach to politics was sorely needed, and they would find an exemplar in the very corporate interests they opposed – an approach that would circumvent parties and largely avoid the electoral arena altogether. The new idea would be the “modern” interest group, which, as Clemens (1997) explains, would emerge as the populist answer to “the lobby.”

“Pressure” is Non-Partisan

For Clemens, the genesis of modern interest group politics can be traced to the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when popular associations like labor, agricultural groups, and women’s organizations

sought new ways to achieve specific policy aims.⁹⁵ Much as “mugwump” reformers would see the taint of corruption as seeping across both party lines, the leaders of these popular associations had found themselves recoiling from either party’s embrace. Their aims had been frustrated rather than channeled by the extant party system, Clemens argues, while their perennial recourse to third parties had proven unsuccessful at the ballot box. Such popular associations had thus become hostile to the very idea of parties and “partisanship,” she argues – whether Republican, Democrat, or otherwise. A tension between parties and interest groups, such as that Schattschneider would still observe in the early 1940s, was thus built in from the start.⁹⁶

These associations would look for a new approach to the achievement of political goals, one that did not involve parties – and found inspiration in the very corporate interests whose influence they sought to counter. Corporate interests focused their attention on a narrow agenda, seeking “specific legislative actions” designed “to benefit a constituency defined by its economic position,” as Clemens summarizes, employing lobbyists in Washington D.C. and the state capitols to help realize those aims. There was little pretense that they were doing anything other than seeking special benefits for their particularly “special” interests.⁹⁷

This was, however, a difficult model for reformist groups to emulate in two major regards. From a resource perspective, the lobbying operations of the major business interests were not an inexpensive proposition. Their vast financial resources facilitated the employment of legislative representatives and expense accounts capable of supporting the “dinners, receptions, and other entertainments,” that were tools of the lobbyist’s trade.⁹⁸ It allowed for the distribution of campaign contributions and other financial largesse, and their economic importance in specific constituencies might add further weight to their entreaties. Popular associations lacked comparable financial stature.

There was also a problem from a cultural perspective. The pursuit of special interests was viewed as *wrong*. How could reformist interests trying to protest the actions of a domineering and selfish class, proceed to act just as badly? For popular associations to openly approximate such goals and methods would challenge the cultural sensibilities of the age. As Clemens explains, the 19th Century party system was a system in which “individuals or groups were motivated by partisan identities, action was organized around the election of officials, and the purpose of legitimate action was understood to be partisan victory or some “common good.”” Pursuing “special interests,” in contrast, “was understood to be illegitimate and involved methods or models of organization that were culturally corrupt.”⁹⁹

The solution these interests hit upon was to substitute their popular appeal for the financial resources they lacked, and to draw upon their extant cultural authority to foster a new vision of special interest politics – one that could become, in a sense, less “special,” more universal and enlightened, and thereby more culturally acceptable. This they achieved, Clemens argues, by focusing on specific issues separated out from any particular party association, and by emphasizing the *education* of citizens in those issues as their broader purpose. (Schwedtman, in fact, was channeling *this* trend, when he gave his account of the NAM’s emphasis upon issues over parties).

Drawing on the normative approbation attached to education, they developed methods to articulate and promote an agenda built around specific issues and legislative goals – supplying “expert witnesses” to testify before legislative committees, holding conferences to draw media attention, and “educating” the public at large on their concerns through publicity campaigns and the mass media.¹⁰⁰ Their emphasis upon education and expertise was counterposed to partisanship (and its association with patronage) – in this, they tapped into a Progressive Era ethos that there could be technical solutions to social and political problems, a *right* answer rather than a partisan one. Their

approach was a primarily legislative and increasingly *administrative* vision, then.¹⁰¹ Indeed, a pioneering force in this area had lacked the ability to do anything else.

Much of the non-electoral aura that came to surround pressure group action can be traced to the powerful imprint of the women's suffrage movement. The aim pursued by groups like the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), of course, was the very tool of influence their members lacked: the vote.¹⁰² Unlike the members of farm or labor organizations – the other reformist associations upon which Clemens focuses in depth – women were excluded from the party system itself, whether or not they might have wished to participate within it. As such, they had no choice but to develop non-partisan, non-electoral methods of moving toward their goal. Hence their emphasis on formal mechanisms of representation to which non-voters had access – such as the presentation of petitions to legislatures – and their reliance on broader publicity to harness public opinion to their cause. Their non-electoral methods were soon adopted by groups that *already* possessed the vote, to pursue the policy issues with which they were concerned.

The characterization of their approach as *educational*, moreover, was an important choice of terminology that helped to overcome cultural hostility to women's action in the public sphere, Clemens explains – one that was premised on a gendered conception of women's "non-political" nature. "Education" was acceptably feminine, and drew a contrast with the rough-and-tumble, competitive world of "politics." Indeed, in this respect, women's groups also stressed their "non-partisanship, as a further means of assuaging the stigma of involvement in "political" affairs – the man's world of party competition. This suggests again the equivalence of "partisan" and "political." Men were partisan because the electoral sphere involved competition, fighting, opposing teams, winners and losers – arenas which women were to be protected from, as Gustafson (1997) has also noted.¹⁰³ Though being "nonpartisan was not the same as apolitical," Clemens notes, the claim

helped to preserve their non-political *status* at least.¹⁰⁴ The “nonpartisan” claim, then, also became a cultural asset for their efforts in bringing about reform.

But there was also an *internal* benefit stemming from claims of “nonpartisanship” – much as Truman (1951) would later suggest.¹⁰⁵ The women’s suffrage movement as a whole was an unlikely coalition. It had experienced a major schism after the Civil War over the extension of voting rights to African-American men before women of any race, and the rapprochement forged in the 1890s was a fragile one – bringing together former Abolitionists with unabashed adherents of the Confederacy’s “lost cause”; incorporating some who wished to challenge the societal boundaries placed upon women, and others – like the temperance activists – who looked for greater restrictions on all. Susan B. Anthony was famous for forging such alliances – subjugating any points of disagreement to desire for the suffrage (and leading to criticism also, for the Faustian bargains she appeared to make). Thus the realm of agreement both across and within these disparate groups stretched to the vote for women, and little beyond. In such circumstances, avoiding any official partisan affiliation was simply one means of keeping the peace.¹⁰⁶

That said, individual *members* were free to pursue partisan activity as they saw fit. At the 1912 NAWSA convention, for example, the delegates resoundingly supported the resolution declaring it an “absolutely nonpartisan, non-sectarian body.”¹⁰⁷ But they also rejected a resolution calling for the organization’s individual *officers* to maintain a nonpartisan stance. As Gustafson (1997) describes, the NAWSA maintained that “[w]omen members and officeholders...could join political parties as individuals but could not invoke the name of the organization on behalf of their party.”¹⁰⁸ And this tolerance of individual partisan proclivities extended beyond the major parties to *third* parties, should the individual so desire. Jane Addams, then vice-president of the NAWSA, famously seconded Theodore Roosevelt’s nomination at the Progressive Party convention in 1912, actively and publicly embracing a partisan position (though her visibility in this role did exert some internal strain).¹⁰⁹

Still, as Gustafson notes, Anthony preferred to describe the women's suffrage movement as "all-partisan" rather than "non-partisan" – suggesting its embrace of individual partisanship in any and all forms.¹¹⁰

In line with this example, Clemens often points to legislative or bureaucratic lobbying as the dominant means by which popular associations implemented their "non-partisan" stance – involving arenas in which party organizations would not be directly encountered, and given the heterogeneity of partisan stances themselves, meant that partisan "sides" need not be taken.¹¹¹ As Clemens suggests, the key features of this new form of interest group politics – exhibited by the Farmers Union as early as 1905 – were: "the rejection of partisanship; the establishment of ties to the legislature, other pressure groups, and state agencies; and the articulation of specific demands to be met by new laws, public spending, or the strengthening of state agencies."¹¹²

But this was not the only possible alternative to partisanship (where a group would either become a *faction* of a major party, or create an independent party of its own). Clemens also outlines a third possible approach – though one on which she places less emphasis – a vision of *electoral* "non-partisanship" or even, in a certain guise, "extra-partisanship." Both approaches sought to take advantage of the only real "resource" advantage popular associations might claim over business interests – their very mass memberships (as opposed to any monetary resources) – and convert that into electoral strength. But now they would aim to do so within the frameworks of existing parties, rather than by creating new ones.

The "non-partisan" version sought to deploy group members in general election contests – to show the power of their *votes* – by strategically backing or opposing major party candidates. The key was to train their members to vote according to their economic *interest* first, to look to specific issue positions held by candidates rather than their party label, and sometimes to vote *against* the candidate whose party they typically supported. If members could be so induced, the association

could potentially operate as an electoral *bloc* – swinging elections for or against particular candidates, “rewarding” or “punishing” them according to their positions, or at least *threatening* to. Heeding the lessons of the past, popular associations set about breaking the party regularity of their members in a more subtle way than third party campaigns had required – they did not exhort members to *switch* parties or take on the additional psychic burden of a new party identity, simply be willing to vote differently on occasion, as the need might arise.¹¹³

This was much as the *Tribune* had described the NAM’s “system of campaigning” – it identified Schwedtman as having authored numerous “letters and telegrams directing the work of the lobby, the efforts of the N.A.M. to re-elect ‘its friends’ in congress, [and] to defeat ‘its enemies,’” among other misdeeds.¹¹⁴ But this kind of electoral policy was much more prominently associated with, and originated by, the American Federation of Labor.¹¹⁵

Labor’s “Friends and Enemies”

The “friends and enemies” policy marked new step toward political assertiveness in contrast to the AFL’s foundational years, which have typically been characterized as “non-political” by historians.¹¹⁶ As Greene (1998) has noted, “scholarship on American labor politics has been dominated by the view that the AFL rejected political action and pursued instead economic and union-centered strategies. The AFL may have occasionally lobbied the government but beyond that, it is said, the Federation stayed out of politics.”¹¹⁷ This “business unionism” position – oriented toward private rather than political [or statist] solutions to the problems faced by workers – is particularly associated with the leadership of Samuel Gompers.¹¹⁸

But in 1906, as Greene details, Gompers took the AFL “into politics” with an effort to defeat two particularly staunch congressional “enemies”: Rep. Charles Littlefield of Maine, and Rep. Joe Cannon, Illinois Congressman and Speaker of the House.¹¹⁹ The federation sought to mobilize

its members as a bloc in the general election, demonstrating labor's electoral weight and defeating these congressmen. The move marked the beginning of a newly aggressive phase of AFL political activity, Greene argues – with roots as early as 1904 – which was prompted by a number of new concerns.¹²⁰ The increasing use of injunctions in labor disputes, “plus the growing aggressiveness of the employers' associations” around the “open-shop” publicity campaign, as Zeigler points to, “led to a change in policy with respect to legislative and general political activity.”¹²¹ In short – the AFL's strictly “non-political” stance did not seem to be producing results – suggesting that assessments of current tactics were an important factor stimulating a new approach, and that the cyclical dynamic to interest group development was also present, in line with the framework presented in Chapter 1. “Several new forces appeared to lash out against the labor movement in the early years of the twentieth century,” Scheinberg (1962) concluded, “and their primary effect was finally to drive the AFL into partisan politics.”¹²²

But moving into *partisan politics* did not necessarily mean being *partisan*. Scheinberg's point was that the AFL would become participants in the two-party conflict in elections, but not that they would necessarily take sides in doing so. Like other discontented interests that Clemens discusses, the AFL under Gompers had exhibited hostility to parties and partisanship more generally – associating the major parties with the corruptions of machine politics, and dismissing both as equally bad. But for Gompers, an “independent” party effort was no better. He dismissed the ability of an independent labor party to achieve real progress for the workingman, and saw it as a threat to the power and influence of the union movement, which he believed was the only vehicle that could do the job. As Gompers had urged the AFL's members in 1894, they must not look to an independent party for their salvation, but must be “[i]ndependent *of all parties* regardless under which name they may be known.”¹²³ Exhibiting the reeducation of members that Clemens emphasizes, Gompers urged individual workers to reject the “party slavery” that tied them to a particular side, and bring

their own learning and judgment to the issues of the day (in reality, to accept the AFL's viewpoints rather than their favored party's).¹²⁴

In this sense, the AFL's early position appeared less like the "all-partisanism" of the NAWSA – which accepted all partisan identities among its members and drew distinctions among none – and more like an altogether *anti-partisan* position, exhibiting a basic *aversion* to parties and partisanship in all its forms (one that Greene connects with a deep-rooted anti-partisan strain in American political culture).¹²⁵ And being hostile to parties generally meant being absent from the electoral arena – as discussed in the previous chapter. Like the other reformist popular associations explored by Clemens, therefore, the AFL initially pursued nonpartisan tactics largely in the legislative realm – such as petitions and issue-based publicity campaigns.¹²⁶ Yet electioneering would soon come to occupy a more substantial position within the AFL's repertoire of activities, even as "partisanship" itself was still to be rejected. The "friends and enemies" strategy served to bridge that gap, enabling the AFL to participate in elections within the existing two-party system, but without become *part* of that system – neither forming an independent party, nor forging enduring attachments to the existing ones.

In theory, therefore, the "friends and enemies" policy was a "non-partisan" strategy within the electoral sphere: the group's stance was formulated on the basis of the candidate's public positions on issues of concern to them, irrespective of his party affiliation. Practically, this tended to mean avoiding the presidential level, where the aura of partisanship was hard to escape. With only one office in view, engagement in presidential elections would inevitably mean picking a *side* (in contrast to congressional elections, where a different "side" might be picked in different races). As V.O. Key would later summarize in a series of lectures: "The tactic of non-partisanship was a corollary of the doctrine of business unionism" – orienting the AFL away from the vehicles through which control of the state could be captured, *political parties*, much as business unionism oriented the

AFL away from the state itself. Instead, they bargained with individual politicians of any party persuasion, “just as on the economic front they bargained with employers.” The doctrine thus definitively rejected the idea of a labor or socialist party, as well as “any policy of blanket endorsement of a party and its candidates,” which was “the tactic of affiliation with a single party.”¹²⁷

But Greene claims “friends and enemies” was, in reality, much more *partisan* than typically regarded. It was sufficiently permissive to allow, if not condone, the tendency of some state federations and locals to ally with the dominant party machine in their constituency, as Rogin (1988) has discussed.¹²⁸ In this respect, non-partisanship served to protect the group’s internal unity, as Truman would expect. Strouthous (2000) has also pointed to several third party efforts at the sub-national level, suggesting the desire for an independent labor party was never entirely expunged.¹²⁹ But more importantly, on the national level, the AFL’s activity seemed to exhibit a distinctly *Democratic* cast. Both of the targeted congressmen in 1906 were prominent Republicans. Indeed, the outright attack on these party colleagues stimulated an “unprecedented” response from the sitting president – Republican Theodore Roosevelt, as Scheinberg details, who rallied support for them.¹³⁰ In 1908, moreover, the AFL’s Executive Council took the unprecedented step of endorsing the Democratic presidential candidate – William Jennings Bryan – which would seem to explicitly violate the “non-partisan” ideal. The Council defended its endorsement decision on the grounds that it had appealed to both party conventions to include the AFL’s favored legislation in its platform planks, and only the Democrats had done so. In endorsing Bryan, therefore, they were actually endorsing the *platform* that best embraced their goals: in doing so, “[l]abor does not become partisan to a political party, but partisan to a principle,” they said.¹³¹

In fact, the NAM’s 1906 electoral activity, such as it was, was largely designed to offset AFL activity – concentrating on the Littlefield and Cannon contests that the AFL had targeted. In the

1908 election, these opposing interest groups would be locked in battle off the field too – as the *Buck's Stove and Range* case made its way through the courts. This lawsuit had stemmed from a consumer equivalent of the AFL's "friends and enemies" policy – the *American Federationist's* "We Don't Patronize" list, on which certain businesses appeared on the basis of their labor policies. One such company was Buck's Stove and Range – a corporation that happened to be owned by James W. Van Cleave, president of the NAM. Van Cleave responded by securing an injunction, which was then intentionally violated. AFL leaders, including Gompers, were accordingly tried for contempt (and ultimately convicted, though Gompers never served his one-year prison sentence).

Pointing to further organizational connections, moreover, Greene reveals that the AFL even made a formal agreement with the Democratic Party to work on its behalf during the 1908 election – promoting William Jennings Bryan's third try for the presidency as the Democratic nominee. In a deal reached between Gompers and DNC Chairman Norman Mack, the party would underwrite the costs of AFL literature (though it "would naturally carry a union label") and assign more resources to districts the AFL was particularly interested in – Speaker Cannon's in particular.¹³² But the party also paid the salaries of many organizers assigned to campaign work, making the AFL basically reliant on the DNC for the financial capacity to participate in the election.¹³³ This, Greene claims, was "an unprecedented and far-reaching alliance."¹³⁴

But in general, the AFL's electoral activities in the 1906 and 1908 contests were quite limited – across both time and space. And as the focus on two prominent enemies in 1906 suggests, the point of the exercise was less the specific results in these two districts (though their defeats were certainly desirable), than the broader message this would send to congressmen at large. As then Secretary of War William Howard Taft wrote to Charles Littlefield, his contest was of critical importance "for the reason that should they succeed in beating you, it would frighten all the Congressmen, and would enable Gompers to wield an influence which would be dangerous and

detrimental to the public weal.”¹³⁵ As it happened, neither congressman was defeated in 1906, and Taft himself secured the presidency two years later, despite the AFL’s best efforts there.¹³⁶ Indeed, 1908 was largely viewed as a disaster from the perspective of the AFL’s political goals.¹³⁷

Still, Taft’s comments speak to the kinds of concerns these actions generated – with the backlash, in part, serving to keep the AFL largely “out” of politics for the foreseeable future. In the Maine contest, Joe Cannon put in an appearance for Littlefield, and attacked Gompers for attempting to direct the electoral choices of the AFL’s members and “deliver” the vote for Littlefield’s opponent. As Cannon dramatically declared before an audience in Norway, Maine, just prior to the election: “Samuel Gompers, by the grace of God, these very laborers next Monday will put their foot on your proposition because it is undemocratic and it is not according to the principles of your labor organization.”¹³⁸ This rhetorical theme, stressing the violation of individual rights in some sense, and the specter of *coercion* – seemed to resonate, and would also become a repeated theme in the rhetoric of political action. In 1908, it appeared as an attack on Gompers’ promise to “deliver the labor vote” for the Democratic presidential ticket – a charge AFL leaders felt had “significantly damaged their campaign,” Greene concedes – resonating with their own members as well as the broader public.¹³⁹ The Republicans also honed in on the labor-Democratic tie itself, which “allowed Republicans to taint the Democrats with the scandal of links to special interests.”¹⁴⁰ Schattschneider, after all, regarded the absence of party-group alliances as a two-way street – where the party would be as hesitant to appear linked to a particular “selfish” interest as the interest would be disinclined to jump on the party’s bandwagon.¹⁴¹ The disastrous fallout in 1908 suggested why.

By 1912, then, the AFL seemed to have stepped back from the electoral realm. Gompers may have endorsed Democrat Woodrow Wilson, but he did so as an *individual*. Indeed, the AFL largely reverted to a “non-political” position for several decades after this point – emphasizing legislative lobbying and congressional-level “friends and enemies” campaign at the discretion of the

state and local federations. While the AFL's executive council overcame its reservations in 1924 and endorsed Robert La Follette's independent presidential candidacy, the experience was again a cautionary one. After 1924, the national AFL pressured state and local affiliates to toe the "non-political" line, and the Railroad Brotherhoods also stepped back from an aggressively political stance.¹⁴² Its brief spurt of electoral activism at the turn of the 20th Century, therefore, did not produce an "alliance" with the Democrats in any permanent, systematic, and organizational sense. AFL representatives, including Gompers himself, were called to testify before both lobbying committees the following year – when some of these issues were raised. But none appeared before the Clapp campaign investigation, which was directly charged with considering electoral activities throughout the period in question.¹⁴³

At least one aspect of the AFL's early electoral efforts seemed to endure: the compilation and use of congressional voting records as a means of determining "friends" over "enemies." Where the NAM based its assessment of Congressmen on their insider intelligence regarding legislative maneuvers, the AFL adopted this more public and systematic approach to candidate assessment.¹⁴⁴ The practice of *publicizing* such voting records, however, which began to appear after 1912, was viewed as a form of black-listing and considered deeply suspect within the political class.¹⁴⁵

Agriculture and "Extra-Partisanship"

An alternative "extra-partisan" electoral approach placed greater emphasis on primary elections, a new institutional tool in which an agricultural group, the "Non-Partisan League," saw new potential. Rather than third party activity, or a "friends and enemies" approach in the general election context, "extra-partisan" methods took advantage of newly emerging mechanisms of direct democracy, like the initiative, the recall election, and, especially, the direct primary, to seek political influence and replace "[t]he "vicious habit" of partisan politics."¹⁴⁶ While the League channeled the widespread

desire among agricultural interests “to purge themselves of all “partisan” practices,” as the Farmers’ Union had too, it would do so in a distinctive way. Clemens points to the Farmers’ Union as an early exemplar of a non-partisan lobbying approach, and the American Farm Bureau Federation, founded in 1919, would come to be regarded as a classic legislative and bureaucratic lobby, avoiding party ties, and responsible for forming the “Farm Bloc” – the most successful *legislative* coalition of the 1920s. Several decades later, its relationships with the agriculture committees in Congress, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture would offer another classic example – this time of an “iron triangle.”¹⁴⁷ But in the first decades of the 20th Century, an important strain of agricultural energy would go into an experiment with electoral involvement. In its emphasis on the electoral sphere, and primaries in particular, the Non-Partisan League would actually adopt an “extra-partisan” approach, pursuing a distinctive approach to political influence at the subnational level, and at least a temporarily successful one.¹⁴⁸

Primaries were particularly important in this regard, bringing parties into the mix since it was their nomination contests that were opened to broader public participation. Primaries had been advocated by elite reformers as a means of loosening the grip of party leaders on candidate selection—a defining act of partisan organization – so as to diminish the power of corrupt party machines.¹⁴⁹ “From the beginning, the thrust of the movement toward the direct primary was against the organized party,” Truman (1984) summarized.¹⁵⁰ As Theodore Roosevelt succinctly put it: “The direct primary will give the voters a method ever ready to use, by which the party leader shall be made to obey their command.”¹⁵¹ In this regard, the move to primaries channeled the broader anti-party reform sentiment of the Progressive Era.¹⁵²

The primary concept swept across the country after 1901, when Minnesota adopted primary laws for the selection of congressional candidates, along with some state offices.¹⁵³ A wave of other states would follow suit, though comprehensive information on the scale and timing of adoption is

surprisingly lacking. It appears that by 1912, some 28 states used primaries for the selection of House candidates, a number that had risen to 33 states by 1915.¹⁵⁴ And with ratification of the 17th Amendment in April 1913 – the direct election of U.S. Senators – such primary provisions were extended to the Senatorial selection in most states where already on the books. Nor was the presidential nomination beyond the reach of the primary movement. Wisconsin had something along those lines in 1905, and in 1910, Oregon passed a primary law allowing voters to indicate “presidential preference,” which would become the most important type.¹⁵⁵ Ten states had such presidential preference primaries on the books by 1912, when Teddy Roosevelt entered several of these contests to demonstrate popular support for his Republican candidacy.¹⁵⁶

At the congressional level, it was a group forged around agricultural concerns that most visibly realized the opportunities for influence via primaries. Founded by a flax farmer named A.C. Townley, the “Non-Partisan League” (NPL) first appeared in North Dakota in 1915, and its strength would subsequently be concentrated in the agricultural states of upper mid-West.¹⁵⁷ Having briefly flirted with the Socialist Party, Townley came to the opinion that “the unswerving loyalty of the state's voters to the Republican party could be overcome only by the creation of an organization, no matter what its program, capable of winning the Republican primaries.”¹⁵⁸ The fact was that the Republican party was dominant in North Dakota’s general elections, Townley recognized, but the primary process might be utilized to shape it. The NPL essentially ran its own candidates in the GOP primaries, taking advantage of concentrated agricultural populations in particular areas, and the lower turnout associated with primaries in general, to gain the nomination for its placemen. Getting their man nominated under the Republican label would be tantamount to election. Through such “the tactics of infiltration rather than third-party politics,” as Bone (1958) characterized their approach, the NPL was able to effectively take over the North Dakota Republican party.¹⁵⁹

The concept soon spread to neighboring states in the upper Midwest, and the League itself grew into a regional network.¹⁶⁰ But its intrusive attentions were not confined to Republican parties. Thus in Idaho, Colorado, and Montana, for example, the State Leagues ran their candidates in the *Democratic* primaries, while in Minnesota and Wisconsin, as in North Dakota, they opted for the Republican contests. As Samuel P. Huntington (1950) explained, in an article considering their tactics, the League typically picked whichever party it considered dominant in a particular state – irrespective of the actual policies or apparent sympathies of that party to begin with.¹⁶¹ They might even enter the primaries of *both*. And they exhibited several different kinds of tactics, he concluded.

Huntington defined the “nonpartisan tactics with which the League was most intimately associated” as working “within one or both of the major parties to nominate League candidates in the primaries and then elect them to office on the major party ticket in the general election.”¹⁶² The superiority of this approach over the direct third party efforts of the past was tied up in the numbers – non-partisan tactics, in sum, enabled the League to win “a majority with a minority” Huntington concluded.¹⁶³ A much smaller number of voters was necessary to make the difference in a primary contest, versus generating sufficient support for an entirely new party to be elected. But in some circumstances, particularly where the League was weak in organizational terms, it might wait out the primaries, and instead make its presence known in the general election. Here they would utilize “balance of power tactics” – assessing the nominated candidates “and then throw[ing] the support of the group to the candidates most favorable to the groups program.”¹⁶⁴ On occasion, the League would also adopt tactics that came closer to a third-party model. Where its favored candidates had lost in major party primaries, they often adopted what Huntington labeled “sorehead tactics” – nominating those same candidates as independents for the general election, or even on a third-party ticket instead.¹⁶⁵

Such “farmer-labor party tactics,” as in the latter instance, however, were the League’s least successful approach according to Huntington, and the one with which its leadership was least comfortable.¹⁶⁶ “When the League itself...tried to act like a political party, it was almost universally defeated,” he concluded.¹⁶⁷ But the League also drew a “definite distinction” between *acting* like a political party on occasion (by using such farmer-labor party tactics), and *being* one.¹⁶⁸ Though some charged that the Non-Partisan League was “a party in spite of itself,” Huntington emphasizes how it rejected the idea of “partisanship” in any form.¹⁶⁹ “In entering a party’s primary the League never committed itself to support that party,” he notes.¹⁷⁰ “It always emphasized that it was separate from all political parties,” Huntington stresses, and “with few exceptions was always careful to disassociate itself from the men who made up the old party machine.”¹⁷¹ In North Dakota, for example, it never sought “to liberalize the Republican party” so as to make for its supporters a permanent party home.¹⁷² Rather, the party was just a useful shell. “[I]t entered the primaries as the most effective means of getting on the ballot. If this means failed it reserved to itself the right to get on the ballot by any other method available.”¹⁷³ Parties, then, were “mere instruments through which control of the state could be obtained.”¹⁷⁴

The Non-Partisan League thus combined extra-partisan methods with an anti-party spirit – even as it came to dominate several state party organizations, both Republican and Democratic, and to occasionally create temporary third party vehicles itself. As a *New York Times* correspondent observed: the “most significant feature of the Non-Partisan League and of the movement back of it is the total indifference to partisan politics and all that has ever gone with it.”¹⁷⁵ In this the NPL seems the most distinctive example of what Clemens described as “the distinctive contribution of popular associations to the weakening of the party system”: “[t]he linkage of anti- or extra-partisan reforms to a mass membership.”¹⁷⁶ Huntington also pointed to the NPL’s drawing inspiration directly from corporate interests, anticipating the competitive emulation that Clemens’ emphasizes.

“The political method of the League was nothing new in American politics,” he observed. “It had...been long employed by the interests whom the League was fighting, and it was the farmers who espoused the tactics of their opponents and not the reverse.”¹⁷⁷ Yet the Non-Partisan League was never able to translate these methods into national political success.

Given its emphasis on candidate selection, the presidential primary process might have been one means of doing so. The number of states with compulsory presidential preference laws rose to at least nineteen by 1916, and between 1912 and 1924, 22 different states had held at least one party presidential primary.¹⁷⁸ Delegates selected in primaries, in fact, comprised over 50% of each party’s conventions in 1916 (almost 60% in the Republican case), in which year 20 states had held such contests.¹⁷⁹ Still, the importance of primaries as a popular selection method was diminished by the fact that not all of the statutes made primary preferences binding on delegates (“beauty contest” primaries), and “favorite son” candidacies were often employed as a means whereby state leaders could retain control over delegate blocs at the convention.¹⁸⁰ Less than half of the states actually had *mandatory* presidential primary laws on the books, and such contests were not generally the critical force in presidential contests they would later become.¹⁸¹

Table 2.1. Presidential Primary Contests, 1912-1924

| <i>Year</i> | <i>Democratic Party</i> | | <i>Republican Party</i> | |
|-------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | <i># held</i> | <i>% delegates selected</i> | <i># held</i> | <i>% delegates selected</i> |
| 1912 | 12 | 32.9 | 13 | 41.7 |
| 1916 | 20 | 53.5 | 20 | 58.9 |
| 1920 | 16 | 44.6 | 20 | 57.8 |
| 1924 | 14 | 35.5 | 17 | 45.3 |
| 1928 | 16 | 42.2 | 15 | 44.9 |

Source: *Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections*, 5th ed. (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2005), 318.

But the Non-Partisan League did not make an attempt to gain its man as the Republican or Democratic presidential nominee. When it looked to the national level in 1920, in fact, it would ultimately revert to agricultural type, and pursue a third-party path. This was, however, a last-ditch effort anyway – “farmer-labor party tactics” being the NPL’s least favored strategy at the state level – and reflected its ebbing influence in the mid-Western states.

In part, the NPL had actually been hurt by the prosperity farmers had enjoyed during World War I, when commodity and land prices hit all-time highs, and the populist sentiment into which the NPL could tap accordingly lessened.¹⁸² The “Red Scare” in the wake of the Russian Revolution, moreover, also raised public fears about left-wing “radicalism,” no matter how far removed from Bolshevism.¹⁸³ And it faced internal leadership problems.¹⁸⁴ But the League was also attacked for its *methods* as much as its radicalism. Their party-takeover tactics were criticized as “unethical and destructive of the American party system,” Huntington notes.¹⁸⁵ Their actions had undermined the spirit of the primary, others said, which had been intended to allow any *individual* who so chose to be a candidate, not for a group standing *behind* a candidate to, in a sense, manipulate the results. So much animosity did the League begin to engender that Huntington notes instances where state Democrats encouraged “loyal” Democratic supporters to vote the *Republican* ticket – in order to defeat the League.¹⁸⁶ Some states even went so far as to repeal their primary laws altogether.¹⁸⁷

By the time farm conditions plummeted to unprecedented lows in the post-war period, the NPL was already largely undone, and had cast its lot with the ill-fated Farmer-Labor party of 1920.¹⁸⁸ That effort to unite two key reformist interests, so often divided by party and section, would again prove unsuccessful. It simply could not bridge the gap in this election.¹⁸⁹ Instead, farm politics would follow a different path – a much more legislatively focused, and explicitly *bipartisan* path, associated with a new and powerful agricultural “lobby”: the American Farm Bureau Federation. Emerging out of the network of local farm bureaus fostered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s

“extension service,” the national Farm Bureau was established in 1919 – just as the Non-Partisan League was declining.¹⁹⁰ Veering away from the electoral arena, the Farm Bureau would draw instead upon the non-partisan legislative and administrative techniques that the women’s movement had deployed so effectively (the suffrage amendment itself was approved that year).¹⁹¹

But it would primarily pursue an inside track. Given its origins, the Farm Bureau had a natural affinity for bureaucratic lobbying – quickly able to capitalize on its connections within the USDA, and the federal government more generally, and “to revolutionize the scope of farm lobbying.”¹⁹² But it broke new ground in the legislative sphere too, where it set about building a cohesive bloc of *legislator’s* votes, rather than trying to explicitly guide those of its nearly 1 million members.¹⁹³ “The farm organizations had made a genuine break with the past,” Zeigler explains. “There was to be no effort to build a new party.” Nor, moreover, any effort to pursue “extra-partisan” tactics in the electoral sphere, along the lines of the Non-Partisan League. “Instead, efforts would be concentrated toward contributing to the election of sympathetic congressmen of both parties and the molding of these congressmen into a reliable bloc.”¹⁹⁴ The ‘Farm Bloc,’ as it came to be called – a coalition of Republican and Democratic legislators who came together on agricultural issues – was organized on a formal basis from 1921-1923, and informally thereafter.¹⁹⁵ As Zeigler summarizes the Farm Bureau’s influence on other agricultural groups: “The stimulus of a new and powerful rival, combined with the serious economic plight of the farmer, encouraged the Grange and Farmers Union to follow the example of the American Farm Bureau Federation and establish Washington offices for the purpose of influencing legislation by whatever techniques seemed appropriate.”¹⁹⁶

The terminology of “extra-partisanship” and “non-partisanship” is a helpful one, since it indicates the importance of institutional features beyond the parties themselves in the first case. But not

everyone employs such distinctions – Huntington himself used “nonpartisan tactics” to describe those “which require active participation in the primaries.”¹⁹⁷ These were distinct from the “balance of power” idea he had outlined, which was also “identical with the traditional labor policy of rewarding its friends and punishing its enemies...”¹⁹⁸ Whichever terminology is employed for describing efforts to swing the result in a general election, versus selecting the candidates in a primary, there is one important group that seemed to blend the two: the Anti-Saloon League. This advocacy organization, committed to promoting temperance in the United States, aimed to be the balance of power in *both* general and primary contests, rather than infiltrate a party altogether. In so doing, it would bring the non-partisan “friends and enemies” approach to new heights of effectiveness on the national level. For as V.O. Key would suggest in his lecture course, the Anti-Saloon League was the “perfection” of the AFL’s “nonpartisan doctrine.”¹⁹⁹ It was a “perfection” aimed at maximizing the League’s *legislative* influence within the halls of power.

Temperance and the “Balance of Power”

The American Anti-Saloon League was founded in 1895, growing out of the Ohio Anti-Saloon League, founded two years prior by former lawyer and temperance activist, Howard Hyde Russell. Rather than a national mass membership organization, the League was a federation of churches, state, and local Anti-Saloon leagues – all rallying to the slogan, “The Church in Action Against the Saloon!”²⁰⁰ That “action” combined both electoral and legislative activity, with the League maintaining a large year-round presence in state capitals and Washington, D.C. to push for its favored measures.²⁰¹ The Ohio League, in fact, had begun with its eye firmly placed on the legislative arena: pushing for a “local option” law that would allow localities to go dry (and require a biennial vote on their temperance status).²⁰² That bill failed, but it proved a rallying point for dry forces, and a strategic wake-up call for Russell.

As Kerr (1980) explains, the failure actually provided Russell with an opportunity to educate members of his growing organization – that “[l]egislative victories would take time,” and that part of achieving them would require “a bureaucratic and nonpartisan approach.”²⁰³ But his critical realization was that such victories “would follow only after carefully marshalling popular support and teaching recalcitrant politicians that votes for dry legislation were beneficial on election day.”²⁰⁴ It was the same kind of rationale the League would apply on the individual level, when trying to convince an inveterate drinker to give up the booze. As W. M. Burke, a district official in the California Anti-Saloon League explained, there were “but two methods of accomplishing reforms where the action of others is necessary for success. Either the will of these others must be influenced by persuading them that the change is right, or they must be forced to take certain action because it is best for their own welfare.”²⁰⁵ The individual legislator, likewise, must be made to realize that supporting temperance was best for their *electoral* welfare.

This was the same “reward and punish” idea that animated the AFL’s political approach after 1906, but the Anti-Saloon League would take it a step further, and conduct it on a much wider scale. Their approach was informed less by an aversion to parties and partisanship, as by basic political learning. Temperance forces had repeatedly fielded presidential candidates under the “Prohibition Party” banner, formed in 1869. But the party was riven by internal divisions – unable to resolve the vision of temperance they would promote. Should distinctions be made between “lighter” intoxicating beverages like beer and wine, versus hard liquor? Or should they advocate for a “bone dry” nation? And what about a state-by-state approach? The Prohibition Party simply could not decide. Nor could it win elections. Thus the Anti-Saloon League was explicitly “not a party,” as Burke affirmed, “and, furthermore, refuses to become a part of any party...”²⁰⁶ It would take a gradualist approach, seeking whatever degree of temperance legislation it could get, wherever it might get it. And it would seek allies wherever it might find them too. “The league never undertakes

to have any opinion upon any question except those concerning the saloon,” Burke explained – channeling Susan B. Anthony’s approach to women’s suffrage.²⁰⁷

If the Prohibition Party had offered a negative lesson in political tactics, the very “liquor men” they sought to oppose offered a more constructive one (much as Clemens emphasizes this tendency to emulate business opponents among labor, agricultural, and women’s associations). It was the liquor men who “had early learned that party affiliation must be secondary to trade protection,” Burke explained.²⁰⁸ When first threatened with serious temperance sentiment after the Civil War, they had successfully maintained favorable laws by becoming much more electorally aware, and active – determining which candidates were friendly, and delivering to that candidate (presumably by purchase) sufficient votes to make the difference.²⁰⁹ “Where both were friendly, the exigencies of politics were allowed to decide without interference,” he added.²¹⁰ In the absence of “organized political opposition,” therefore, the liquor men “held the balance of power between the parties” in the districts, and got their way in the statehouse.²¹¹

The Anti-Saloon League sought to provide that “organized political opposition,” and it emulated the increasingly bureaucratic business world in doing so. As Kerr (1980) points out, it brought a hierarchical, disciplined organizational form and “business-like” management principles to its pursuit of a single issue.²¹² But the League also showed it had “learned well the lesson which the political organization of the liquor traffic has taught it, viz., that in order to win victories it must hold the balance of power,” as Burke observed.²¹³ They would seek to do so by educating their members to place the issue of temperance above all other allegiances – to create a bloc of voters that could be mobilized for or against any candidate in an election; that could be a *swing* vote. It tracked legislator votes or sought pledges from candidates if a voting record was unavailable, made endorsements accordingly, provided financial support and other kinds of aid to endorsees, and rallied its supporters to the polls through a decentralized network of churches, exhorting them to

reward the friends of temperance and punish its enemies, irrespective of party affiliation.²¹⁴ As Kerr concludes, the League became the first “modern” pressure group in the sense that “it employed bureaucratic methods to maintain its single issue focus” rather than becoming a political party, as previous democratically organized movements had done.²¹⁵

But in doing so, the League also emphasized a key principle – “that a man need not leave his party permanently,” as Burke explained.²¹⁶ “It is usually sufficient if he leaves his party in a single campaign for a single candidate,” he continued, because the losing party would likely have learned its lesson next time around, and would nominate a pro-temperance candidate too.²¹⁷

In other words, the representatives of the league emphasize this one point, that not until men are willing to forsake their party in at least one campaign, and vote for a man who is personally distasteful to them...[but] who stands right, instead of a man on their own party ticket...but who stands wrong-until that time comes, the united church forces cannot win anything. But when that time does come, they can get from any deliberative body anything that they choose.²¹⁸

“It is only by showing the people that this has been the method of the liquor men for forty years,” Burke asserted, “and proving to them that this is the reason the liquor men have won, that anything in the United States has been accomplished by the league.”²¹⁹

Beyond this basic strategic orientation, Burke described a hierarchy of tactics the League might employ, stressing their “adaptability to circumstances.”²²⁰ They would first try “to get a candidate of the dominant party to stand for its measure,” he noted, which might include interventions in primary contests where such laws were on the books.²²¹ In this respect, they bore a closer resemblance to the Non-Partisan League than the AFL, which avoided primaries as a general practice.²²² And like the pragmatic NPL, they targeted whichever party was most powerful: “When political action is undertaken,” explained J.C. Jackson, editor of the League’s newspaper, *The American Issue*, “it is through any party or body that may be available.”²²³ Unlike the NPL, however, the Anti-Saloon League did not aim to infiltrate the party more generally. Rather, they looked to primaries as another electoral contest in which temperance voters could be the balance of power—

thereby going against Truman's (1951) expectations that the primary was a *more* dangerous electoral contest to engage in, since the chances of backing the "wrong" candidate were higher.²²⁴ Still, they avoided *presidential* primaries.²²⁵

If the dominant party could not be prevailed upon, the Anti-Saloon League would seek to "make terms" with the other major party "for a candidate who will stand right."²²⁶ It was not above third party tactics too: if neither major party could be induced to field a temperance candidate, the League felt justified in supporting Prohibition party candidates.²²⁷ But typically one or both parties *were* induced to dance to the League's tune. Because it held the balance of power in so many areas, "it has compelled all parties, in many of the states, to nominate candidates who are in favor of the measures advocated by the Anti-Saloon League."²²⁸ And if both candidates were favorable on temperance issues, then the League – like the liquor men – would let the political winds take their course.²²⁹ Such results, moreover, did not necessarily require them to *act* at all. Merely the perceived *threat* of an intervention in one or both party primaries, or in the general election, could be sufficient to ensure pro-temperance candidates.

All considered, Jackson concluded "[i]t is conservative to say that, including the elections of state officers, legislators and local officers having to do with temperance matters, thousands of victories at the polls have recorded the influence of the anti-saloon league."²³⁰ In Ohio, for example, the League claimed "defeat either for renomination at the conventions or at the ballot-box, of upward of 100 legislators unfavorable to temperance measures" and the "overthrow" of the Governor in 1906.²³¹ In Maine that same year, where the AFL would fail to unseat a targeted congressman (Littlefield), the Anti-Saloon League would claim to have saved its governor – a supporter of the state's prohibition law.²³² And its legislative impact was even greater – as Jackson summed up, "[t]he work of the league at the primaries and the ballot-box has, in the great majority of instances, preceded the enactment of its measures in the legislative bodies of the various

states.”²³³ Eleven states had adopted prohibition laws by 1914; thirty-two by the end of 1918.²³⁴ In between, the League had managed to construct a national campaign around the Prohibition issue in the 1916 midterms, and was sufficiently successful to consider at least two-thirds of the new Congressional members as “favorable” toward their aims.²³⁵ With this majority, they were able to set the constitutional amendment process in motion – with the Prohibition amendment passing both chambers on December 22nd, 1917, and being ratified by January, 1919.

This was a spectacular success for an interest group, though one the women’s movement would soon repeat. But success also bred hostility. It was, like the AFL, criticized for its use of legislative voting records.²³⁶ And its narrow focus on a single issue opened the Anti-Saloon League to the charge of being unprincipled in a broader sense – the same charge leveled at the Non-Partisan League, but here for different reasons. “[T]he politics of the Anti-Saloon league is being exposed in state after state as a thing without scruple,” the *Chicago Tribune* reported in 1926.²³⁷ It was willing to ally with the Ku Klux Klan in Indiana, for example, while in Ohio, it was linked to the corrupt business interests behind the Teapot Dome scandal.²³⁸ Such examples of “practical politics” placed ends above means.²³⁹ Those ends were about the broader public good, supporters of the League argued – its members were performing a public service by wiping out the “liquor traffic,” rather than seeking personal gain.²⁴⁰ The *Tribune*, however, argued that the means mattered: “the Anti-Saloon league is showing no more regard for decent political action or for the consequences of its tactics than the booze barons, and its pretense of moral motive does not cover the sordid truth.”²⁴¹ As Senator William Cabell Bruce (D-MD) put it in 1928, the League was “a hybrid organization, partly ecclesiastical and partly political, ecclesiastical enough to be a menace to the State and political enough to be a discredit to the church.”²⁴²

The League’s “political” status, however, would be a contested one. A state-level league official remarked that the League’s aims would naturally take it into the realm of elections. “How

could it hope to destroy its enemy were it to stand aloof from its enemy's most fruitful field of operations?"²⁴³ "Assuredly it is in politics to stay until its work is done," he added.²⁴⁴ But the League's official position was to deny being a truly "political" operation – for all they might venture into the electoral realm to some extent. Here the effort to separate out "politics" and "partisanship" would again be evident – that, like the NAM, the League was not in *party politics* and hence could claim to be "non-political" in this sense. But the Anti-Saloon League's version stressed the "educational" aspect of its mission to a greater extent. Since its concern was a particular issue – temperance – on which it sought to educate legislators and the public, the League argued, its objectives were not "political." As such, it generally did not file reports of its expenditures with the House Clerk, as "political committees" would be expected to do under the Publicity Acts – though it was induced to do so in 1920, under protest.²⁴⁵

While the Anti-Saloon League might engage in the electoral realm, no matter how they wished to describe it, they never adopted a pure "electoral strategy" as defined by Rozell, Wilcox, and Franz – relying solely on electoral means to alter the composition of the government and thereby achieve legislative aims.²⁴⁶ Rather, such electoral action – and particularly the *threat* of such – was intended to serve "as an adjunct to lobbying efforts," in line with an "access, or legislative strategy" – designed to help bolster the task of *persuasion*.²⁴⁷ Indeed, to the extent that any of these groups engaged in electioneering, it was viewed along such lines – with the exception, perhaps, of the Non-Partisan League, whose approach came closer to a purely electoral one. Modern interest group politics, in sum, was about applying *pressure* on elected officials to act as a group desired. Using their mass memberships to make electoral threats was one of the ways that popular associations found new political resources, learned how to channel and deploy others, and turned their cultural disadvantages into advantages, as Clemens lays out in detail.

But the threat of electoral intervention was only one aspect of the “pressure” that a mass-based interest group could bring to bear on legislators. In fact, some of the new tactics associated with “educating” the citizenry would be far more prominent. Thus, even as the Anti-Saloon League’s threat-based model of electoral activity impressed itself upon a generation of political scientists, it was their “educational” publicity activities that received the most attention in Peter Odegard’s seminal assessment, *Pressure Politics* (1928).²⁴⁸ Odegard acknowledged the League’s “influence in the lobby and committee room would have been negligible” had it “not demonstrated its ability to elect and defeat candidates for public office.”²⁴⁹ But in a later book he generalized that “[t]he pressure which these groups are able to exert depends in the final analysis upon the efficiency of their propaganda.”²⁵⁰ “Educational” publicity had brought lobbying “out of doors” – outside the halls of Congress and into the constituencies. It made appeals to the public as *constituents*, imploring them, in turn, to appeal to their own legislator – knowing their voices would often have greater sway. This was a form of “indirect lobbying” that popular associations were able to draw on their mass memberships to help promote and deploy.

But there are no patents in politics; an effective approach will not remain proprietary for long. In accordance with a competitive emulation dynamic, Clemens suggests that interests which were not fundamentally “popular” in their basis, or even their aims – business interests primarily – came to adopt the new publicity techniques and seek to mold and mobilize public opinion.

Publicity and the “New Lobby”

As Senator Robert LaFollette noted in his appearance before the Overman Committee in 1913, lobbying was “changing in form,” moving away from the “coarser kind” of lobbying apparent when he first came to Washington – the kind with which the old “lobbies” had been most associated, and

with which Mulhall's allegations had implicated the NAM.²⁵¹ "[T]hat old, raw, bargain-and-sale system of lobbying is out of fashion," La Follette observed. "[T]he interests, I think, found a better way."²⁵² That "better way" was not necessarily a better one in moral terms, as President Wilson made clear in his speech denouncing the "tariff lobby" that year. Money was being spent by "astute men" in order "to create an appearance of a pressure of public opinion," Wilson said, "an artificial opinion" seemingly opposed to the bill.²⁵³ The *Washington Post* had summarized the trend the previous year: "The old-fashioned lobbyist went out when the publicity agent came in," the *Post* concluded. "Practically all the lobbying done now is conducted by press agents," whose eyes were fixed upon the world beyond Washington. "The new method is not to bribe statesmen, but to create a public sentiment in their districts which will impel or compel them to vote this way or that," the *Post* explained.²⁵⁴ *Publicity* was becoming the prime means of applying *pressure* – serving to rouse a mass public whether the group had a mass membership or not.

Where popular associations and pressure groups like the Anti-Saloon League had emulated the business "lobbies" of the 19th Century in some respects, business interests would now adopt the principles and methods of the popular association, becoming "new lobbies" or "pressure groups." Thus, as Clemens argues, popular associations would see their goals increasingly frustrated, particularly in the 1920s, by opponents using the very techniques of "educational" publicity they had developed.

The NAM would be at the forefront of this effort – now joined by a newer national business organization, the United States Chamber of Commerce. At the same time that the NAM was coming under congressional scrutiny in 1912, in fact, a different part of the federal government was helping to forge the Chamber.²⁵⁵ The Secretary of Commerce and Labor under President Taft – Charles Nagel – was concerned about the lack of a broad-based organization that could present a relatively unified sense of "business opinion" – beyond manufacturers, presumably.²⁵⁶ At a meeting in

February, 1912, he brought together representatives from the NAM, local Chambers of Commerce, and other business organizations to sketch out a plan for a new representative group, the outcome of which was ultimately the U.S. Chamber, officially organized at a convention two months later, with President Taft in attendance.²⁵⁷

The Chamber quickly became a political force to be reckoned with – but it was by no means an *electoral* force. As the Chamber’s president announced in 1927: “The time is past when it is enough for business to assemble facts for the use of the government – the American nation must be aroused to insist that business facts shall be translated into national action.”²⁵⁸ But that *action* involved the mobilization of constituency pressure, and the means to achieve was *publicity*. By 1925, for example, the NAM had organized itself into four specific departments including Trade, Law, Industrial Relations, and Publicity. “The Law Department sponsors all legislation favorable to the manufacturers, and obstructs the passage of all bills thought to be unfavorable to their interests,” noted Taylor (1928) – that is, it engaged in *direct* lobbying.²⁵⁹ But “[t]he most important department is that of Publicity,” he continued, “for this department is in constant contact with the daily newspapers, with press associations, and with special correspondents arranging for the publication of feature articles in leading magazines.”²⁶⁰ Through such *indirect* lobbying efforts, alongside the activities of the Law Department, the N.A.M. sustained its reputation as “one of the most powerful lobbies in Washington, D.C.”²⁶¹

As lobbying itself came to include “indirect” appeals – utilizing publicity to induce citizens at large to put “pressure” on their legislators – concerns shifted from the relatively straightforward potential for corruption in the individual legislator-lobbyist relationship, to much cloudier questions of influence over public opinion. But it was difficult to assess where the line between *educating* constituents and *manipulating* them could be drawn. Loomis (2009) points to the idea of “developing sentiment” – a phrase coined by the publicity agent James Arnold to describe the cultivation of

grassroots opinion – but whether his techniques helped to unlock, refine, and articulate “sentiments” already held, or simply inserted particular viewpoints into a blank public mind – as Walter Lippmann feared propaganda could do – was unclear. As Loomis explores, such techniques did not simply raise normative concerns, but practical questions of interpretation for legislators. How might they tell which expressions of popular sentiment were “real”? Which should they pay attention to? Lawmakers had to learn and adjust, Loomis observes.²⁶²

The parties adjusted too, with the rise of the “new lobby” inspiring several organizational changes to the national committees themselves. As Baker (2002) notes, the parties had begun to rationalize their fundraising by the 1920s.²⁶³ And the RNC established a Publicity Bureau early in the decade.²⁶⁴ In the later part of that decade, chairman John J. Raskob had put the Democratic National Committee on an ostensibly permanent footing – setting up a permanent headquarters in the nation’s capital, an Executive Committee to oversee it, and ongoing Publicity and Research Divisions.²⁶⁵

The First Transition

By the late 1920s, both direct and indirect lobbying, Clemens suggests, had attained a certain level of cultural acceptability, if not respectability, as the pursuit of “special” interests became essentially universalized.²⁶⁶ Lobbying had expanded to embrace the public as a tool of “pressure,” but these techniques aimed to shape public opinion and encourage constituent action in support of particular legislative aims. While a limited sphere for electoral activity had been carved out, it was conceived as a temporary supplement to ongoing lobbying efforts – both direct and indirect – not a viable strategy in and of itself. It was an “access, or legislative strategy,” as Rozell, Wilcox, and Franz label it, not an “electoral strategy.”²⁶⁷ And it was one that operated on a largely non-partisan basis.

Though there had been some cases where parties and interest groups appeared temporarily to come

closer together, the “modern interest group” had been conceived in *opposition* to partisan forms of organization. The contest among interests was primarily conceived as playing out in the legislative and administrative arenas. And the baseline for understanding modern *interest group* politics, therefore, was a non-partisan *legislative* form. In the next chapter, I explore how this form would soon begin to change.

3. The Rise of Political Action

As the 1920s progressed, the interest group world showed signs of change. It had already undergone one major transition – from an arena of “lobbies” to one of “pressure groups.” But it would soon undergo another, as interest groups became increasingly concerned with the realm of elections, and as the concept of the “political action committee” or PAC began to emerge.

This shift has generated little attention in extant scholarship, largely due to the lack of systematic information on exactly *which* interest groups were engaging in elections, and *when*. In contrast, the relative abundance of such information from the 1970s onwards has yielded extensive analysis of interest group electioneering in more recent decades. Yet the nature of that information has also encouraged a narrow focus on the *financial* aspects of PAC activity, without an appreciation of the broader organizational, rhetorical, and cultural dimensions these groups brought to the fore.

In this chapter, I begin to address both gaps in the extant scholarship. Looking both to form and function, I construct a definition of political action committees that goes beyond legal structure and financial data, and offers a continuum for understanding other kinds of political organization that appeared beyond the 1920s. Drawing on a dataset of congressional investigations into lobbying and campaign expenditures, I use this definition to systematically identify significant interest group electoral actors prior to the 1970s. Embracing actors that both fulfill or partly fulfill the criteria for identifying PACs, this analysis builds a fuller picture of electoral participation by groups both explicitly and implicitly geared toward influencing elections, with debates over their actions mirroring those playing out in our own time.

Defining Political Action

In the contemporary sense, PACs are viewed as legal vehicles through which corporations, incorporated associations, and labor unions can make campaign contributions in elections, given statutory prohibitions on their doing so directly.¹ This is achieved by drawing on voluntary funds raised specially for political purposes, and kept separate from the general treasury of the major group itself.² Viewed in such financial terms, there is a dearth of systematic information available on PACs prior to the establishment of the Federal Election Commission (FEC) in 1974, which was charged with monitoring individual and group participants in elections, primarily in financial terms, and enforcing the financial limitations imposed in the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 and its 1974 amendments.

Prior to this legislation, however, the concept of a PAC lacked a formal legal definition – going unmentioned in the various extant statutes pertaining to campaign finance, and lacking in clarification from the Courts.³ But PACs *did* exist before this point – a fact widely acknowledged though lacking in systematic substantiation. And it was clear that their activities embraced more than just *financial* participation in elections – both then and now. PACs can issue endorsements and publicly advocate for or against particular candidates – the most explicitly “political” activities in which they engage, beyond campaign contributions. They often have voter mobilization programs too, hoping to get sympathetic citizens to the ballot box on Election Day. And while voter mobilization is not an activity legally restricted to PACs, the selective manner in which they normally undertake it, and its direct connection to elections themselves, leads me to classify it as part of the broader repertoire of “political action” with which PACs are associated.⁴

But there is another dimension of PAC activity that is again, not strictly legally restricted to this organizational form in the contemporary setting. PACs engage in what I label “political education” – conducting publicity campaigns to “educate” their members and the public about

certain political issues, or more general political ideas and values, rather than specific candidates or particular legislative proposals. This is an important sustaining activity for PACs (and other kinds of politically-engaged organization), particularly in periods when an active election is not immediately forthcoming.⁵ The need for sustaining activities, in fact, points to another important feature of the PAC form, in terms of its relative *permanence*. PACs are typically intended to be *enduring* organizations, in the sense, at the very least, of persisting beyond a particular election cycle, even if they do not exist in perpetuity. At the same time, PACs do not generally turn their attentions to *lobbying* as a sustaining activity – even of an indirect, publicity-oriented form. Their emphasis on “political education” suggests a specialization of function in which their publicity activities remain oriented to elections at all times – being designed to foster a positive electoral environment for the next campaign. Other ongoing activities include research and fundraising, the former often designed to identify and cultivate potential candidates for the PAC’s electoral support. In this sense, their activities can also be deemed positive and proactive – with ongoing preparation for the *next* campaign, and an emphasis on the provision of resources to *support* particular candidates.

In essence, PACs can be identified in terms of several key features. In terms of their basic nature, PACs have some form of “segregated” voluntary contribution fund, and endure beyond a single election cycle. In terms of substantive activity, PACs can be defined in terms of making campaign contributions and endorsements, while also undertaking voter mobilization and general “political education.”

The rise of “political action” involved a new phase in interest group development, with new organizations learning from the past, but inaugurating a tangible shift in a new direction: from temporary, reactive, and small-scale electoral forays, to permanent, proactive, and large-scale electoral interventions. The rise of “political education,” in contrast, represents a more gradual

extension of earlier interest group innovations, where publicity-based techniques for “indirect lobbying” of the broader public, were expanded so as to shape a general electoral context, while stopping short of explicit candidate advocacy. But this too would be embedded in new organizations, where some interest groups simply retooled their activities in a more electoral direction through political education, or created separate organizations to do the same. Indeed, as my analysis below suggests, there appear to be important differences within the interest group community in terms of *who* creates what type of election-oriented group, and *when* – highlighting an important developmental asymmetry. It serves to emphasize the point that while the emergence of PACs marks a new *phase* in interest group organization, it is not one that appeared in a universal, comprehensive, or immediate way. Understanding the complex dynamics of this emergence – and its implications for interest group partisanship – will be my task in subsequent chapters. Here I concentrate on the main organizational contours of this important and neglected change.

Extant Information on Interest Groups

In 1942, Schattschneider described “the growth of voluntary organizations and societies” as “one of the prime social phenomena of this age,” and evidence supporting his assessment is abundant.⁶ The Commerce Department had been tracking the number of trade associations since the ‘teens, and reported significant increases – from 700 national associations in 1919, to more than 2000 a decade later.⁷ In 1949, the department cast its eye over “national associations” in general, estimating there to be over 4000 national, trade, professional, civic, and other associations.⁸ And there were numerous other sources offering similar information – and depicting continuous growth. The Temporary National Economic Committee (TENC) also collected data on trade associations in 1938, for example.⁹ And Schattschneider pointed to the *World Almanac* as offering information on both business and non-business associations and societies.¹⁰ In 1956, the *Encyclopedia of Associations* was

first published, a directory listing trade associations and other types of organization, which has been heavily utilized in interest group research.¹¹ Other widely utilized directories include Congressional Quarterly's *Washington Information Directory*, published since 1975, and *Washington Representatives* (a directory of associations with Washington offices) since 1977.

Some scholars, notably Walker (1983), have even used these latter directories to try and build a picture of the interest group environment in earlier decades, based on the formation dates of organizations listed there. From that analysis, Walker concluded that interest group formation expanded significantly at midcentury.¹² Tichenor and Harris (2002), however, have stressed “the limitations of looking at existing groups for information about long-term formation trends,” pursuing an alternative approach to identifying early interest groups, looking to the hundreds of hearings held in each session of Congress, and the representatives of organized interests that appeared before them.¹³ Drawing on the Congressional Information Service's *U.S. Congressional Committee Hearings Index*, which provides information on hearings from 1833 onward, Tichenor and Harris find a much greater expansion of trade associations – and of “citizens groups” – in the early 20th Century than is apparent from retrospective analysis.¹⁴

These various studies and sources of data offer a quantitative picture of the interest group environment – the *number* of organizations in existence, and to some extent, their different interest basis. But a qualitative dimension is lacking – the kinds of *activities* in which these groups engaged are not illuminated, with “lobbies” or “pressure groups” not distinguished from organizations entirely unconcerned with legislative affairs.¹⁵ Nonetheless, there are some separate sources of information that concern themselves with this narrower type of group. In 1920, for example, a list of 120 “Watchful Lobbies and Lobbyists That Camp in Washington” – compiled from D.C. telephone directories and office tenant lists – was published in various newspapers and magazines, and made its way into the *Congressional Record*.¹⁶ In his 1929 *Group Representation Before Congress*, political scientist

Pendleton Herring used a similar approach to identify “well over five hundred...groups keeping representatives in the capital...”¹⁷ After 1946, moreover, individuals and organizations which undertook lobbying activities were required to register with the House Clerk and Secretary of the Senate, under the terms of the Federal Regulation of Lobbying Act (1946). *Congressional Quarterly* began to report these filings, and Congress periodically published compilations of registrants.¹⁸ Between 1946 and 1950, for example, about 1500 organizations were registered as engaging in lobbying.¹⁹ But these sources do not identify those groups whose political engagement extended to *electoral* involvement.

There are no comparable government indicators of electioneering organizations in this period. Not until 1974, with the establishment of the Federal Election Commission (FEC), would a similar “register” of political action committees become available. Nonetheless, a handful of groups do gain mention in various historical overviews of interest group electioneering or campaign finance legislation – the original “Political Action Committee,” formed by the Congress of Industrial Organizations in 1943, prime among them. But these overviews are usually brief and limited, mentioning only a handful of actors beyond the CIO P.A.C. such as “Labor’s Non-Partisan League” – another CIO related entity active in the 1936 election, “Labor’s League for Political Education” – the AFL’s counterpart to the P.A.C., formed in 1947, or the “Committee on Political Education” (COPE) – the political action arm of the newly merged AFL-CIO after 1955.²⁰

This is not to say, however, that there are no important sources of information on electioneering groups prior to the mid-1970s. Theoretically, at least, the early campaign finance legislation had required what it termed “political committees” to report their financial activities to the House Clerk. The 1910 Publicity Act was, after all, a measure designed to bring the light of “publicity” to the murky world of campaign finance – to require what we would now label “disclosure.” A “political committee” under the law was essentially any group working to influence

federal elections in more than one state – a formulation designed primarily to bring the finances of the national party committees under the glare of the spotlight.²¹ But by law, any organization that fit that definition was required to file reports on their contributions and spending with the Clerk of the House.²² There was, however, a major flaw in the system – the lack of outside enforcement (a flaw the FEC was eventually set up to address). It was up to the organization itself to determine whether it constituted a “political committee” under the law – a status that, unsurprisingly, many organizations were disinclined to volunteer.²³

Irrespective of how many groups ultimately filed, another problem emerges in terms of *records*. As set out in the legislation, the Clerk had no other duties beyond receiving and retaining the reports for two years. The lack of requirement to retain, compile, or even *publish* the reports creates problems in terms of availability and continuity of the records.²⁴ But from the 1960s, at least, one organization took it upon itself to systematically monitor these reports and produce more comprehensive analysis from them – the “Citizens Research Foundation” (CRF).²⁵ The CRF was an early campaign finance watchdog organization associated first with Vanderbilt University, before moving to Princeton, and finally the University of Southern California.²⁶ It was headed by Alexander Heard, a noted scholar of campaign finance and Vanderbilt’s Chancellor. V.O. Key was a member of the advisory board, and Herbert Alexander became the executive director. Their careful work points to at least 56 national political action committees in existence by 1964, including non-labor PACs that gain little or no mention in the overviews mentioned earlier.²⁷ Thus the American Medical Association had joined the roster of electoral actors by 1961, with the formation of “AMPAC.”²⁸ By 1963, moreover, the National Association of Manufacturers had entered the fray, creating the Business-Industry Political Action Committee (BIPAC) – a development that has gained little scholarly attention.²⁹

The CRF had emerged out of Heard's involvement with a congressional investigation into campaign finance held in 1956, for which he served as an expert advisor. Chaired by Senator Albert Gore (D-TN) and conducted under the auspices of his subcommittee on Privileges and Elections (of the Senate's Committee on Rules and Administration), it was a comprehensive examination of the money being spent in elections, and the sources from whence it came – including direct contributions from political action committees, individual contributions from interest group leaders, and other expenditures on seemingly election-related publicity in which a range of interest groups engaged.³⁰ While the most comprehensive investigation to that date, Gore's committee was not the first to examine campaign finance and the world of elections. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the Senate had formed an investigative committee in 1912, under the chairmanship of Senator Moses E. Clapp (R-MN), to examine campaign expenditures in the 1904 and 1908 elections, and to assess the operations of the newly passed Publicity Act and Amendments in the 1912 election campaign.

The Clapp Committee was, in fact, the first of many such committees, designed to supplement the loose enforcement regime surrounding campaign finance and disclosure by assessing reports filed with the Clerk, deploying the power of subpoena to gain further information, and serving as a semi-judicial body to which potential violations could be reported. The practice would soon become regularized, particularly in the House. Between 1912 and 1974 (when FECA was created), Congress created 36 separate investigating committees, authorized to conduct inquiries into campaign activities and expenditures across various congressional and presidential elections, and to investigate specific charges brought under the Corrupt Practices Acts. Table 3.1 shows a selection of fourteen such investigations, which engaged in general or national-level investigations – whether by virtue of examining the presidential contest, or by considering issues of concern in House or Senate contests in a generalized way.³¹

Table 3.1. National-Level/General Campaign Contribution and Expenditure Investigations, 1900-1974

| <i>Committee</i> | <i>Chairman</i> | <i>Chamber</i> | <i>Year / Congress</i> |
|--|---|----------------|--|
| Committee on Privileges and Elections, Subcommittee | Moses E. Clapp (R-MN) | Senate | 1912-1913 (62 nd) |
| Committee on Privileges and Elections, Subcommittee on S. Res. 357 | William S. Kenyon (R-IA) | Senate | 1920 (66 th) |
| Special Committee on Campaign Expenditures | William E. Borah (R-ID) | Senate | 1924 (68 th) |
| Special Committee Investigating Presidential Campaign Expenditures | Frederick Steiwer (R-OR) | Senate | 1928 (70 th) |
| Select Committee on Senatorial Campaign Expenditures | Gerald P. Nye (R-ND) | Senate | 1930-31 (71st-72nd) |
| Special Committee on Investigation of Campaign Expenditures* | Robert B. Howell (R-NE)/ Tom Connally (D-TX) | Senate | 1932-33 (72nd-73rd) |
| Special Committee to Investigate Campaign Expenditures of Presidential, Vice Presidential, and Senatorial Candidates in 1936 | Augustine Lonergan (D-CT) | Senate | 1936-37 (74th-75th) |
| Special Committee Investigating Campaign Expenditures | Guy M. Gillette (D-IA) | Senate | 1940-41 (76 th -77 th) |
| Committee to Investigate Campaign Expenditures | Clinton P. Anderson (D-NM) | House | 1944 (78 th) |
| Special Committee to Investigate Campaign Expenditures of Presidential, Vice Presidential, and Senatorial Candidates | Theodore F. Green (D-RI) | Senate | 1944 (78 th) |
| Committee to Investigate Campaign Expenditures | J. Percy Priest (D-TN) | House | 1946 (79 th) |
| Special Committee to Investigate Campaign Expenditures | Hale Boggs (D-LA) | House | 1952 (82 nd) |
| Committee on Rules and Administration, Subcommittee on Privileges and Elections | Albert Gore (D-TN) | Senate | 1956 (84 th) |
| Special Committee to Investigate Political Activities, Lobbying, and Campaign Contributions | John L. McClellan (D-AR) | Senate | 1956-57 (84 th) |

Several of these committees had provided important sources of information for campaign finance scholars prior to Alexander Heard – prominently Louise Overacker, who had also undertaken her own efforts to monitor reports filed with the Clerk, providing another valuable source of

information for the CRF (indeed, her records were subsequently integrated into the CRF collections and utilized by Heard).³²

Between 1932 and 1944, in fact, Overacker published studies of spending in each presidential election cycle either in book or article form.³³ Although her published work focused more heavily on *individual* contributions than *organizational* ones, her important *American Political Science Review* articles on the 1936, 1940, and 1944 presidential elections identified various “important non-party organizations” that had been active – often associated with particular kinds of economic or societal interest, or constituting formal interest groups in themselves. In preparing these articles, Overacker drew heavily on the reports of the congressional committees that had investigated these elections: the Senate investigations chaired by Senators Augustine Lonergan (D-CT) to investigate the 1936 election, Guy Gillette (D-IA) for 1940, and Theodore F. Green (D-RI) for 1944; and the House investigation chaired by Rep. Clinton P. Anderson (D-NM) which also looked at 1944.³⁴ Taken as a whole, the reports of these committees, and of the other investigations listed in Table 3.1, provide the most extensive, if incomplete, financial information on an array of participants in election campaigns prior to the establishment of the FEC.

But the body of hearings they conducted can serve as another source of information on the nature of those participants themselves. In the spirit of Tichenor and Harris, examining the organizations from which witnesses appeared before this subset of congressional investigations can offer a narrower indicator – not just of the number and identity of interest groups appearing, but of their *activity* too. Since witnesses were generally *asked* to appear before these committees (given their oversight role), it suggests any organizations with which they were associated were considered currently relevant in respect to the lobbying or campaign activities the committees were charged with investigating. Given the chronological spread of these committees, moreover, they present the possibility of examining developments in the kinds of organizations appearing over time.

Moreover, this approach allows for a comparison to *lobbying* organizations. Indeed, to the extent Tichenor and Harris's data across all committees indicated a general type of activity, it would be this – since testifying *voluntarily* before congressional committees had become part of the repertoire of legislative lobbying activities in the early 20th Century, a way to develop influence as an “expert witnesses,” or bring attention to a group's concerns. But the Congress also undertook a series of specific investigations into these very kinds of *lobbying* activities, where the appearance of groups was less in this voluntary mode.

As noted in the previous chapter, both the House of Representatives and the Senate formed investigating committees in 1913 to examine lobbying issues – with the NAM an important subject of consideration. The House committee, chaired by Representative Finis J. Garrett (D-TN) would concern itself primarily with the allegations made by the NAM's former agent, Mulhall (later accusing him, and by extension, the NAM, of engaging in “systematic secret and disreputable practices against the honor, dignity, and integrity of the House of Representatives”).³⁵ And this was neither the first such investigation to examine particular “lobbies,” nor would it be the last. Industrial giants such as U.S. Steel Corporation and the Du Pont companies, along with trade associations like the Brewers and the NAM itself, would come in for congressional scrutiny at one time or another. Table 3.2 shows a comprehensive list of such investigations in the pre-1970s 20th Century – where Congress examined the lobbying activities of particular companies, associations, or economic sectors.³⁶

Table 3.2. Investigations of Lobbying by Specific Groups/in Particular Sectors, 1900-1974

| <i>Committee</i> | <i>(Sub)Chairman</i> | <i>Chamber</i> | <i>Year / Congress</i> | <i>Groups/Corporations Investigated</i> |
|--|-----------------------------|----------------|---|--|
| Select Committee Under House Resolution 288. | Henry S. Boutell (R-IL) | House | 1908 (60 th) | Investigation of Corrupt Practices in Lobbying Congress, Charges Against Electric Boat Co. and Lake Torpedo Boat Co. |
| Subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee in relation to H.Res. 482 | John A. Sterling (R-IL) | House | 1910 (61 st) | Investigation of Charges Relative to Ship Subsidy Legislation |
| Committee on Investigation of United States Steel Corporation. | Augustus O. Stanley (D-KY) | House | 1911-12 (62 nd) | United States Steel Corporation |
| Select Committee to Investigate Lobby Charges | Finis J. Garrett (D-TN) | House | 1913 -14 (63 rd) | Charges Against Members of the House and Lobby Activities of the National Association of Manufacturers of the U.S. and Others. |
| Special Committee on Lobbying. | Thomas J. Walsh (D-MT) | Senate | 1914-16 (63 rd -64 th) | Maintenance of a Lobby To Influence Legislation on the Ship Purchase Bill |
| Special Committee to Investigate National Security League | Ben Johnson (D-KY) | House | 1918-19 (65 th) | National Security League |
| Committee on Judiciary | Lee S. Overman (D-NC) | Senate | 1918-19 (65 th) | Brewing and Liquor Interests and German and Bolshevik Propaganda (United States Brewers' Association) |
| Committee on Banking and Currency | Louis T. McFadden (R-PA) | House | 1921 (66 th) | Farm Organizations |
| Subcommittee on S. Res. 110, of the Committee on Agriculture and Forestry | Henry W. Keyes (R-NH) | Senate | 1922 (67 th) | Investigation of Organizations Engaged in Combating Legislation for the Relief of Agriculture |
| Subcommittee on S. Res. 142, Committee on Judiciary. | Samuel M. Shortridge (R-CA) | Senate | 1922 (67 th) | Proposed Investigation of the Motion-Picture Industry |
| Subcommittee on S. Res. 77, Committee on Judiciary. | Samuel M. Shortridge (R-CA) | Senate | 1922 (67 th) | Alleged Dye Monopoly (and maintenance of lobbies) |
| Special Committee to Investigate Air Mail and Ocean Mail Contracts | Hugo L. Black (D-AL) | Senate | 1934 (72 nd) | Investigation of Air Mail and Ocean Mail Contracts. |
| Special Committee Investigating Munitions Industry | Gerald P. Nye (R-ND) | Senate | 1934-36 (73 rd -74 th) | Munitions Industry |
| Special Committee to Investigate American Retail Federation, | Wright Patman (D-TX) | House | 1935-36 (74 th) | Investigation of the Lobbying Activities of the American Retail Federation/Investigation of the Trade Practices of Big Scale Retail and Wholesale Buying and Selling Organizations |
| Select Committee Investigating Old-Age Pension Organizations | C. Jasper Bell (D-MO) | House | 1936 (74 th) | Old-Age Pension Plans and Organizations |
| Special Committee To Investigate Contracts Under National Defense Program | Harry S. Truman (D-MO) | Senate | 1941 (77 th) | Investigation of the National Defense Program |
| Subcommittee on Publicity and Propaganda of the Committee on Expenditures in Executive Departments | Forest A. Harness (R-IN) | House | 1947 (80 th) | Investigation of Agricultural Adjustment Agency and Production and Marketing Administration Publicity and Propaganda in Nebraska |
| Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Expenditures in Executive Departments | Clyde R. Hoey (D-NC) | House | 1951 (82 nd) | Influence in Government Procurement |
| Subcommittee on Public Works and Resources, of the Committee on Government Operations | Earl Chudoff (D-PA) | House | 1955-56 (84 th) | Private Electric Utilities' Organized Efforts To Influence the Secretary of the Interior (Ebasco Services, Inc., and Rocky Mountain Group) |
| Special Committee to Investigate Political Activities, Lobbying, and Campaign Contributions | John L. McClellan (D-AR)* | Senate | 1956 (84 th) | Oil and Gas Lobby Investigation |
| Senate Committee on Foreign Relations | J. William Fulbright (D-AR) | Senate | 1963 (88 th) | Activities of Nondiplomatic Representatives of Foreign Principals in the U.S. |

But the Senate committee in 1913, chaired by Senator Lee S. Overman (D-NC), would have a broader remit – to examine the “maintenance of a Lobby to influence legislation” in general, of which the NAM was but one example.³⁷ In so doing, it represented a rarer breed – Congress would conduct only four such broader investigations over the same timeframe – as detailed in Table 3.3. It is these investigations that offer greater comparability to the campaign investigations listed above, in considering broadly *national* or *general* kinds of lobbying activity. (In fact, there was also a narrower kind of campaign investigation, equivalent to the investigations into specific lobbying charges, which examined specific charges against congressional candidates accused of violating the Corrupt Practices Acts. Some of the committees constituted as general investigations actually only served to investigate such particular cases, and are accordingly excluded from Table 3.1).

Table 3.3. General Lobbying Investigations, 1900-1974

| <i>Committee</i> | <i>Chairman</i> | <i>Chamber</i> | <i>Year / Congress</i> |
|--|---|----------------|--|
| Subcommittee on S. Res. 92, Committee on Judiciary <i>“Maintenance of a Lobby to Influence Legislation”</i> | Lee S. Overman (D-NC) | Senate | 1913-1914 (63 rd) |
| Subcommittee on S. Res. 20, Committee on Judiciary <i>“Lobby Investigation”</i> | Thaddeus H. Caraway (D-AR) | Senate | 1929-1931 (71 st -72 nd) |
| Special Committee to Investigate Lobbying Activities <i>“Investigation of Lobbying Activities”</i> | Hugo L. Black, (D-AL)/ Sherman Minton (D-IN) | Senate | 1935-1938 (74 th -75 th) |
| Select Committee on Lobbying Activities <i>“Role of Lobbying In Representative Self-Government”</i> | Frank Buchanan (D-PA) | House | 1950 (81 st) |

As these tables suggest, lobbying and campaigning continued to be examined in separate investigations – as had been the case in 1912-13 – and separate bodies of law would grow up to regulate the practices in each realm. Nonetheless, the committee jurisdictions themselves begin to show greater recognition of connections between the two by the 1950s. The 1950 Buchanan Committee, for example, considered “Lobbying: Direct and Indirect” – the latter aspect of which embraced forms of lobbying beyond the legislature through appeals to the public at large, a

conception that might have an electoral dimension, depending on what exactly the public was being asked to do in order to aid the realization of legislative objectives.³⁸

In 1956, moreover, Senator John L. McClellan (D-AR) would chair the “Special Committee to Investigate Political Activities, Lobbying, and Campaign Contributions,” an investigation that appears in both lists since it was explicitly charged with considering lobbying and campaigning activities side by side. (It was, in fact, inspired by particularly blatant case of electoral-legislative connection, in which an oil company had promised a large campaign donation to a Senator, in return for a favorable vote on natural gas legislation – exactly the kind of *quid pro quo* which links lobbying and campaigning in the most corrupting light).³⁹ Though the House would set up pro forma campaign expenditure committees beyond this point, which occasionally examined particular sub-national controversies, and while a number of hearings were held on particular legislative proposals in the ensuing years, the McClellan committee would be the last major investigation of either lobbying or campaign expenditures held prior to the major campaign finance reforms of the 1970s.⁴⁰

This large number of congressional investigations into both lobbying and campaign activities provides a way to get some systematic idea about the contours of interest group activity within and across these realms, and to focus in on a particular period in which to do so. It is to these investigations, therefore, that I primarily turn for evidence of the major groups active in both lobbying and electoral politics at the national level, and to understand the developmental contours involved. In sum, I look to the witnesses who appeared before these committees, and the organizations with which they were associated, for an indicator of groups active on the electoral scene in these years, and sufficiently significant to attract congressional notice. By focusing on investigations specifically concerned with lobbying and campaigns, my examination of witnesses can indicate general types of *activity* engaged in by interest groups, not simply their existence. While not a perfect measure, as I discuss further below, the approach offers a helpful starting point. In the rest

of this chapter, I undertake an analysis of witnesses appearing before these committees, as an indicator of broader trends in interest group formation and activity, and as the basis for selecting those organizations I consider in detail in subsequent chapters.

Exploring Congressional Investigations

Drawing from the master list of congressional investigations into lobbying and campaign finance, I analyzed hearings associated with the subset of “general” investigations noted above, identifying the various witnesses appearing before these committees and any specific organizational affiliations they might have. Through this process, a relatively broad universe of groups that were considered actively engaged in lobbying on the national stage, or relevant actors in federal election contests, can be discerned. Over 1,000 witnesses appeared across these major lobbying and campaign expenditure hearings, with some giving testimony on several occasions.⁴¹ 102 different organizations were represented before these committees.⁴²

While an imperfect measure of the full extent of lobbying or electoral activity, such groups were of sufficient prominence to be called to testify before Congress, which gives some suggestion of their relative importance compared to other actors.⁴³ At minimum, what this approach offers is a systematic way to identify interest group organizations as they came to prominence – at least at the national level. The resulting developmental timeline does not necessarily accord with the dates when particular groups were *created* (to the extent accurate founding dates can be ascertained), but it does provide an indicator of when their activity reached a sufficient level that congressmen took note. With further analysis of identified groups, it can also shed light on the *organizational forms* employed in each realm and *when* they appear.

A significant problem does emerge, however, in terms of “missing” hearings. From a purely chronological perspective, either the House or the Senate formed committees to investigate

campaign expenditures in every presidential election after 1912, with the sole exception of 1916. A Senate investigation had, in fact, been planned that year (under the auspices of the Committee on Privileges and Elections), but partisan maneuvering led to fears that both national party committees would be embarrassed by revelations it might make, leading the investigation to be dropped.⁴⁴ But even where congressional committees were formed, they were not always fully active. Thus some of the committees classified as “major” did not actually hold *hearings*, though they may have issued reports. In 1936, for example, the Senate created an investigating committee chaired by Augustine Lonergan (D-CT), which issued a substantial report heavily utilized by Overacker. Yet it held no hearings. In some significant presidential election years, moreover, committees may have existed on paper, but neither held hearings nor produced any comprehensive report of activities that year. This was the case in 1932, for example, when both chambers created investigating committees to consider expenditures relating to the election, but neither held national-level hearings or issued relevant reports. The House Committee appears to have been simply kept “in reserve” in case of allegations of specific violations.⁴⁵ The Senate investigation, in contrast, became embroiled in a controversial Senate election in Louisiana, and failed to report on the presidential expenditures they were also authorized to examine. In 1948, the Senate took no action, while the House created a committee that held no hearings. In 1960 and 1964, in contrast, the House created committees that did hold hearings, but only pertaining to sub-national issues. From then on, House investigating committees were formed biennially, corresponding with their electoral calendar, but either did not hold hearings or only did so on sub-national issues. In sum, these “missing” hearings make it impossible to utilize witness lists alone as a consistent and comparable measure over time.

Nonetheless, useful information does exist that can substitute for these “missing” hearings – utilizing other congressional sources, such as data directly from the Clerk’s office, or those that draw on it. Some information on the reports submitted to the Clerk in 1916 is available in the National

Archives, for example, with other details appearing in the *Congressional Record*. Several of the formed committees, moreover, were active in their investigation despite the lack of hearings, and produced extensive reports that sometimes specify active electoral organizations (usually in financial contribution tables of some sort). The 1936 Lonergan committee, for example, compiled an array of relevant national data – sending questionnaires to the party committees and various other groups asking about their activities in the 1936 presidential contest, and producing an extensive report.⁴⁶ Its report specifically listed “Miscellaneous Political Organization of National Scope” in 1936 and provides a breakdown of their expenditures. The 1948 Rizley Committee also provided some useful information in a report – though it is less extensive than that for 1936.⁴⁷

The 1932 election is a more problematic case. We know from its Louisiana report that the Senate investigating committee – chaired first by Robert Howell (R-NE) and then, after Democrats took control of the Senate that November, by Tom Connally (D-TX) – did send out questionnaires to the party committees and other entities, asking about their electoral activities. But that report offered no further details as to the responses, noting simply that they were “available to the Senate for any appropriate purpose.”⁴⁸ Since the responses cannot be located at the National Archives, the next best source of information is Louise Overacker’s research. She published an article on the 1932 campaign in the *American Political Science Review*, which was based largely on reports submitted directly to the Clerk of the House of Representatives though focused primarily on the major parties and individual contributors. This is the only election for which comparable supplemental information is basically unavailable, which is particularly disappointing given the importance of this particular election. I do, however, draw on some non-congressional sources in the next chapter, to offer some indication of the contours of electoral action in that year.

More generally, Overacker’s *APSR* articles offer an important reference point and check on the basic comparability of the witness data, since her articles on the 1936, 1940, and 1944 elections

include a table listing the most “important” non-party or independent organizations in the campaign. Though the overlap is imperfect, the comparison suggests that the major groups in each election cycle do appear in the witness data for the relevant committees (an overlap we would also expect since Overacker often based her analysis on the financial reports these committees produced). Where discrepancies occur, or where other sources of relevance to a particular year are also available, I note them in the discussion below. Finally, for the 1960 and 1964 elections, data is drawn from Herbert Alexander’s studies of those elections, under the auspices of the Citizens’ Research Foundation (CRF) – which, as noted earlier, adopted Overacker’s methods and acquired her research files. These sources can help fill in the gaps in the witness data and round out the picture of new organizations and political activism in this larger period.

Organizational Representatives – Witness Data

To begin by focusing on the witness data alone, I classified witnesses according to the primary capacity in which they were testifying – whether on behalf of a corporation of which they were a director, for example, as an official within a union, as an elected representative with views on the particular subject matter, or simply as an individual citizen, and so forth. Chart 3.1 summarizes the general categories of witnesses across both types of hearing. Table 3.4 breaks down this information in greater detail, showing the specific types of witness classified under each general category.

Chart 3.1. Types of Witness at Lobbying and Campaign Expenditure Hearings

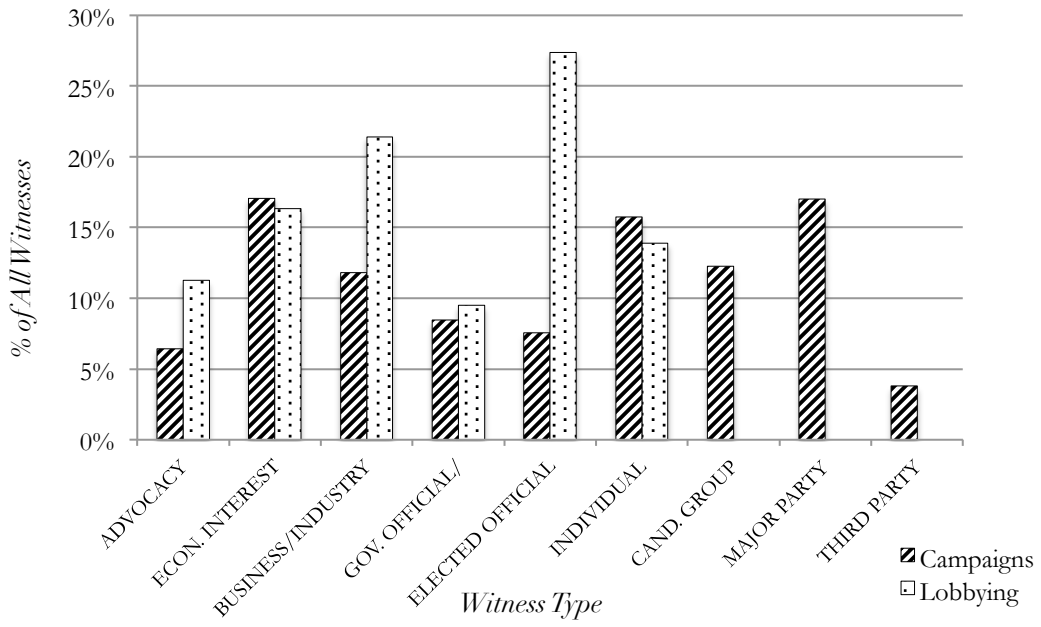


Table 3.4. Witness Types in Campaign and Lobbying Hearings

| CLASSIFICATION | CAMPAIGNS | | | LOBBYING | | |
|---|-------------|-----------|------------|-------------|-----------|------------|
| | # Witnesses | Sub-Total | % of Total | # Witnesses | Sub-Total | % of Total |
| ADVOCACY - NATIONAL | 32 | | | 48 | | |
| ADVOCACY - SUBNATIONAL | 7 | 39 | 6% | 3 | 51 | 11% |
| BUSINESS/INDUSTRY [SPECIFIED COMPANY] | 48 | | | 83 | | |
| BUSINESS/INDUSTRY RELATED [SECTOR IDENTIFIED] | 1 | | | 7 | | |
| BUSINESSMAN [SECTOR IDENTIFIED] | 30 | 79 | 12% | 7 | 97 | 21% |
| CANDIDATE COMMITTEE/GROUP - NATIONAL | 39 | | | 0 | | |
| CANDIDATE COMMITTEE/GROUP - SUBNATIONAL | 45 | 84 | 12% | 0 | 0 | 0% |
| CITY/COUNTY OFFICIAL | 3 | | | 2 | | |
| STATE OFFICIAL | 10 | | | 2 | | |
| FED GOV OFFICIAL | 18 | | | 24 | | |
| EXEC. OFFICIAL | 18 | | | 0 | | |
| CONG. STAFFER | 8 | 57 | 8% | 15 | 43 | 9% |
| ELECTED OFFICIAL - FEDERAL | 40 | | | 123 | | |
| ELECTED OFFICIAL - STATE | 9 | | | 1 | | |
| ELECTED OFFICIAL - CITY | 1 | 50 | 7% | 0 | 124 | 27% |
| FOREIGN GOVERNMENT | 0 | 0 | 0% | 1 | 1 | 0% |
| ECONOMIC INTEREST - LABOR [NATIONAL] | 39 | | | 2 | | |
| ECONOMIC INTEREST - LABOR [SUBNATIONAL] | 33 | 72 | 11% | 2 | 4 | 1% |
| ECONOMIC INTEREST - TRADE ASSOCIATION [NATIONAL] | 33 | | | 54 | | |
| ECONOMIC INTEREST - TRADE ASSOCIATION [SUBNATIONAL] | 1 | 34 | 5% | 13 | 67 | 15% |
| ECONOMIC INTEREST - TRADE ASSOCIATION [FOREIGN] | 4 | 4 | 1% | 0 | 0 | 0% |
| ECONOMIC INTEREST - FARM [NATIONAL] | 5 | | | 1 | | |
| ECONOMIC INTEREST - FARM [SUBNATIONAL] | 0 | 5 | 1% | 1 | 2 | 0% |
| ECONOMIC INTEREST - PROFESSIONAL [NATIONAL] | 1 | | | 1 | | |
| ECONOMIC INTEREST - PROFESSIONAL [SUBNATIONAL] | 0 | 1 | 0% | 0 | 1 | 0% |
| ECONOMIC INTEREST - VETERANS [NATIONAL] | 1 | | | 0 | | |
| ECONOMIC INTEREST - VETERANS [SUBNATIONAL] | 0 | 1 | 0% | 0 | 0 | 0% |
| INDIVIDUAL CITIZEN | 13 | | | 21 | | |
| INDEPENDENT PROFESSIONAL | 95 | 108 | 16% | 42 | 63 | 14% |
| PARTY [D] - NATIONAL | 28 | | | 0 | | |
| PARTY [D] - STATE | 18 | | | 0 | | |
| PARTY [D] - CITY/COUNTY | 2 | | | 0 | | |
| PARTY [D] - AUXILIARY [NATIONAL] | 2 | | | 0 | | |
| PARTY [D] - AUXILIARY [SUBNATIONAL] | 0 | 50 | 7% | 0 | 0 | 0% |
| PARTY [R] - NATIONAL | 37 | | | 0 | | |
| PARTY [R] - STATE | 23 | | | 0 | | |
| PARTY [R] - CITY/COUNTY | 1 | | | 0 | | |
| PARTY [R] - AUXILIARY [NATIONAL] | 5 | | | 0 | | |
| PARTY [R] - AUXILIARY [SUBNATIONAL] | 0 | 66 | 10% | 0 | 0 | 0% |
| PARTY [THIRD] - NATIONAL | 4 | | | 0 | | |
| PARTY [THIRD] - SUBNATIONAL | 1 | 5 | 1% | 0 | 0 | 0% |
| PARTY [THIRD] [IND. CANDIDATE] - NATIONAL | 3 | | | 0 | | |
| PARTY [THIRD] [IND. CANDIDATE] - SUBNATIONAL | 2 | 5 | 1% | 0 | 0 | 0% |
| PARTY [THIRD] [FACTIONAL] - NATIONAL | 13 | | | 0 | | |
| PARTY [THIRD] [FACTIONAL] - SUBNATIONAL | 3 | 16 | 2% | 0 | 0 | 0% |
| | 676 | | | 453 | | |

As Chart 3.1 shows clearly, there was wider variation in terms of the kinds of organizations appearing at the hearings held by campaign investigating committees as opposed to those examining lobbying. This was largely driven by the complete absence of party organizations – both major and third parties – and of candidate groups, in lobbying hearings. This organizational difference reinforces the conceptual and rhetorical distinctions between “lobbying” and “politics” discussed in the previous chapter, where the latter involved support for particular candidates and parties in elections. As concretely shown here, candidates and parties simply did not factor into the lobbying realm, as conceived at this time.

Other categories of group were apparent across both types of hearings, though they were not necessarily an equivalent presence in each arena. This is, of course, only a basic quantitative assessment from which robust conclusions cannot be drawn – particularly as the smaller number of lobbying investigations places limitations on the comparability of the data across hearing type. Nonetheless, some general observations can be made. A number of what might be deemed “issue advocacy” groups, for example, were apparent across both types of hearing (those whose motivations are “purposive” rather than economic in Wilson’s (1974) terminology, such as the Anti-Saloon League), though they made up a larger proportion of the lobbying witnesses (11%) than the campaign witnesses (6%). The organizational witness data also suggests the relevance of economic interest groups in both campaign and lobbying hearings – with Chart 3.1 indicating a similar proportion of witnesses from this organizational category across both types of hearing. But the configuration of economic interests appearing in each type of hearing differs.

Professional groups and veterans organizations were negligible in both types of hearing, and there is very little evidence of farm groups appearing too. This latter result is perhaps more surprising in the lobbying context, given the particular association of groups like the Farm Bureau with that arena. It is possible that their absence from congressional investigation is indicative not of

a lack of importance or influence, perhaps, but a lack of *controversy* surrounding their efforts. Even more speculatively, it might indicate the support of congressional protectors on both sides of the aisle who could prevent their being investigated – the Farm Bureau’s particular commitment to bipartisan lobbying being evident in the formation of the Farm Bloc, as noted in the previous chapter.

The bulk of witnesses associated with economic interests were thus representing labor unions or trade associations (with foreign trade associations a negligible factor in the latter category). But there are differences in the distribution of these witness categories across the different hearing types. Trade associations account for almost all of the witnesses associated with economic interests in lobbying hearings – making up 15% of the total witnesses in lobbying hearings, while labor accounted for just 1%, a similar level to farm groups. Since a lack of controversiality would seem a less likely explanation here, the relatively low levels of labor appearances might indicate a general lack of insider standing – thus a lack of visible direct lobbying activity to assess. Alternative, given the small number of lobbying investigations and their non-regularized basis, it might reflect the political leanings of the legislators who forged them. The Black Committee, for example, was largely concerned with the misdeeds of private utility companies as relating to the Publicity Utility Holding Company Act of 1935. In contrast, labor unions account for the majority of economic interest witnesses in campaign hearings, though trade associations are also well represented – with labor witnesses making up 11% of the total in campaign hearings, while trade associations accounted for 5%.

From the standpoint of understanding *interest group* activity, the “business/industry” category indicated in Chart 3.1 is a relatively meaningless one, though this is not to say it bears no relationship to *interests*. Witnesses from this category are certainly numerically abundant across both types of hearings: 12% in campaigns, 21% in lobbying. But the problem is in identifying *when* their

appearance is reflective of a business *interest* being represented. The witness descriptions provided in the index to congressional hearings are simply insufficiently consistent, or nuanced, to do so. Company names are sometimes listed or a general occupation such as “manufacturer” might be indicated, but often the description is simply a pro forma identifier of a witnesses’ job, since they supplied that information when being sworn before the committee, though it bears no relation to the reason they are appearing. Thus the category can include individual businessmen as prominent as J.P. Morgan, and as minor as clerks in a local bank. Without examining the testimony of each and every witness identified in this category, therefore, it is impossible to determine if they represented a broader economic interest in some sense. Other “catch-all” categories such as “individuals” or “elected officials” are relatively meaningless for analysis too – they reflect the fact that numerous lawyers, for example, appear before the committee on behalf of unidentified clients, or where elected officials are called to discuss their experiences in a particular election campaign, or in relation to particular legislative bills generating heavy lobbying activity.

In sum, the basic conclusion we can draw from this witness data is that each type of investigations was predominantly associated with a distinctive set of organizational actors – with major parties and candidate committees characterizing campaign investigations, with labor unions the next most significant presence there (17%, 12%, and 11% respectively), while trade associations and advocacy groups were the main organizational actors in lobbying hearings (15% and 11% of the totals, respectively). These general patterns largely fit with the ideas about participants in the legislative and electoral realms sketched out in the previous chapter.

But these are aggregate differences. From the perspective of understanding political *development* in this period, this information must be probed in greater depth. Given the limitations of the data involved, this is not a straightforward quantitative task. Rather, I use this data to *identify* particular organizational actors in the lobbying and electoral realms, to identify patterns among such

actors, and as a guide to understanding the *chronology* of their activity. Combining the witness data with the supplemental information described above, and undertaking in-depth research into the groups so identified, I explore the *kinds* of groups that are appearing over time, rather than the *extent* of their appearances. Looking to the national level alone, the combined data analysis I discuss below examines the sectoral, organizational, and temporal dimensions of interest group activity in the lobbying and electoral realms. Which interest group sectors are active in each realm, and when? And with what organizational *forms* are these efforts associated? Are different *kinds* of *organization* apparent over time? Through this approach, important organizational changes – and their chronological contours – begin to emerge.

Organizational Development

Tables 3.5 and 3.6 identify national organizations relevant to elections or lobbying, drawn from the organizational witnesses identified in the hearings (that is, associations or representative groups). Table 3.5 displays this information, arrayed by committee, prior to 1930, while Table 3.6 shows the same information for committees after 1930. In the discussion that follows, I include comparable information from supplemental data where available, to fill in gaps for “missing” committees.

A few clarifications on the data presented here: firstly, the tables identify only *national* organizations, though some sub-national groups did appear in the witness data reviewed above, despite the exclusion of committees that solely looked to the sub-national level. This committee selection criterion reflected my primary analytic interest in the contours of interest group activity on the *national* political scene, and I therefore exclude sub-national groups from this stage of analysis on similar grounds. While national politics does not exist in a vacuum isolated from sub-national developments, an analysis of interest group politics incorporating all levels of elections and government is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

Secondly, individual corporations are also excluded from this analysis. The concerns raised about “business/industry” data raised above are a factor here, but even if a better way to explicitly identify corporate or business representatives were available, the supplementary information for “missing” years does not provide comparable information (i.e. naming particular corporations). More importantly, even if comparable information were available, my purpose is to understand *interest group* activity. Though some scholars do identify corporations as “interest groups” in themselves they do not classify as such for the purposes of my analysis.⁴⁹ My goal is to compare across interest groups conceived in a more collective sense – as avowed representatives of particular corporations or economic interests, or popular associations in some sense.⁵⁰

The Organizational Participants

Several important patterns can be discerned from the comparison of Tables 3.5 and 3.6, involving the sectoral, organizational, and temporal dimensions of participation in the legislative and electoral arenas. As in the witness data reviewed above, parties and candidates are an important presence in the campaign investigations (while being absent from lobbying hearings), with candidate committees becoming more relevant over time. Economic interests are consistently apparent in lobbying hearings, particularly *trade* associations, and advocacy groups are also an important presence across those investigations too. But where economic interest group actors are largely absent from the early campaign hearings, they become more apparent in the later ones, particularly in terms of labor organizations. Indeed, the regularity with which witnesses associated with economic interest and advocacy groups were called to testify before campaign committees, particularly in the 1940s, suggests the widening conception of electoral actors beyond party organizations. The *nature* of the advocacy groups involved also undergoes an important change over the course of this period, with more broadly ideological as opposed to single-issue groups appearing – an interesting reversal from the pattern typically identified in the 1970s and beyond, though in those cases, “single-issue” and “ideological” began to go hand-in-hand.

Closer examination of each type of group, moreover, suggests important changes in their *nature* or political purpose, and even their specific organizational form. Groups whose dedicated purpose is *electoral*, moreover, begin to emerge – first around specific candidates, but increasingly around particular economic interests, as subsidiary organizations created by formal interest groups themselves, or even as ideologically-based groups with no other purpose or link to an organization beyond. Where pure candidate groups were typically temporary, moreover, those forged around other bases are more durable, even permanent. Thus we see precursors to, and ultimately various expressions of, the “political action committee” appearing in the witness data. While many engage in

explicit and direct “political action,” some confined their activities to “political education,” engaging in publicity efforts oriented toward the broader electoral realm, but stopping short of explicit advocacy of persons or parties.

In the discussion that follows, I draw out from these tables, supplemented by other congressional information, some of the main developmental themes in the terms of organizational participants in *elections*, assessing the bases around which they were forged, the nature of their activities, and the forms they took, before turning to a subset which engaged in both lobbying *and* electioneering over the course of the period examined – becoming the focus for the following chapters.

Political Parties

Major Parties and “Auxiliaries”

The prominence of the national party committees in the hearings reflects their shining moments in presidential campaigns. But another party-related actor is apparent too – the party “auxiliary,” like the “National Young Men’s Republican League,” which appeared in 1920. The Young Men’s Republican League set out to mobilize a particular demographic to support the Republican presidential candidate, obtaining at least semi-official party status to do so (it was set to receive financial aid from the party to pursue its general election campaign efforts). It presaged a new wave of organizations that brought a more bureaucratic organizational form, and more specialized demographic targeting, to the old idea of the “party club.” Though the Young Men’s Republican League would be a temporary campaign vehicle, subsequent groups would often be established as permanent subsidiaries of the national party organization – realizing the aim that party clubs continue to exist *after* the campaign torches went out.⁵¹ The National Association of Democratic Clubs, for example, had announced that it would “appeal to the public mind and invoke public

opinion *in the intervals between campaigns* as well as during campaigns.”⁵² And as Daniel J. Ryan had affirmed in the *North American Review’s* forum, “[p]ermanency” was “the first requisite of an organization that will accomplish effective work in politics.”⁵³

In the 1930s, groups like the Young Democrats, College Republicans, and the National Federation of Republican Women would make appearances in the hearings, among a range of new party auxiliaries that were formed at this time – cultivated by both party organizations, designed to link a particular demographic with an explicit party identity, and permanently maintained.⁵⁴ Another auxiliary-type organization, the United Republican Finance Corporation of New York – which became a permanent entity in 1940 – would essentially function as the national fundraising arm for the Republican Party (which, in fact, explains its appearance here, since other “sub-national” organizations have been excluded).⁵⁵ These kinds of organizations would be active during campaign periods too, when they would work in conjunction with the regular party apparatus. Indeed, auxiliaries *assist* or *supplement* but do not *replace* or *supersede* the regular party apparatus, making them distinct from “extra-legal” party committees, which began to appear in this period at the sub-national level (California and Wisconsin being prime examples), serving as substitute party committees in states with permissive primary laws.⁵⁶

Third Parties

Alongside the major party committees in the early hearings were various *third party* committees – suggesting that “independent party politics” still held attractions, despite the anti-partisan attitudes prevalent among reformers. Thus as noted earlier, the 1912 election exhibited several prominent third party efforts – most notably from former Republican president Theodore Roosevelt, running on the Progressive Party ticket, alongside candidates for the Socialist and Socialist Labor parties. Representatives of the Socialist Labor and Progressive Parties, in fact, would ultimately appear

before the Clapp committee investigating campaign expenditures that year. Theodore Roosevelt himself would appear before that committee, though he did so prior to the Republican convention, when he still hoped to secure the GOP nomination.⁵⁷ When, having failed to do so, Roosevelt bolted the Republican party and forged ahead at the top of a new party ticket, he would deliver the best electoral showing for a third party in American history – polling nearly 28% of the popular vote, and even knocking a major party candidate into third place. But it was not enough to win, or to endure. The Progressive Party was very little without the “Bull Moose” at its head, and by 1916, Roosevelt had healed his rift with the GOP and returned the regular party fold. The party he had whipped into action around his frustrated presidential ambitions lacked deep organizational roots, was unable to persist on the basis of its issue concerns alone. The party did not even field a presidential candidate in the 1916 race, and was left to disintegrate.⁵⁸

Another third party also had its best ever showing in the 1912 election – as Eugene Debs took his fourth stab at the presidential wheel of fortune, as the Socialist Party’s candidate, and found 6% of the American public willing to back him.⁵⁹ But it was a representative of the Socialist *Labor* party who appeared before the Clapp Committee. This was a party with earlier roots than that which Debs now represented (the Socialist Party having essentially emerged in 1904 out of an earlier split within Socialist Labor). The existence of these two different Socialist parties speaks to the severe conflicts on the ideological left at this time, and helps to explain the persistent failure of their third party efforts, since they were never able to rally all of the various Communist, Socialist, or union forces under one banner.⁶⁰ By 1920, in fact, when Debs famously conducted his final presidential campaign from a prison cell, having been jailed for allegedly seditious speech during World War I, his party had effectively crumbled.⁶¹ The formation of the Farmer-Labor Party, the only third party represented at the Kenyon Committee hearings that year, had drawn away some of his support. Its presidential candidate Parley P. Christensen, had appeared in person before the committee, and

would be on the ballot in 19 states that November. Still, Debs would outperform Christensen, who polled less than 1% of the popular vote.⁶²

The Farmer-Labor Party effort of 1920 had also drawn support from the remnants of the Non-Partisan League on the agricultural side, and from the Railroad Brotherhoods, in particular, on the labor side. The Brotherhoods had been inspired to electoral action a failed legislative campaign to defeat the Transportation Act of 1920 – legislation that would return the railroads to private ownership, having been placed under federal control during World War I.⁶³ (The appearance of representatives of the “Plumb Plan League,” which I discuss below, relates to this effort). And despite the poor showing in 1920, railroad labor was not to be dissuaded from independent party politics – at least not yet. They remained politically active for the next few years, helping to form the “Conference for Progressive Political Action” (CPPA), a pseudo-third party convention which backed Robert La Follette’s independent presidential candidacy in 1924.⁶⁴ Indeed, confusion surrounding the party status of La Follette’s candidacy is reflected in the witness data, where individuals associated with his campaign are variously described as representing the “La Follette-Wheeler National Progressive Committee” or the “Progressive Party.”⁶⁵

The AFL, as noted earlier, had offered qualified support to that effort, which – like the 1920 Farmer-Labor bid – ended in failure. Though La Follette polled almost 17% of the popular vote, the third highest ever by a third party candidate to that point, his success did little to erode support for Republican incumbent Calvin Coolidge, who won the presidency in his own right with a substantial majority.⁶⁶ Perhaps chastened by these recent experiences, there were no major third party candidacies in the 1928 presidential election – either appearing in the hearings, or on the ballot itself. The third party vote that year diminished accordingly – falling to the smallest percentage of the popular vote since 1872.⁶⁷ Only Norman Thomas, in the first of six consecutive presidential bids

as the Socialist Party's nominee, registered on anything like a national basis – and that was barely, bringing in only 0.73% of the popular vote.⁶⁸

Thomas did better next time around, polling approximately 2.2% of the popular vote in 1932.⁶⁹ But again, this was hardly impressive national viability, and none of the other third-party candidates came even close.⁷⁰ Overacker's article on the 1932 election, in fact, confines its attentions to the Democratic and Republican party finances exclusively. Similarly, her article on the 1936 election makes reference only to a sub-national third party organization – the American Labor Party (ALP) of New York. But the ALP, in fact, was only running party candidates within the state. It had endorsed Franklin Roosevelt for re-election as president, throwing its lot with the Democratic Party at the national level.⁷¹

Indeed, none of these third party efforts registered on anything like the level of La Follette in 1924, the Progressives in 1912, and even Debs that year. Thus it is apparent that the witness data includes numerous representatives of third parties that were not particularly significant in electoral terms. In 1940, for example, the Communist Party's presidential candidate, Earl Browder, would appear before the Gillette Committee, and go on to poll under 50,000 votes in the general election (0.1% of the popular vote).⁷² Norman Thomas would again top the third party stakes, with just 0.23% of the popular vote this time. The presidential ticket offered by the "America First Party" received just 1,781 votes in 1944, while the "American Democratic National Committee" did not even get a candidate onto the ballot, yet both appeared before the congressional investigating committees that year. Indeed, both of these organizations appeared much more like *factions* within the Democratic Party apparatus than true third party efforts – both had aimed to prevent Roosevelt's re-nomination as the Democratic nominee, and when their efforts failed, the America First Party, at least, tried to give their supporters an alternative in November.⁷³

This factional quality, in fact, would characterize a more significant third party effort in 1948, yet one that does not appear in the witness data, since the House committee organized that year, chaired by Rep. Ross Rizley (R-OK), held no hearings. 1948, of course, was the year of Strom Thurmond's "Dixiecrat" bolt from the Democratic convention, and subsequent presidential candidacy as the newly-formed State's Rights party nominee. It was also the year in which Henry A. Wallace, former vice-president under Franklin Roosevelt, would launch an independent presidential bid from the left – disappointed with Roosevelt's successor, Harry Truman, on both the domestic and international fronts. Like La Follette's campaign in 1924, however, Wallace's bid was neither rooted in, nor produced, an enduring third party organization. Still, Thurmond and Wallace would both receive a million votes, and bring in approximately 2.4% of the popular vote each. With his strength concentrated in the Deep South, moreover, Thurmond was able to win 39 Electoral Votes too.⁷⁴ And yet neither makes an appearance in the report produced by the Rizley committee, which offered no information on party activities or finances at all – major or third party. If focused instead on an "exhaustive survey" of Supreme Court decisions pertaining to congressional authority in elections, and to examining individual cases where violations of the Corrupt Practices Acts were alleged.⁷⁵

For the election year hearings beyond this point, no third party candidates appear, and they are a minimal presence in the supplemental data for 1960 and 1964. Drawn from the CRF, the data available for those years is the most extensive in terms of both the number of organizations listed and the financial information provided. But only three third parties appear across them. In 1960, the Socialist Labor Party and the "National States Rights Party" were listed, of which the latter spent less than \$5000 in the election); and both again in 1964, along with the Socialist Workers Party, which spent only about \$2500.⁷⁶ Up to 1964, at least, third parties were no longer appearing particularly significant in either financial and popular terms.

Candidates

“Candidate-centered politics” is normally considered to be a modern phenomenon – a feature of the television age coming to fruition in the 1960s, and exacerbated by the institutional reforms of the early 1970s: the emphasis on primaries stemming from the McGovern-Fraser commission report, and by campaign finance reforms in that decade which placed candidate campaign committees on a par with the parties, and even advantaged them in some ways.⁷⁷ But the data here suggests much earlier origins, though ones that do seem to track with the initial emergence of primaries.

In creating new electoral contests in which candidates could not expect the campaign support of the regular party apparatus, primaries created an organizational challenge for candidates. The initial response was for associates of the candidate to form groups aimed at securing the nomination on behalf of a particular candidate – though not necessarily bearing that candidate’s official imprimatur. This was partly related to a cultural ideal, since, as Troy (1996) explains, for much of the 19th and early 20th Century, presidential candidates were constrained by strong norms against their actively campaigning for office.⁷⁸

In explicitly supporting particular candidates, moreover, they went against the ideal of the “party club” idea presented in the 1880s. As Daniel Ryan had noted then: “Whenever a political club fails to act in harmony with the regularly constituted party authorities, it ceases to be a club; it becomes a cabal.” “Whenever it seeks to control the party conventions, it becomes a machine,” he continued. “In either case it is a failure and a curse.”⁷⁹ “The prime object of clubs,” Ryan emphasized, “is to *elect* candidates, not to *nominate* them.”⁸⁰ The National Association of Democratic Clubs was established on such a basis – conceived as a party-wide integrating device: “It will not nominate candidates; it will support them,” an Association pamphlet from 1900 affirmed; “It will not prescribe platforms; it will ratify them.”⁸¹ Thus if permanent party auxiliaries were an extension and refinement of the “party club” idea – if a more disaggregated version – candidate organizations

were their antithesis. This new kind of candidate group could be viewed as an organizational expression of factionalism.

The creation of candidate committees also reflected legal considerations, however. Ever since the first wave of federal campaign finance legislation had passed, questions had been raised as to just *why* it really constrained. On the face of it, the spending limitations imposed by the Publicity Act amendments of 1911 “seemed to apply only to candidates,” Urofsky (2008) explains, paving the way for committees of “friends” or supporters to emerge who were not subject to limitations, as their activities were “nominally without the candidate's knowledge or involvement.”⁸² The Federal Corrupt Practices Act of 1925 did little to remedy the situation. It explicitly required reporting only those expenditures made with a candidate’s “knowledge or consent.” As Overacker (1932) accordingly noted, “the astute candidate” must simply be “discreetly ignorant of what his friends are doing.”⁸³

Thus the “Hoover National Republican Club” and the “Leonard Wood League,” whose representatives appeared before the Kenyon Committee in 1920, just prior to the Republican convention, had sought to secure delegates directly in primary states, and more generally mobilize a wave of grassroots support that could impress upon others with the sheer popularity of their man.⁸⁴ Neither Hoover nor Wood – a former Army Chief of Staff – would secure the nomination in 1920, though an even more sophisticated (and expensive) popular apparatus would emerge to promote Hoover’s second attempt in 1928.⁸⁵ This time, the “Hoover for President Association” succeeded in its nomination efforts, and may have operated in the general election too.⁸⁶ Still, it spent far less than did the “Hoover for President Engineers National Committee,” according to information in the Steiwer Committee’s report (about \$9000 compared to the Engineers’ \$65,000), before which representatives from both organizations had appeared.⁸⁷

Supplemental information on the 1916 election, in fact, points to even earlier origins for this type of organization. In that year, groups like the “Woodrow Wilson Independent League” and the “National Hughes Alliance” made an appearance on the scene – and reported their financial activities to the House Clerk. Records for seven such groups appear in various congressional sources, with a greater number formed to promote the candidacy of Republican nominee Charles Evans Hughes (the former Governor of New York, recently resigned Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, and future Chief Justice).⁸⁸ Of the \$826,519 spent by these committees, 92% was spent on behalf of Hughes, compared to only 8% on behalf of Wilson (the biggest individual spender was the Republican National Publicity Committee, which spent over \$450,000).⁸⁹

Table 3.7. Expenditures of Independent Committees in 1916

| <i>Organization</i> | <i>Expenditures</i> |
|--|---------------------|
| <i>Favoring Democrats</i> | |
| Woodrow Wilson Independent League | 46,405.50 |
| Wilson Business Men’s National League | 20,975.91 |
| <i>Sub-Total</i> | 67,381.41 |
| <i>Favoring Republicans</i> | |
| Hughes Alliance Reserve | 58,445.34 |
| National Hughes Alliance—Women’s Committee | 45,234.99 |
| National Hughes Alliance | 187,189.47 |
| Republican National Publicity Committee | 454,334.32 |
| Hughes National College League | 13,933.84 |
| <i>Sub-Total</i> | 759,137.96 |
| Total | 826,519.37 |

Source: Compiled from information in James K. Pollock, Jr., *Party Campaign Funds* (New York: Knopf, 1926), 56.

What is not clear about these 1916 committees, however, is the extent to which they were created or supported by the political party organizations themselves, or which part of the campaign they were

formed to contest. The former would come to be an important factor in distinguishing some of the groups that appeared in the 1932 and 1936 elections – which appeared on one level to be committed to a particular candidate, but whose organizational basis was not purely determined by support for that candidate – as I discuss more below. In terms of the latter factor, these 1932/36 groups were also primarily active in the *general* election, unlike those forged for the purposes of gaining the *nomination* for a particular candidate.

Of course, groups forged to help secure the nomination might be repurposed for the fall campaign – the “Willkie Clubs” of 1940, and the “Citizens for Eisenhower” of 1952 being particularly important examples. The Citizens for Eisenhower, in fact, continued into the general election (as “Citizens for Eisenhower-Nixon”), and beyond, remaining active throughout the 1950s in support of Eisenhower’s congressional allies and his presidential re-election campaign.⁹⁰ In this respect, it served as something of a parallel, or even rival party organization to the regular GOP. Indeed, these committees increasingly raised and spent their own money, not receiving aid from the party’s own purse. And this separate financial basis accorded with the purpose of these “citizens” committees – aiming to attract self-conceived “independent” voters who would not be responsive to a *party* appeal, emphasizing that commitment to a *candidate* need not mean allegiance to his party in general. After 1956, in fact, these kinds of “citizens” committees would become a regularized feature of the presidential campaign, with the “Volunteers for Stevenson” appearing in both 1952 and 1956, the “Citizens for Kennedy-Johnson” and “Citizens for Nixon-Lodge” in 1960,” along with the “Citizens for Johnson-Humphrey” and the “Citizens for Goldwater-Miller” in 1964.⁹¹ But candidates were not the *only* “cause” around which such financially “independent” groups began to cohere.⁹²

Interests

A traditional economic interest group was represented at the very first campaign expenditure investigation – the National Association of Manufacturers – as discussed in the previous chapter. Yet it is difficult to view economic interests as a major part of the earlier investigations (particularly when compared to the lobbying hearings). The appearance of the Association of Foreign Language Newspapers’ president in 1912 related to a particular question about payment for advertising in the newspapers he represented, while the appearance of representatives from the National Retail Liquor Dealers Association in 1920 was more indicative of the temperance politics of the era, as I discuss further below.⁹³

The appearance of the “Plumb Plan League” in 1920, and the Order of Railway Conductors in 1924, relate to the labor strife surrounding return of the railroads to private control following the end of World War I, as discussed above. While the Order of Railway Conductors was itself a union, the “Plumb Plan League” suggests an interesting fusion of economic interest and issue advocacy – being essentially a grassroots pressure group created by the Railroad Brotherhoods to fight against the Transportation Act.⁹⁴ (The name referred to an alternative legislative plan formulated by the Brotherhoods’ legal counsel, Glenn E. Plumb). Its appearance before the Kenyon Committee in 1920 was suggestive of a shift in focus from the legislature to the electoral realm. Indeed, the nearly 600 branches of the League would form the organizational basis for the “Conference for Progressive Political Action” (CPPA) – the pseudo-third party effort that backed La Follette’s independent presidential candidacy in 1924.⁹⁵ The 1924 appearance of L.E. Sheppard before the Borah Committee – president of the Order of Railway Conductors – was thus linked to that effort.

No other economic interests appeared in the early campaign expenditure hearings, though the Farm Bureau’s appearance before the Caraway lobbying committee in 1929 is notable for the *absence* of that organization, or farm interests more generally, from any of the campaign expenditure

hearings shown here.⁹⁶ While the Farm Bureau did make a subsequent appearance before the McClellan Committee in 1957, it reflected that committee's dual concern with both electioneering and lobbying, and the Farm Bureau testimony was associated with the latter. The absence of farm organizations is a particularly interesting absence since Truman (1951) points to a notable example of Farm Bureau electioneering in the 1928 presidential election – via the creation of the “Independent Agricultural League.” This organization is actually discussed in the Steiwer Committee's *report* – one of few examples where an apparently significant organization, at least sub-nationally, did not have a representative appear before that committee.

In 1928, the presidential candidates were sharply divided on the Farm Bureau's prime issue of concern: the McNary-Haugen bill. Despite the success the bipartisan “Farm Bloc” in the early part of the decade, it had declined in influence to some extent, and failed to secure passage of this legislation, which would have established a federal agency to buy up agricultural surpluses, store or sell them overseas, and thereby sustain a higher domestic price.⁹⁷ Its proponents defended the plan as giving farmers the same kinds of economic protections that manufacturers received through the tariff.⁹⁸ Yet the protectionist Republican Party did not quite see things that way. Though the Farm Bureau had actively sought support for the measure at both parties' conventions, it was successful only on the Democratic side. Republican president Calvin Coolidge, after all, had already twice vetoed earlier versions of McNary-Haugen, and the convention to nominate his expected successor seemed in no mood to change course.⁹⁹ Thus the Farm Bureau was left in a dangerous position – if it actively supported the Democratic nominee and the Republican candidate won, then McNary-Haugen would be doomed, and the Farm Bureau isolated on the political scene through the next presidential administration.¹⁰⁰ But if it did nothing, its doom was likely anyway.

As Kile (1948) summarized their problem: “how could farm bureau leaders in the midwestern battleground states fight effectively, while at the same time avoiding the appearance of

‘dragging their organizations into politics?’¹⁰¹ As Truman recounts, the Farm Bureau found a solution to its quandary through an *organizational* innovation, in the creation of the Independent Agricultural League.¹⁰² This was a parallel campaign structure that drew upon the organizational framework of the county farm bureaus, but was organized separately from them. At the same time, it was separate from the regular Democratic Party machinery, though it would encourage voters to support the Democratic nominee – Al Smith. “Vote as Farmers, not Partisans,” became their slogan.¹⁰³ In this case, the “independence” of the Agricultural League was conceived in terms of this organizational separation from the party, not the traditional meaning – which would indicate a third party. Yet the purported organizational independence of this Agricultural League was never particularly in evidence. Like the AFL in 1908, it was heavily dependent on the Democratic Party itself for financing, and in Kile’s assessment, much of the impetus for the group had come from the DNC in the first place. According to Kile, the DNC “turned the organization job over to George Peek” a prominent agricultural economist, “and put up the necessary money.”¹⁰⁴

This was a sub-national effort, thus would not be included in my assessment here, but the example is an interesting one, both for the kind of organization it suggests being developed, and the future direction Farm Bureau activity seemed to take. While Smith lost in 1928, the Farm Bureau’s strategy had apparently insulated it from public backlash, and its internal cohesion was preserved even as support was offered to one side.¹⁰⁵ Yet the Farm Bureau did not repeat the experiment in 1932, reverting instead to the largely bipartisan legislative and administrative lobbying that would become its signature in future years.¹⁰⁶ Its success with this strategy is widely noted, and while Hansen (1991) points to a more Republican-leaning outlook in the 1950s, this does not appear to have translated into electoral action. Other than the 1957 lobbying appearance, the Farm Bureau is not evident elsewhere in the witness or supplemental data.¹⁰⁷

Peek, however, would be involved with another election-oriented organization in 1932, one that would be based less around agricultural interests than a broader Progressive ideology: the National Progressive League. This was one of only two non-party committees that Overacker (1933) mentions in her overview of the 1932 election, and the only such organization active nationally.¹⁰⁸ A successor organization, the Progressive National Committee, would be formed in 1936, a year in which a range of new electoral actors appear on the scene – some associated with major economic interests. Overacker’s article on the 1936 election included a list of “non-party organizations” she deemed “important” in 1936, based on the findings of the Senate’s Lonergan Committee, and reproduced in Table 3.8 below.

Table 3.8. Expenditures of “Important” Non-Party Organizations in 1936

| “Important Non-Party Organizations” | Expenditures | Received from National Committee |
|--|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| <i>Favoring Democrats</i> | | |
| Committee of One | \$65,213 | \$32,486 |
| Good Neighbor League | 168,677 | 34,750 |
| Labor’s Non-Partisan League | 169,011 | --- |
| Progressive National Committee | 54,460 | --- |
| Roosevelt Agricultural Committee | 272,609 | 244,087 |
| Progressive Republican Committee for Franklin D. Roosevelt | 7,233 | 5,000 |
| Young Democratic Club of America | 22,973 | 10,750 |
| Total | \$760,176 | \$327,073 |
| <i>Favoring Republicans</i> | | |
| Independent Coalition of American Women | \$107,783 | --- |
| Liberty League (National headquarters) | 518,123 | --- |
| Women’s National Republican Club | 27,973 | --- |
| Total | \$653, 879 | --- |

Source: Reproduced from “Table II- Expenditures of Important Non-Party Organizations in 1936.” In Louise Overacker, “Campaign Funds in the Presidential Election of 1936,” *American Political Science Review* 31: 3 (1937), 478.

Her list includes “Labor’s Non-Partisan League” (LNPL), the organization identified by Rozell, Wilcox, and Franz (2011) as an important predecessor to the CIO’s Political Action Committee.¹⁰⁹ Formed by the emergent Committee on Industrial Organization – then a breakaway faction of the craft-based AFL – Labor’s Non-Partisan League professed to be an all-labor coalition embracing industrial unions, those still associated with the AFL, and the Railroad Brotherhoods. The American Labor Party, discussed above, was also closely associated with the CIO, and was effectively the New York arm of LNPL. Another important organization was the “Liberty League,” which was financially and popularly identified with business interests, though its leaders were less than willing to admit the connection.

Rooted in two different interest communities that were increasingly taking opposing stances to the New Deal, these groups became overtly associated with support or opposition to major party presidential candidates that year – Republican Alf Landon and Democrat Franklin Roosevelt – and had to negotiate the partisan meanings that such associations involved. For LNPL and the Liberty League, they did so to some extent through an organizational means – claiming financial independence *of* the political parties, even as they effectively lent financial and other support to aid their candidacies. In contrast, the “Roosevelt Agricultural League,” like the “Independent Agricultural League” of 1928, was largely funded *by* the Democratic Party – thus anything *but* truly independent in financial terms.

The CIO’s “Political Action Committee” first appears in 1944, when its representatives appeared before both the House and Senate campaign investigations that year. Indeed, the investigations were largely animated by the appearance of the P.A.C., and the controversies over its nature and purpose that ensued. Also appearing before the House committee that year was the “National Citizens Political Action Committee” – another vehicle created by the CIO but designed to appeal to a broader liberal community beyond union members. The NCPAC would be active

again in the 1946 midterm elections, but in the wake of that contest it would cut its ties with the CIO, joining with other liberal-leaning groups to form the “Progressive Citizens of America,” which would ultimately forge the basis for Henry Wallace’s 1948 independent presidential bid.¹¹⁰

Beyond this point, other PACs would begin to appear, particularly associated with labor or more broadly liberal concerns. Though the 1948 Rizley Committee reported without holding hearings, its legal overview of court decisions relating to campaign finance touched on new kinds of “political committee” that were appearing.¹¹¹ As noted in its report:

“The period following the summer of 1943 is noteworthy for the appearance on the political scene of so-called political action committees and educational leagues. These newly formed groups may be described as instrumentalities for the application of political pressure or for participation in political activities sponsored indirectly by labor unions other than financially, and without violating any part of section 313 of the Corrupt Practices Act...”¹¹²

The report briefly listed a handful of such organizations, beyond the CIO-PAC – including “Labor’s League for Political Education” (LLPE), which had been created by the AFL in 1947, and PACs associated with the Railroad Brotherhoods and particular international unions.¹¹³ LLPE would make an appearance before the House campaign expenditure committee in 1952, and would ultimately merge with the CIO P.A.C. in 1955, when the two labor federations reunited as the AFL-CIO. Their combined political action committee, the “Committee on Political Education” (COPE), would thus appear before the Senate’s campaign expenditure investigation in 1956. Several international labor unions appeared directly before the various committees in this period, but for the national federations, following the creation of their PACs, it would be these organizations sending representatives.¹¹⁴

The AFL’s choice of name for its PAC is an interesting one – emphasizing “educational” nature of their activities, suggestive of an effort to draw on the positive normative qualities associated with that term. As I discuss in subsequent chapters, the phenomenon of “political education” is a distinctive one – related, but not identical to political *action*. It combined the

educational emphasis of the modern interest group with the acknowledgment of a specific political *viewpoint*, if not explicit advocacy for particular candidates or parties. Political education would become an important sustaining activity for PACs between elections, when there were not necessarily direct “targets” on which to focus. But it would also be only form of activity in which some of the groups appearing in Tables 3.5 and 3.6 engaged – a phenomenon that primarily involves conservative *ideological* groups.

In fact, it becomes difficult at this point to separate out economic interests from the broader ideological constellations in which grew up around them. Though some issue groups were “purposive” in Wilson’s (1974) sense – that is, pursuing objectives that were not of direct economic benefit to members – those that appear in the tables are not always easy to categorize in such terms. Groups like the National Committee to Uphold Constitutional Government (later the Committee for Constitutional Government), or the Constitutional Educational League, for example, made arguments for constitutional limitations on the federal government that accorded with those of economic interests opposed to federal government regulation (primarily business interests, though, as I explore further in Chapter 8, “business” was by no means homogenous in this regard).¹¹⁵

Both expressed hostility toward New Deal legislation, and the president who had pushed for them. But they would claim to take no part in electoral politics per se, pursuing instead the path of “political education” – disseminating their ideological message through extensive publicity activities, but avoiding direct political action. Spending money *on behalf of* certain general principles that might incidentally prove of *benefit* to certain candidates did not, they argued, amount to electoral involvement. They took the “indirect lobbying” methods of the ‘twenties and turned it to “developing sentiment” for a broader ideological position rather than specific pieces of legislation, and for a positive political context in which candidates committed to that position might succeed – stretching the idea of “non-electoral” activity as far as it might conceivably go.

In contrast, liberal groups such as the Americans for Democratic Action (which appeared before the Senate campaign expenditure investigation in 1956), or the National Committee for an Effective Congress (which appears in the supplemental data for 1960 and 1964) embraced political *action*. The “Americans for Democratic Action” was formed in 1947, though the “Union for Democratic Action” (which appeared before the 1944 House investigation) was a loose predecessor.¹¹⁶ The ADA issued endorsements and advocated for particular candidates, made direct campaign contributions to their campaigns, drawing on voluntary contributions it received, and sought to mobilize voters on Election Day. It also maintained a separate “educational” account that was heavily financed by labor union contributions.¹¹⁷ In sum, the ADA was a political action committee, a status it is not typically accorded in retrospect. Indeed scholarly attention to the ADA primarily revolves around the ideological index scores it began offering in 1959 – scores that summarized the extent to which a legislator’s roll-call votes on bills of concern to the ADA were in accordance with their preferred position. As a general measure of ideology, the ADA index scores have become key elements of much congressional analysis. Yet as I discuss further in Chapter 7, they were an important innovation in the techniques of political action, and had an important broader impact in terms of political culture. The National Committee for an Effective Congress would also offer important innovations in the techniques of political action, primarily in terms of national fundraising, and directing those funds to targeted competitive districts.

The ideological cleavage between liberal and conservative groups thus appeared to be marked by a different approach to political involvement too – at least for a time. Not until 1958 would a fully-fledged conservative ideological PAC emerge, though its very name would indicate its intention to be a direct counterpart to a liberal group: the Americans for *Constitutional* Action. Appearing in the supplemental data for 1960 and 1964, the ACA would quickly become an

important source of financial support for conservative (Republican) candidates, and launched its own index of congressional roll-call votes to rival that of the ADA.

The emergence of this conservative PAC would suggest a shift in approach among conservative organizations, away from their dominant mode of activity in the 1940s. The publicity-based approach conservative groups took then paralleled that undertaken by the major business organizations apparent in the hearings too – the National Association of Manufacturers, and the United States Chamber of Commerce, which appeared before the campaign expenditure committees in 1944 and 1956 respectively (the NAM had also appeared, as noted earlier, in 1912, and would also appear in the House investigation of the 1946 congressional elections, which was of national scope). Both of these organizations engaged extensively in direct and indirect lobbying, and pursued an ideological publicity campaign during this period advocating “Free Enterprise” – an economic conception with political implications, as I explore further in Chapter 8. But they too stopped short of endorsing candidates, contributing directly to them, and mobilizing voters – the key identifiers of political *action*.

But in the wake of the ACA’s formation, conservative-leaning economic interests and professional associations would begin to move in a different direction. As sometimes indicated in the brief histories of political action committees offered in campaign finance textbooks, the first official non-labor or liberal PAC was the American Medical Association’s “AMPAC,” formed in 1961, and often attributed to the growing threat of government health care to the independence and financial prospects of their members (with debates over Medicare about to begin in earnest). So began the broader development of associated with “business” or “professional” groups – ten years prior to the explosion of “corporate PACs” so noted among observers of the 1970s campaign finance reforms. The NAM’s creation – the “Business Industry Political Action Committee” (BIPAC) – would make its appearance two years later, in 1963. Unlike AMPAC, however, BIPAC is

less clearly attributable to any specific legislation or other “threat” – raising questions as to the stimulus for its creation. Nonetheless, BIPAC would mark an important shift in business political activity – though one that took twenty years to decide upon, following the CIO-PAC’s initial move.

Issues

While the ideological groups considered above are categorized as “advocacy” organizations in the table, in light of their emphasis on ideas and issues, their connection to economic perspectives complicates that categorization. With the exception of the “League to Enforce Peace” in 1920 (an oddly-named pacifist organization opposed to World War I), the only true advocacy groups remaining in the table turn on one particular issue – *temperance*. All came before the Steiwer Committee in 1928, and are suggestive of the particular electoral dynamics of that election.¹¹⁸

With the passage of the 18th Amendment in 1919 and its ratification in early 1920, Prohibition would cast its specter over the politics of that decade, with the Anti-Saloon League an especially important voice, as discussed in the previous chapter. Alongside the Anti-Saloon League at the Steiwer Committee hearings, however, was another pro-temperance organization: the National Civic League. This group had been formed in 1922 to ensure passage and proper enforcement of “laws affecting and improving the morals of the people along lines of temperance, antigambling, antivice and things of that sort,” as their president explained before the Committee.¹¹⁹ The appearance of the Ku Klux Klan, moreover, can be viewed in the light of temperance politics, and not, as might typically be expected, in primarily racial terms.

Though the Klan is primarily identified with both virulent racism and secrecy – symbolized in the white robes that disguised its members – it also had a public organizational face, and a legislative program that included a strong commitment to Prohibition. This was connected to the streak of evangelical Protestantism that ran through the Klan’s membership. And it had led the

national organization to rally Klansmen against the Democratic candidate for president in 1928 – Al Smith. In addition to being a “wet” – favoring the repeal of Prohibition – Smith was also the first Catholic presidential candidate nominated by a major party, a religious affiliation that the largely Protestant temperance advocates saw as allied to the drink industry (as well as subject to the “foreign” influence of the Pope).¹²⁰ Smith’s nomination thus brought out the Klan’s religious virulence if not its racial hostilities, but also a streak of revenge, since Smith had tried to insert an anti-Klan plank into the 1924 Democratic platform.¹²¹

Indeed, the presidential candidates’ positions on Prohibition served as a lightning rod in this campaign, bringing the Anti-Saloon League into the realm of presidential electoral politics for the first time. Where support for Prohibition had previously cut across party coalitions, and national parties had sought to avoid pronouncing upon it, the issue would come to the fore in 1928. As concerns over bootlegging and organized crime took root, many began to wonder if such negative effects of the Volstead Act had not outweighed any moral benefits it may have offered. With temperance advocates on the defensive, the incipient conflict over Prohibition exploded into the 1928 election with the nomination of Smith. Though the Democratic platform actually contained a weak commitment to *enforcing* the 18th amendment, the presidential candidates were soon locked in battle, taking opposing stances on retaining or revising (though not *repealing*) the law. Smith publicly called for changes so as to allow states to “opt-out” of Prohibition.¹²²

With such a stark contrast on the table, as Truman’s (1951) strategic calculus might suggest, there was now little to lose by picking the “dry” side – even though there was no way to balance out their support or opposition at this level, and thereby appear less “partisan.” The Anti-Saloon League determined to make the leap, and began rallying its members and beyond in support of Republican standard-bearer Herbert Hoover.¹²³ Geographically, they would work with sympathetic groups to make inroads into the South. For all this was solid Democratic country, the South was also dry

country, and Smith's stance on Prohibition was placing strains on the traditional sectional basis of the party system.¹²⁴ The Solid South would accordingly be broken in this election, with "Hoover Democrats" bringing him victory in several Southern states, and helping the Republican candidate toward a landslide victory – winning 40 states and almost 60% of the popular vote.¹²⁵

Despite this stunning victory, however, the influence of Prohibitionists would soon wane. Having scaled the heights of interest group influence – realizing their policy aim in a constitutional amendment, no less – the Anti-Saloon League would find its signature achievement undone in little over a decade, and its organization effectively collapsed. Hansen, in fact, locates this decline in the 1928 election, arguing that there was a cost to the Anti-Saloon League's "partisan" stance. He argues that pressure groups automatically *lose* influence when they ally with parties, since their status is dependent on their provision of good counsel to a legislator, and if a party and interest group are sending the same message, then the legislator will look to the party first, making the group essentially redundant. As in Schattschneider's (1960) case, the interest group is effectively dominated. For Hansen, therefore, the Anti-Saloon League's precipitous decline after 1928 is a prime example of what happens to groups once the parties divide on their issues of concern.¹²⁶ The Anti-Saloon League was undone not so much by "isolation," in this account – since the Republican candidate actually *won*, and retained unified control of the Congress – but by *irrelevance*. When the Democratic Party *did* win in 1932, on a massive scale, isolation did come to the fore – since there was essentially no one left to listen to the League's counsel anyway.¹²⁷ Thus did the Anti-Saloon League fade away into political obscurity – or so Hansen's argument goes.

Hansen's analysis is a cautionary tale that avoiding isolation does not guarantee *influence*. But it is not an entirely intuitive one. The Anti-Saloon League had seen its cause adopted as a rallying cry by a major party – one they strove to retain in 1932 despite its increasing unpopularity (their platform now accepted a state "opt-out" amendment as a possibility, but still sought to uphold

Prohibition as a federal law).¹²⁸ The point seems more to be that once the parties had divided on the issue, the Democrats ultimately *won*. A partisan strategy of sorts had not worked for the Anti-Saloon League, but it *had* been quite effective for those opposed to Prohibition. Indeed, Hansen's account ignores the rise of another group whose goals were fulfilled by the Democratic ascendancy: the "Association Against the Prohibition Amendment" (AAPA).

The AAPA also appeared before the Steiwer Committee in 1928, and would play a key role in the movement to repeal Prohibition.¹²⁹ Formed in the mid-1920s, the AAPA had strong ties to the business community, and especially to the Du Pont family.¹³⁰ It was one of a number of anti-Prohibition pressure groups that appeared at this time, though it became the most prominent – largely due to the prominence, and deep pockets, of its leadership. There is, in fact, some skepticism about the motivations of these business leaders in opposing Prohibition. This apparently principled stance may have been motivated by distinctly *economic* interests, since liquor taxes could provide an alternative stream of tax revenue, and shift the burden from corporations.¹³¹ Irrespective of motivations, the actions of the AAPA leadership did much to encourage the hostility toward Prohibition that the Democratic Party would ultimately express with the nomination of Smith.

For if Hansen's story points to pitfalls when parties divide, it offers no account of *why they do so*, especially on an issue that had crossed party lines for so long.¹³² The emergence of the AAPA helps to fill out that account, and points to the importance of opposition within the interest group environment. The AAPA's chairman, Du Pont executive and longtime Republican John Jacob Raskob, would switch his party registration, contribute over \$100,000 to the Democratic campaign coffers in 1928, and find himself made chairman of the DNC.¹³³ And the Association itself was active in the election – raising almost half a million dollars to spend in the campaign – compared to under \$200,000 for the Anti-Saloon League.¹³⁴ Both would also be active in the ensuing *legislative* fights to get a repeal amendment on the table, evidenced by the appearance of both the Anti-Saloon

League and the AAPA before the Caraway lobbying committee the following year (and a number of other congressional investigating committees between 1928-1930).¹³⁵ After the election of a president committed to repeal, and after ratification of the promised constitutional amendment – the 21st – in December 1933, the issue was effectively dead.

But issue advocacy was not. Instead the main cleavage around which it turned came to reflect the other major initiatives of that president – the New Deal legislative agenda, and the role of the state in the economy.

The Features of Political Action

This overview of organizations appearing before campaign expenditure committees, or in supplemental data, speaks to the changing contours of electoral participation in the first half of the 20th Century. Several organizational features and developmental themes are apparent, particularly in terms of the kinds of underlying “interest” with which electoral participants are associated, and the *nature* of the organization through which they pursue their political aims. It shows the appearance of new kinds of party actor, but more critically, of various *non-party* actors in national campaigns. From temporary entities fostered by the parties themselves, these non-party electoral actors would exhibit increasing organizational and particularly *financial* independence from the party, and would come to be placed on a much more permanent basis, whether forged around individual candidates, ideological perspectives, or basic economic *interests*.

Financial independence from parties, first really apparent in 1936, with Labor’s Non-Partisan League and the Liberty League, would mark the beginning of “outside “actors being net financial contributors *to* a party’s overall election effort, rather than being funded by them. In this contest, the money raised was *channeled* independently too. Such independently-financed committees were further encouraged by changes to campaign finance law, particularly the passage of the Hatch Act

Amendments of 1940, which imposed an overall cap on spending by any one political committee, and thereby encouraged a proliferation of alternative vehicles through which to raise and spend campaign cash.¹³⁶ And while in later years, PACs would also contribute directly *to* candidates and party committees, they still raised their funds independently, and mounted large campaigns separate from the party or candidate, though waged on his behalf.

Financial independence from parties, therefore, suggests one key attribute of political action committees. Otherwise, a group is simply a subsidiary of the party organization itself – however the connection might be presented to the public. A term often used to describe this kind of organization is a party “auxiliary” – the same term used to describe the official subsidiaries sections of the national committees, like the “Young Democrats” or the “College Republicans,” discussed above. There are, however, important distinctions between acting *as* an auxiliary to party, that is, effectively aiding its candidates and cause, and *being* an auxiliary in a formal or tangible sense.¹³⁷ Key began to recognize this distinction in later editions of his textbook, where he applied the label “auxiliaries” only to those groups that received financial backing from the regular party apparatus, while labeling groups that were truly financially independent of the party as “non-party groups.”¹³⁸

Another trend apparent across various types of actor reviewed here is one of *durability* and eventual *permanence*. Other than the political party organizations, early campaign committees in their varying forms were viewed as *temporary* entities. As the Lonergan committee observed in 1936, “independent” campaign groups were “*emergency* committees and organizations varying in nature and purpose.”¹³⁹ But the kinds of organization appearing in the 1930s and especially the 1940s suggested endurance more than emergencies.

The *basis* around which an electoral group was organized had some bearing on this. Where candidates might be ephemeral, societal *interests* offered a more durable basis upon which to found electoral organizations – ones that could promote the same *issues* even as different candidates cycled

on and off the ticket. When permanent economic interest groups created electoral organizations, therefore, there likelihood of enduring was increased. At the same time, the emergence of Citizens for Eisenhower in the 1950s indicates that durability beyond election cycles was beoming evident even in the candidate world, suggesting that trends among one type of electoral actor are eventually reflected across others, even where their underlying basis would seem to be evanescent.

Of course, since elections themselves are intermittent, permanent electoral organizations must undertake other sustaining activities. Labor’s Non-Partisan League did so by falling back upon more traditional ideas of legislative lobbying, before gearing back up for electoral action in the 1938 midterms (and would have played a similar role in 1940 if it were not for internal divisions among their leadership). The CIO P.A.C., however, and subsequent political action committees, would turn to “political education” as their sustaining activity – avoiding direct legislative lobbying. PACs thus exhibit a greater *specialization* and dedication to specific kinds of electoral-oriented activity, along with an intended *durability* beyond a particular election cycle.

Combining ideas about financial and organizational independence with the longevity of the organization allows a rough classification of the organizational types of electoral actor evident in the witness and supplemental data.

Table 3.9. Classifying National Group Electoral Actors

| | | <i>FINANCIALLY INDEPENDENT OF PARTY?</i> | |
|------------------|--|--|--|
| | | <i>NO</i> | <i>YES</i> |
| <i>TEMPORARY</i> | | Auxiliary campaign group | Non-party campaign group |
| <i>PERMANENT</i> | | Formal party auxiliary | Permanent electoral group Permanent educational group |

The final identifying features are activity-based: whether groups engage in direct campaign contributions, electoral endorsements, and voter mobilization. Without the first two, a group may qualify as a “political education committee” – if such a label existed – but not a political *action* committee. As the discussion above suggests, by the 1940s, examples of *both* were beginning to appear.

Patterns of Organizational Development and Partisanship

With this understanding of the different kinds of electoral actors in mind, I turn my attention to a subset of groups that appear (or are closely associated with groups that appear) across both types of hearings, as a way to highlight the transition from lobbying toward more election-oriented forms of activity. I use supplemental data for the missing electoral years here, but still compare groups to those appearing in lobbying hearings. This approach highlights what I suggest are distinct phases of interest group development – from lobbying to electioneering.¹⁴⁰

Table 3.10. Interest Groups/ Associated Organizations Appearing Before Both Types of Investigation, By Date

| YEAR | LOBBYING | CAMPAIGNS | YEAR |
|-----------|--|--|--------|
| | | National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) | 1912 |
| 1913-1914 | American Federation of Labor (AFL) National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) National Council for Industrial Defense (NAM) | | |
| | | Anti-Saloon League Association Against the Prohibition Amendment | 1928 |
| 1929 | American Farm Bureau Federation Anti-Saloon League Association Against the Prohibition Amendment US Chamber of Commerce | | |
| 1935 | Crusaders (ALL) Nat'l Comm. to Uphold Constitutional Government Sentinels of the Republic (ALL) | | |
| | | American Liberty League (ALL) Labor's Non-Partisan League (CIO) | 1936 |
| | | Nat'l Comm. to Uphold Constitutional Government | 1940 |
| | | National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) <i>CIO-Political Action Committee (CIO)</i> <i>Nat'l Citizens Political Action Committee (CIO)</i> Committee for Constitutional Government Constitutional Education League | 1944 |
| | | National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) American Federation of Labor (AFL) <i>CIO-Political Action Committee (CIO)</i> <i>Nat'l Citizens Political Action Committee (CIO)</i> | 1946 |
| 1950 | Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) Committee for Constitutional Government Constitutional Education League <i>Americans for Democratic Action</i> | | |
| | | <i>Labor's League for Political Education (AFL)</i> <i>CIO-Political Action Committee (CIO)</i> | 1952 |
| | | US Chamber of Commerce <i>Committee on Political Education (AFL-CIO)</i> | 1956 |
| 1956/7 | American Farm Bureau Federation AFL-CIO (merged 1955) <i>Committee on Political Education (AFL-CIO)</i> US Chamber of Commerce | | 1956/7 |
| | | <i>Americans for Constitutional Action (ACA)*</i> <i>Americans for Democratic Action</i> <i>Committee on Political Education (AFL-CIO)</i> | 1960 |
| | | <i>Americans for Constitutional Action (ACA)*</i> <i>Americans for Democratic Action (ADA)</i> <i>Business-Industry Pol. Action Committee (NAM)</i> <i>Committee on Political Education (AFL-CIO)</i> | 1964 |

* *Americans for Constitutional Action* was formed after the last general investigation of lobbying activities in this period was held.

As shown in Table 3.10, focusing on this subset indicates more clearly the development of interest group electoral action in the direction of political action committees – shown in bold.¹⁴¹ The table includes the major groups mentioned at the outset in the brief overviews of early PACs, but it also includes other groups to which little attention has been drawn in any scholarship – such as the National Committee to Uphold Constitutional Government – or groups that are not typically viewed as early political action committees, like the Americans for Democratic Action. Further, analysis of the groups listed here suggests important patterns and differences in the development toward PACs: a particular sequence and trajectory of formation, evident first among national labor union federations (the CIO and the AFL), then adopted by liberal ideological groups (Americans for Democratic Action and the National Committee for an Effective Congress), followed by conservative groups (the ACA), and then apparent in the business community (BIPAC).

If developments external to interest groups themselves, changes in the broader political environment are somehow inducing them to “go into politics,” we might expect to see uniformity in the *timing* of this development and the participants. Instead, the data indicate a dynamic of organization and counter-organization – a common pattern in interest group development – with innovation in one interest group sector eventually counteracted by organization from an “opposing” sector. The conservative “Americans for Constitutional Action” is a good example – established in 1959 with the explicit intention of counteracting the liberal “Americans for Democratic Action” – adopting the same organizational form and set of activities as its opponent, though channeling them in a different direction, and even approximating its name. Since it was founded in 1959 as a free-standing organization, the ACA is the only example in the table where a related group did *not* also appear in a lobbying hearing. Given its status as a direct response to the ADA, and the prominence accorded it in the supplemental data from 1960 and 1964, however, I have included it as an

important element of this particular developmental phase. Similarly, the labor electoral mobilization of the 1940s was eventually met with a business program along similar lines in the early 1960s.

But this is not to say that the NAM, or the Chamber of Commerce, were not politically engaged prior to this point. Far from it. In the lengthy gap between the formation of the CIO's "Political Action Committee" in 1943, and the NAM's "BIPAC" in 1963, the NAM and other business interests, alongside conservative-leaning groups more generally, appeared to follow a somewhat different approach to electoral involvement. They placed more of an exclusive emphasis on "political education," with some of the conservative ideological groups constituting, in effect, dedicated political *education* committees. The Chamber, especially, developed a more actively political emphasis oriented toward mass audiences in the 1950s, though it stopped short of direct political action. Where the NAM would soon create its PAC, the Chamber, in fact, would seem to take a step back – focusing more on legislative and administrative lobbying even as a new wave of corporate PACs were being created in the 1970s. It is only in recent electoral cycles that the Chamber has come to play a much more explicit electoral role – through a variety of structures permitted under current campaign finance law, including, since 2010, a PAC.

It is on the organizations indicated here, beginning with the 1936 election, that I primarily focus my attention in the rest of the dissertation – particularly the economic interest groups that form such an important part of our conceptions of party-group alliances today. Though American Farm Bureau Federation does appear in the table, due to its appearance before the McClellan Committee in 1956/57, the dual nature of that committee's remit – examining both legislative lobbying and electioneering – meant that a mix of groups appeared before it, not all of which were engaged in both fields. The Farm Bureau's appearance was particularly linked to legislative lobbying activities, and only otherwise appears before lobbying committees (the Caraway Committee in 1929). The other groups noted for this year all appeared separately before both types of committee.

More generally, agriculture presents an interesting counter-example to the partisan dynamics exhibited by major business and labor groups: Drawing on the framework I presented in the previous chapter, one might speculate that agricultural interests did not expand their activities into the electoral sphere due to satisfaction with existing methods for achieving their policy aims. Finegold and Skocpol (1995), for example, observe that the Agricultural Adjustment Administration was one of the clearest success stories of the New Deal, helping to address the chronic economic instability farmers had long faced.¹⁴² In terms of the interest group environment itself, moreover, farmers lack a direct economic opponent, and they also enjoy some of the normative benefits Key associated with veterans, given the cultural importance of the agricultural ideal from the American Founding onwards. Even today, the Farm Bureau at the national level remains largely aloof from electoral politics – it has no federal PAC, for example.¹⁴³ Though Hansen suggests it exhibited some Republican leanings in the 1950s, the contemporary Farm Bureau does not convey an obvious partisan identity. Though beyond the scope of this dissertation, exploring the contrasting dynamics exhibited by agricultural interests will be an important avenue for future work.

My focus here will primarily be confined to the economic interest groups apparent across these lobbying and campaign expenditure hearings, to the ideological organizations that began to hew in their direction, and to the political action committees they ultimately created. In the chapters that follow, I explore in greater detail their nature, activities, and relationships to the major political parties.

4. A Tale of Two Leagues

As the 1936 presidential election approached, the journalist Max Lerner observed a “new phenomenon” in the world of campaign politics – the “fellow-traveler.” This label, he explained, applied to “someone who does not accept all your aims but has enough in common with you to accompany you in a comradely fashion part of the way.”¹ Both major presidential candidates – incumbent Democratic President Franklin Roosevelt and the Republican challenger, Governor of Kansas, Alf Landon – had acquired such fellow-travelers in the campaign, Lerner explained:

“Mr. Landon fears to link arms openly with them, but they are unmistakably seeking to help him on his difficult trek to the White House—Coughlin, Townsend, Gerald Smith, Al Smith, the du Ponts, Hearst, and Lemke. Mr. Roosevelt’s fellow-travelers are the forces of progressive labor, organized nationally as Labor’s Non-Partisan League and in crucial New York taking the form of the American Labor Party.”²

This list of individuals and specific organizations embraced a rather disparate set of personalistic movements, third parties that would come up short, newly prominent labor activists, and disaffected businessmen. Differing in terms of their organization, financial status, motivations, and relations to political parties, the campaign efforts launched by these actors reflected a surge of organizational creativity in the electoral arena – born of the political and economic turmoil of the early New Deal.

Though often regarded as a “critical” or “realigning” election, Franklin Roosevelt’s definitive victory in the 1932 presidential election had not subdued all dissenting voices – and his administration would soon create new ones.³ Nor had it diminished desire for vehicles of expression outside of the extant two-party system. As early as 1933, the Socialists were testing the waters for a potential run.⁴ And that fall, the “League for Independent Political Action” had called a convention to discuss other third party prospects – out of which had emerged the “Farmer-Labor Political Federation,” which hoped to finally bring about the longed for union of agriculture and labor interests behind a new political agenda.⁵ A pseudo-third party in itself, the Federation was nonetheless toying with the prospect of a national presidential campaign in 1936.⁶ The Minnesota

Farmer-Labor Party, after all, had been gaining ground – electing Floyd B. Olson as governor in 1930, who would himself call for a national convention in early 1936. And other state-level third parties were emerging. In 1934, Wisconsin had returned Philip La Follette to the governor's office, under the banner of the Progressive Party, which he and his brother had just created – though they seemed content for it to remain within state borders, at least for now.⁷ Thus the classic vehicle of reformers – the third party – was still a prominent recourse for the politically dissatisfied, even as its periodic national incarnations had proved persistently unsuccessful.

And across the country, charismatic political personalities were tapping in to popular discontent. There was Francis Townsend – a small-town doctor with a big idea. His revolving pensions for the elderly would solve the economic problems of the New Deal *and* care for the aged, he claimed. Or Father Charles Coughlin, a Catholic priest with a large radio following and a religiously-infused vision of “social justice.” And of course, there was Huey Long – the former Governor of Louisiana, now its senator, whose economic program called for capping individual fortunes at \$1 million and – unabashedly – spreading the rest around.⁸ The organizations these personalities created to promote their visions would be distinctive too, more like a hybrid of the “pressure group” and the kinds of candidate-based campaign committees that had become more apparent in the 1920s. Yet when these organizations looked to have influence in the 1936 election, they reverted to a third party form.

Groups based in economic interests, however, would forge a more enduring hybrid in the 1936 election, bringing interest groups, specific issues, and individual candidates together in a new approach to politics. New kinds of party-funded but ostensibly separate campaign groups had begun to appear in 1932, seeking to downplay the presidential candidate's party affiliation, and appeal to broader communities on the basis of his *principles*. In 1936, two groups identified with business and labor interests would move a step further, building organizations that were truly separate from the

political parties, though directing aid toward (or against) their candidate's campaigns. 'Labor's Non-Partisan League' and the 'Liberty League' were among the most important "fellow travelers" in the 1936 campaign. They would stress their organizational "independence" from the parties as a means of emphasizing their *political* independence too, bolstering a rhetorical case that their support for a candidate was based not on blind partisanship, nor implied any wider commitment to the party whose label he bore. These groups would lessen the call for independent parties, in the short-term at least, through what would eventually become known as "independent political action."

Whether the 1936 election constitutes a "critical" one, or whether 1932 does either, the New Deal would undoubtedly foster new ideological divisions in the American polity, and set in motion a changing configuration of party policy priorities and voter preferences – a party "realignment" around support or opposition to the New Deal. It was in this contest that the contours of modern electoral organization and politics first began to emerge – through the innovations of some of these "fellow travelers." And it is the new political forms and modes of action first realized in the 1936 election, I argue, that would ultimately carry that realignment into effect in the party system. In this and the following chapters, I begin to show how.

Party Auxiliaries and 'Non-Party' Groups

As his re-election year dawned, Roosevelt told James Farley that he was "very anxious that we start organizing different committees at once."⁹ A few days later, the gears started turning to reach out to progressive senators such as George Norris – a Republican from Nebraska – who had been heavily involved in supporting Roosevelt's 1932 campaign.¹⁰ In that contest, Norris had helped form the "National Progressive League," a group composed of Republican and Democratic leaders who had urged "progressives" generally to support Roosevelt's bid for the presidency.¹¹ And it would form an important model for a number of efforts in 1936.

The National Progressive League

Formed in September, 1932, the National Progressive League had a simple and attractive slogan, apparently coined by Norris himself: “What this country needs is another Roosevelt in the White House.”¹² And it was based on a simple and attractive concept: to give non-Democrats a way to support *Franklin* Roosevelt without identifying themselves with his party directly, to help negotiate the cultural norms that made support for a presidential candidate a defining act of partisanship.¹³

Norris recruited other progressive leading lights to the cause, including Harold Ickes and Henry Wallace (both Republicans who would soon be installed in Roosevelt’s cabinet) and George Peek – the agricultural leader who had headed up the Independent Agricultural League in 1928.¹⁴ Indeed, the National Progressive League was based on a similar idea and form to that prior effort – an organization *separate* from the party apparatus, emphasizing the *separability* of the candidate from his party – now deployed on a much larger scale, and appealing to an ideological rather than interest-based community.¹⁵ Of course, like the “Independent Agricultural League,” saying a group was separate from the party organization, and *being* effectively separate were two different things. Despite the Republican progressives among its number, the League’s national committee was packed with Democrats.¹⁶ More importantly, like the agricultural version in 1928, it was also *financially* connected to the Democratic Party – receiving substantial support directly from the party coffers.¹⁷

Nonetheless, the NPL’s leaders would aim to make the separation in their words at least, if not in their deeds – with Norris embarking upon a countrywide speaking tour, driving home the point that a vote for Roosevelt was just that, a *personal* endorsement, not a partisan one.¹⁸ And the candidate himself would aid the rhetorical cause when he flew to Chicago as the Democratic Convention met, breaking precedent by accepting their presidential nomination in person and addressing the delegates. “I invite those nominal Republicans who find that their conscience cannot

be squared with the groping and the failure of their party leaders to join hands with us,” the newly minted presidential nominee told the radio audience beyond the auditorium.¹⁹ Many would do so.

But the National Progressive League’s appeal was not confined to progressive Republicans – aiming to make their party defection seem more acceptable. It also looked to more radical leftists too – hoping to make them feel less like “sell-outs” if they leant their support Roosevelt’s way. In this it was designed to actively counter voices on the left, especially that associated with another relatively new organization – the “League for Independent Political Action” (LIPA). The LIPA had been formed in 1929, by a group of “radical intellectuals,” as Kessler (1967) describes them, including the philosopher John Dewey, the economist Paul Douglas, sociologist W. E. B. DuBois, and Oswald Garrison Villard, editor of *The Nation*.²⁰ These intellectuals believed that the changing social realities brought on by industrialization were insufficiently reflected in the relatively static political environment – in essence, they sought a *realignment* of the party system around the key struggles of modern society, the struggle of capital and labor. Since they perceived little difference of opinion between the two main “capitalist parties” – Democratic and Republican – a realignment could only be brought about by adding a new, non-capitalist party into the mix.²¹ Indeed, party “realignment” was widely understood in these terms, where the configuration of party competition could only be altered through the disruptive force of a third party.²² Accordingly, LIPA developed a plan for “a *campaign of political education* that will bear fruit at the election four years hence” – either helping to form a new independent party by that point, or at least fielding a viable independent presidential candidate.²³

But the LIPA struggled to get this message across. Disheartened by the outcome of Robert La Follette’s 1924 presidential bid, and by a 1928 election that had seen the lowest third party vote in sixty years, enthusiasm for another third-party project seemed lacking. It clashed with the Socialist Party, still unclear about its own future direction after a bad showing in 1928, and it failed to recruit

sub-national third parties to a new national cause.²⁴ And the unions were wary. Few longtime radicals had the remaining energy of Ohio State professor Horace English, who had been “a follower of all previous liberal forlorn hopes since my first vote,” and could still “stand another couple dozen lickings.”²⁵ More typical was the reaction of another correspondent, writing to Dewey in 1931: “WHAT’S THE USE?”²⁶ Its natural constituency flagging, the LIPA’s intellectual appeal did not easily translate into popular politics. It was unable to build a strong supporter base, and its membership never got above 10,000.²⁷

Still, the LIPA’s membership included influential intellectual leaders, whose call for a third party was not an idle one. Dewey even penned a series of articles in the *New Republic* in 1931, rather concretely entitled “The Need for A New Party,” which pointed to the LIPA as a starting point for building one.²⁸ Since the LIPA was not itself a third party, and they recognized that reeducating the public to support one would be a lengthy process, the LIPA determined to offer electoral support to third party and independent candidates in the mean time.²⁹ They had even quietly approached Norris in 1930, in the hopes that he might run as an independent presidential candidate.³⁰ The Nebraska senator had refused – he had little faith in independent party politics or presidential candidacies, preferring to maintain his personal political independence within the existing party system, as a nominal, but hardly regular, Republican.³¹ But the LIPA was resolutely against working within the extant party system, even where the positions espoused by some of its candidates might seem appealing: “we are firmly opposed to giving aid and comfort to any men within the old parties no matter how promising they seem,” its assistant secretary wrote in 1930.³² “A “good” man in a party that is controlled by interests that control the Republican and Democratic parties is impotent no matter how much he may aspire to,” he concluded.³³

As progressive sentiment warmed toward Roosevelt, therefore, the LIPA turned cold. As someone who might *seem* to give progressives what they wanted, while still being tied to the old

ways, they viewed Roosevelt as the most dangerous threat to real political change of all. But the Depression had raised the stakes for many other progressives – uncertain about Roosevelt, perhaps, but unwilling to risk a division within their numbers that might hand the election to a more conservative candidate. *That* was the bigger danger as far as Norris and his allies were concerned. It was in this context that Norris determined to form the National Progressive League, aiming to unify the progressive vote behind FDR.³⁴ While the father of philosophical pragmatism would retain his third party dreams, political pragmatism would be the order of the day for Norris. And pragmatism seemed to pay off in November, as Roosevelt swept into the White House, while the LIPA's candidate was swept away. Having ultimately backed Socialist Norman Thomas, they would see him poll only about 885,000 votes – putting Thomas atop the rag-tag bunch of third party candidates on the ticket that year, at the very least.³⁵

With Roosevelt elected, its purpose fulfilled, the National Progressive League closed its doors. Like other campaign committees formed to that point, it was envisaged as a *temporary* effort, existing for the purposes of the immediate campaign. Though Norris and Ickes had shown a flicker of interest in maintaining the League in some form – as an unofficial progressive Republican club – the flicker soon went out.³⁶ The National Progressive League was put to rest, and the Democratic Party quietly acquired its membership list.³⁷

The National Progressive League 2.0.

Four years later, Roosevelt came knocking on Norris's door once again. But Norris hung back in 1936, prompting not-so-subtle invitations from the Oval Office for others to take up the mantle of organizing a progressive group to support Roosevelt's re-election campaign.³⁸ Not until the summer were things fully under way, coming to fruition in early September with a rousing conference held in Chicago, which ostensibly voted to establish the committee, but in reality simply unveiled it – with

conferees pledging \$10,000 to help get its campaign to re-elect Roosevelt started.³⁹ Senator Robert La Follette, Jr., scion of Wisconsin's prominent progressive family – variously Republican and otherwise – was now primarily in charge of the group, and was joined by a number of progressive luminaries from both sides of the aisle in Congress, the states, and by various labor leaders.⁴⁰ Floyd B. Olson, the Farmer-Labor Governor of Minnesota, would also be involved, having backed away from his earlier calls for a third party candidate in the election. Olson had simply become too afraid of a split in the progressive vote allowing a “fascist Republican” to be elected instead.⁴¹

Like the National Progressive League of 1932, the 1936 model ‘Progressive National Committee’ (PNC) was explicitly *not* a third party, nor an open supporter of the Democratic Party *per se*.⁴² It produced a manual for speakers, guiding them to emphasize how the committee was *not* a party, and urging them to avoid mentioning third parties, or making any allusions as to the 1940 campaign.⁴³ The 1936 contest presented “a conflict which is above party,” the manual explained. “It is a conflict between the American idea, the Progressive and the Liberal idea, and the selfish, grasping irresponsible dictatorship of the few.”⁴⁴ Through the PNC’s efforts, support for those progressive or liberal ideas would translate into support for an individual candidate (though discussion of *personality* itself was also to be avoided).⁴⁵

The Committee's purpose, as McCoy (1956) summarized, was “to attract the votes of liberals, progressives, independents, and nonpartisans in doubtful or pivotal states for the President.”⁴⁶ In essence, the idea was to maintain intellectual integrity, even disdain for parties, while avoiding the risk of splitting the progressive vote.⁴⁷ But it would not be alone in launching such an effort. A number of similar groups would emerge in 1936, appealing to intellectual communities, supporters of particular issues, individuals associated with particular interests, or demographic populations writ large – seeking always to connect those individuals to the presidential candidate. The ‘Roosevelt Agricultural Committee,’ the ‘Good Neighbor League,’ and the ‘Committee of One,’

for example, would all be prominent actors in the drive to re-elect Franklin Roosevelt.⁴⁸ Such vehicles were intended, as Spencer (1981) explains, “to attract voters who had a significant stake in the New Deal relief and recovery programs; black Americans, farmers, laborers, women, and ethnic groups,” for example, and progressives more generally, “who felt at ease supporting Roosevelt but not the Democratic party.”⁴⁹ These kinds of groups – on the Democratic side, at least – “were more active and in greater number than any other previous election,” Spencer (1976) observed.⁵⁰

While the Roosevelt Agricultural Committee appealed, as its name suggests, to farmers and their communities, the Good Neighbor League went beyond personal economic realities and appealed to idealism. It took the concept of the “Good Neighbor” as expressed in Roosevelt’s foreign policy and applied it to the domestic New Deal.⁵¹ Its “appeal was to be directed to those groups open chiefly to idealistic solicitations, such as liberal-minded businessmen, educators, Negroes, religious leaders, social workers, and women,” explained McCoy (1960).⁵² Perhaps as a response to the Coughlin threat, the Good Neighbor League particularly emphasized religious themes: its major campaign pamphlet, “The Social Ideals of the Churches and the Social Program of the Government,” as McCoy (1960) noted, was primarily concerned with “establishing the economic principles of organized religion”⁵³ The reach of the Committee of One was even broader – it involved no objective identity or ideal beyond a common commitment to Roosevelt. It was simply “a large organization of Roosevelt supporters who signed pledge cards to commit themselves to work as a Committee of One for the President.”⁵⁴ As Milkis (1993) suggests: “[t]hese independent groups, which organized farmers, blacks, labor, as well as intellectual and social activists...marked a new type of organization,” becoming effectively “auxiliaries of the parties” – nonparty organizations which leaned toward the New Deal presidents on the basis of “programmatic benefits and causes.”⁵⁵

Such efforts, in fact, suggest a changing view of the electorate – one that Weed (1994) has illuminated.⁵⁶ Instead of seeing voters in relation to the traditional sectional map of the country, an

increasingly nationalized electorate was emerging. Yet at the same time, it was conceived in ever-narrower vertical slices, with voters viewed in relation to group identities and or issue-based affiliations. Weed attributes much the GOP's failure in the 1936 elections to misperception – to a still “sectional” view of the political scene that blinded them to the changes in political competition (particularly in terms of *interests*) being wrought by the New Deal.⁵⁷ The Democrats, in effect, were building a new kind of coalition.⁵⁸

How “Independent”?

By making individual presidential candidates the recipient of their support, these groups claimed “non-partisanship” in purpose. By doing so as an organization “independent” of the regular party apparatus in some sense, they claimed “non-partisanship” in form. Thus the two concepts that had once represented opposing positions – working outside of the extant party system, versus working within it – came together under reconfigured meanings.

Yet the extent to which these groups were truly “independent” of the regular party apparatus varied widely. Though they aimed to attract voters repelled by party politics, they might also be connected to the regular party in tangible, if unpublicized, ways. As a Senate investigating committee tasked with examining campaign expenditures in the this election summarized:

“During every national campaign, emergency committees and organizations varying in nature and purpose, are created to carry on political work. Ostensibly, they function independently of the regular national party organizations, but, in reality, they are closely affiliated with them in their political and financial endeavors. They solicit funds directly from party members, as well as received financial aid from their related national committees.”⁵⁹

This Senate committee, chaired by Augustine Lonergan (D-CT) was established both to assess compliance with the Federal Corrupt Practices Act of 1925 and investigate any complaints of violations under it, and produced an extensive report offering some of the most comprehensive campaign finance data available in this period.⁶⁰ As shown in Table 4.1, reproduced from Overacker

(1937) and drawing on the Lonergan report, the Committee of One, the Good Neighbor League and the Roosevelt Agricultural Committee all received substantial financial backing from the Democratic National Committee itself.⁶¹

Table 4.1. “Expenditures of Important Non-Party Organizations in 1936”

| “Important Non-Party Organizations” | Expenditures | Received from National Committee |
|--|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| <i>Favoring Democrats</i> | | |
| Committee of One | \$65,213 | \$32,486 |
| Good Neighbor League | 168,677 | 34,750 |
| Labor's Non-Partisan League | 169,011 | --- |
| Progressive National Committee | 54,460 | --- |
| Roosevelt Agricultural Committee | 272,609 | 244,087 |
| Progressive Republican Committee for Franklin D. Roosevelt | 7,233 | 5,000 |
| Young Democratic Club of America | 22,973 | 10,750 |
| Total | \$760,176 | \$327,073 |
| <i>Favoring Republicans</i> | | |
| Independent Coalition of American Women | \$107,783 | --- |
| Liberty League (National headquarters) | 518,123 | --- |
| Women's National Republican Club | 27,973 | --- |
| Total | \$653, 879 | --- |

Source: Reproduction of “Table II- Expenditures of Important Non-Party Organizations in 1936,” in Louise Overacker, “Campaign Funds in the Presidential Election of 1936,” *American Political Science Review* 31 No. 3 (1937), 478.

In this financial sense, then, they were truly *auxiliaries* to the party – dependent upon it, contrary to their claims of organizational independence. They shared an important characteristic with the official, permanent party auxiliaries like the “Young Democratic Clubs of America” which had been formed in 1932 and also appears on Overacker’s list.⁶² Nonetheless, the total expenditures of these

groups indicates that they spent substantially more than they received from the DNC, suggesting they raised further sums from other sources, or went into debt. The Good Neighbor League, for example, received nearly \$35,000 from the DNC in the form of direct transfers or loans, though it raised almost \$169,000 more from individual donors – typically in large donations of \$500 or more.⁶³ At the same time, it still finished the election with a deficit of almost \$47,000, which the DNC largely paid off.⁶⁴

Yet as Overacker distinguished, both major parties had “received important aid from auxiliary organizations *or* from groups which functioned entirely independently” (labels which she placed under the broader category of “non-party organizations”).⁶⁵ As Table 4.1 suggests, some groups did *not* receive any funds from the national party committees. On the Republican side, in fact, the groups offering support to Landon’s campaign did so on an entirely independent financial basis – the ‘Liberty League’ for example, the ‘Independent Coalition of American Women,’ and even the Women’s National Republican Club, which was essentially an official and permanent party auxiliary.⁶⁶ On the Democratic side, two groups exhibited a similar financial profile – the Progressive National Committee, and ‘Labor’s Non-Partisan League.’ Though the Progressive National Committee actually raised less money from non-party sources than did the Good Neighbor League (about \$60,000), it was still financially “independent” of the Democratic Party in a new way – unlike its 1932 predecessor, the National Progressive League.⁶⁷ Most of the PNC’s non-party money, in fact, came direct from the treasuries of labor unions – almost \$40,000, according to other information provided by Overacker.⁶⁸ And those treasuries opened even wider for Labor’s Non-Partisan League – with unions contributing almost \$200,000 to this newly-formed organization (though it apparently did not expend the entire amount).⁶⁹ Labor’s Non-Partisan League thus led the way in independent fundraising for the Democratic ticket in 1936.

In 1936, the various national organizations promoting Roosevelt's candidacy managed to raise about half a million dollars independently – a relatively small amount compared to the approximately \$5 million the DNC itself would raise that year, but representing an important shift toward the idea that campaign groups might be net *contributors* to a party's overall cause, not an expense.⁷⁰ But this figure was left in the dust by the Republican-leaning independent organizations. Though fewer in number, they raised more money than did the Democratic groups – driven primarily by the Liberty League, which spent over half a million dollars through its national headquarters alone.⁷¹ A crucial aspect of this important election, therefore, involved the contest of these two leagues.

Interests in the Election

Neither directly fostered nor funded by the national party, both the Liberty League and Labor's Non-Partisan League drew instead upon the resources of "special interests" in some sense – the communities of business and labor respectively. In doing so, they came up against the complex set of norms and values surrounding interest group activity in the political realm. As lobbies or "pressure groups," their efforts were hardly regarded in neutral terms, but electoral efforts presented a more explicit kind of involvement in the political process – one that could risk a public backlash. In the legislative sphere, a claim of "non-partisanship" had been an important means of legitimizing their engagement, if not entirely popularizing it, as Clemens (1997) explores.⁷² But a claim of non-partisanship was hard to sustain in the electoral context – particularly in the presidential race. With only one office in view, engagement in presidential elections would inevitably mean picking a *side*. (Involvement in congressional elections, in contrast, had been justified to some extent on the lack of *overall* side-taking possible where multiple races were in play). Combined with efforts to dissociate the presidential *candidate* from his party, then, organizational and financial independence would be

employed to bolster the claim of “non-partisanship” for these groups in a new way – to justify the extension of interest group activity more clearly into the electoral sphere. The new forms, tactics, and sheer scale of activities undertaken by these groups would thus leave a lasting legacy.

Business, the Depression, and Politics

“Ours is a business civilization,” the journalist James Truslow Adams had pronounced in July 1929. “Our economic and social life has been dominated by the business man’s point of view,” he explained. “It has influenced profoundly our moral, intellectual, and even religious life.”⁷³ At the end of a decade of dramatic economic growth, the American businessman seemed to stand at unimpeachable heights – a pillar of his community, essential to its economic success, his voice without rival for political influence. But just a few months after Adams penned these lines, the Wall Street Crash and the ensuing Depression would serve to place that “business civilization” in jeopardy, and bring the prestige of business to an unprecedented low.

Of course, “business” is a diffuse term that embraces many different economic sectors, industries, and corporate interests. But at the national level, the Chamber of Commerce of the United States and the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) were undoubtedly critical voices. Their ideas, Prothro (1954) argued, had “entered the stream of American political thought during the 1920’s as *the* business viewpoint.”⁷⁴ And that viewpoint was not as hostile to the state’s involvement in business affairs as might be supposed.⁷⁵ The Department of Commerce was instrumental in bringing about the very formation of the United States Chamber of Commerce in 1912, for example, while Herbert Hoover’s vision of an “associative state” in the 1920s further encouraged the creation of trade associations.⁷⁶ And there was always lobbying to consider. “Pressure was exerted,” observed journalist Frederick Allen in 1935, casting a glance back over the previous decade, “by groups of business men who professed to hate interference.”⁷⁷

In the early stages of the Depression, the viewpoint coming from these “voices” of business was supportive of any efforts to rationalize and restore the flailing economy. The Chamber had already urged President Hoover to consider some form of cartelization of industry through suspension of the antitrust laws.⁷⁸ After Franklin Roosevelt’s election, they quickly leant their support to the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) he proposed.⁷⁹ The NAM too would recommend passage of the NIRA, if a little more reluctantly in their case.⁸⁰ And the NIRA itself, by requiring industry-wide representatives to help formulate the industrial codes it would enforce, would encourage the creation of other new business organizations.⁸¹

But this cooperative attitude toward the Roosevelt administration and its early New Deal measures would not last long. The NIRA had given representative trade groups a crucial role in shaping codes that would now govern their industries, but it had given other actors – most conspicuously labor – a seat at the table too. As Weed (1994) depicts it, the enthusiasm of the NAM and Chamber waned as the NRA moved away from supporting “industrial self-regulation” toward external regulation.⁸² As new agencies and regulatory threats appeared, and as the federal deficit began to balloon, opposition to the New Deal began to take hold within the NAM and the Chamber, and among other important business leaders too.⁸³ How extensive, and how intensive was this opposition within the wider business community is still a matter of debate.⁸⁴ But the time for debate was over as far as the NAM and Chamber were concerned. By December of 1934, both organizations were publicly voicing their criticisms of the recovery program, and the administration too.⁸⁵ By the following year, Weed summarizes, “business leaders were calling directly for “industrial mobilization” in order to end the New Deal” – to overturn the “new economic order” the Roosevelt revolution was putting into place.⁸⁶

At the same time, existing vehicles for the expressing that hostility were limited. The NAM responded in early 1934 much as a pressure group might be expected to do: it set up a public

relations committee.⁸⁷ But dismantling the New Deal one press release at a time hardly seemed a sufficient response. The Republican Party, moreover, offered a little better alternative. Overacker (1937) observed that the regular Republican machinery was “practically dormant” in the period between the 1932 and 1936 campaigns.⁸⁸ Rudolph (1950) described it as “moribund” in the wake of the 1932 election, spiritually defeated and organizationally defunct.⁸⁹ Though Weed suggests that growing business hostility registered in the RNC’s increasingly oppositional stance in 1936 (going against the Downsian expectation that defeated parties would moderate), it would manifest itself more clearly in an entirely new organization: the American Liberty League.⁹⁰

Enter the American Liberty League

“At a time when the Republican party was bankrupt of leadership and purpose,” Rudolph observed, “the American Liberty League became the spokesman for a business civilization” – one seemingly besieged from all sides in the mid-1930s.⁹¹ In a satirical sketch for the *New Republic*, Hamilton Basso put it in blunter terms. Published in July, 1936, it featured a “Future Historian” recommending a new academic treatise to his wife, concerning the origins and activities of the Liberty League. The title of the work said it all: “An Investigation into the Behavior of Millionaires When Affected by a Severe Case of the Jitters.”⁹²

Whether a case of the jitters, or a deep-seated fear for a fundamental way of life, the Depression had certainly been a shock to the system for America’s business elites. Accustomed to social and political dominance, the loss of prestige and power that paralleled the economic decline was proving difficult to accept, or comprehend. Faced with new political realities from which prominent business leaders felt increasingly alienated, new questions arose among those for whom legislative lobbying had generally proved a successful tool of influence, and for whom the prospect

of electoral action through a third party was almost an anathema. The Liberty League was their solution, and its formation was announced to the world in August 1934.⁹³

Among the founding members were prominent industrialists such as Pierre du Pont and John Jacob Raskob (a vice-president at the chemical giant), Alfred Sloan of General Motors, and J. Howard Pew of Sun Oil, among others. They had become concerned that New Deal programs were fostering economic dependence and “communistic elements” in society. Letters circulated among such like-minded individuals in early 1934 stressing a need “to definitively organize to protect society” from the dire consequences of believing “that all businessmen are crooks.”⁹⁴ They needed “some plan for educating the people to the value of encouraging people to work; encouraging people to get rich,” among other, grander purposes.⁹⁵ The guiding purpose for the “definite organization” they would ultimately forge would lie not in riches per se, but in “preserving the Constitution.” The Liberty League thus described itself as an “educational” organization dedicated to “teach[ing] the necessity of respect for the rights of person and property...and the duty of government to encourage and protect individual and group initiative and enterprise, to foster the right to work, earn, save and acquire property and to preserve the ownership and lawful use of property when acquired.”⁹⁶ Constitutional preservation, therefore, was heavily invested in preserving the traditional rights of property ownership.

Despite the educational language in which their aims were depicted, Basso’s sketch offered a blunter interpretation, once again. “Why was the Liberty League founded?” the Future Historian’s wife asks. “It is fairly safe to say,” he responds, “that the Liberty League was formed to defeat Roosevelt II.”⁹⁷ Indeed, the businessmen who founded the League were by no means novices in traversing the fine line between educational and electoral politics. They had cut their political teeth in the temperance battles of the 1920s and early 1930s, when they mounted various efforts against

the Anti-Saloon League – whose “educational” campaigns and electoral threats had culminated in the Prohibition amendment, ratified in 1919.

To help repeal the 18th Amendment, Raskob had backed Democrat Al Smith in 1928 – the “wet” candidate. He had even taken the reins at the Democratic National Committee and personally retired much of the party’s debt from the failed campaign (he would do the latter again in 1932). With Pierre du Pont, moreover, Raskob had helped launch the ‘Association Against the Prohibition Amendment’ (AAPA) as an explicit counterweight to the Anti-Saloon League, and their combined efforts would ultimately secure the Repeal amendment following Roosevelt’s election.⁹⁸ But hostility to Prohibition cut across the otherwise conservative economic sensibilities among the business leaders in the AAPA. As they became disenchanted with the broader direction of Roosevelt’s policies, many of these anti-prohibitionists would now coalesce around the Liberty League.⁹⁹ Al Smith himself would become a prominent member. Never particularly enamored of Roosevelt, Smith felt increasingly alienated from the latter’s style of progressivism, which went beyond what he himself would countenance.¹⁰⁰ Not for nothing had Walter Lippmann described Smith in 1925 as “the most powerful conservative in urban America.”¹⁰¹

The campaign against Prohibition, in fact, had left a skeleton organization on which to build the Liberty League, as Wolfskill (1962) noted. Though the AAPA had officially disbanded after 1932, its executive committee had left a skeleton group in place– the “Repeal Associates” – whose members were instructed to “continue to meet from time to time” and be ready to form a new group (based on old members) “which would in the event of danger to the Federal Constitution, stand ready to defend the faith of the founders.”¹⁰² That danger would be quickly apparent, and its label was the New Deal. With a foundation already laid, new machinery was quickly in place, and Jouett Shouse – Raskob’s lieutenant at the DNC and former head of the AAPA – was installed as president of the new Liberty League.¹⁰³

Whatever the mix of motivations animating its leading figures, the Liberty League made its public debut the following January, with a sold-out dinner at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington, D.C., featuring Al Smith as the speaker. In a passionate speech, Smith proceeded to denounce the class warfare instigated by the New Deal, to deride its complex web of agencies and acronyms, and to vehemently attack the circle of advisors Roosevelt had surrounded himself with – the Brains Trust – as an affront to traditional modes of governance. But he was more circumspect in his criticism of Roosevelt himself. Though Basso’s *Future Historian* spoke of its founding in terms of an intention “to defeat Roosevelt II,” such sentiments were conspicuously absent from the League’s initial rhetoric and activities.¹⁰⁴

Beyond its professed “educational” purpose, League spokesmen pointed to the mix of Democrats and Republicans among its founding members as a means of bolstering a “non-partisan” claim.¹⁰⁵ “It is definitely not anti-Roosevelt,” moreover, as Shouse told the press when announcing the new organization on August 22, 1934.¹⁰⁶ He had even met with the president prior to its launch – seeking Roosevelt’s seal of approval for its constitutional mission.¹⁰⁷ Roosevelt had been happy to oblige, noting that few could oppose such noble sentiments as the League expressed. Its initial energies were accordingly directed along the lines of publicity, though on a massive scale. As Wolfskill observed, the League “launched an educational campaign that surpassed even that waged against the Eighteenth Amendment.”¹⁰⁸ It offered a subscription news service for weekly newspapers and set up offices in the National Press Club, aiming – as a state division leader told radio listeners in November 1934 – to provide the citizenry with “the means for collective expression of public opinion.”¹⁰⁹ In aiming to do so, it went beyond the realm of a typical “business” pressure group.

For one thing, it sought to build a mass membership – unlike the corporate or trade association-based memberships of the NAM and the Chamber. By the beginning of January, 1936, it

had approximately 75,000 members, rising to about 150,000 at its high point.¹¹⁰ This might be a somewhat lackluster figure when contrasted with the ‘Share Our Wealth’ societies of Huey Long, or the Townsend Clubs, but it still represents an unprecedented effort coming from this quarter.¹¹¹ It organized state divisions, with active Liberty League headquarters in some twenty states by 1936.¹¹² And there were even plans for specialized divisions along *economic* lines – for “homeowners, farmers, labor, savings depositors, life insurance policyholders, bondholders, and stockholders,” as Wolfskill reports, though such plans would never fully materialize.¹¹³ A student Liberty League and a special Lawyers’ Committee did however emerge.¹¹⁴ Indeed, the student section held a week-long institute at the University of Virginia in July 1935, to discuss “The Constitution and the New Deal.”¹¹⁵

The Liberty League, in sum, denied it was a “business” group at all. It stood against the pursuit of selfish interests, its leaders claimed, irrespective of their economic origin – or otherwise. “The League would “provide for the rank and file of the American people . . . an opportunity . . . to offset the influence of any and all groups working for selfish purposes,” the platform declared.”¹¹⁶ Yet it was hard to ignore the extent to which the League’s leadership did *not* appear much like the “rank and file of the American people.” “The new organization was dominated by prominent executives and corporate lawyers from banking, oil, steel, transportation, automaking, and other industries,” Tichenor (2006) has noted, and “boasted especially close ties to General Motors and the Du Pont family’s financial empire.”¹¹⁷ But because it sought to “protect the Constitution” – a presumably universal and noble aim – its prominent founders expected working class members would be eager to join, and that a mass membership would be generated almost automatically (they were eventually persuaded to bring on a paid organizer).¹¹⁸

As much as it denied a business basis, the Liberty League also vehemently denied any suggestion that it was, or might become, a third party. Nor should it be considered an ally of one of the extant parties either. Speaking to the Bond Club of New York late in 1934, Shouse admitted

“while the American Liberty League is in its very essence a political organization – because its objectives are political – it is in no sense a political party. Its cooperation will not be partisan [*sic*]. Its criticism will not be partizan.”¹¹⁹

As with other pressure groups that had dipped their toes in the electoral waters, then, the claim of “non-partisanship” would remain crucial to their public justifications. This non-partisanship, moreover, inhered in more than just their organizational separation and financial independence from the major parties, in the view of Liberty League leaders. It was reflected in their very goal – protecting the Constitution was something *everyone* could support.¹²⁰ The League claimed, moreover, that it was in no way a *business* group – as reflected in its efforts to build a broad membership base. Indeed, its leaders attacked what they saw as a New Deal effort to *create* classes and conflict where none had existed before.¹²¹ “The League is opposed to any attempt to divide this country into classes and blocs,” Shouse affirmed¹²² But the non-partisan claim was most clearly embodied in the very *bi-partisanship* of their leading members: Smith, after all, was a former Democratic governor, Raskob and Shouse former DNC officials. Joining with prominent Republicans, the authority behind the Liberty League’s critique of the New Deal was that *both* sides were represented in condemning it.¹²³ Non-partisanship, from their perspective, was self-evident.

Nor was it explicit electoral activity that first drew the ire of the League’s many critics. It was, instead, their somewhat shadowy presence in a traditional lobbying context: the unprecedented efforts surrounding the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935. The bill targeted the holding company structures through which utilities had consolidated massive monopolies. But the utility executives struck back, as George Soule described in *The New Republic* the following year.

Encapsulating the methods of the “New Lobby” in a single statement, Soule explained that “[w]hat the utility executives really tried to do was not so much to bring their own pressure directly to bear on Congress *as representatives of their own interest*, but to give Congress the impression that multitudes

outside the inner group were opposed to the bill as a matter of public policy.”¹²⁴ That is, as a matter of *constitutional* policy or propriety.

Indeed, a number of groups “formed to defend something that is variously called “the American system,” “the constitution,” or more simply, “liberty”” would soon be called before a Senate investigating committee to explain their actions in regard to the bill.¹²⁵ While representatives of the Liberty League itself did not appear, its presence infused the hearings.

First Among “Liberty-Savers”

Soule labeled the Liberty League as “the most impressive and the best financed” of a number of “liberty-saving” organizations that had been active on the Holding Company bill. But its leading lights had made no appearance before the committee charged with investigating such efforts, chaired by Senator Hugo Black of Alabama.¹²⁶ Instead, its influence was said to have rested in the interconnected patterns of prominent members and financial backing among those groups that did appear – like the ‘Crusaders,’ the ‘Sentinels of the Republic,’ and the ‘National Committee to Uphold Constitutional Government.’¹²⁷ Alfred Sloan, for example, was prominently connected with the Liberty League *and* the “Crusaders” – a group that had been originally formed to promote repeal of the 18th Amendment, before turning their attention to opposing the New Deal.¹²⁸ The “Sentinels of the Republic,” in contrast, had emerged in 1922 to oppose women’s suffrage.¹²⁹

In June of 1936, Black inserted into the *Congressional Record* “a résumé of the contributions made by various groups to certain organizations in America,” beginning with the American Liberty League and including many of the groups that appeared at the hearings.¹³⁰ Beyond the Liberty League, those listed were; “American Federation of Utility Investors, American Taxpayers League, Crusaders, Economists National Committee on Monetary Policy, Farmers Independence Council, League for Industrial Rights, Minute Men and Women of Today, National Economy League, New

York State Economic Council, Repeal Associates, Sentinels of the Republic, Southern Committee to Uphold the Constitution, and Women Investors in America, Inc.”¹³¹

Rudolph described them as part of a range of “all and sundry anti-New Deal groups,” most of which were “masthead organizations,” he said, lacking real memberships but instead “operated by professional publicists and lobbyists, many of whom, like the principal officers and backers of the League, were veterans of the prohibition repeal movement.”¹³² Nonetheless, they all owed substantial financial backing to the same small group of industrialists who sponsored the Liberty League,” Rudolph added.¹³³ Indeed, while the groups themselves denied any formal connections or responsibilities, Soule argued that “their opinions and tactics fit together well enough” Soule remarked, “that one is justified in classifying what they all want under the general head of Liberty League Liberty.”¹³⁴ That term, as Soule described it, embraced a vision of the Constitution dedicated to property rights and little else.

Groups like the League presented their appeals in the language of “rights,” Soule argued – but they no longer openly argued for their own “divine right” to property, having translated their essentially selfish claims into arguments about the rights of the workers themselves.¹³⁵ Thus the “open shop” was pitched in terms of the worker’s individual right to choose when and how he would wish to work. Business had essentially staked out the rhetorical high ground, since as Soule remarked, the “open shop” was effectively “closed against unions and union members,” and the only real right the worker enjoyed, “as to work for what wages and hours the employer pleased, or not to work at all,” since he had no power to negotiate.¹³⁶ In the wake of the NIRA’s guarantee of collective bargaining rights – enshrined in the famous provisions of section 7(a) – business rhetoric turned the tables on independent unions, by claiming they actually interfered with the workers right to bargain through a *company* union.¹³⁷ But their rhetoric rang hollow, Soule claimed, since only the labor movement offered a meaningful right for most workers – “the right of the industrial citizen to

have a share, through democratic procedure, in the decisions that govern his life.”¹³⁸ In political terms, as Soule summarized: “Liberty League liberty simply means fighting against government as a dangerous regulator or rival of private business enterprise.”¹³⁹

In its early fight against government intervention, the Liberty League was largely categorized and understood as a *lobby*. Democratic Senator Pat Harrison of Mississippi, for example, dubbed it the “American ‘Lobby’ League,” and in a sense, the Liberty League might be viewed as a holding company for these various sympathetic affiliates.¹⁴⁰ The utility holding companies, however, did not prevail. Despite expenditures in excess of \$3.5 million on the effort (an amount Soule rather presciently noted was “more than an entire presidential campaign fund usually amounts to”), the Holding Company bill would pass.¹⁴¹ Legislative lobbying, the purported arena of business dominance, had failed spectacularly.

Soule offered little evidence of *electoral* activity by the League – whether extant or planned – though he hinted that business interests more generally might foster localized, “decentralized activities,” which “were harder to trace.”¹⁴² Still, the Liberty League did file a report to the House Clerk in January 1935, which showed close to \$105,000 in receipts since its formation four months earlier – and expenditures of just over \$95,000. It had even given \$9000 directly to the Crusaders.¹⁴³ “League Files as Would a Political Organization,” read the subtitle in the *New York Times*, “but Denies That It is a Party.” In fact, Shouse issued a statement to explain that while the League had filed the report, as a political party might, it did not feel it was under any *legal* obligation to do so. “The League is in no sense a political party,” Shouse said, “it has no intention of placing its own candidates in the field for any public office.”¹⁴⁴ The *Washington Post’s* subtitle was equally incisive: “Aims of Group ‘Political,’ Shouse Says.”¹⁴⁵ As the AP report that followed explained: “Jouett Shouse, president, said any organization which sought to influence legislative action was political. Quickly he added the league was in no way partisan.”¹⁴⁶ The Liberty League, Shouse explained,

“reserves the right to *appeal to both parties* to indorse its principles and it will endeavor to persuade elected officers of Government to adhere to those principles.”¹⁴⁷

Lobbying the Voters?

The Liberty League’s broader publicity activities were but one example of a growing trend – where the methods of grassroots lobbying might be employed but without a specific legislative goal in mind, but rather, an *electoral* one. These seemingly issue-based educational efforts could still imply support or opposition to certain candidates. In February 1936, Representative Howard W. Smith of Virginia was sufficiently concerned about this trend that he introduced legislation aiming to extend the disclosure requirements of the Corrupt Practices Act to those engaged in this gray area of activity.¹⁴⁸ Explaining his effort before a House Judiciary subcommittee, Smith observed:

In recent years there has grown up a different system of government in this country; I may say a government by propaganda. Now, there are numerous organizations, some large and some small...[that] can collect money in large and small quantities, from people all over the country, for the purpose of influencing legislation and propagandizing and getting appropriations or defeating appropriations, and *electing or defeating* Members of Congress or the Senate. And yet they don’t have to do anything; they don’t have to account to anybody; they don’t have to file any accounting with the Clerk or anybody.¹⁴⁹

Just that morning he had received a form letter emanating from “The People’s Lobby, Incorporated” (of which John Dewey was honorary president, continuing his political involvement even after the demise of the LIPA), urging him to oppose an upcoming agriculture bill, or face electoral consequences.¹⁵⁰ “Apparently some of these organizations are collecting enormous sums of money,” Smith noted, pointing to the Liberty League – “Shouse’s outfit” – as a prime example. Though in this case, at least, the Liberty League was reporting its contributions to the Clerk voluntarily, even as it denied being truly *political*.¹⁵¹ Not all such groups were doing so.

Smith’s legislation would seek to address it, embracing efforts to “advocate” for or against *candidates*, suggesting that the fine line between candidate and “educational” or issue-based advocacy was already a matter of concern.¹⁵² It would extend disclosure requirements to “any individual,

partnership, committee, association, corporation, or any other organization or group of persons” who, by themselves, or via an agent, “in any matter whatsoever, directly or indirectly, solicit, collect, or receive money or other thing of value to be used in whole or in part to aid” efforts “[t]o influence directly or indirectly the passage or defeat of any legislation or appropriation by the Congress of the United States,” or “[t]o nominate, elect, or defeat any candidate for the House of Representatives or the Senate of the United States.”¹⁵³ In essence, Smith was aiming to bring lobbying and campaigning regulations under a single umbrella.

Quizzing Smith on bill’s scope, Congressman Francis Walter (D-PA) expressed his own understanding of traditional interest group behavior – where “advocacy” involved efforts to achieve specific *legislative* outcomes, and that it involved “not taking part in any partisan issue” – that is, not taking “sides” or engaging in elections.¹⁵⁴ But he recognized that things were changing – both as to the means and aims of such groups.

Suppose they don’t in so many words *advocate*? For example, suppose that Father Coughlin did not advocate the defeat of my colleague from Pennsylvania, Mr. Boland, but did advocate the defeat of people who opposed his ideas with respect to the Frazier-Lemke bill. Would your bill meet that situation?¹⁵⁵

Smith claimed that it would – or, at least, that his language was “trying to get at all this kind of propaganda.”¹⁵⁶ “It ought to do it,” Walter affirmed.¹⁵⁷

But even as Smith sought legislation to clarify what “educational” efforts were really all about, other legislative frameworks served to encourage such claims. In 1934, for example, restrictions on lobbying were first applied to “charitable” organizations – today classified as 501(c)(3) organizations – as part of the Revenue Act of 1934. This had the effect of encouraging even more “indirect” forms of issue-based lobbying, where the final step – the urging of specific constituent *action* – would be removed. At the same time, the Act had ignored the more flagrant political involvement that electoral activities would embody. Legislators had considered extending the prohibition to “participation in partisan politics,” but the language was defeated in conference,

due to a concern that such a prohibition may be too broad.¹⁵⁸ It also suggests that there was less apparent electoral activity to regulate, when compared to the lobbying concerns they primarily targeted. Indeed, a “political campaign prohibition” was not imposed on charitable organizations until 1954, when then-Senate Minority Leader Lyndon Johnson offered it as an amendment to the Revenue Act being debated that year.¹⁵⁹

The Judicial Alternative

The Liberty League had kept a low profile during the 1934 midterms, though some within its leadership hinted they were simply “marking time” until those contests were over, when it would move aggressively into “the coming struggle to preserve our Constitution.”¹⁶⁰ But into mid-1935, the League was still focused on non-electoral avenues to undoing New Deal legislation – this time in the Courts. Following passage of the National Labor Relations Act (the “Wagner Act”) in July 1935, the League’s National Lawyers’ Committee declared that in its opinion, the Act was unconstitutional, and proceeded to advise employer groups to disobey it.¹⁶¹ Moreover, the League offered free legal support to any employer involved in litigation through such disobedience.¹⁶² In this regard, Vose (1958) drew analogies between the judicial tactics utilized so prominently in the 1950s by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), with those adopted by the Liberty League for quite different purposes.¹⁶³ The idea of the businessman-as-protester is a jarring one – probably so for the individuals themselves. But the League was there to assuage concerns: there was no real disobedience in effect, they suggested. As Earl F. Reed from the Lawyers’ committee announced: “When a lawyer tells a client that a law is unconstitutional...it is then a nullity and he need no longer obey that law.”¹⁶⁴ The result of this advice, however, was a new wave of intense labor-management strife, with increasing allegations of violence and intimidation on the part of employers (ultimately leading, as Rudolph points out, to the sit-down strikes of 1936-37).¹⁶⁵

The NAM would actually mount a similar legal challenge to the Wagner Act, if a less aggressive version.¹⁶⁶ But as their general counsel James A. Emery remarked, such efforts could only achieve so much: “judicial remedies are not sufficient,” Emery observed, “[t]hey afford no remedy against unsound policy.”¹⁶⁷ The judicial approach would be slow, traditional lobbying had failed – each technique was too narrowly focused – moving case-by-case or bill-by-bill. Yet the broader public “education” on the dangers to the Constitution did not appear to have advanced much further. As Texas oilman and a Liberty League financial backer J.S. Cullinan wrote to Shouse at the end of 1935:

“[F]rom my point of view the American Liberty League has never quite fulfilled the aims and ends at least some of us had in view when the program of maintaining an office in Washington was determined... Your thought at that time, as I gathered it, was the creation of a National organization that would reach all or practically all of our citizens regardless of party, and make them constitutionally conscious to the end that... all would be qualified to act or vote intelligently on all matters of public importance.”¹⁶⁸

Something more than constitutional “education” was needed, some greater “remedy against unsound policy” had to be formulated. And with that broader policy agenda now embodied in a single individual, an electoral possibility seemed to offer their last hope of a reprieve: to restore the old constitutional order, they must defeat the architect of that new one.

Personal Politics is Non-Partisan?

Along with Basso in *The New Republic*, other critics of the League would claim that defeating Roosevelt had been the League’s plan all along – Democratic National Committee Chairman James Farley being a prominent example.¹⁶⁹ “[T]here was never any doubt,” Farley said, “that the League would eventually support whatever Republican candidate was nominated.”¹⁷⁰ But even if it had been, translating the *idea* of electoral involvement into concrete activity posed both normative and practical problems. How could a pressure group become involved in a presidential election without either becoming a third party itself or backing a major party candidate and thus violating the “non-

partisan” claim in which the authority of their opposition was presumed to rest? The answer would depend on shaping and expanding the meaning of “non-partisanship” itself.

As 1936 rolled around, speculation mounted as to the League’s intentions, particularly as its prominent individual members appeared to take more strident positions in opposition to FDR. The League’s official position of neutrality, Wolfskill observes, “became untenable” at this point.¹⁷¹ Yet many of those individual members appeared concerned to distance their actions, undertaken in what they saw as a private capacity, from the organization itself. When Al Smith undertook a lecture tour that summer, in which he would explicitly attack Roosevelt and the New Deal, “he carefully refrained from accepting Liberty League sponsorship,” Rudolph notes.¹⁷² Keeping up appearances of organizational independence would remain important to the Liberty League.

The Republican National Committee, moreover, appeared concerned to distance itself too. In February, after reports surfaced that the League would endorse the GOP candidate if the platform passed muster with its executive committee, RNC chairman Henry Fletcher publicly denied any prospect of coordination.¹⁷³ The extent of this dissociation is unclear – Shouse claimed that even as Fletcher was making such statements, strong pressure was emanating from his direction “to have the League endorse the Republican ticket.”¹⁷⁴ But there was likely good reason for Fletcher’s public hesitance – already the Liberty League had come under attack for its “big business” links. Father Coughlin condemned it as “the mouthpiece” of the bankers, while Senator Pat Harrison savaged its organizers as “apostles of greed.”¹⁷⁵ Such rhetoric supports Schattschneider’s warning that too close an association with specific interests, especially *unpopular* ones, could be dangerous for a party too.¹⁷⁶

In April, the League itself put out a statement reaffirming its status as a “nonpartisan organization founded to defend the Constitution.”¹⁷⁷ Again they pointed to their bipartisan composition to bolster the claim, stressing that “that the League’s membership is composed of

thousands of Democrats and thousands of Republicans,” and that it was not concerned with “promoting the special interests of any individual or group.”¹⁷⁸ The message, however, did not seem to be getting through.

By July, when both party conventions were over, the League appeared ready to take a definitive position on its plans for the fall campaign. Since the GOP platform had fulfilled many of their hopes, it was clear which way *policy* and *principle* would lead.¹⁷⁹ But they would still avoid an explicit *endorsement* of the person in whose candidacy their hopes would now rest – Republican nominee Alf Landon.¹⁸⁰ A formal statement soon emerged from the League’s Executive Committee, bearing the imprimatur of Al Smith, and a solemn declaration of its intent. The Liberty League, it was announced, would not embrace the Republican candidate, but would instead pursue “a *non-partisan opposition* to Franklin D. Roosevelt.”¹⁸¹ This statement was, according to Wolfskill, “a *non-sequitur* peculiar to politics” and one to which he attributes much of the Liberty League’s subsequent misfortunes.¹⁸²

By September 1936, that the business community was “in politics” seemed readily apparent to Washington’s observers. “To be convincing, prophecies concerning the November election ought to start with an estimation of the public campaign activities of great corporations and their agents,” observed an editorial in *The New Republic*.¹⁸³ Though “facts are few and obscure,” it acknowledged – laying the blame upon a corrupt practices act with “as many holes as a kitchen colander” – the editorialist felt safe in concluding that there was “no doubt that big business is contributing to the Landon campaign with fantastic liberality.”¹⁸⁴ Prime among these big business representatives in the minds of *New Republic* writers and readers was, of course, the Liberty League. In January, 1937, the Liberty League reported to Congress that it had received \$441,380 in contributions over the course of 1936, while spending \$518,123 – a deficit it had made up with the balance carried over from 1935.¹⁸⁵ In sum, it would spend more than \$1 million on publicity, education, and mobilization

efforts waging its non-partisan opposition to Franklin Roosevelt, more than the RNC.¹⁸⁶

But irrespective of the timeline by which they arrived at this action, the operative term here is its opposition to *Roosevelt*. The very dominance of Roosevelt as the “issue” of the election is important to consider. “As a figure Mr. Roosevelt dominates the whole campaign,” Lerner noted in his October piece for the *Nation*, “but the *division* of forces is not to be seen in personal terms.” That personal appeal was translating along distinctly structural lines: “it comes closer to being a class division than in any election since Jackson’s,” he continued.¹⁸⁷ As a result, “party lines are now more unstable than at any time since the Civil War, as witness the striking shifts of alignment in all the camps.”¹⁸⁸ “Al Smith is right,” Lerner concluded from his review of the situation. “There *are* things that transcend party.”

In this he pointed to the very heart of what Smith and the Liberty League were seeking to convey – a new argument about non-partisanship, in which support for the individual presidential candidate might be separated from support for his party, and re-arrayed on another basis. By stressing the separation of their organization from the regular party apparatus, and the bipartisan composition of their membership, they hoped to convey their separation from party concerns. By presenting their arguments in the negative case – merely pointing out the reasons not to support one candidate, while offering no *active* support to his opponent – they hoped to further this detachment. And by the emphasizing the Constitution, they indicated the alternative basis of support was one of *principle*, not the class lines Lerner discerned.

These claims, however, were resoundingly rejected by liberal commentators at the time, and have been largely mocked in subsequent historical assessments. Everyone, it seemed, dismissed the nonpartisan claims of the Liberty League,” Wolfskill remarked.¹⁸⁹ Rudolph described their purported nonpartisanship as an “obvious fiction” – an attempt “to disguise its backing and its purposes” which opened it up “to the charge of gross hypocrisy.”¹⁹⁰ It was a fiction that offered few benefits,

moreover, Rudolph concluded, since it placed “two serious handicaps” on the Liberty League’s campaign: “It fooled no one; and it amounted to a self-imposed limitation on the kind of attack which could be made upon the New Deal and Franklin Roosevelt.”¹⁹¹ A more open attack, Rudolph seemed to suggest, would have been less hypocritical and more effective. “[T]he New Dealers themselves,” after all, “had no qualms about their own partisanship.”¹⁹²

The Liberty League’s main non-party rival in the ‘36 election would also make non-partisan claims, at the same time that it actively endorsed and embraced its favored candidate – Franklin Roosevelt. Wolfskill had described the Liberty League’s proclaimed “non-partisan opposition to Franklin D. Roosevelt” as “a *non sequitur* peculiar to politics.”¹⁹³ Yet a reverse non-sequitur was apparent in the very name of its rival organization, officially “Labor’s Non-Partisan League for the Re-Election of Franklin D. Roosevelt.’ This differential treatment can be understood, in part, by considering the role of organizational independence and other factors in the justifications offered by each group. The Liberty League placed a greater reliance on organizational independence as an indicator of non-partisanship, but had a weaker justification in which to embed it. Labor’s Non-Partisan League, in contrast, would exhibit a weaker kind of organizational independence, yet a more robust claim to non-partisanship, justifying their electoral involvement in both a more open and seemingly principled way.

Labor’s Non-Partisan League

“More significant than anything Mr. Landon may say in the coming campaign is the fact that he is being backed by the oil, steel and chemical industries,” a *New Republic* editorial observed in September 1936. “[M]ore significant than anything Mr. Roosevelt may say,” it added, “is the support he is receiving from Labor’s Non-Partisan League.”¹⁹⁴ In his discussion of “fellow travelers,” Max Lerner had dismissed the Liberty League as a “desperate union of Tories and fascists” – one that was

“to be expected” in the circumstances. But “[t]he massing of labor almost solidly behind a liberal Democrat deserves closer analysis,” he urged. “The fate of workers and progressives in the fascist countries,” he explained, had sufficiently “roused American workers from their traditional lethargy in politics” and “led the more militant of them to abandon their former “plague on both your houses” attitude and come out for Roosevelt.”¹⁹⁵

The vehicle through which they would channel that support – Labor’s Non-Partisan League – did not make its appearance on the political stage until April of 1936. It was an outgrowth primarily of the nascent “Committee for Industrial Organization” or CIO – a movement within the craft-based American Federation of Labor (AFL) that was pushing for industrial unionization.¹⁹⁶ The CIO had been formed in November 1935 by the presidents of eight international unions, it quickly began organizing drives in the mass production industries, leading the AFL to suspend these unions in September 1936 (not until 1938 would the CIO reformulate as a separate labor federation, the *Congress* of Industrial Organizations).¹⁹⁷ The presidents of three of these CIO unions – John L. Lewis of the United Mine Workers, Sidney Hillman of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, and George Berry of the Printing Pressmen’s union – would come together to form Labor’s Non-Partisan League, which would gain most of its support, financial and otherwise, from unions involved in the CIO.¹⁹⁸ Unlike the Liberty League, it declared its electoral intentions from the start, and it made no efforts to lobby for particular pieces of legislation. At its inaugural convention in August, held in Washington, D.C., an official resolution was adopted affirming the re-election of FDR in 1936 as the League’s “sole objective.”¹⁹⁹

But this objective had not been chosen lightly – it was carefully crafted to maximize internal support from within the labor movement, and to seek external legitimacy from the public at large. With similar caveats about unity as for “business,” we might say that “labor” had made important gains under FDR. The famous assurance in section 7(a) of the NIRA that guaranteed the right to

organize (and the intended protections of the Wagner Act that replaced it), were huge milestones. But many within the labor ranks distrusted Roosevelt's long-term commitment to their aims. There had been little back in 1932 to indicate such support would be forthcoming – the Democratic platform then had made no mention of labor concerns, and the electoral strategy had been, as Brains Truster Raymond Moley described, “essentially agrarian” in its appeal.²⁰⁰ John L. Lewis himself had backed Herbert Hoover that year, while the AFL had remained neutral.²⁰¹ Whether Roosevelt would be supportive beyond 1936 seemed equally unclear.

The “militants” who adopted the “plague on both your houses” stance, as Lerner had pointed to, were the voices that had long called for an “independent” labor party as the only way to ensure fulfillment of the movement's goals. They saw little difference between the two major parties, with both ultimately committed to capitalism and to elevating the desires of business over labor, they felt. To support the titular head of a major party would typically be viewed as a wholesale abandonment of their aim – because for all the parties might be decentralized, ill-disciplined entities at that time, backing the *presidential* candidate had a cultural status as a statement of broader partisanship. But there were practical concerns with that idealist aim itself – independent *parties* had a track record of persistent failure. They might also, as Governor Olson worried, split the progressive vote such that the least-favored candidate would win.

At the same time, the “plague on both your houses” attitude was not too far away from the AFL's traditional political posture – though it had remained resolutely opposed to any “independent” party effort. Indeed, the traditional orientation of the AFL under Gompers had expressed hostility toward parties and partisanship in general. Despite a small-scale foray into the presidential contest of 1908 on the Democratic side, and a half-hearted effort behind Robert La Follette's independent candidacy in 1924, the AFL had formulated a “non-partisan” approach to the political realm that involved rewarding labor's “friends” and punishing its “enemies,” irrespective of

their party affiliation. This mostly reactive political stance was the counterpart to its “business unionism” – the idea that labor required only minimal state action to ensure basic fairness in their dealings with management – by limiting the use of injunctions, for example. In the traditional AFL view, labor would achieve its goals through *collective* action in the shop context, not *political* action in the electoral realm.

But as Taft (1937) pointed out, “[t]he political methods of Gompers and his followers were based on assumptions derived in an environment unlike the present.”²⁰² Taft pointed to new means of employer coercion (such as company unions and spies) and the threat of interregional economic competition from nonunionized areas as prompting a more favorable view of the state, at least among industrial union leaders. Such leaders needed more than just government restrictions on the injunction.²⁰³ As Taft observed, “[u]nlike the skilled workers in the early part of the century, they are unable to depend upon the special skills and a large treasury to bring the employer to terms. Their experience as union men will therefore tend to direct their interest toward politics.”²⁰⁴ The political *mind-set* of the CIO leaders, in particular, was much more attuned to “labor political action” he observed. A fear of government was simply “alien to their mentality.”²⁰⁵ Indeed, with the guarantees of the NIRA largely responsible for the massive expansion of industrial unionism itself, such organizations had been born “in politics,” Taft concluded.²⁰⁶

But being “in politics” was still sufficiently controversial to require special precautions, and special justifications. Labor’s Non-Partisan League, recognizing that collective action was insufficient to the needs of industrial labor, that the AFL’s “friends and enemies” policy could not achieve their immediate aims, and that third parties were an impractical vehicle of political activism, would find a middle way. Indeed, Taft would label the creation of Labor’s Non-Partisan League “a new departure in labor's political activity,” and one that “may mean the beginning of the long-looked-for political re-alignment.”²⁰⁷

Labor's Non-Partisan League would neither be "a party" in itself or attached to one explicitly. It would be formed separately from the regular party organizations, and separate from the CIO too. The choice to engage in political activity via a new entity, and to orient that entity to the Democratic Party – at least for the duration of the 1936 campaign – suggests organizational *learning* on the part of the unions. They had absorbed both the repeated failures of third parties and the apparent successes of auxiliary forms reflected in the Independent Agricultural League of 1928, or the National Progressive League of 1932.²⁰⁸ As with the former example, which had been designed, in part, to safeguard the Farm Bureau's internal unity amid potential political disagreement, the formation of LNPL offered some separation of the CIO unions from the potentially divisive endorsement decision, and as an "external" body, it allowed for broader participation among non-CIO unions too.

Moreover, it proclaimed "non-partisanship" – as a source of both cultural legitimacy and practical internal appeal. Labor's political orientation had long been dominated by the AFL's hostility to partisanship, and even as the CIO embraced a more actively political stance, it sought to smooth over the jump by using these terms.²⁰⁹ It would do so by drawing on the "friends and enemies" policy as a justification for that non-partisanship, while extending its application to the presidential contest. Connecting policy positions to the president, issues to the individual, Labor's Non-Partisan League would support Roosevelt because they affirmed his *policy* stances, not because he was a Democrat. Their non-partisanship would thus be premised on a tangible, and replicable principle – an extension of "friends and enemies," even if underpinned by a basic interest – not on a more diffuse suggestion of "constitutional" disagreement, or an appeal to bipartisan membership.

This rhetorical extension might appear to be an underwhelming step, but it was a critical one – it began a process by which "non-partisan" claims might be detached from "non-partisan" outcomes. That is, the AFL had generally avoided the presidential contest because, with only one

office involved, there was no way in which to ‘balance’ out the results. Indeed, all of the previous interest group electoral experiments had somehow combined their non-partisan claims with substantively *bi-partisan* outcomes. They might not be perfectly balanced across districts or states, but the connection was important. In translating a “friends and enemies” policy to the presidential context, LNPL tried to make the non-partisan case knowing that the substantive outcome would ultimately be one-sided. Hence the importance of placing rhetorical distance between the president and his party, and of distancing themselves, in at least some respects, from the party organization itself.

The AFL did not seem to buy the distinction, or its sustainability. Although the AFL might lean toward FDR, pursuing a policy of “endorsing the candidacy of President Roosevelt by indirection” as Taft observed,²¹⁰ they chose not to participate in the League because they feared, as Hower (2010) explains, “that the organization would be used as a springboard for an independent labor party.”²¹¹ Indeed, the AFL was not entirely wrong on this count. LNPL *was* heavily involved in creating a third party in 1936 – the ‘American Labor Party’ in New York – where flexible election laws would permit a third party to pick a major party candidate for the presidential contest, and thus provide an even better solution for assuaging the concerns of more radical members. In New York, Labor’s Non-Partisan League could thus fuse with the Socialists to offer a more traditional vision of “independent” labor politics – as long as you held your gaze below the top of the ticket.²¹² But in the national contest at large, it would embrace independence in the newer sense – pursuing “independent political action” *within* the two-party system, by supporting a major party presidential candidate.

A Contrast in Political Action

Labor's Non-Partisan League thus threw itself actively into the fall campaign – as did other labor organizations more generally. The \$195,000 that LNPL raised and spent separately from the Democratic Party was small change compared to amounts it and other unions contributed elsewhere.²¹³ The DNC itself was said to have received over \$500,000 from labor unions in 1936, though not all of this appeared in the official reports – perhaps reflecting some anxiety on the party side about too visible an association.²¹⁴ Nonetheless, the Lonergan report does show one violation of the financial detachment between the LNPL and the Democratic Party – a detachment that was meant to run both ways. At least one contribution of \$1000 from LNPL direct to the Democratic National Committee shows up in the records.²¹⁵

Table 4.2. 'Recapitulation of Labor Organizations' Campaign Contributions, Campaign of 1936'

| <i>Contribution from Labor organizations to:</i> | <i>Amount</i> |
|---|---------------------|
| 1. To Democratic National Committee | |
| (a) Direct Cash Contributions | \$129,878.60 |
| (b) Advertising, book of the Democratic National Convention of 1936 | 7,500.00 |
| I Purchases of book of the Democratic National Convention of 1936 | 4810.50 |
| (d) Loans | 50,000.00 |
| (e) Reimbursement of portion of expense for operating sound truck | 360.68 |
| 2. To Roosevelt Nominators' Division | 62,517.50 |
| 3. To Labor's Non-Partisan League (national organization) | 195,393.13 |
| 4. To Labor's Non-Partisan League (State divisions) | 32,000.00 |
| 5. To the Progressive National Committee | 40,300.00 |
| 6. To the American Labor Party in New York | 180,558.03 |
| 7. Miscellaneous contributions | 67,005.91 |
| Total | \$770,324.35 |

Source: Reproduced from From S. Rpt.75:151, "Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Campaign Expenditures of Presidential Vice Presidential, and Senatorial Candidates in 1936," United States Senate, 75th Cong. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, March 4, 1937), pp. 127-128.

The Lonergan committee estimated the “combined financial assistance of all labor organizations to all political organizations” during the 1936 Presidential campaign at just over \$770,000 – as shown in Table 4.2. “So far as this committee can determine, this figure is unprecedented by any financial contributions from labor organizations in any previous political campaign in the United States,” the report observed.²¹⁶

Large amounts from union treasuries went to Labor’s Non-Partisan League (national and state divisions), to the Progressive National Committee, the Roosevelt Nominators’ Division, and to the American Labor Party in New York.²¹⁷ And some went directly to the DNC. Of the \$129,878.60 directly contributed by labor organizations to the party’s national coffers, \$100,000 had come directly from the treasury of John L. Lewis’s UMW alone, according to the Lonergan report (a further \$50,000 was provided as a loan).²¹⁸ These figures might still underestimate the actual amounts involved. An internal CIO report written in late 1942, for example, suggests that the UMW alone had contributed \$500,000 to the DNC.²¹⁹ Indeed, considering the combined national and sub-national structure, Taft observed that Labor’s Non-Partisan League undertook “a vigorous campaign on behalf of the Democratic national ticket. Its local, state, and national organizations expended almost one million dollars in the last campaign.”²²⁰ Of course, the LNPL found itself relatively unencumbered by legal restrictions in this election. The electoral role of labor had been insufficiently apparent a decade prior when the last major revision of the Corrupt Practices Act had occurred, and no restrictions comparable to those facing corporations had been imposed.²²¹

LNPL itself worked closely with the Democratic auxiliary campaign committees – particularly the Progressive National Committee, which LNPL leaders had been closely involved in its forming and financing.²²² John L. Lewis and Sidney Hillman had both volunteered as spokesmen for the PNC’s Speaker’s Bureau – something even AFL President William Green was prepared to do.²²³ That bureau itself “maintained close liaison with its opposite in the Democratic National

Committee.”²²⁴ In September, the LNPL, the Progressive National Committee, and the Good Neighbor League came together for a series of radio programs that would be broadcast nightly on CBS, five nights a week, from September 28th until the election itself.²²⁵ “This series featured business, government, Negro, religious, and women’s leaders as speakers,” McCoy (1960) notes, covering a range of topics such as “Roosevelt’s humanitarianism, hatred of war, and economic achievements in the public good, as well as criticism of the Republicans.”²²⁶

While these programs might criticize the Republicans, it was the Liberty League that had come to be the major focus of the Democratic attack. DNC Chairman James A. Farley issued a “battle order” instructing campaign personnel to essentially ignore the Republican Party itself and focus on the League.²²⁷ Constantly suggesting its connections to the GOP and to nefarious big business interests, the DNC kicked its publicity machine into high gear. But drawing direct electoral connections between the Liberty League and the GOP, or even to substantive *electoral* activity, is not as easy as Farley’s plan might suggest.²²⁸

In May, the Liberty League’s Executive Committee sent an open letter to the membership, printed in its *Bulletin*, with plans for a major “get out the vote campaign.”²²⁹ It asked members to make a written pledge to vote, to seek out ten non-members who would commit to the same, and then to mail the pledges to national headquarters. Building their mailing list, the League would then contact these ten individuals, and ask them to repeat the exercise – creating a chain letter, in essence.²³⁰ “With the letters from the Executive Committee went solemn reminders that the League was not seeking any pledges for votes “to support any individual candidate or any particular party,”” Wolfskill noted.²³¹ Hardly a rousing call to action, but one the League felt was in accordance with its claim to neutrality.²³² The “Committee of One” in contrast, used a similar scheme but it sought to pledge voters actively to *Roosevelt*.²³³ The Liberty League’s version was simply a pledge to *vote* – a “civic” stance in keeping with its “educational” mission.²³⁴

Still, Pierre du Pont, perhaps recognizing that mobilization efforts without *direction* were likely to be ineffective, wrote Shouse to ask about padding out the League's mobilization materials – in his personal mailings, at least – with some of its more vociferous anti-administration leaflets. “While I admire the frankness with which you state that you desire votes, but not votes for a particular party or purpose,” du Pont wrote to Shouse (adding that it was a “sound doctrine”) he wondered about “enclosing with it a copy of your leaflet concerning the 28 more or less doings and misdoings of the present administration?” “I find that this has popular appeal,” du Pont observed, “but hesitate to combine the two offerings unless you endorse such a plan.”²³⁵ Whether du Pont's plan was endorsed or not is unclear, but the underlying concern is instructive.

Though Shouse began to flirt with party names in radio broadcasts, even hinting that anti-New Deal Democrats might wish to vote Republican – if they so chose – the Liberty League's campaign of *opposition* never reached the definitive level of LNPL's affirmation.²³⁶ As Shouse clarified to reporters in August (following “persistent rumors” that it was set to announce its support for Landon), the League “will endorse no party. It will endorse no candidate. It *has not contributed and will not contribute* to any campaign fund.”²³⁷ Indeed, the national League spent more than \$500,000 during the election year – more than the Republican National Committee in terms of anti-New Deal propaganda. But none of that money would go directly the RNC.²³⁸

This financial separation could be viewed as both a normative and a legal stance. Wolfskill claims it was simply “part of the nonpartisan charade,” noting that Liberty League members as individuals contributed lavishly to the Republican cause. “The Republican campaign was made possible largely with Liberty League money,” he explains, with members of the du Pont and Pew families alone, for example, providing \$1 million to the national committee.²³⁹ “Without Liberty League money,” incoming RNC chairman John Hamilton acknowledged after the election, “we couldn't have had a national headquarters.”²⁴⁰ But it also reflected a *legal* constraint – the American

Liberty League was incorporated and, as such, was constrained by the Corrupt Practices Acts from contributing directly to a candidate or party.²⁴¹ Of course, that act had “as many holes as a kitchen colander,” as a *New Republic* editorial remarked in September, leading the editorialist to conclude that there was “no doubt that big business is contributing to the Landon campaign with fantastic liberality.”²⁴²

But, as with Smith’s lecture tour, what its prominent individual members did and what the *League* did was meant to be a significant distinction – making it, as Shouse asserted, “neither an adjunct nor an ally of the Republican party” in his view.²⁴³ By refraining from an active candidate endorsement and from direct contributions, the League would remain above the partisan fray. It would also remain above the on-the-ground campaign activity. This was a major deficiency in that era, according to Wolfskill: “political victories are a combination of many little things – ringing doorbells, stuffing envelopes, buttonholing voters, volunteering transportation – a thousand things that cannot be accomplished by network radio speeches or slick paper pamphlets.”²⁴⁴ Without offering an endorsement, and in the absence of a large membership or effective mobilization plan, the Liberty League campaigned to defeat a presidential candidate on the basis of publicity alone.²⁴⁵

Labor’s Non-Partisan League, in contrast, offered an active, positive endorsement of a presidential candidate, and had closer connections with the formal Democratic organization and the party-backed auxiliaries. While it funded publicity efforts too, it drew on the immediate manpower available through its member unions to provide greater organizational muscle than the Liberty League could generate. Crucially, it also drew on that membership as *voters*. Much of the strategy behind non-partisan electioneering in the past had rested on the perceived ability to cohesively deliver a “bloc” of votes: labor tried valiantly to realize this in 1936, to *support* rather than punish.

Yet, in one respect both campaigns were similar – Labor’s Non-Partisan League largely avoided making direct contributions *as an organization* to the Democratic Party (other than the \$1000

exception, noted above). Much as individual members of the Liberty League provided financial support to the RNC, it was *individual unions* – which might be considered “members” of LNPL – which contributed to the Democratic Party directly (the United Mine Workers being an important case in point). Yet the LNPL faced no legal prohibition from doing so – not until 1943 would restrictions on contributing directly to candidates and parties in federal elections be extended to labor organizations. That they refrained from doing so suggests the ways in which financial independence played a cultural role in bolstering the “non-partisanship” for LNPL too.

“The effect of pro-Roosevelt activities among the organized labor groups has been increasingly noticeable,” Arthur Krock had noted just prior to the election.²⁴⁶ Paul Ward, writing in the *Nation*, also noted LNPL’s achievements as a “power in the campaign,” and that its machinery had “silenced and impressed the veteran political writers who at the outset jeered at the league and its theory that labor’s vote could be organized and delivered.”²⁴⁷ LNPL’s local machinery, moreover, was “shouldering out the Democratic or Republican machines.”²⁴⁸ LNPL, it seemed, was winning the ground war for Roosevelt. As Leuchtenburg (1963) concluded: “Never before had union leaders done so effective a job of mobilizing the labor vote in a national campaign.”²⁴⁹

The Liberty League’s pure publicity campaign was not entirely ineffective, either. At the start of 1936, Shouse maintained that 1,363 weekly newspapers were accepting a special Liberty League news service.²⁵⁰ And they certainly had their moments with savvy PR. In September they had unveiled “automobile emblems” – bumper stickers, in effect – which cost 25¢ and could be placed on a car’s license tags. In bold blue lettering, these emblems would inform other motorists that this driver, at least, intended to “Uphold the Constitution.”²⁵¹ In that same month, moreover, when voters went to the polls in Maine, a local Republican leader credited Landon’s victory there to “the liberal supply of printing and the circulation and showing up of the present administration” that the

Liberty League's publicity had provided.²⁵² But Maine, of course, would be one of only two states to support Landon in the general election: as Maine went, so did Vermont. The nation went for Roosevelt, by a landslide.²⁵³

The Lessons of Two Leagues

In failing to defeat Franklin Roosevelt, the Liberty League itself was cast as a failure. In the post-election recriminations, significant weight was accorded Landon's inability to distance himself from the League's reactionary aura, despite efforts to do so.²⁵⁴ And the fault was largely attributed to its big-business image.²⁵⁵ "[N]othing is more stupid," the RNC's chairman summarized, "than for an organization of big businessmen to get out and 'carry a flag in a political parade.'" As Wolfskill interprets, "[w]hat he meant was that the Republican party wanted and needed help from these people, but as individuals, not as a flag-waving organization that the Democrats could readily discredit." "[E]ven after its expiration," Rudolph adds, "the League was a symbol of selfish greed and special interests."²⁵⁶

The Liberty League's denial that it was simply an organization of big businessmen has been given short-shrift – by its opponents at the time and by subsequent commentators. For Jim Farley, the Liberty League spoke "as conclusively for the reactionaries and their party as does Mr. Hoover, the United States Chamber of Commerce and the National Manufacturers' Association."²⁵⁷ Its claims to be a classless organization, set against the class conflict it saw the New Deal as creating, have evoked mirth from subsequent commentators.²⁵⁸ The League's difficulties were "made more apparent by the necessity of masquerading a defense of property and wealth as a popular movement," Rudolph said – a necessity he attributed to "the cult of the common man" that had arisen in American society during the 1930s.²⁵⁹ This cult "had become sufficiently embedded in American society to make clear that any pressure group or political organization must disregard it at

its own peril,” Rudolph explained.²⁶⁰ But the Liberty League, he suggests, cared “no more for the common man than the minimum requirements of public relations demanded...”²⁶¹ Hence the discordant message they presented – appealing to the common man by defending “something which most Americans had very little of – property.”²⁶²

But such an interpretation dismisses an important aspect of “business” self-conception and its place in society throughout this period, one that would continue to shape its approach to the political scene. The Liberty League appealed to a universal (“the Constitution”) and saw itself as a universal – its leaders did not regard business as being in opposition to other segments of society, so much as being the essence of society itself, its successes benefiting all.²⁶³ The “business civilization” still lived within the minds of the captains of industry. When Fred G. Clark appeared before the Black Committee – the “National Commander” of the Crusaders in their fight to save the Constitution – he vociferously denied any claims that they were simply “the agents of big business,” despite revelations of large contributions from prominent businessmen he had failed to disclose.²⁶⁴ As Soule described, “Mr. Clark protested, and *probably believed*, that the concealment was of no importance, because what is good for big business is good for everybody.”²⁶⁵

The problem was, as Rudolph explained, the particular vision – and *provisions* – of the Constitution with which they seemed most concerned. The *rights* that the Liberty League seemed to emphasize were those of *property*, and thus had limited appeal to individuals lacking real experience of property ownership itself.²⁶⁶ “Liberty League Liberty” then, as Soule had described it, had little accessible meaning to the common man, even if the appeal was meant to be pitched his way.²⁶⁷ The reduced social status of “business” moreover in the midst of the Depression, made it difficult to embrace the businessman’s vision as being that always best for society. That the public did not embrace the message in 1936, however, did not alter the self-conception of most businessmen and their belief in societal centrality, or diminish the need to keep pushing that message.

Hamilton Basso, via his Future Historian, had predicted in July that “Roosevelt II” would be “reelected by an enormous majority,” and the Liberty League would subsequently dissolve.²⁶⁸ But in mid-September, anticipating the defeat if perhaps not its scale, Pierre du Pont wrote to Shouse to discuss post-election plans – for *sustaining* the organization, not dissolving it. “Should the electorate decide to continue Mr. Roosevelt as President for another term,” du Pont wrote, “it would be a great misfortune and sign of admitted defeat if the League should disband.” Citing a lack of financial backing as the only “possible cause” that could prevent its continued operations, he promised to continue his support “and expect that others will do likewise.”²⁶⁹ Another member of the Liberty League’s Executive Committee – George L. Buist – wrote too. “Let us admit that the Liberty League has been shot up a bit by the Michelson propaganda machine,” Buist began – referring to the DNC’s publicity director, Charley Michelson. “What of it?” The “struggle between diverse systems of government” would not be over in November, regardless of how the election turned out – thus the Liberty League should remain active too.

The League must first work to repair its reputation, dedicating itself “to convincing the public that it is not a rich man’s club, but is a large group of patriotic citizens who are seriously and sincerely concerned over the future welfare of our people, of all of our people in all walks of life.” Then the League could “pick up the problem of definitely organizing into a political entity that part of the people who oppose the introduction into this country of experiments in government now so popular in Europe.”²⁷⁰ Party divisions had “broken down,” Buist argued, and “[t]he old names now serve only to confuse and mislead.” A realignment was clearly approaching, and the League had a role to play in it. While a socialist party and a fascist party would undoubtedly emerge, so too would “an American party that believes that our system of government that has worked well for considerably over a century might serve us a trifle longer.” *This* was where the League could make its mark, he suggested.

“It is the problem of welding into a unit the American party, of which I am thinking...It seems to me that here is an important future work for the League, a work of education, a work of calling things by their right names, a work of organization.”²⁷¹

The Liberty League had emerged in large part because, as an organization, the Republican Party was not effectively opposing the New Deal. Nor were the extant trade associations willing to reach much beyond their traditional legislative sphere.²⁷² But the League struggled to translate the identities and techniques associated with each. As Rudolph concluded, the Liberty League was a “combination of undercover political party and overt pressure group” – a hybrid description that could be applied to both major Leagues in the 1936 election.²⁷³ In the case of the Liberty League, at least, its repertoire of activities were constrained less by campaign finance laws and lobbying regulations than by an uncertainty about how to operate in the electoral sphere as a non-party group, and the universalist self-conception of “business” that its leaders brought to the table.

Labor’s Non-Partisan League would also continue its “work of organization.” Flush with success, it showed no intention of closing its doors after November. It had, in fact, expressed an intention from the outset to persist beyond the campaign. At its inaugural convention in August, when resolutions supporting Roosevelt had first been passed, a measure was also approved calling for the League to “be continued after the election as an instrumentality for the furtherance of liberalism in the United States.”²⁷⁴ As Sidney Hillman told the delegates:

“In the great realignment which will mean liberal forces on one side opposed to the forces of reaction, labor should take its place in an organized manner, and I do hope that you and the men and women you represent will see the wisdom and the duty and the responsibility of making Labor’s Non-Partisan League a permanent, effective instrumentality for labor to fight for a constructive political program in the years to come.”²⁷⁵

As an LNPL brochure, would later describe, “[s]peaker after speaker emphasized the imperative urgency of independent political action by labor not only in 1936, but in the years that would follow.” Their organization must “be built strongly and maintained permanently,” these speakers urged, and impressed upon the delegates “that labor should be prepared for any future realignments in national politics.”²⁷⁶ But in the “great realignment” that Hillman spoke of, it was not clear what

the role of Labor's Non-Partisan League would be, or what being "prepared" for realignment really meant. Indeed, visions of realignment itself – long desired in terms of a distinctive party of the "left" emerging – were usually conceived in terms of a third party that would finally, somehow, succeed. How could Labor's Non-Partisan League be an "effective instrumentality for labor" without becoming that party vehicle itself? Similarly, what was the "work of education" that Buist felt could serve the future "American party"? Or was it meant to become its very basis?

In contemplating an extended life for their organizations, then, the familiar models of activity would again rear their heads – either third-parties-in-waiting for their next electoral opportunity, or legislative "pressure groups" which sustained an active existence on a permanent basis through the constant flow of congressional legislation with which they were concerned. Labor's Non-Partisan League, at least, would come to fuse both.

5. Electoral Afterlives

Despite their divergent fortunes in the 1936 election, the leaders of both the Liberty League and Labor's Non-Partisan League intended to continue the lives of their organizations well beyond Election Day. But it was not entirely clear *how* they might do so, and what, if they did, those organizations might become. The only extant models for a permanent mode of political organization were "pressure groups," on the one hand – organized around specific legislative issues – or political parties on the other, organized largely to contest elections and maintaining only a skeleton framework in between. Labor's Non-Partisan League, at least, would draw on elements of both to sustain its mission in the coming years, suggesting a new hybrid form that would provide important inspiration for the Political Action Committees that would soon follow.

How to Persist?

The third party call would be sounded first – just days before the election in the case of Labor's Non-Partisan League. Writing in the *Nation*, Paul Ward expressed the disappointment of some on the left with the LNPL's strategy in 1936 – questioning whether their apparently pragmatic support for the president had not become something deeper.¹ The LNPL had started out "as the most promising step toward a farmer-labor party that this country has seen," Ward observed, but it had failed to live up to expectations. It would end the campaign "as a mere adjunct of the Democratic National Committee." The Progressive National Committee, moreover, had been little more than a "lecture bureau" for the DNC, Ward seethed, "providing dignified and high-toned speakers" for events that the DNC was "unwilling or unable to fill." In so doing, it had "been just as much a *false-front organization* as the Liberty League or the Sentinels of the Republic."²

Labor's Non-Partisan League was not supposed to be a false front for the Democrats. Its participation in the Roosevelt re-election campaign, as Ward understood its founders' intent, was to be "a first strategic step toward the formation of a third party."³ Instead its leaders had "lost their heads and become hysterically orthodox supporters of the status quo" – waging little more than a campaign to re-elect Roosevelt, whom Ward argued, "might have won without its help."⁴ They had sought no commitments from Roosevelt in return for their support, or insisted he clarify his position in any area.⁵ After all, there was no guarantee that Roosevelt would continue to be labor's "Santa in the White House," as Raymond Gram Swing had characterized him in 1935.⁶ Even then, Swing had pointed to some disconcerting developments, as when the National Recovery Administration – under instruction from FDR – failed to consult with autoworkers when creating the industrial code for automobile manufacturing.⁷ "Risking all for Roosevelt," therefore, Labor's Non-Partisan League had not even "had the courage to test its strength by entering the Congressional jousts in *truly non-partisan support* of labor candidates," whether they be "Republican, Democratic, Progressive, Independent, Socialist, Farmer-Labor, or Communist."⁸

Max Lerner, writing in the previous issue of the *Nation*, expressed a typical belief among radicals, that both major parties were as bad as each other, and only a third party would do. LNPL was "working shoulder to shoulder with Democratic politicians who represent the worst aspects of capitalism and of whom they will eventually have to sweep the polity clean."⁹ And yet the third parties that had contested the 1936 election had fared poorly. And as the post-election analysis began, there was little to suggest the public might respond different any time soon. When George Gallup's new American Institute of Public Opinion (AIPO) conducted a survey in December 1936, they found that 82% of respondents would not choose to "join a new farmer-labor party if one is organized."¹⁰ But labor leaders themselves might have been tempted to consider it, as just a few

weeks later the sit-down strike in Flint, Michigan began, and Ward's warnings about the lack of guarantees secured from Roosevelt seemed to loom much larger.

During this bitter struggle between labor and management, one that continued into the following year, Roosevelt studiously maintained a position of neutrality.¹¹ This did not stop his political opponents trying to make hay from the increasingly disruptive strikes, by linking the administration to the CIO and support for the strikers.¹² But if anything, relations between the CIO and the Roosevelt administration were becoming more strained. Speaking to a radio audience of more than 20 million on September 6th, 1937 – Labor Day – UMW president John L. Lewis sounded the alarm. He who has “supped at labor’s table” and “been sheltered in labor’s house,” Lewis warned, should not “curse with equal fervor and fine impartiality both labor and its adversaries when they become locked in deadly embrace.”¹³

There was disillusionment too, with the congressional hostility still greeting New Deal initiatives – arising in part “from the fact that many of those elected under the New Deal banner deserted that standard almost as soon as they were safely in office,” as an LNPL pamphlet pointed out.¹⁴ And with renewed economic problems at home, and rising tensions internationally, Lewis in particular grew increasingly concerned about the administration, and the success of their 1936 strategy of supporting a presidential candidate within the two-party system.¹⁵ The hard times drove CIO membership up, at least – reaching 4 million in 1937, exceeding the AFL’s membership of around 3 million.¹⁶ The following year, the CIO would finally reconstitute itself as a separate labor federation.¹⁷

Plenty of people in this period seemed to believe that a “powerful new labor party” was likely to emerge on the national scene – even if their expressed likelihood of supporting it remained low. In a May 1938 poll conducted for *Fortune* magazine, 38% of respondents believed such a party *would* emerge in the next decade, while only 22% of respondents *hoped* that would be the case.¹⁸ The

Gallup poll continued to suggest low levels of support for the idea, as shown in Table 5.1 (though, if translated into an equivalent of the vote, these levels of support would have registered as in the upper echelons of third party performances).

Table 5.1. Views on a new Farmer-Labor Party, 1936-1938 (Gallup Poll)

Q. Would you join a new farmer-labor party if one is organized?

| | Dec 1936 | Jul-Aug 1937 | Jan 1938 |
|-------------------|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| <i>Yes</i> | 18% | 21% | 15% |
| <i>No</i> | 82% | 79% | 64% |
| <i>No opinion</i> | n/a | n/a | 22% |

Note: In 1937, the question was phrased “If a Farmer-Labor party is organized before the next presidential election, do you think you would join it?” In 1938, the question was: “If a Farmer-Labor party is organized, do you think you would join it?”

Source: Gallup Polls, December 16 - December 21, 1936; July 28 - August 2, 1937; January 13 - January 18, 1938. Accessed from the iPOLL Databank, The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, University of Connecticut.¹⁹

But rather than abandon that strategy, Lewis and other LNPL leaders chose to augment and extend it. “Re-election of President Roosevelt accomplished the first major objective of Labor’s Non-Partisan League,” an LNPL pamphlet explained in 1938, but labor was soon confronted with “new and serious political problems” arising from the lack of commitment to New Deal initiatives exhibited by many of those elected under its banner.²⁰ “Events proved that the far-sighted plan of the founders of Labor’s Non-Partisan League for organization of labor’s political strength on a permanent basis must be carried through if the victories won at the ballot box were not to be lost in the halls of Congress,” the pamphlet continued. “Only by continuing pressure from labor could the people’s mandate for social legislation ever be translated into action.”²¹ Some kind of permanent political activity short of forming a third party would be the solution.

With the next presidential election still three years away, LNPL would lower its gaze from the White House and cast it out to whichever elections were next in view – engaging in what they would term “independent political action,” with the emphasis on organizational independence

suggesting the shifting terminology on the political scene. “Independent political action by labor” had “gained enormous impetus in 1937,” the pamphlet explained, with corporate violence against sit-down strikers bringing “a keen realization of the urgent necessity of ousting corporation puppets from public office” – in whatever public office they might occupy.²² Its first efforts would be launched for the municipal elections of 1937, in which Taft (1937) described differences between the LNPL’s tactics and the traditional AFL approach – even as it entered a multi-office setting more familiar to the “friends and enemies” policy. “In contrast to the purely negative attitude of the American Federation of Labor, the League believes in conducting intensive campaigns on behalf of the candidates it supports for office,” Taft noted.²³ LNPL actively supported its *friends*, it did not simply aim to defeat enemies. And unlike the AFL, which confined its efforts to general elections, LNPL had entered some of the primaries in these municipal contests too.

In these activities, moreover, the LNPL was moving beyond the AFL tradition of “rewarding or punishing” candidates in terms of their positions on labor issues, but was instead moving closer toward “Non-Partisan League” territory. “For the present the League is mainly interested in operating within one of the two major political parties, Taft explained. But its activity was “not limited to mere endorsement of candidates,” but stretched even to entering their own in the primary contests – just as the Non-Partisan League had done.²⁴ As an LNPL pamphlet itself described the practice, where candidates supportive of New Deal legislation were not apparent in a particular district, “labor ran its own.”²⁵ In Taft’s estimation, this made LNPL “an independent political party operating in the primaries instead of in the final election” – a *New Deal* party, he might have added. And it also fueled speculation that the LNPL might ultimately pursue a third-party path after all. The League was, after all, “sufficiently flexible to allow for independent political action whenever that becomes necessary,” Taft noted.²⁶ That is, it was prepared to become an *independent party* should that be deemed necessary or opportune.

The LNPL pamphlet had also pointed to “continuing pressure from labor” in order to achieve “the people’s mandate for social legislation.”²⁷ The persistence of congressional opposition to such legislation would thus provide a more consistent and sustaining target around which Labor’s Non-Partisan League could refocus. LNPL would thus begin, as Key (1942) observed, “to lobby before Congress in support of New Deal measures,” including such prominent initiatives of Roosevelt’s second term as the “Judicial Procedures Reform Bill of 1937” – his attempt to pack the Supreme Court.²⁸ On the Wages and Hours bill, to which it lent strong support, the LNPL would also tie its lobbying and campaigning together in explicit ways, as it continued to extend the latter beyond the presidency. It pushed hard for the bill, which eventually passed despite having been recommitted to the House rules committee in December, 1937 – normally a funeral path for legislation. LNPL promptly circulated the roll call vote on recommitment, and “announced it would oppose in the 1938 elections those who had voted to kill the wages and hours bill.”²⁹

Thus despite mixed feelings about the president’s performance, LNPL would be active in the 1938 congressional contests, seeking to remedy the problem of New Dealers who had “deserted that standard” after 1936.³⁰ In doing so, they would need to extend the case for electoral action from Roosevelt himself to “supporters” of the New Deal – without embracing Roosevelt’s *party*. They would again connect issue positions to individuals. Singling out the “sincere advocates of social legislation,” LNPL put out “a list of the House members who deserved re-election and of those whom labor should oppose, though it did not attempt to enter actively into each of these campaigns.”³¹ And “[t]rue to its non-partisan policy, labor threw its support to those candidates in either major party who stood for social progress.”³² In this respect their non-partisan strategy would return to more familiar AFL ground. As Key observed, LNPL’s technique “has not differed fundamentally from that of the A.F.L. The league has been much more vigorous in its political campaigning than the A.F.L., but fundamentally it seeks to exert electoral strength by swinging its

support to that party and that candidate more favorable to labor rather than by forming a labor party.”³³

This might be true of the *mechanism* they employed, but the “friends and enemies” *strategy* had been altered through its association with a presidential candidate and subsequent extension beyond: the separation of president and party achieved in 1936 by virtue of focusing exclusively on the presidential race would begin to blur. Indeed, Franklin Roosevelt himself would famously seek in the 1938 midterms to stamp his imprint upon the party, in the “Purge” campaigns against staunch anti-New Deal Southerners. He would, in essence, seek to punish his internal enemies. To do so, he would lean on the manpower not of *labor* primarily, but of his own federal workforce – dramatically enlarged through the public works programs of the New Deal.

“Purges” and Party Purification

“There’s one issue in this campaign,” Roosevelt had told Raymond Moley in 1936, and it was a simple choice: “people must be either *for me* or *against me*.”³⁴ In 1938, he would apply this understanding to the midterm elections too. In the so-called “Purge” campaign, Roosevelt would embark upon an unprecedented presidential intervention in a series of nomination contests within his own party, primarily in the Democratic South.³⁵ Amid the failure of his court-packing and executive reorganization plans, Roosevelt would aim to remove those from among the Democratic ranks who had proven most recalcitrant, using the primary process to try and impose his vision of the Democratic way.

“It is the view of the Presidential advisers,” *Los Angeles Times* political columnist Frank R. Kent reported, “that the administration should place itself strongly behind the 100 per cent Roosevelt candidate in the primaries. The contention is that, the people being still with the President, they will rally to the support of the man known to be his friend.”³⁶ In this the president

and his advisers clashed with Jim Farley, who emphasized the importance of the regular organization's support.³⁷ As Farley would later write, Roosevelt's "purge" campaign "violated a cardinal political creed which demanded that he keep out of local matters." "In any political entity," Farley emphasized, "voters naturally and rightfully resent the unwarranted invasion of outsiders."³⁸ Only the national party committees at this time, and especially the recently created "Hill" Committees, bore any wider responsibility for collective efforts to elect party members – and only did so in the general elections.³⁹ Roosevelt's actions also raised ethical questions over his use of *administrative* resources to pursue this end.

The president, it seemed, had turned to the Works Progress Administration (WPA)—the New Deal's largest relief agency—to aid in the implementation of his political plans. The WPA was accused of distributing its funds to influence the primaries, encouraging partisan activity amongst its workers, and influencing the vote choice of those on its relief rolls.⁴⁰ In the Pennsylvania primaries, for example – not explicitly part of the Purge but an important contest nonetheless – Republicans made charges of "use of a gigantic slush fund and attempted coercion of W.P.A. workers," and WPA Administrator Harry Hopkins ultimately did take disciplinary action against its officials in the state.⁴¹ Pennsylvania had become a prominent primary contest, in fact, largely due to the actions of John L. Lewis, who had picked a fight with the state's regular Democratic Party organization.

Against the regulars' preferences, Lewis backed a former miner and UMW official for the gubernatorial nod – a move that ultimately embroiled LNPL in the Senate primaries too.⁴² The state AFL, in fact, sided with the regulars, and the Lewis-backed candidates ultimately failed to secure the nominations.⁴³ Framed in conservative newspapers as a failed attempt on Lewis's part to become the political boss of Pennsylvania, the ill-fated effort had also reflected poorly on the administration, conservative commentators claimed.⁴⁴ Frank Kent in the *Los Angeles Times* claimed the administration had backed Lewis's preferred ticket "100 per cent, all the time," as a reward for the

“more than \$500,000” of CIO money Lewis had poured “into the Roosevelt campaign fund in 1936.”⁴⁵ The W.P.A. had even been called in to assist, claimed Kent and his fellow *Los Angeles Times* columnist, Chapin Hall.⁴⁶ But none of it had worked. With Pennsylvania, Kent suggested, “[t]he idea that candidates with the Roosevelt blessing are invulnerable has been knocked out.”⁴⁷ For Hall, it had “put[] the administration in its place, which Pennsylvanians do not think is interfering in state primaries.”⁴⁸ It had also put LNPL in its place, they seemed to think, which Lewis had also deployed in support of his ticket. “[T]he so-called ‘Labors Nonpartisan League,’ which served as Mr. Lewis’s political false whiskers in a number of States,” noted Kent, “has been exhibited as a sham which no one will take seriously in the future.”⁴⁹

That remained to be seen, but the 1938 elections were hardly a success story for the LNPL, or for Roosevelt. His “purge” campaign in the primaries was largely a disaster – with only one of the five Democratic lawmakers targeted by the administration losing their primaries – Congressman John O’Connor or New York. The four successfully re-nominated lawmakers – all Senators – all secured re-election. Table 5.2 gives an overview of the administration’s electoral efforts in 1938.

Table 5.2. Overview of the “Purge” Campaign of 1938 (Incumbents Only)

| <i>“Enemies” – Targets of Roosevelt’s 1938 “Purge”</i> | | | |
|--|----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Name | State | Office | Outcome |
| Guy Gillette* | Iowa | U.S. Senate | Wins P; Wins G |
| Walter George | Georgia | U.S. Senate | Wins P; Wins G |
| Cotton Ed Smith | South Carolina | U.S. Senate | Wins P; Wins G |
| Millard Tydings | Maryland | U.S. Senate | Wins P; Wins G |
| John O’Connor | New York – 16 | U.S. House | Loses P. |
| <i>“Friends” – Recipients of Roosevelt’s Support in 1938</i> | | | |
| Name | State | Office | Outcome |
| Claude Pepper* | Florida | U.S. Senate | Wins P; Wins G |
| Alben Barkley | Kentucky | U.S. Senate | Wins P; Wins G |
| Hattie Caraway | Arkansas | U.S. Senate | Wins P; Wins G |
| Elmer Thomas | Oklahoma | U.S. Senate | Wins P; Wins G |
| William G. McAdoo | California | U.S. Senate | Loses P. |
| Robert Bulkley | Ohio | U.S. Senate | Wins P; Loses G |
| Maury Maverick | Texas – 20 | U.S. House | Wins P; Loses G |

* Indirect support/opposition provided via Roosevelt’s son James, and other administration officials.

Source: Compiled from information in Susan Dunn, *Roosevelt’s Purge: How FDR Fought to Change the Democratic Party* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010).

More generally, 1938 saw one of the largest swings away from the president's party in a midterm election – with Democrats losing 71 seats in the House, and 6 in the Senate.⁵⁰ And it was the New Dealers, more often, that lost. Amid growing public disapproval of the disruptive strikes, an economic downturn, and a backlash to Roosevelt's actions themselves – and with their constituencies often safer to begin with – most of the more conservative Democrats had retained their seats.⁵¹ As Key (1942) notes of the LNPL's success in the election: “[o]f the forty-three Congressmen on its “blacklist,” only three were defeated. Of the House candidates it supported, ninety-eight won and one hundred lost.”⁵² These were hardly reassuring results.

Yet the failure of the Purge did not so much discredit the end Roosevelt had lurched toward, as the means. According to Savage (1991), Roosevelt had long hoped to transform the Democratic Party in a more liberal direction, but in the 1920s, he had envisaged doing so through the internal procedural reforms in the Democratic National Committee.⁵³ With the purge, Roosevelt had hoped his own activism could achieve the same, and been swiftly disabused of that notion. The public could not quite accept the president playing such an avowedly partisan role – or more accurately, a *factional* role.⁵⁴ As a result, Milkis (1993) argues, Roosevelt determined to pursue his liberal objectives not via enduring party change so much as through the enlarged federal administrative apparatus he was building. But Roosevelt was not necessarily averse to letting others continue the struggle within the party, as both Milkis and Savage acknowledge.⁵⁵ “The DNC's special divisions and chairmanship would now be used to consolidate party support among voters and interest groups attracted to Roosevelt and the New Deal,” Savage suggests – special divisions that in 1938, at least, still loosely embraced the “Good Neighbor League,” since it continued to be funded heavily by the DNC.⁵⁶

The president had publicly promised to continue the Good Neighbor League beyond the election, “to offer means whereby public-spirited and forward-looking citizens can give practical effect to the ideals for which they stand.”⁵⁷ It had been formed, after all, to appeal “to those groups

open chiefly to idealistic solicitations, such as liberal-minded businessmen, educators...religious leaders, social workers,” along with African-Americans and women, as McCoy (1960) explained.⁵⁸ It offered a way to remain actively engaged to those who would otherwise lack a demographically based party auxiliary to work with. But the GNL’s very idealism would increasingly clash with the practical politics of governance, and cause headaches for the administration.⁵⁹ When its chairman in 1937, Dr. Charles Stelzle, publicly proposed a “program to reduce strife and prejudice in America” that went beyond what the administration thought politically feasible, he was taken to task.⁶⁰ The DNC even tried to wield its financial power to press the League closer to the Administration line.⁶¹ But by 1939, it had decided to give up the “good neighbors” altogether. With the DNC’s funds tighter in the wake of the 1938 elections, it deactivated the GNL on the grounds that “it was no longer financially feasible” to support it.⁶²

And “financial feasibility” would even start to be a concern for the one group whose pockets had once seemed bottomless: the Liberty League.

The Beginning of the End...

The Liberty League would be above reproach in the 1938 election – remaining “above politics” by being entirely absent from it. Despite the pre-election encouragement from du Pont and Buist, the League’s post-1936 plans had stalled. Shouse did circulate Buist’s letter among other members of the Executive committee, and according to Wolfskill, he also seriously contemplated ways to launch a full-scale third-party effort. “The third-party idea figured only remotely in Liberty League strategy for 1936,” Wolfskill claimed, observing that the record of such parties was “not an impressive one.” “[T]he leaders of the League knew history even if they did not always understand it,” Wolfskill concedes.⁶³ But he also implies that there was still some third party discussion in the mix, perhaps moreso in the post-election period. From the outset, Wolfskill claims, Shouse had “visualized the

League as the intellectual nucleus for a reorientation and realignment of parties, an idea that was often discussed in executive committee and one on which there was complete agreement.”⁶⁴ And while Roosevelt’s purge would soon hint in a different direction, realignment as the product of a *new party* was still the dominant conception – one that could break apart the existing conflicts and commitments animating the old.

According to Wolfskill, Shouse commenced to shop his third party idea around, suggesting that the defeated Republican nominee Alf Landon, and even the chairman of the RNC, John Hamilton, were receptive.⁶⁵ It was the president of General Motors, Alfred Sloan, who “carried the word” to Hamilton on behalf of the Liberty League’s leading lights, “warning that if a new party were not undertaken before the next election they might withdraw their financial support from the Republicans.”⁶⁶ How exactly such a wholesale reformulation was to occur is unclear, but Wolfskill goes on to suggest that Hamilton pursued it further, informally polling Republican leaders around the country, and ultimately presenting “a lengthy report to the Republican National Committee” in which “he argued that the idea was neither desirable nor feasible.”⁶⁷ As Wolfskill reports of the informal poll, “local Republican leaders laughed Hamilton out of town when he came to them with the third-party proposal,” because they recognized – as perhaps few others did – that “[e]lections are won in the precincts, not in the dining room of the Metropolitan Club.” The local level Republican organization, moreover, was still “in surprisingly good shape.”⁶⁸

The Liberty League, however, was not. All but the League’s Washington office were closed following the election, and its state divisions dissolved.⁶⁹ “The Executive Committee, at the end of 1936, told us to stop all mail solicitation, and to keep as much out of the limelight as possible,” noted the League’s Secretary, William Stanton.⁷⁰ The Executive Committee itself no longer met after that.⁷¹ Throughout 1937, in fact, the League subsisted entirely on the contributions of two donors: Pierre du Pont – as promised – and his brother Irénée.⁷² Another du Pont brother – Lamot – was

induced to contribute in early 1938, and a small amount from J. Howard Pew that year was the only thing preventing the League from becoming an entirely du Pont family affair.⁷³ But it was merely limping along, an organization that was little more than its letterhead.⁷⁴ The fight against the New Deal and its allies would be taken up by others in the legislative arena, who would now seek to stem the rising tide of “outside” actors in the electoral realm altogether.

A New Assault on “Corruption”

Mr. BIGGERS. I guess that corrupt practice law was a New Deal measure?

The CHAIRMAN. No, sir; unfortunately it was put on the books during the earlier administration of Calvin Coolidge.

Mr. BIGGERS. I thought it was a flaming New Dealer, a New Mexico man, responsible for it.

The CHAIRMAN. Was that Senator Hatch? I would like to take the credit, but I have to be honest and tell you it was not a New Mexico person who sponsored the Corrupt Practices Act. It came in under Calvin Coolidge. He is not a New Dealer, is he?

Mr. BIGGERS. No.

The CHAIRMAN. To the best of your knowledge?

Mr. BIGGERS. No.

The CHAIRMAN. Therefore you don't like the corrupt practice law.

Mr. BIGGERS. I thought it was a New Deal one.

- Congressman Anderson talks with E.M. Biggers of the Biggers Printing Co., Houston, TX (1944)⁷⁵

Labor's increasingly prominent role in elections, and the “purge” campaign in particular, were not without lasting impact – though it was not of the kind they had hoped. When members of the 76th Congress took their seats in 1939, hostility to engagement by these actors would make corrupt practices “reformers” out of those more often labeled “reactionaries.” With the 1940 presidential election on the horizon, concern had arisen among Roosevelt's opponents that the growing federal workforce, which had expanded prodigiously with the New Deal state, might “become a permanent political force in the Democratic Party,” as campaign finance scholar Anthony Corrado (1997) observes.⁷⁶ Or, at least, a permanent force behind *Roosevelt's* vision of the Democratic Party. The blurred lines between bureaucracy and politics evident in the WPA's 1938 actions had already elicited public disapproval, and would now generate a legislative backlash.

Despite Biggers' characterization of Senator Carl Hatch (D-NM) as a "flaming New Dealer," it was Hatch who would move to cut off this bureaucratic source of support for New Deal candidates. The eponymous Hatch Act of 1939 (officially "An Act to Prevent Pernicious Political Activities") legally barred federal workers from engaging in partisan electoral activity.⁷⁷ Though Hatch was inspired more by a longtime progressive hostility to government "corruption" – from wherever it may emanate – he would gain large support from conservatives in both parties to do so. At the same time, a growing concern with union expansion and their increasing financial activity in campaigns would result in Amendments to the Hatch Act the following year.⁷⁸ This attempt to constrain the money flowing into politics would not target unions directly, however, but impose more general constraints upon the amounts of money that could be spent in politics by the recipients of their largesse – parties and candidates. In doing so, the amendments would have profound, and unintended consequences.

The \$3 Million Question

The 1940 Amendments to the Hatch Act placed the first limitations on individual contributions to campaigns, and capped the overall amount any "national political committee"/multi-state political committee could raise or spend in a given year.⁷⁹ The yearly individual contribution limit was set at \$5000, while the cap on political committee spending was set at \$3 million.⁸⁰ In reality, the latter provision was intended only to constrain the national party committees – the main multi-state committees. That is, if there were truly strong intentions behind the provision at all. The legislation was primarily concerned with extending the original Hatch Act's provisions to state government workers paid with federal funds, Hayward (2008) points out. The caps on individual contributions and party spending were subsequently tacked on with little debate or discussion, she describes.⁸¹

Hayward even suggests that the measures were intended more as “poison pills” to defeat the bill, not as reasoned commitments to a vision of campaign finance reform.⁸²

In any case, the timing was hardly well thought out – with the changes coming down in the middle of a campaign year. The parties, therefore, struggled to reorganize their affairs so as to comply with the law. And perhaps less unexpectedly, they also looked for ways to get around it. Groups that were financially “independent” of the party offered a partial solution – an outlet both for contributions and spending that might otherwise have been conducted under the party’s own umbrella. So long as there were no “official” ties between them, the parties might tacitly suggest the creation of such groups and direct their donors that way – hoping the groups themselves would return the favor. Or, at least, this was the position one could infer from the opinion of the RNC’s legal counsel, Henry P. Fletcher.

Having consulted “with several prominent lawyers,” Fletcher proffered somewhat mixed advice. The \$5000 cap on individual contributions was not a fixed overarching limit, he explained, but a maximum amount an individual could contribute to any one federal candidate or political committee. The only catch was how the RNC itself would factor in. In Fletcher’s view, since a contribution to the RNC could yield benefits to *all* Republican candidates, it might preclude an individual being able to give another \$5000 to a particular GOP candidate. The safest option, which he recommended, was thus to give their \$5000 to the RNC and direct any further money they wished to spend to the state or local party committees, which were beyond the law’s reach.⁸³ Yet a more intuitive recommendation, and one that many contributors immediately grasped, was to *avoid* giving to the RNC, and instead distribute as many \$5000 contributions as they wished to candidates directly and to non-party committees.⁸⁴

Of the \$3 million limitation (which capped a committee’s expenditures *and* the contributions it could receive), Fletcher noted an important loophole from the outset – it applied *only* for the

calendar year. Most importantly, however, he interpreted the spending cap as applying separately to any distinct political committee, irrespective of whether they were working toward the same goals, not to overall efforts designed to promote a presidential candidate. Thus the cap certainly applied to national committees like the RNC – as the lawmakers had intended – but the Republican congressional committees would have their own \$3 million limits too. As to whether an “independent Willkie-McNary committee” might be a possibility – referring to the Republican presidential and vice-presidential nominees – Fletcher advised that so long as it was “unconnected with the Republican National Committee,” it would also have a separate \$3 million limit on what it could raise and spend. Such a group would be “unconnected,” it seemed to Fletcher, as long as it was “independently organized and does not consist of members of the Republican National Committee.”⁸⁵

Many of those with Republican sensibilities apparently took this advice to heart. According to the Senate committee tasked with investigating the 1940 election, there were 89 “independent” groups (of various kinds) operating on behalf of the Republican ticket in the 1940 election, and 41 other such groups operating within a single state. The combined expenditures of just these interstate committees scraped in at just under \$3 million, a figure higher than the expenditure of the Republican National Committee itself. The Democrats, in contrast, having pioneered “auxiliary” organization, had only 20 financially independent committees operating on an interstate basis, and 21 more within particular states. Where the DNC’s spending would actually exceed that of the RNC, spending by Democrat-leaning independent committees (interstate) would be less than a fifth the sum spent by their Republican-leaning counterparts.⁸⁶

Table 5.3. Committees Supporting Republican and Democratic National Tickets in 1940

| Organization | Contributions | Expenditures |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|
| SUPPORTING REPUBLICAN NATIONAL TICKET | | |
| Republican National Committee | 2,564,606.59 | 2,242,742.47 |
| 89 independent committees/groups/individuals | 2,986,919.18 | 2,832,167.41 |
| 41 intrastate independent c'ttees/groups/ individuals | 812,657.81 | 754,900.81 |
| Republican State committees* | 11,792,149.11 | 10,791,625.17 |
| Total (R) | \$18,156,332.69 | \$16,621,435.86 |
| SUPPORTING DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL TICKET | | |
| Democratic National Committee | 2,454,101.57 | 2,438,091.88 |
| 20 independent committees/groups/individuals | 576,210.29 | 557,017.6 |
| 21 intrastate independent c'ttees/groups/ individuals | 319,086.15 | 311,558.49 |
| Democratic State committees | 2,935,062.22 | 2,785,659.82 |
| Total (D) | \$6,284,460.23 | \$6,092,327.79 |

*Including contributions and expenditures by Republican State finance committees totaling \$1,680,292.99.

Source: Partially reproduced (with additional information) from the Gillette Report, p. 11. Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Presidential, Vice Presidential, and Senatorial Campaign Expenditures, 1940. Pursuant to Senate Resolutions Nos. 212, 291, and 336. 76th Congress, 3rd Session (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, February 15, 1941).

Out of total spending on behalf of the Roosevelt ticket, the 20 national independent committees supporting him provided only about 9%, according to the Gillette Committee.⁸⁷ On the Republican side, in contrast, the inter-state independent committees provided approximately 17% of overall spending on behalf of the Republican ticket, almost half of which was spent by a single organization – the Associated Willkie Clubs of America. It spent over \$1.3 million, itself comprising about 8% of overall spending on behalf of the Willkie ticket.

Table 5.4. *Expenditures of Important Non-Party Organizations in 1940'*

| “Important Non-Party Organizations” | Expenditures |
|--|------------------------|
| <i>Favoring Democrats</i> | |
| National Committee of Independent Voters for Roosevelt and Wallace | \$250,455 ^a |
| National Committee for Agriculture | 131,489 ^b |
| Business Men’s League for Roosevelt | 59,973 |
| Young Democracy (Illinois) | 26,394 |
| Young Democratic Clubs of America | 16,420 |
| Hollywood for Roosevelt Committee | 12,983 |
| Non-Partisan League of Clothing Workers (New York) | 12,405 |
| Employees for Roosevelt (New York) | 11,962 |
| Democratic State Councils of Americans of Italian Origin | 11,184 |
| Labor Joint Committee for Roosevelt and Wallace (Ohio) | 10,036 |
| Total | \$543,301 |
| <i>Favoring Republicans</i> | |
| Associated Willkie Clubs of America | \$1,355,604 |
| Democrats for Willkie | 416,808 |
| National Committee to Uphold Constitutional Government | 377,381 |
| Citizens Information Committee | 176,248 |
| Maryland Committee | 110,223 |
| Willkie War Veterans | 78,001 |
| People’s Committee to Defend Life Insurance and Savings | 58,871 |
| Jefferson Democrats of California | 41,440 |
| Pro-America | 37,950 |
| Willkie Magazine Fund | 29,537 |
| No-Third Term Democrats of Illinois | 23,352 |
| Ohio No-Third-Term Committee | 20,580 |
| Independent Willkie Advertising Campaign | 17,937 |
| Women’s National Republican Club | 16,974 |
| Clearing House for National Interests | 13,580 |
| National Committee of Physicians for Willkie | 11,712 |
| “We, the People” | 11,414 |
| Total | \$2,797,612 |

Notes: ^a \$54,100 of this was contributed by trade unions. ^b \$54,000 of this came from the Democratic National Committee.

Source: Reproduced from Table IV – “Expenditures of Important Non-Party Organizations in 1940,” in Louise Overacker, “Campaign Finance in the Presidential Election of 1940,” *The American Political Science Review* 35 No. 4 (1941): 709.⁸⁸

“Independence” Catches On

The Associated Willkie Clubs, in fact, was exactly the kind of “independent Willkie-McNary committee” Fletcher had hypothetically approved in his opinion. Yet the Willkie Clubs were already in existence before the Hatch Act Amendments had passed. They had been formed to help secure the Republican nomination for Willkie in the first place – a dark horse candidate without a background in politics. Ostensibly a popular movement springing from the localities, the clubs prompted Alice Roosevelt Longworth, daughter of former president Theodore Roosevelt and cousin to the incumbent, to quip that Willkie’s support came “from the grassroots of a thousand country clubs.”⁸⁹ Willkie, after all, was a prominent business executive, who had come to national attention as the crusading chairman of Commonwealth & Southern – a private utility company – challenging the Tennessee Valley Authority, a symbol of the New Deal state.⁹⁰ But Longworth’s remark points to an important shift – pressure groups had long been perfecting the appearance of popular sentiment to aid in their legislative lobbying efforts. But those techniques – the creation of what we would now describe as “astroturf” – were now being actively translated into the electoral context itself, with the Republican convention delegates the target of such “lobbying” in this case.⁹¹

In the Willkie Clubs, the candidate-centered primary organization also melded with newer ideas about non-partisan *general* election organization, and the ways “independent” groups might appeal to “independent” voters. As Evjen (1952) notes, Willkie authorized the continuation of the clubs beyond the Republican convention, organized under the national umbrella of the Associated Willkie Clubs, directed by Oren Root, Jr.⁹² Around 4000 clubs were affiliated with this national committee, amounting to approximately 500,000 members.⁹³ But if Franklin Roosevelt had quietly encouraged independent groups to form, and been the cause around which they cohered, he had not previously been as personally identified with one as Willkie would be with the Associated Willkie Clubs.

Indeed, as a party outsider, Willkie had fewer ties to the regular party organization than the typical presidential candidate. As such, it became clear that both the national committee and the Willkie Clubs would play an important role in the campaign, and that the candidate himself would be linked to both of them. A strategic understanding was reached with the RNC, where the Willkie Clubs would make a direct appeal to independent voters, but would also retain autonomy in determining how to go about doing so.⁹⁴ Populated with young political amateurs inspired by their candidate, the Willkie Clubs repeatedly clashed with the regular Republican organizations – as did Willkie himself.⁹⁵ This conflict illustrated a broader downside with “independent” organization, whomever they might be organized by or for: the loss of full party or even candidate control. And the concern threatened to be a more enduring one in the case of the Willkie Clubs, since their leaders considered continuing the organization even after Willkie’s loss. It was Willkie himself who stepped in and asked them to disband.⁹⁶

The 1940 campaign would see a vast proliferation of “independent” political committees, now viewed primarily in financial, organizational terms. And in party terms, their growth was seen as an ominous sign. “It has long been noted that the independent committees are not amenable to the discipline of an organized and responsible political party” the Senate committee investigating expenditures in the 1944 election remarked. “Prior to the passage of the Hatch Acts,” therefore, “the national officers of all major parties *were inclined to discourage formation of independent groups* owing no allegiance and no obedience to the parties themselves...”⁹⁷ Such groups could not be controlled, the committee’s report noted, and their fund-raising activities “tended to funnel away funds needed by the regular party organizations.”⁹⁸ “With the passage of the Hatch Act,” however, “the trend was reversed.” “Both national party organizations feverishly aided, openly or covertly, the establishment of numerous independent committees,” and had continued to do so in 1944.⁹⁹ “Activities of independent committees, once deprecated, are now welcomed,” the committee’s report

summarized.¹⁰⁰ And moreover, they added, “[i]t is unlikely that the proponents of the Hatch Act ever intended such a result.”¹⁰¹ As an internal memo for the 1944 investigation put it: “However noble the purpose of this law has been, the result has led only to the horizontal growth of a number of independent committees.”¹⁰²

As the last chapter revealed, national party organizations were not inimical to pseudo-independent entities, having encouraged their formation in the 1930s. But the economic incentives now played out differently. The “National Committee for Agriculture,” for example, which ranked as the second largest independent spender “favoring Democrats,” according to the Gillette Committee’s data, was a fully independent manifestation of what had earlier been only partly so. For the National Committee for Agriculture was the heir to groups like the “Independent Organizations Committee,” chaired by George W. Peak in 1928, which had been substantially funded by the DNC.¹⁰³ Over successive incarnations in campaigns, this agricultural campaign group had moved from party auxiliary to non-party organization – though still formed temporarily, if recurrently, for the purposes of the campaign.¹⁰⁴

Indeed, the Hatch Act amendments may have discouraged true party auxiliaries more generally, since the party themselves were responsible for funding such entities, thus counting against its \$3 million limitation. And while the parties might have lost formal control of the such committees now constituted on an independent financial basis, they might still provide the benefit for which the auxiliaries and pseudo-independent organizations had been created – to broaden the party’s appeal beyond its loyal partisans. Indeed, the new organizations might do a better job of this, since the claim of separation was now more compelling.

The contribution and expenditure caps imposed by the Hatch Act Amendments, in sum, served to encourage the proliferation of financially independent political committees on the national scene.¹⁰⁵ But this legislation did not create that phenomenon or trend out of whole cloth. And it was

the very existence of a nascent trend that meant the legislation was so quickly subverted. The Hatch Act amendments were still based on traditional understandings of who was primarily active in elections – candidates and parties. They did not seem to anticipate the ease with which independent actors would be brought into the mix, particularly where the legislation itself only constrained *financial* connections between parties and “non-party” groups – being relatively silent on the extent to which such entities might actively *coordinate* with one another.¹⁰⁶ As Senator Lister Hill (D-AL) would observe during the Gillette Committee hearings, “if you have all these different organizations, each one setting its own budget limitations, each one spending what it sees fit...the law is not worth the paper it is written on.”¹⁰⁷

A Conservative Education

But there were other factors at work that would undermine the value of the law. It was not simply *who* was spending what, but *what* they were saying. In the case of outright political committees, such as the RNC or the Willkie Clubs, the \$3 million they had to play with would be used for overtly political activities – outright advocacy for particular presidential candidates, and encouragement of voters to support them at the polls. But there were others that seemed to orbit particular candidates while never explicitly advocating their cause. By avoiding overt statements of support, these groups denied that they were engaging in political activities at all – or, at least, they were not subject to the Hatch Act’s provisions in doing so. Like the Liberty League’s claim that there could be no partisan politics without an outright (and positive) endorsement, a number of groups called to appear before the Gillette Committee objected to the putative reason for their being called at all – that they were somehow involved in the election campaign. Intriguingly, it was mostly *conservative* or anti-Roosevelt groups taking this position – a claim that their broadly ideological opposition to the president’s *policies* meant their actions were “educational,” not “political.”

For if the Liberty League had stepped back from view, there was no shortage of anti-New Deal groups seeking to pick up the mantle. One of the most prominent in 1940 was the dramatically named “National Committee to Uphold Constitutional Government” (NCUCG). The NCUCG was noted as a big spender on the Republican side, yet it refused to admit to being “in politics” at all, least of all in support of the Republican candidate, Wendell Willkie.

Closely associated with the political ambitions of newspaper publisher Frank E. Gannett – who had himself sought the GOP nomination in 1940 – the NCUCG had come into existence just a few years prior. In early 1937 it had mobilized against Roosevelt’s executive reorganization proposals, and the “court-packing” bill – combining these legislative concerns with “non-partisan” claims, being “careful not to include anyone who had been prominent in party politics” among its leadership, as Gannett later explained, and stressing a membership that embraced a range of party backgrounds and ideological persuasions.¹⁰⁸ At the helm day-to-day was Edward A. Rumely – a master of the new forms of public persuasion, who knew how to target potential supporters and “develop sentiment” in the wider public, using the techniques the “new lobbies” of the 1920s had first developed.¹⁰⁹

But the committee’s solely legislative orientation did not last long. By late in 1937, Gannett was growing disillusioned with both sides of the political aisle, as Polenberg (1965) explains. Though he and his followers disliked the New Deal Democrats, they also had no time for the monetary orthodoxy of the “old Guard” Republicans – Gannett felt the Republican Party more generally was “dying of dry rot.”¹¹⁰ A plan began to emerge that would try to tie opponents of the New Deal together, irrespective of their party persuasion, and encourage an electoral mobilization in 1938. It gained new impetus when Roosevelt launched “the Purge,” as the NCUCG quickly branded that effort an affront to the Constitution that they must defend against.¹¹¹ An ambitious plan was sketched out in which the NCUCG would mobilize a bloc of voters 10 million strong –

“Constitutional Freemen” as they labeled them – men and women who would pledge support to those candidates “who are upholding our constitutional system,” irrespective of their own or the candidate’s party affiliation.¹¹² The NCUCG, of course, envisaged those incumbents who had opposed the Court-packing bill and executive reorganization plans, primarily.¹¹³ And yet, they would not actively *endorse* such candidates.

Gannett and his close associates interpreted “nonpartisan” status as precluding open endorsements altogether – even as they remained comfortable with the notion of recruiting 10,000,000 “Constitutional Freemen” to vote. The idea seemed to be that as long as those individuals were not being explicitly *instructed* how to vote, through the mechanism of an endorsement, then non-partisanship would be observed. In this belief, they mirrored the Liberty League, whose discomfort with outright endorsement had led to their “non-partisan opposition to Franklin D. Roosevelt.” Nonetheless, to help guide voters along in the right direction, Gannett founded a new magazine, *America's Future* – which was “entirely separate” from the NCUCG, but dedicated to the same purpose of opposing the New Deal.¹¹⁴ Perhaps because of this limited vision of what a nonpartisan group might do, Gannett wished ultimately to institutionalize the anti-New Deal coalition as an independent party – one that could have “loftier ideals and finer objectives than either of the parties today.”¹¹⁵ On a more practical level, Gannett could not envisage a way – without the vehicle of a third party – to induce Southerners to vote for a Republican.¹¹⁶

But despite the relative success of the 1938 elections as a rebuke to the New Deal of sorts, 1938 was not an auspicious year for the NCUCG. Its opposition to the executive reorganization and Supreme Court bills had caught the attention of Senator Sherman Minton (D-IN), now chairman of the Senate’s ongoing lobby investigation since the appointment of Hugo Black to the Supreme Court. When asked to provide the investigating committee with financial documents, the NCUCG’s Rumely had refused – on the grounds that their publicity activities in this regard had been purely

educational.¹¹⁷ The argument earned Rumely a rebuke from Minton in open session, raking over his shady background in publicity and even possible links to the KKK – and doing little for the group’s reputation.¹¹⁸ Yet Rumely and the NCUCG would continue to apply the same reasoning in 1940, now in relation to their presidential publicity efforts.

When Gannett himself had determined upon an ill-fated bid for the Republican nomination that year, he turned over leadership of the NCUCG to Samuel B. Pettengill, a former Democratic Congressman from Indiana, who had not sought reelection in 1938.¹¹⁹ Pettengill accordingly testified before the Gillette Committee on the group’s 1940 activities, which he claimed had been focused on “developing a strong Congress,” by encouraging the best candidates to stand, “wholly irrespective of party.”¹²⁰ But they also wished to encourage the best occupant of the White House – even as Gannett’s campaign had stalled. Thus the NCUCG aimed to “educate” voters in the 1940 campaign on a new and important constitutional issue: the third term. As Gannett later testified before another congressional campaign investigation in 1944, the NCUCG had viewed the third term “as a violation of the spirit of the Constitution.”¹²¹ This Gannett did not regard as “political,” he told the chairman of that committee, Rep. Clinton Anderson (D-NM), since his group had campaigned on the basis of a *principle* – opposing a third term – not for or against any particular candidate.¹²² It is perhaps unsurprising that the report of the hearings records the reaction to this claim as “[*Laughter*].” As Anderson quizzed drily: “Well, there was only one third-term candidate, was there not?”¹²³

At least one NCUCG witness was a little franker about the political nature of the group’s *objectives*, at least. “If we did not have any political effect, either on the election of candidates or on legislation, we might as well fold up,” he told Anderson.¹²⁴ The NCUCG, in fact, would soon do just that. Shaken by bad publicity, internal splits over foreign policy, and the fallout from Gannett’s candidacy, it closed its doors in April 1941, at least for a time.¹²⁵ In fact, the 1940 election would see

a more general demise among the first wave of electoral groups forged in the mid-1930s, as their attempts to endure faced new challenges.

The Demise of Two Leagues

In the case of the Liberty League, the death-knell would prove to be the changes in campaign finance law embodied in the Hatch Act Amendments – even as the impetus for reform had largely come from those seeking to thwart sources of aid going to Roosevelt and his allies, rather than his opponents. Having subsisted for so long on the handouts of a few wealthy contributors, the effect of the \$5000 contribution limit was to cut off the Liberty League’s life support.¹²⁶ Pierre du Pont could not carry its costs alone.¹²⁷ As the *New York Times* stated simply in September 1940, after reporting that its Washington office had finally been closed, and its skeleton staff dismissed: “The American Liberty League, organized in 1934 to oppose New Deal policies by an “educational” campaign, has expired.”¹²⁸

The 1940 election would also spell the effective demise of the Liberty League’s rival – Labor’s Non-Partisan League. But the Hatch Act would not be the cause in this case. As Overacker (1941) reported, “Labor’s Non-Partisan League was inactive in 1940,” adding that “it raised no funds and spent only \$2,000.”¹²⁹ Increasingly alienated from Roosevelt as the threat of international war had loomed, John L. Lewis had clashed with Sidney Hillman – who had forged stronger ties with Roosevelt and now been appointed to the National Defense Advisory Board, readying the nation for conflict.¹³⁰ As Lewis remarked at the outset of 1940, “A political coalition...presupposes a post-election good faith,” but “[t]he Democratic Party and its leadership have not preserved this faith.” They had ignored the “views of labor,” and Lewis now wished “to serve notice that labor is not to be *taken for granted*.”¹³¹ “Serving notice” would not involve creating a third party, however – though Lewis toyed with the idea once more. Rather, it would go back to the idea of labor as a

voting bloc, to the basic strategy behind a “friends and enemies” policy – that the threat of *punishment*, as much as support, was the way to maintain a beneficial relationship, and that the threat must be carried through if it did not serve as a sufficient warning.

Lewis initially considered launching a third party effort on the back of Labor’s Non-Partisan League.¹³² He was, perhaps, dissuaded by the lack of public appetite for such a move. A Roper/*Fortune* survey from April 1940 had found only 11% of respondents believing that American labor unions “should form a national labor party” to compete with the existing major parties. But he was willing to ignore other signals of public discontent – the 57% of respondents who felt that labor unions should “keep out of politics” altogether.¹³³ Thus Lewis ultimately threw his support to Wendell Willkie, engineering the “support” of LNPL to go with him. In the ensuing fallout within the CIO, Lewis subsequently stepped down as its president, and the UMW itself would ultimately disassociate from the CIO. “Labor’s Non-Partisan League” would be reconstituted as little more than a political fund of the UMW.¹³⁴ Though he had shown himself unable to command the vote of labor’s rank-and-file in 1940, Lewis had been true to the non-partisan justification he had offered for the LNPL back in 1936. As Key (1942) had noted, the LNPL’s approach had resembled the AFL’s traditional policy in seeking “to exert electoral strength by swinging its support to that party and that candidate more favorable to labor rather than by forming a labor party.”¹³⁵ Lewis had supported FDR when he thought he was a friend. And abandoned him when not.¹³⁶

The events of 1940 would preclude any third-party possibilities Lewis might have once imagined. And for the labor movement as a whole, while third party sentiment did not entirely disappear from its ranks, “independent” political action within the extant two party system would become its dominant strategy, and altering the composition of the Democratic Party its overweening goal.¹³⁷ For the CIO had learned much from its experience with LNPL. While the Roper/*Fortune* poll from

April 1941 seemed to show a spike in support for “a national labor party” – with 30% of respondents agreeing that such a development “would be a good thing for the country” – the CIO would not pursue that approach.¹³⁸ As Key (1942) concluded, the approach take by Labor’s Non-Partisan League had “perhaps pointed the way to a means for a more effective expression of labor’s strength without the risks incident to operation through an independent labor party.”¹³⁹ LNPL had “provided a valuable lesson in political action,” LaPalombara concluded “– a lesson which was not to be forgotten when labor supporters received a setback in the Congressional elections of 1942.”¹⁴⁰ Nor was it forgotten the following year when a new law sought to constrain the kinds of political activities in which labor unions might engage. Indeed, the CIO soon moved to create a new and improved version of the LNPL, a truly permanent and *proactive* electoral organization – one that would become far more than a “fellow traveler” in Franklin Roosevelt’s election campaigns, but a means of realizing his vision for a new Democratic party.

In achieving permanence, however, it would also draw lessons from the Liberty League. The very language in which the *Times* had relayed its obituary had been telling – an organization formed “to oppose New Deal policies by an “educational” campaign.”¹⁴¹ For the Liberty League had always leaned more in the “educational” direction than LNPL. Its emphasis on “the Constitution” and its avoidance of an outright endorsement of Alf Landon had been expressions of this position, though largely dismissed as flippant or hypocritical. As I argued in the last chapter, however, this outlook on the appropriate scope of political action was informed by a genuine self-conception among business elites – however misplaced it may have been – of the universality of their beliefs and goals. It was not “political” to share their message since “political” would imply there was a genuine contest over its substance. In a sense, the Liberty League viewed its mission as did later “public interest” groups – who also rely on a largely “educational” justification for their activities – since they present a vision of a “better world” resting on their personal *beliefs* rather than personal

benefits. This was, perhaps, the crux of the concern with the Liberty League, since the personal benefits that coincided with their commitment to “the Constitution” were all too readily apparent.

Conservative groups like the NCUCG may have taken “non-endorsement” beyond the limits of credibility, but illustrated in doing so how “educational” efforts could be turned toward the electoral setting. This would involve educating voters about *issues* but in order to reshape a general *electoral* context, rather than change the dynamics of public opinion on a specific bill before the legislature, or urging particular actions in support of that aim. In this manner, publicity would be extended from a grassroots lobbying technique to a form of electoral activity, though not a direct or overt one. Such “political education” suggested an important *sustaining* activity for groups oriented to events that occurred only intermittently, and it would continue to characterize the approach of the anti-Roosevelt forces swirling around the business community and beyond. But it would also become an important supplemental activity undertaken by those more attuned to outright political *action* when campaign season rolled around, as the CIO Political Action Committee would shortly demonstrate.

6. Introducing P.A.C.

With the 1944 presidential election season drawing to a close, the journalist Samuel Grafton observed that “[t]he organization of labor on a large scale has profoundly altered the American electioneering process, perhaps forever.”¹ Grafton’s remark was prescient. But the mobilization of labor in that campaign would do more than change *electioneering* – it would alter the nature of party-pressure group relations in enduring ways.

The critical factor was the emergence of the Congress of Industrial Organizations’ (CIO) Political Action Committee. The “P.A.C.,” as it was soon known, was the first distinct, permanent interest group entity entirely dedicated to electoral activity – it would undertake long-term programs of political research and voter education, while making campaign contributions, endorsing candidates, registering voters, and seeking to mobilize them on Election Day. But P.A.C. reflected more than just a new set of tactics to be employed in elections – it offered a whole new strategy by which interest groups might achieve their aims. It pointed to the electoral arena as a forum in which legislative objectives might be pursued indirectly, through the promotion of supportive candidates for office. And it offered an organizational model for electoral participation that avoided formation of a third party vehicle, offering resources and other forms of campaign support to candidates of the two major parties instead.

In this chapter, I explore the organizational and strategic shifts first taken by the P.A.C. – shifts that would lay an important groundwork for other groups to move in this direction. In theory, P.A.C. worked to elect pro-labor legislators, and presidents, irrespective of their party affiliation, so as to accomplish positive administrative and legislative ends for labor. In reality, it focused on a single extant party – the Democrats – forging an alliance that still endures. This singular focus did not suggest blanket support, however. Rather, the P.A.C. embarked on an effort to reshape the Democratic Party in accordance with labor aims, ultimately seeking a generalized party realignment.

This new strategy of partisan political action, as with its organizational innovations, provided an important strategic model that other groups would emulate, as I explore in subsequent chapters, contributing over time to the systematic party divergence we see today. In this respect, the rise of interest group electioneering itself – and the specific variant developed by labor unions – made party-group alliances more likely over time.

By supporting individual candidates on the basis of their positions in relation to labor's issues of concern, the P.A.C. claimed it sought a more friendly *Congress* – one in accordance with their liberal vision – and a friendly occupant of the White House. P.A.C. thus retained the “non-partisan” claims that had characterized labor's past activity – claims that interest groups had first formulated to help assuage internal and external cultural hostility to the appearance of special interests being “in politics.” In practice, the P.A.C. strategy would be a much more partisan than the party-neutral principle on which it supposedly rested. Thus while Zelizer (2002) states succinctly: “[t]he Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) created the first political action committee in 1943 to support Democratic candidates,” this stance was not quite so straightforward, nor openly acknowledged, as such a formulation suggests.² Unlike Schattschneider's later ideas of stronger partisan divisions serving to pull in interest groups, the P.A.C.'s orientation suggests that interest groups could encourage those divisions too. At the same time, becoming party *influencers* in this sense was not a straightforward or automatic process. As the ideological conflict set in motion by the New Deal began to play out, new conceptions of political strategy began to seem both realistic and desirable to leaders within the CIO – conceptions that moved beyond the person of Franklin Roosevelt or the institution of the presidency, to the nature of the parties themselves.

The CIO's new strategy, implemented through its P.A.C., would be oriented to reshaping the Democratic Party into a more consistent, cohesive, and liberal body at the national level, with a more liberal Congress achieved by helping to ensure majority-control for *Democrats* of the right

persuasion – not creating a majority of “liberal” congressmen as a whole. Yet they also tried to maintain the “nonpartisan” claim that their predecessors had promoted – a claim that had helped to justify and promote new kinds of electoral interventions by interest groups.

This tension between non-partisan rhetoric and an increasingly partisan reality was negotiated through an effort to shift the basic definition of “nonpartisanship.” Nonpartisanship had always suggested a indifference to the party identification of a candidate – even a hostility to parties and partisanship in general. Its principle was issue-based, and its indifference to party was typically evidenced by a group’s regularly supporting candidates on both sides, affirming a kind of party balance in their activities. Through the rhetorical efforts of groups like the P.A.C., however, it became a claim that rested on the application of principle alone. Lopsided support for candidates of a particular party was now justified in essentially “incidental” terms – a product of the issue positions gathering steam among the individual candidates on that side. Since more Democrats tended to take the “right” positions on labor’s issues, then more Democrats would receive labor’s support. From a claim grounded in a *lack* of preference between parties, it became one that *justified* a party preference on issue-based grounds.

But their actions went beyond the mere distribution of support in line with growing party divisions on issues – but actively sought to exacerbate those divisions through the selective provision of support. Even where Republican candidates took the “correct” positions from the CIO’s point of view, support was not always forthcoming. A sustained effort to defeat conservative Democrats, moreover, and the provision of direct support to the Democratic national party committees, suggests an effort to reorient the Democratic Party in a more pro-labor direction. In normative terms, however, the CIO P.A.C. still turned to the increasingly tenuous claim to “non-partisanship,” accompanied by an emphasis on civic and educational goals, and a denial of “special interest” status itself.

In this chapter, I provide an in-depth assessment of the P.A.C and sketch out the contours of its broader importance. In sum, the CIO, through P.A.C., developed a characteristic form of organization, a specific strategy of political action focused on a single party, and a set of arguments to justify it, that would have profound effects upon the nature of election campaigning, of pressure group-party relations, and even, through the emulation of allies and opponents, the broader contours of the party system. Political action would be the tool through which a new vision of party politics was forged.

Toward a “More Perfect” Organization

Passage of the “War Labor Disputes Act” in June 1943 would profoundly alter the political environment for labor unions. Though vetoed by President Franklin Roosevelt, it was overridden the very same day in both chambers of Congress, and the Smith-Connally Act – as the legislation was more commonly known – went into effect.³ Ostensibly designed to authorize presidential seizure of private production facilities where a strike might interfere with the war effort (authority Roosevelt had already claimed through executive order just eight weeks earlier), a further provision limiting labor union activity in the political realm had been tacked on. Unrelated to the main substance of the bill, as Roosevelt noted in his veto message, unions now found themselves banned from making financial contributions “in connection with” federal election campaigns – much as corporations were already restricted from doing.⁴

Just two weeks after passage of the Smith-Connally Act, the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) Executive Committee approved formation of the “Political Action Committee” or P.A.C.⁵ This timing has led the P.A.C. to be characterized as a straightforward response to a new legal framework. As Urofsky (2008) summarizes, for example (referring to the section of the Act that now prohibited union contributions in federal campaigns): “[t]he unions

circumvented section 9 with a device that would come to play a key role in the debate over campaign finance reform a half-century later, the political action committee, or PAC.”⁶ The PAC would do so primarily – though not immediately – by collecting voluntary contributions from members rather than relying on union dues to fund direct political activities, forging the basic organizational model for future imitators.⁷ Moreover, they developed arguments distinguishing between types of activity that would permit the continued use of treasury funds for everything but the most explicitly “political” of actions – carving out an exception for “educational” activities (and for the administrative expenses of running the P.A.C. itself) that still holds in campaign finance law today.⁸

But P.A.C. was also much more than a financial vehicle to circumvent campaign finance restrictions – it both reflected important developments in industrial labor’s orientation to the political realm – a more active stance that had been gathering steam for a decade – and it placed that activity on a new trajectory, one that the law’s requirements did not fore-ordain.

The CIO’s Newest Committee

In a basic respect, the P.A.C. was simply one of several committees appointed by the CIO’s executive board for various purposes.⁹ This one would coordinate the C.I.O.’s electoral activity generally – in accordance with an electoral purpose defined, in the first instance, in terms of the re-election of President Franklin Roosevelt in 1944, and a Congress that would support him. To head up this effort, Sidney Hillman, president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, was appointed as chairman, with a vice-chairman and secretary also named at the initial meeting. With a national headquarters in New York, 14 regional offices across the country, and a staff of 135 spread among them, PAC set out to organize sub-national committees and mobilize members for the 1944 presidential campaign.¹⁰

By this point, the CIO had been at the forefront of labor's political activity for a decade, and the move to create a national electoral organization had been underway *before* the passage of the Smith-Connally Act. While the PAC did start in the summer of 1943, the PAC's second director – Jack Kroll – told a congressional committee in 1946, “I do not think that the Labor Disputes Act, if you will as my opinion, had much to do with it.”¹¹ Indeed, in a larger sense, the P.A.C. was not a straightforward response to the law alone, created out of whole cloth in 1943 – as some campaign finance scholars imply. It reflected a refinement and expansion of the assertive strain of interest group electoral activity becoming evident in the 1930s, in which labor organizations had played a major role.

With the growth of the industrial labor movement in the 1930s, embodied in the nascent CIO, a more overtly political face of labor emerged. Philip Taft described this in terms of a growing recognition that more positive intervention from the government was necessary, both to protect labor's right to organize (as initially secured by Section 7(a) of the National Industrial Relations Act) and to offset threats to industrial union survival stemming from broader economic forces, such as capital flight to non-union states.¹²

The fundamental need to engage politically seemed more pressing than ever in the early 1940s, even if the CIO's first political effort – the LNPL – had broken down. With business enjoying a post-Depression resurgence in its prestige amid the “miracle” of wartime production, any relative advantage labor might have enjoyed in public opinion terms was waning. Moreover, the CIO had some concerns about the president's responsiveness to labor and of various government agencies either set up explicitly to deal with wartime labor issues, or with relevance to them.¹³ The “no-strike pledge” that key labor leaders had agreed to for the duration of the war, took one of labor's most important tools of private influence off the table.¹⁴ Of course, actions breaking the pledge, such as the UMW's walkout in May 1943 (which had prompted Roosevelt to nationalize the

mines and been the proximal cause of the Smith-Connally Act) had also inflamed public opinion against labor. But it had also shown labor leaders how political decisions could undo the gains secured through collective bargaining – and that efforts to purely *persuade* legislative or administrative bodies were insufficient to prevent it.¹⁵

Thus in late 1942 plans were already laid for a national political organization that would build on extant activity and try to carve out a new path to influence. Earlier that year, the CIO had established a national Legislative Committee to coordinate interaction with the administration and Congress, but had also instructed it “to take steps toward the establishment of a political arm of the CIO.”¹⁶ In accordance with this goal, Nathan E. Cowan, John Brophy, and J. Raymond Walsh – the CIO’s Legislative Representative, Director of the Industrial Union Councils, and Director of Education and Research, respectively – produced a report for president Phillip Murray assessing current political capabilities and providing a plan for the new organization.¹⁷

The Blueprint for P.A.C.

“The general outlines of a national political organization...are already in existence,” Cowan, Brophy, and Walsh observed, though this owed little to the CIO’s earlier effort with LNPL.¹⁸ For all it was an important development in terms of labor’s financial role in election campaigns, LNPL had done little to build up grassroots organization.¹⁹ “[I]he neglect of detailed political work which characterized the administration of the first President of the CIO [John L. Lewis] made it necessary to begin building organizations and procedures anew from the ground up,” Cowan and his colleagues explained.²⁰ Nonetheless, progress had been made and there was now “considerable political machinery” at the sub-national level, and a skeleton national staff in place to coordinate it.²¹

Two departments of the national CIO had been sharing primary responsibility for coordinating this activity – the Legislative Department, which liaised with the international unions

and kept track of their “contacts with Congress and the administration,” and the Council Department, which did the same with the Industrial Union Councils (I.U.C.’s – the state-level coordinating bodies of the CIO).²² The I.U.C.’s were the heart of extant political operations. “Even before the abandonment of Labor’s Non-Partisan League,” they noted, “and very definitely since that time, the state industrial union councils have carried the primary responsibility for the political work of the CIO.”²³ Indeed, Cowan et al. made a distinction between legislative lobbying activity, and purely *electoral* activities – the sense in which “political” is usually meant – pointing out that the I.U.C.’s tended to separate lobbying and political tasks and locate the latter within specialized entities – a feature they would emphasize in their national recommendations.²⁴

The national office itself had already undertaken some activity. The 1942 midterm elections had provided opportunities to gain experience, and the Legislative and Council Departments had not simply gathered information about the state political operations in 1942, but had also sought to stimulate activity and even, “[i]n one or two instances,” had “participated directly in coordinating labor political campaigns.”²⁵ One such instance happened to occur in the 8th Congressional District of Virginia – chosen for its proximity to Washington D.C., but where the incumbent opposed was none other than Howard W. Smith – co-sponsor of the Smith-Connally Act.²⁶ Here, and in the other district chosen (VA-6), there were “unfortunate results...in which labor-endorsed candidates lost by wide margins,” suggesting the need for better research and organization.²⁷ A more unfortunate result, however, may have been to invoke the ire of Smith, who would push the prohibition on labor political activity and continue to be a thorn in the side of labor activity for decades to come.

With few labor successes elsewhere in the 1942 elections, the report’s authors concluded that “[t]he existing political structure...has many obvious faults and deficiencies.” Nonetheless, it should serve as “the point of departure from which the development of a more perfect organization should

be undertaken.”²⁸ Perfecting the CIO’s political operations would involve several organizational innovations at the national level – taking long-term trends in the interest group world to a new level.

Most prominent in this respect would be the very *permanence* of the P.A.C. itself. “We have not organized for 1944 alone,” Sidney Hillman would inform the CIO’s 1943 convention, and from the outset P.A.C. was designed as a permanent body.²⁹ This was, in itself, something of a revolutionary step, even as the electoral groups of 1936 had tried to move in this direction. The national parties themselves still had little in the way of a permanent organizational footprint, even if they now had headquarters and a skeleton national staff at all times.³⁰ Labor’s Non-Partisan League, for its part, never quite had in mind the sophisticated political machine that the CIO’s leaders would now envisage for P.A.C.³¹

Beyond permanence, other key features of P.A.C.’s structure were its *separation* from other parts of the CIO and its *specialization* – a dedicated focus on electoral activity. While predecessors like the LNPL or the Anti-Saloon League had combined *both* legislative and electoral activities within the same organization, P.A.C. was a specialized, dedicated entity that would focus solely on electoral activity.³² Murray had actually recommended that the existing Legislative Committee direct “at least the initial stages of political organization,” but Cowan, Brophy, and Walsh pushed against this idea.³³ In contrast to expectations associated with the “organizational synthesis” in historical scholarship, their motivations in this respect were not primarily those of bureaucratic efficiency.³⁴

Rather, the major reason for creating a *separate* political action arm – distinct from the State Industrial Union Councils – was to encourage participation of non-CIO labor groups, *and non-labor groups*, in the new organization.³⁵ The organizational vision presented by Cowan, Brophy, and Walsh had extended membership well beyond CIO unions – to A.F.L. affiliates, Railroad Brotherhoods, farm organizations, and liberal groups in general – much as LNPL had sought to incorporate broader constituencies.³⁶ It was this desire to foster “[a] much broader coalition of labor than has

ever been achieved in the past” that made the creation of a structure separate from the CIO desirable in their view.³⁷

Lesser, but still relevant factors were raised too in support of a separate entity – such as the mismatch between extant union organization – built around the shop or plant – and the geographical electoral system. “Peculiar forms of organization are required for political purposes, as distinguished from purposes of trade union activity,” they noted, a consideration that also pointed to a new, separate structure.³⁸ Also briefly noted were campaign finance considerations – whether political activity undertaken by a state council itself, for example, would require it to report the entirety of its general financial activities under the Federal Corrupt Practices Act, though this possibility was rather quickly dismissed.³⁹ Finally, specialization itself was cited as a reason for separation – allowing the P.A.C. to focus purely on “political” activities, and avoid legislative or administrative lobbying.⁴⁰

Nonetheless, the Smith-Connally Act did play an important role in shaping P.A.C. – prompting a narrowing of its intended membership scope to CIO unions themselves. The broader coalition aims Cowan, Brophy, and Walsh had laid out, however, were eventually exported to an ostensibly separate group – the National Citizens Political Action Committee (NCPAC) – though in reality, it was tightly linked to the P.A.C. in both financial and organizational terms.⁴¹

Created in July 1944, the NCPAC was essentially “the non-labor branch of the [CIO-]PAC,” with Sidney Hillman serving as the director of both organizations, which were even located within the same offices.⁴² Testifying before the House committee investigating campaign expenditures in 1944, Hillman explained that the NCPAC was formed as a vehicle to give “progressives outside of the ranks of labor” who had been attracted by the CIO P.A.C.’s work “an opportunity for organized participation in political activity.”⁴³ From a more cynical perspective, it was an opportunity to attract contributions from a broader pool than simply union members.⁴⁴ Indeed, the NCPAC’s executive

committee read like a “who’s who” of prominent progressives: politicians like George Norris and Gifford Pinchot, journalists and academics such as Max Lerner, Arthur Schlesinger, Carey McWilliams, and George Soule, and Orson Welles adding a Hollywood touch.⁴⁵ Such names attested to the “broad nonpartisan character” of the NCPAC, Hillman asserted, since Norris and Pinchot were prominent Republicans.⁴⁶ And the NCPAC denied any partisan objective. Its mission was “the election of Roosevelt and Truman and a progressive Congress,” Hillman announced – linking individuals and ideology as a means of circumventing party.⁴⁷ Attesting to the new financial importance of outside committees, the NCPAC would also “[give] financial assistance to or on behalf of candidates whom the committee supports.”⁴⁸

The Smith-Connally law also shaped the financial basis of both the P.A.C. and the NCPAC. While the CIO’s political action arm was always intended to be a grassroots effort, the Smith-Connally Act motivated some changes in the basic design of P.A.C. It appears that the CIO’s original intention was to finance the national organization through a combination of large donations from international unions, and from a per capita tax levied on local unions – a tax presumably passed on to members though not necessarily indicated as such in their dues payment.⁴⁹ In response to the law, the per capita tax idea was ultimately replaced with that of individual voluntary contributions. But the use of treasury funds – that is, compulsory dues payments – was neither immediately nor *entirely* abandoned.⁵⁰

Financing the P.A.C.

“The original funds of the CIO Political Action Committee were derived exclusively from contributions from the treasuries of CIO unions,” Hillman told the House committee investigating campaign expenditures in 1944, chaired by Rep. Clinton Anderson (D-NM).⁵¹ Those C.I.O member

unions contributed approximately \$700,000 in seed money, which, despite the Smith-Connally Act's prohibition on the use of treasury funds, the P.A.C. found ways to employ.⁵²

On the one hand, they made contributions to candidates in *state* electoral contests, which were beyond the reach of the federal law.⁵³ On the other, they interpreted the law as being inapplicable in federal contests prior to the party nominating conventions – before which, they argued, there were no *general election candidates*, and thus no federal election to which their expenditures would be connected. As Foster (1975) explains, the PAC's counsel – John Abt – argued that “the Smith-Connally Act forbade union contributions to an election campaign,” but “an election required a candidate, and any activity prior to the nomination of party candidates was not restricted.”⁵⁴ The Senate also formed campaign expenditure committee in 1944, chaired by Senator Theodore Green (D-RI), and as its report noted, “the Political Action Committee had proceeded on the premise that the Corrupt Practices Act had no application to primary elections.”⁵⁵ Even though the P.A.C. officially endorsed Roosevelt on May 17th, 1944, it continued to utilize treasury money on the grounds that the general election did not begin until the conventions were concluded.⁵⁶

But once the general election campaign did begin, in this calendar, the P.A.C. needed to devise a different approach. It was this rationale which prompted the move to voluntary contributions from members, which, the P.A.C.'s legal team reasoned, could not be prohibited by law without infringing upon individual rights. Of course, volunteers had to be found and encouraged to make such contributions. Beginning in July, the CIO launched an appeal to its members for donations of \$1, half of which would go to the national P.A.C. fund, and the other half would remain within the state – a way of encouraging the creation of state and local-level P.A.C.'s too, to which, the legal team also believed, the Smith-Connally restrictions would not apply.⁵⁷ These sub-national PACs were accordingly constructed as semi-autonomous entities so that they might be

deemed “solely intrastate” in operation, and “not subordinate to the national organization” – which might have classified them as “political committees” under the law.⁵⁸

Speaking to the Anderson Committee in August, 1944, Hillman claimed he had “no idea” how much the P.A.C. would raise through these voluntary donations since they had only a limited amount of time to do so. “It takes a long time for organizations, mass organizations, to set up their machinery,” Hillman noted.⁵⁹ Either way, the P.A.C. set up internal machinery to deal with these different streams of income, and their distinctive legal status: establishing an accounting system in which treasury funds and voluntary donations were kept separately (one that PACs “connected” to a membership association continue to use).⁶⁰ Exhibiting some legal caution, however, the P.A.C. determined to *freeze* its treasury account for the remainder of the campaign, relying solely upon voluntary donations to fund both its overtly political activities, and its general overhead and maintenance costs too.⁶¹ “We were...advised that the expenditure of funds, derived from trade-union contributions, prior to the inception of the election campaign was unquestionably legal,” Hillman told the Anderson Committee. “We were further advised, however, that the use of these funds for operating expenses after the parties had nominated their Presidential candidates might raise debatable questions of law” – hence the freezing of the account.⁶² It would “remain frozen until after November 7” – the day of the election.

In the interim, all operating expenses of the P.A.C. would “be paid from the individual contributions account” – a precautionary step that would stretch the bounds of its nascent voluntary fund.⁶³ In order to make it possible, the P.A.C. took a financial short-cut, soliciting large *loans* from some individuals which were to be paid back from the \$1 voluntary fund once it was sufficiently built up. Thus in August, Hillman reported almost \$40,000 in loans to the Anderson Committee.⁶⁴ “Obviously, we did not have the funds,” he told them, “so we borrowed money from individuals.”⁶⁵ Thus the P.A.C.’s caution in one area did not extend to all. Nor did caution necessarily reflect their

legal *beliefs*. “We would like to make it clear that it is our judgment that our operating expenses are purely educational,” Hillman clarified during his testimony, “but in order to have no argument about it, we have decided to pay all operating expenses between now and November 7 from voluntary contributions so there can be no questions whether it comes under this prohibition or not. Obviously, a number of the things we are doing are educational and no one would question that.”⁶⁶

Much as individual contributions or state-level organizations were excluded from the law, the P.A.C.’s legal team argued for a strong distinction between the *political* and the *educational* – wherein the latter escaped prohibition too. As Hillman closed the matter before the committee: “In other words, we believe we have a right to do a lot of things under the law, but we do not want to have any public debate as to whether we are or are not within our rights” – at least for now.⁶⁷

As is apparent from this discussion, a varied and evolving set of legal arguments were being put forward in order to justify the P.A.C. idea – but the special status of voluntary contributions was neither the first nor the most important of these in 1944, though it would become critical to the basic definition of a PAC in the ensuing decades. Nor were these various arguments without opponents – including prominent legislators who took their complaints straight to the top.

The Legal Attack on P.A.C.

Among the most outraged was Congressman Howard Smith (D-VA), co-author of the very law that had set out to constrain labor involvement in elections.⁶⁸ In early January, 1944, he complained to Attorney General Francis Biddle that the P.A.C. represented “a flagrant violation of the criminal provisions of the Federal Corrupt Practices Act, as amended by the War Labor Disputes Act,” as Biddle summarized the charge.⁶⁹ But Attorney General Biddle proceeded to pronounce the P.A.C.’s basic financial structure and activities as being in accordance with Smith’s own law.⁷⁰

An FBI investigation had been ordered in response to Smith's complaint, but it found no violations of the Corrupt Practices Act, or the Hatch Act contribution limit, Biddle reported in his reply.⁷¹ Though the P.A.C. had been established using union treasury funds, as Smith had drawn attention to in his initial complaint, it had not made any direct campaign contributions to *federal* candidates using those funds, and thus had not violated the law.⁷² As Hillman acknowledged before the Anderson Committee, the P.A.C. had "made a few modest contributions in connection with the primary campaigns of candidates after consultation with the local organizations of the CIO"⁷³ But as the Green Committee Report summarized: "Except for the primary and local elections, the special committee was advised that in no instance did the Political Action Committee transfer any of its funds to a political candidate or committee, for use in connection with a Federal election."⁷⁴ "If future action by the Committee of a nature prohibited by the Act should occur," Biddle assured the Congressman, "appropriate action will be taken by this Department."⁷⁵

But Smith was not alone in his disdain for the P.A.C. Almost from the moment it was established, P.A.C. had generated scrutiny from the House Special Committee on Un-American Activities – "HUAC" – chaired by Martin Dies (D-TX).⁷⁶ Ever vigilant against Communist infiltration, Dies' committee launched an investigation into the CIO and P.A.C.'s purported links to Communists – fanning the flames of criticism even as its March, 1944 report offered no real "smoking gun" to substantiate such allegations.⁷⁷ In August, Dies took to writing Biddle too.⁷⁸ Dies, somewhat inexplicably, questioned the CIO-PAC's activities in connection with the Hatch Act restrictions on federal employees – perhaps referring to those members of the Roosevelt administration with whom the P.A.C. appeared to have close ties. But Biddle essentially dismissed this complaint, observing that the Hatch Act applied only to non-political appointees anyway. Still, Dies had already used the considerable power and resources of his committee to rail against the P.A.C.

Irrespective of a Communist threat, real or imagined, there was a deeper cultural discomfort with the idea of electoral activity by a “special interest.”⁷⁹ The growing number of public opinion polls consistently showed majorities believing labor should “keep out of politics altogether.”⁸⁰ This suggested a generalized hostility, but financial issues were also singled out. In a *Fortune* magazine poll conducted in April 1944, for example, 57% of respondents felt that labor unions “should *not* be allowed to contribute money to an election campaign,” even if they wanted to.⁸¹ Nonetheless, the CIO *did* want to, and the Smith-Connally Act prohibition had shaped how it would do so.

By September, Biddle was corresponding with Senator E.H. Moore (R-OK), who raised concerns about both the P.A.C. and its sister organization, the NCPAC.⁸² On the one hand, Moore raised questions about the P.A.C. and NCPAC’s organizational status – their close links with the CIO made them, in his view, “labor organizations” under the meaning of the National Labor Relations Act, and thereby prohibited from political activity whatever its nature or funding source.⁸³ During the Anderson Committee hearings in August, Hillman and CIO counsel John Abt had vehemently denied that the NCPAC was a “labor organization.”⁸⁴ As for the CIO-PAC, Abt’s assessment was more measured:

“Let me say on that, like many other questions that arise under the Corrupt Practices Act, or the Hatch Act, I think it is a highly debatable question as to whether we are or are not a labor organization within the definition of the Smith-Connally Act, which incorporates the definition of the National Labor Relations Act, because of the fact we do not negotiate with employers, or have anything to do with the problem of wages, hours, or working conditions.”⁸⁵

Since the point was a debatable one, Abt explained that the P.A.C. had proceeded along the most cautious route – as it had done with “every legal question which we have been confronted with” – assuming it would be classified as a labor organization, and therefore determining that neither the CIO nor the P.A.C. would make any “contributions whatever in connection with the elections.”⁸⁶

But if the P.A.C. itself would avoid direct campaign contributions – even as it was conducting all operations with voluntary funds after July – the NCPAC *was* offering its financial

support to candidates.⁸⁷ And it was here that Moore made his second objection – questioning the very distinction between treasury and voluntary contributions that would come to define the concept of a PAC. The NCPAC’s funding structure, Moore argued, was “a mere technical effort expressly designed for the purpose of attempting to evade the provisions of the Federal Corrupt Practices Act, as amended by the Smith-Connally Act.”⁸⁸ But Biddle did not agree.⁸⁹ The law was designed to “to restrict the use of union and corporate funds,” he acknowledged, but Congress had not intended “to restrict the political activities of individuals.”⁹⁰ *Even if* the NCPAC were a “labor organization,” Biddle argued – a classification he himself strongly doubted – the law’s prohibition could not extend to the actions it had funded through voluntary contributions.⁹¹ “Any other construction of the statute would require me to assume that Congress intended to place the persons who belonged to labor organizations or who hold stock in national banks, or in corporations organized by authority of Federal law, under a special disability and to deny to them a privilege that belongs to all other citizens.” The plan of the NCPAC, then, complied with “both the spirit and the letter of the law,” in Biddle’s view.⁹²

But Moore had one last gasp up his sleeve – an attack on the *expenditure* side of the ledger, and on the CIO itself. Indeed, the issue of “expenditures” would become a crucial legal argument – especially relevant at the presidential level – revolving around what an organization could do *without* giving directly to a candidate or party. Just because the CIO was not contributing directly to candidates, Moore pointed out, did not mean its activities were without benefit to them – backing up his claims with CIO literature and editorials that appeared to advocate for particular candidates.⁹³ But here again, Biddle remained unmoved. Section 9 of the Smith-Connally Act only prohibited *contributions* from labor organizations to candidates or party committees, Biddle observed (“in connection with” federal elections). It did not, as Biddle acknowledged, prohibit *expenditures* – such as those involved in producing the literature.⁹⁴ And prohibiting groups from *spending* money as they

saw fit could be seen as an abridgment of fundamental freedoms, as much as prohibiting individuals from making contributions could be. While he did not dismiss the possibility that some forms of expression might fall under the statutes, those that Moore had emphasized were “very similar to many of the editorials appearing in newspapers and other periodicals during this campaign, and I hardly conceive that Congress should have intended that expressions of opinion by labor unions or by newspapers should be covered by the statutes.”⁹⁵

P.A.C. Counsel John Abt would reproduce these arguments before the Green Committee, noting that the Corrupt Practices Act made a “very clear distinction between contributions and expenditures,” and that to interpret otherwise risked endangering freedoms of speech and association.⁹⁶ More generally, as a letter to P.A.C.’s regional directors in December 1943 affirmed, the P.A.C. held that “expenditures” for such purposes, even where involving explicit candidate advocacy, simply could not be limited. “These activities on the part of the committee are merely the exercise of its constitutional right of free speech, press and assembly. They are not and cannot be prohibited by law.”⁹⁷ The CIO argued that trade union money could thereby be utilized to aid or promote particular candidates, so long as it was not contributed directly to them, or explicitly prearranged or coordinated with them.⁹⁸ They argued, in essence, that an “independent” campaign could still be waged on a candidate’s behalf – Smith-Connally law or not.

In taking the position, the P.A.C. would tap into a longer stream of arguments about what a candidate’s “friends” might do on his behalf, and give a new organizational reality to such support. This issue had first emerged with the Publicity Act Amendments of 1911, which had imposed limitations on the amounts House and Senate candidates might spend on their own nomination and election campaigns (\$5,000 and \$10,000 respectively). But it had also included language stating that a candidate must not “cause to be given” sums in excess of the limitations either – given by other individuals than himself – and even that the candidate must not cause moneys to be “expended” by

other individuals too.⁹⁹ Though the measures were primarily oriented to an electoral world in which candidates themselves would typically finance their own campaigns (hence by “expending” was in these provisions in the first place, since a candidate would not be “contributing” to their own campaign but “expending” their own funds), this language was intended to bring under the spending caps whatever financial aid “friends” of the candidate might occasionally provide, whether by contributing to him directly or purchasing goods or services on his behalf.

The difficulty of establishing such causation was made clear in the *Newberry* case – a lawsuit emerging out of the 1918 Senate contest in Michigan between Truman H. Newberry and carmaker Henry Ford. Convicted of exceeding the spending limits imposed by the Publicity Act Amendments of 1911, Newberry won his appeal to the Supreme Court. The majority opinion in *Newberry v. United States* (1921) held that Newberry’s conviction should be overruled on the grounds that Congress lacked the constitutional authority to regulate primary elections, in which much of Newberry’s spending had occurred. While four judges dissented on the constitutional point, their minority opinion offered a different rationale for overturning the conviction – that the instructions given to the jury gave an overly broad interpretation of the candidate’s responsibility for the spending of others.¹⁰⁰ The problem was that “[m]ost of the money which went into Newberry’s campaign was not contributed or spent directly by him,” Overacker (1932) explains.¹⁰¹ The District Court had worked on the basis that a violation of the statute required more than the candidate simply *knowing* about or acquiescing in (excessive) moneys being spent in his behalf, but that he must *actively participate* in bringing that spending about, and know how it would be used.¹⁰² But the justices of the Supreme Court went further – requiring that “the candidate must actually *participate* in the [excess] expenditure,” in Overacker’s words, for it to constitute a violation.¹⁰³ Chief Justice White went furthest of all, claiming the statute *only* applied to the candidate’s own personal spending.¹⁰⁴

The *Newberry* case, Overacker concluded, “brought into sharp relief the difficulty of holding the candidate responsible for the activities of his friends, or even members of his family.”¹⁰⁵ Indeed, White’s position would ultimately be reflected in the Federal Corrupt Practices Act of 1925 – the Congressional response to the *Newberry* decision – in that it specified the campaign spending caps as applying to the candidate only, and required disclosure only of those expenditures “made with his knowledge or consent.”¹⁰⁶ As such, Overacker continued, “the limitations imposed upon candidates serve no useful purpose” – they did little to rein in what the candidate himself was spending, and “[t]hey certainly do not limit the total amount which may be spent on behalf of a candidate, for what his enthusiastic followers may spend individually or collectively is not limited in any way.” In effect, “they simply make it necessary for the astute candidate to be discreetly ignorant of what his friends are doing.”¹⁰⁷

The questions raised about candidate responsibility for the spending of others, and the point at which a candidate’s knowledge amounted to consent and coordination, would remain active issues. The new organizations of 1936 and 1940 had emphasized the “independence” of their financial basis – partly as a legal tool that allowed donors to avoid some of the disclosure regulations in the 1925 Corrupt Practices Act, and particularly to avoid the overall spending cap on political committees, imposed by the Hatch Act Amendments of 1940. But the “independent” financial basis of their organizations, as I argued in the last two chapters, was employed more for its rhetorical weight – as a means of claiming a new kind of independence *from* the extant parties without reaching for the traditional mode of expressing that independence, a third party.¹⁰⁸ The P.A.C. would begin to emphasize the independence of its *spending* – a conception with much greater legal import in terms of the *sources* of money groups could utilize. In 1944, the P.A.C. had justified some use of money derived from union treasuries on a time-based legal rationale – that prior to the Democratic convention, there was no “candidate” in the general election, and thus no election in which their use

of that money could be connected. After the convention, they had switched to using voluntary funds to fuel their entire operation (though as noted, much of this “voluntary” fund was established through *loans*). Beyond 1944, they would increasingly utilize an *activity*-based rationale that would lay the groundwork for the continuous use of treasury monies to establish and maintain P.A.C. operations, even during campaign periods, for broad “political education” on an ongoing basis, but also for the explicit advocacy of candidates during campaigns – so long as this was done *independently* of the candidate, they now argued, to restrict it would be an affront to free expression.

So what did each of these streams of activity look like? What exactly did the P.A.C. *do*?

The P.A.C. in Action

“For many years each of the affiliated unions of the CIO have conducted their own programs of political activity and political education. It is the function of our committee to coordinate and make more effective the work which our constituent unions have heretofore carried on independently.”¹⁰⁹

- Sidney Hillman, August 1944

So Sidney Hillman described the P.A.C.’s purpose to the Anderson Committee in 1944 – better coordinating and making more effective CIO “political activity and political education.” The P.A.C. would do this, Hillman explained, by working toward three related aims.¹¹⁰ First, it sought “to bring the issues at stake to the attention of the people”; second, “to secure the widest possible participation in the determination of those issues through the use of the ballot”; and third “to assist [the American people] in using their ballot intelligently and effectively.”¹¹¹ Roughly speaking, these aims would be fulfilled by three different streams of activity: political education (essentially issue-based publicity activities), voter mobilization (through registration drives and ground support on Election Day), and political action (through candidate endorsements and the provision of financial support). They would also fit into differing normative categories – the educational, the civic, and the political.

Three Spheres of Activity

Bringing key issues to public attention was a matter of political *education* – of building publicity campaigns around such issues, or broader thematic ideas.¹¹² In the P.A.C.’s case, it stressed a strong commitment to the war effort, with an eye on a “sound and progressive post-war program” which could give full employment to our people, provide an adequate system of social security in time of unemployment, sickness, and old age, and lay the basis for a more secure and abundant life.”¹¹³

Hillman was keen to tap into other positive rhetorical themes that could reinforce and enhance the educational claim. He suggested the process by which the CIO had arrived at specific political program for 1944 was a broad and collaborative one – even as the document was drafted by the P.A.C., and greeted with curiously unanimous approval at every subsequent stage.¹¹⁴ The program “represents the collective thinking of the CIO,” Hillman claimed, “as well as of the *many other groups and organizations* which participated in the discussions which preceded its formulation.”¹¹⁵ Exactly *which* groups had given input was unclear. What was clear was an effort among P.A.C. leaders to depict it in less exclusively union terms – as one group within a coalition of like-minded individuals and organizations that went beyond the labor movement.¹¹⁶ Theirs was “not a narrow labor program,” nor “framed in the interest of any special group” Hillman went on – suggesting the continuing stigma associated with *special interest legislation*. Indeed, he went so far as to suggest it offered “a basis for unity and common action by all Americans in every walk of life, regardless of formal party affiliation.”¹¹⁷ That is, the issue-based P.A.C. program was not just non-labor, it was *non-partisan*. Indeed, from the depiction he offered, it was difficult to see how *anyone* could be against such a program.

Citizenship itself was the second theme that P.A.C. promoted – presenting their voter mobilization activities in purely “civic” terms, along the lines of the League of Women Voters. “We conceive of our task as that of political education in the deepest and most practical sense of that

word,” Hillman said, “education in the full and enlightened exercise of the responsibilities of citizenship.”¹¹⁸ Thus it had embarked upon an extensive registration campaign, “working in close cooperation with other labor groups as well as with civic, businessmen's, and other organizations,” Hillman noted.¹¹⁹ “We are concerned with the decline in the total vote from 50,000,000 in 1940 to 28,000 000 in 1942,” Hillman said, explaining that the P.A.C. sought simply to reverse that trend: “we are interested in assuring the largest possible ballot in 1944,” he emphasized.¹²⁰ But improved voter mobilization was also of particularly importance to P.A.C. if it hoped to promote its issue-based agenda through the ballot box. Apathy among labor voters – particularly low turnout in northern industrial cities – was widely blamed for what the CIO saw as poor results in 1942.¹²¹ At the same time, more workers were becoming unionized, thus representing a significant part of the labor force, and also an increasing part of potential voter pool.¹²²

Accordingly, as Foster (1975) explains, P.A.C. pushed the concept of the “union voter.”¹²³ Clothed in the language of citizenship and duty, this primarily involved a massive push to get members registered and to the polls.¹²⁴ But it also had an ideological component – an attempt to expand the typical union member’s concerns beyond the purely economic toward a wider array of “liberal” positions.¹²⁵ The P.A.C. produced literature pushing both components, organized conventions and conferences, developed plans to increase union voter registration and ensure turnout on election day – anything that might bring the political realm into view for the average union member.¹²⁶ As one of its earliest publications exhorted:

All of us must register.
All of us must vote.
All of us must help get out the vote.
*All of us must contribute to campaign expenses*¹²⁷

In this last respect, of course, they pointed to political *action* – the arena in which preference and selectivity could come to the fore.

“It is not our concern how they register-whether as Republicans or Democrats” Hillman had told the Anderson committee.¹²⁸ But party registration aside, the success of maximum voting from the CIO’s perspective did depend on those untapped voters being largely sympathetic to their aims, and willing to vote in accordance with them. Thus, P.A.C. leaders recognized, latent sympathies must be activated or reinforced, but they must also be *directed*. Political action, then, was depicted as an extension of educational activities designed to aid citizens “in using their ballot intelligently and effectively.”¹²⁹ “We do not think it is sufficient merely to bring issues to the attention of the people,” Hillman said. “We also believe that it is one of our important functions to show people how they can participate in deciding those issues in their own best interest.”¹³⁰ This would be done, in part, by bringing “to the American people the record of the candidates who solicit their support.”¹³¹ Those records would indicate the extent to which an incumbent or prospective elected official was in sync with the P.A.C.’s desired program.

Research and Records

Voting records, and political research more broadly, in fact, would prove to be powerful weapons of political action – its necessity driven home by the P.A.C.’s first congressional strategist, Thomas Amlie.¹³² A former Progressive Party congressman from Wisconsin, Amlie had a background in Socialist politics, had been involved with the Non-Partisan League in the late ‘teens and early ‘20s, and served as chairman of the Farmer-Labor Political Federation in the early 1930s.¹³³ During this time, he toured the country as a liberal spokesman, in which capacity he had learned a powerful lesson about appearance and reality in politics. Though the crowds were largely sympathetic to his ideas, they always seemed enthusiastic about their local congressman too – no matter how reactionary he may be in reality.¹³⁴ Constituents simply lacked any real sense of their congressman’s record, Amlie observed. “As a result of these experiences I learned that in the Northern States, a

congressman could vote liberal on from 10 to 20% of the recorded votes and maintain a reputation as a liberal with his constituents,” he would later write.¹³⁵ Amlie’s conclusion anticipated an entire research agenda in political science, exploring the disconnect between the public view of “Congress” as against individual Congressmen from their districts.¹³⁶ In the early 1940s, at least, Amlie felt that the roll-call data offered ways to correct false impressions of a congressman’s record, and thus aid in the election or reelection of candidates more in sympathy with CIO goals. And as Amlie would later note – there was a partisan dimension too. Closely monitoring the positions legislators’ took would help impress the point on the public “that a Republican is someone who votes like a Republican.” Amlie, it seemed, was moving away from his earlier hostility toward *both* parties.¹³⁷

It was not that the compilation and use of congressional voting records was entirely new – Clemens observed such activity in the ‘teens and ‘twenties. But the level of background research conducted, and the constant attentiveness the P.A.C. was able to give to this activity *was*. Though it initially distributed the special sections on congressional votes prepared by the *New Republic*, P.A.C. would soon attain sufficient internal research capacity to produce their own.¹³⁸ Their emphasis in creating these records, however, would largely be an internal one – a substantive reference point informing various national-level activities, and, most importantly, a concrete resource for state and local P.A.C.s in making candidate endorsements. Indeed, a decentralized endorsement structure was one of the ways in which the sub-national PAC’s had been made semi-autonomous of the national committee. The National PAC only made endorsement recommendations at the national level – for the president and vice-president (and ultimately, the CIO executive committee made the actual endorsement, based on their recommendation). For all other offices the national P.A.C. served only to provide information and guidance.¹³⁹ State and local PACs (often created around congressional districts), were the ones who picked candidates for offices at all other levels.¹⁴⁰ P.A.C.’s early voting record compilations were thus large and unwieldy – packed with as much fine-grained information

as possible in order to cover a multitude of endorsement decisions. As P.A.C. research director Mary Goddard observed in the early 1950s:

“Years of experimentation have brought general agreement that the most useful kind of voting record for political action are master records containing a maximum number of votes for each year together with a full but concise description of the meaning of the vote.”¹⁴¹

“An effort by the national office to pick a small number of votes considered most important nationally often fails to provide the various localities with votes on issues of the greatest importance locally. Incomplete descriptions of individual votes has led to errors in campaign publications and speeches prepared locally.”¹⁴²

Figure 6.1. P.A.C. Voting Record Example

The document is a two-page spread from a PAC voting record. The left page features the PAC logo and header information: 'POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE', '1346 CONNECTICUT AVE., N. W.', 'WASHINGTON 6, D. C.', 'ADAMS 0832'. Below this is a list of resolutions, each with a brief description and a date. The right page is a large table with columns for each member of Congress (e.g., ALABAMA, ALASKA, ARIZONA, ARKANSAS, CALIFORNIA, COLORADO, CONNECTICUT, DELAWARE, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, FLORIDA, GEORGIA, HAWAII, ILLINOIS, INDIANA, IOWA, KANSAS, KENTUCKY, LOUISIANA, MAINE, MARYLAND, MASSACHUSETTS, MICHIGAN, MINNESOTA, MISSISSIPPI, MISSOURI, MONTANA, NEBRASKA, NEVADA, NEW HAMPSHIRE, NEW JERSEY, NEW MEXICO, NEW YORK, NORTH CAROLINA, NORTH DAKOTA, OHIO, OKLAHOMA, OREGON, PENNSYLVANIA, RHODE ISLAND, SOUTH CAROLINA, SOUTH DAKOTA, TENNESSEE, TEXAS, UTAH, VERMONT, VIRGINIA, WASHINGTON, WEST VIRGINIA, WISCONSIN, WYOMING) and rows for each resolution. The table contains 'Y' for 'Yes' and 'N' for 'No' votes.

Source: CIO Political Action Committee (PAC) Collection Papers, 1943-1960s, Accession # 647. Box 12, Folder 4, “PAC Congressional Voting Record Newsletter, 1950-52.” Reuther Library.

Such master records could be interpreted by the trained P.A.C. workers at whom they were directed, but were less than accessible to union members, or the public at large – who in any case did not see them in their raw form.¹⁴³ While the PAC regularly updated members with its *Congressional Voting*

Record newsletter, the large number of issues and legislators included, and the lack of summary analysis, made them difficult to digest without concerted effort. For all the P.A.C. claimed to be continuing labor's traditional "friends and enemies" strategy, their records did not immediately make clear who was what.¹⁴⁴

In this respect, however, it might seem that the somewhat opaque presentation of voting records was useful to P.A.C. Voting records were still controversial, with congressmen themselves tending to view them as a "blacklist." The P.A.C.'s mode of presentation offered room to maneuver, as its second director, Jack Kroll, made plain in his testimony before a 1946 campaign expenditures committee. Asked by a congressman whether the P.A.C. ever explicitly pointed out "the person that you consider has been a friend of yours, of your organization" in their various publications, Kroll explained that they did not.¹⁴⁵ "We do make the issues known," he said, "and whether we think that particular thing is good or bad from our viewpoint. Then we make known the voting record on that particular act, see?" "We do not single out an individual and say, 'Here is Bill Smith; Bill Smith is altogether bad...,'" he continued; "We say, 'We are for this issue. Here is how all the Congressmen voted on it.'"¹⁴⁶ If they talked in general terms about legislators who had supported a bill they desired, or opposed it, "we do not mention any individual names," Kroll assured. "Now, that we are very careful not to do from the national organization," he emphasized.¹⁴⁷ While this format might help assuage the concerns of congressmen to a degree, it made early P.A.C. voting records less useful as a propaganda tool in and of themselves.¹⁴⁸

The Doctrine of 'Non-Partisanship'

Much as its predecessors had, therefore, the P.A.C. invoked nonpartisanship in supporting candidates on the basis of the issues central to their program. "Our committee is a nonpartisan organization," Hillman stated to the Anderson Committee.¹⁴⁹ Its concerns were not partisan ones, he

claimed. Nor were its aims partisan either. Distilling the essence of the nonpartisan principle, while throwing in a dash of pragmatism for good measure, he told them:

“Our whole approach is on a nonpartisan basis. We do not care what party a candidate belongs to. We have got our program and we will support any Congressman who comes anywhere near supporting that program. Of course, we don’t expect them to support the whole program. We are practical enough to know that.”¹⁵⁰

The P.A.C. would support both Democratic *and* Republican candidates, Hillman affirmed, but he gave no indication of quite *how much* they would do so.¹⁵¹

In principle, its support would be distributed at the candidate-level, toward individuals whose positions on particular issues most closely resembled those of the CIO itself. But in practice, there was at least one choice that involved picking sides – the *presidential* choice. It was here that third party temptations, or simply independent presidential candidacies, had often reared their heads. But the P.A.C. would adopt the same approach as had Labor’s Non-Partisan League, and, for that matter, the Liberty League. “It is definitely *not* the policy of the CIO to organize a third party,” its president Philip Murray announced at the November 1943 convention when explaining the formation of P.A.C.¹⁵² Rather, the CIO’s intent was “to abstain from and discourage any move in that direction...”¹⁵³ Aside from the technical problems of third party politics, Murray observed, such an effort “would only serve to divide labor and progressive forces, resulting in the election of political enemies.”¹⁵⁴

Sidney Hillman, the P.A.C.’s first director, would echo these claims in his appearance before the Anderson Committee – the 1944 House committee charged with investigating expenditures in the election. The P.A.C. was neither a third party in itself nor intent on creating one, nor was it “an appendage of either major political party,” he affirmed. And, he emphasized, it had no “desire or ambition to “capture” either party,” as had “sometimes been charged” by politicians and the press alike. Rather, the P.A.C. sought “to influence the thinking, the program, and the choice of candidates of *both parties*,” much like “every other organization concerned with the affairs of

Government” in Hillman’s view.¹⁵⁵ “[T]hat kind of activity,” he summarized grandiloquently, “is of the very essence of our two-party system.”¹⁵⁶ The P.A.C. would instead work within the two-party system, while operating outside of the regular party structures and without becoming subservient to either.

Yet Hillman himself had not always been so committed to that system. And his involvement in third party activity at the state level was not simply confined to the past.¹⁵⁷ In addition to his leadership in P.A.C. and the NCPAC, Hillman also served as the chairman of the American Labor Party in New York State – a fact noted with some relish during the hearings by Anderson Committee member Clarence J. Brown (R-OH).¹⁵⁸ The American Labor Party (ALP) was the CIO’s other major political initiative – active only in New York. On the surface, it seemed starkly at odds with the non-partisan vision of the P.A.C. But as Hillman explained it, the ALP actually came closer to looking like a political action committee than a traditional third party. Even in 1936, when the ALP was first formed, Hillman explained, he had advocated that it not put forth independent candidates, but support those most favorable to labor’s concerns from the two main parties. When the ALP did put forth an independent candidate for governor in 1942, moreover, Hillman himself supported the Democratic nominee – despite his chairmanship of the party. His belief, and vision for the organization, was that “we ought to support the best man from either one of the parties...”¹⁵⁹ Thus, in 1944, “[t]he American Labor Party is doing exactly what the Political Action Committee is doing,” Hillman explained, it was “endorsing candidates from both parties.”¹⁶⁰

At the presidential level, where they would have to make a choice, the national P.A.C. recommended, and the CIO endorsed, the Democratic Party’s presidential nominee, now seeking reelection to his fourth term in office: Franklin D. Roosevelt. Roosevelt was deemed a better “friend” to labor than Republican nominee Thomas Dewey, another New York governor, was likely to be. “As stated, we have endorsed Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Truman, and of course we are going to

campaign for them,” Hillman told the Anderson Committee. That would involve “the distribution of literature,” Hillman acknowledged, which would, in particular, “pay attention to the record of Mr. Dewey, or his lack of record.”¹⁶¹ This was “a political campaign” after all, and the P.A.C. would at all levels “bring out the record of the candidates and speak either for them or against them.”¹⁶² But it would not contribute directly to Roosevelt’s campaign – that is, to the Democratic National Committee – which was officially running it.¹⁶³ Nor would the P.A.C. be giving anything to the *Republican* National Committee either, Hillman added later, if such a point needed to be made.¹⁶⁴

Rep. Clarence Brown, for his part, seemed unpersuaded. “You are not convincing me by your statements that you are very nonpolitical or nonpartisan,” Brown mused. “I think you are showing a great deal of partisan bias.”¹⁶⁵ But Hillman’s response would have made an etymologist proud. “I am not partisan in the sense of narrow partisanship,” he clarified, but “I am very partisan in the matter of the objectives that are at stake.”¹⁶⁶ Hillman and the P.A.C. would be partisans of informed *principle*, he implied, not of blind passions. In supporting Roosevelt, they were applying that principle to a *person*, not a party.

The Impact of P.A.C.

The full extent of P.A.C.’s influence in 1944 and beyond is a matter of some debate – with little evidence with which to assess its overall impact in both primaries and general election contests.¹⁶⁷ In a few notable cases, the P.A.C. enjoyed a taste of revenge, at least. Its opposition to HUAC chairman Martin Dies in his Democratic primary contest was widely credited with prompting his withdrawal (the primary being the only real election in his one-party Texas constituency).¹⁶⁸ Another member of the House Un-American Activities Committee – Rep. Joe Starnes (D-AL) – was defeated in his primary by a candidate the CIO had explicitly cultivated.¹⁶⁹ Several other defeated legislators pointed the finger at the CIO P.A.C. to explain their electoral demise.¹⁷⁰

Yet as Foster notes, the P.A.C. “never published a complete list of its primary endorsements,” thus its true success rate could not be calculated.¹⁷¹ Perhaps they banked on reputation being of greater political use than aggregate results. But the P.A.C.’s reputation was not always a fearsome one. In some areas, especially the South, a P.A.C. endorsement could be viewed as a “kiss of death,” observers reported.¹⁷²

They certainly spent heavily in the election, even – in the P.A.C.’s case – after switching to voluntary funds. Considered together, the P.A.C. and NCPAC spent just over \$1.3 million in the 1944 campaign, at least as far as was reported to the Clerk of the House of Representatives.¹⁷³ The P.A.C. accounted for the majority of that amount – spending just under \$1 million – with trade union contributions providing about half of the funds upon which they drew.¹⁷⁴ Considering the DNC itself spent just over \$2 million, this was a sizeable contribution to the overall effort to return Roosevelt to the White House for a fourth term.¹⁷⁵

Table 6.1. Final Reports of the CIO-P.A.C. & NCPAC (1944), as filed with the House Clerk

| <i>PAC/NCPAC Account</i> | <i>Contributions</i> | <i>Expenditures</i> |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Trade-union account | \$647,903.26 | \$478,498.82 |
| Individual contributions account | 376,910.77 | 470,852.32 |
| <i>Subtotal</i> | 1,024,814.03 | 949,351.14 |
| NCPAC | 380,306.45 | 378,424.78 |
| <i>Total</i> | 1,405,120.48 | 1,327,775.92 |

Source: Green Committee Report [S. Rpt. 79:101], 23.

And the national P.A.C.’s favored candidate did win handsomely – though he may well have done so without the P.A.C.’s involvement, given international considerations and the attractions of the candidate himself. Nonetheless, labor’s efforts on his behalf – and particularly *P.A.C.* activity – were accorded a substantial place in the post-election analysis, particularly in comparison to the contribution the Democratic Party apparatus itself had made.¹⁷⁶

Party versus P.A.C.?

P.A.C. was certainly credited with being better organized and more effective promoting Roosevelt's re-election than the Democratic Party itself.¹⁷⁷ The journalist Ernest Lindley – a commentator considered “friendly” to the P.A.C. effort – observed that its national headquarters “was more businesslike, produced more smart literature, and generally had more brains and practicability at the helm than did Democratic National headquarters.”¹⁷⁸ But even less-than-friendly observers found themselves paying homage to P.A.C. Raymond Moley, for example – once a key member of Roosevelt's “Brains Trust” who had since turned against the New Deal – would describe PAC's methods as “too thorough, too intense, and too surprising for the improvised, routine methods of the traditional Republican party.”¹⁷⁹ Roosevelt, for his part, seemed to recognize where gratitude was due – even sending a personal letter of thanks to Sidney Hillman.¹⁸⁰

Among its “surprising” methods, the P.A.C.'s emphasis on vote mobilization was deemed especially novel by contemporary observers. E.E. Schattschneider himself compiled news clippings and composed his general impressions of its campaign. “The older types of party organization were based on assumptions concerning a great public indifference to politics,” he wrote in an unpublished essay on “P.A.C. and Party Organization.” “What was remarkable about P.A.C. and largely about the whole Roosevelt drive was the confident assumption that many millions of Americans who had never voted before really cared about the result and really wanted to see Mr. Roosevelt get reelected.”¹⁸¹ The seemingly democratic goal of maximum participation thus coincided, in this election, with the P.A.C.'s goal of getting the Democratic nominee back in the White House. “PAC had the new idea of this campaign,” concurred journalist Radford Mobley in the *Detroit Free Press*: “Its future course will largely determine political trends – P.A.C. says that not for a long time again will any political machine try to win an election on the basis of not disturbing the voters. From now

on it feels that elections will be won by maximum voting.”¹⁸² With maximum voting, however, would come the increased costs of campaigning within an ever-expanding electorate.

In seeking to realize “maximum voting,” the P.A.C. was also treading into territory traditionally occupied by the political parties alone.¹⁸³ As journalist Marquis Childs observed in his post-election analysis, “[a] great deal of the work that a Democratic organization might have done was taken care of this time by the regional offices of the Political Action Committee.”¹⁸⁴ These party-like activities brought the P.A.C. into contact, and sometimes conflict, with the regular party apparatus. Though DNC Chairman Robert Hannegan denied any “ill feelings” between the two, Schattschneider concluded that “the relations between the regular party organizations and PAC were complex and not without friction.”¹⁸⁵ As he explained further:

“PAC certainly violated one of the basic principles of the traditional type of regular party organization – the rule namely that the regular, recognized local party organization be the sole and exclusive local organization recognized by the party. *PAC duplicated the regular local organizations and moreover took over the principal function of the regulars—i.e., the drive to get out the vote.* In view of the extreme value placed on “recognition” by the regular party organization, the invasion of the field by a new pattern of organizations was certain to create tensions.”¹⁸⁶

As the journalist Thomas L. Stokes concluded after the election, labor was “an ally—not always politely accepted” by the regulars. It had “earned the right to partnership in the Democratic party,” he remarked, but would likely “have to struggle for recognition.”¹⁸⁷

This talk of “partnership” or “alliance,” however uneasy, suggests two important strategic developments with P.A.C. In one respect, it suggests something *enduring* – that P.A.C. would not, as with many campaign committees, disappear after the election. Indeed, beyond Election Day, Hillman expected the P.A.C. “to carry on our educational work – *to explain the issues in connection with bills before the Congress* – to point out what is at stake...”¹⁸⁸ He suggested, in essence, that the P.A.C. would shift away from an active campaigning mode. But it would not simply convert into a “lobbying” organization, as Labor’s Non-Partisan League had tried to do after the 1936 election. Rather, its “political education” program would retain an electoral emphasis. Indeed, when the CIO convention voted in November, 1944, to continue the P.A.C.’s operation, it did so with instructions

“to intensify its program of political education, and to prepare the ground work for extensive participation in the local, State, and congressional elections of 1946.”¹⁸⁹ The NCPAC too, which had initially been envisaged more like a traditional and *temporary* campaign committee, would also see its life extended.¹⁹⁰ The second strategic development suggested by talk of “partnership” was whether that too would endure, and thus translate into a more comprehensive *partisanship*.

P.A.C. Partisanship?

In 1954, an internal CIO memo characterized the “history of labor political action” as alternating “spasmodically” between two different strategies – neither of which had proven particularly successful for the labor movement. “Either they plunged with fervor into the building of a separate labor or “third” party,” the memo noted, “or else they religiously refrained from participation in the political processes and sought to exert their influence only in specific instances and on specific issues.”¹⁹¹ It had been third party politics or no “politics” at all – avoiding the rough-and-tumble of the electoral arena and seeking to “plead the justice of their cause” by lobbying legislators directly.¹⁹² But neither approach had delivered. As much as third parties had spectacularly failed, pleading offered little more hope of success – as a last-minute CIO effort to avert the Smith-Connally Act graphically illustrated.¹⁹³ The P.A.C., and its vision of permanent but ostensibly non-partisan political action, represented a third way, not a third party.

With the P.A.C. and NCPAC, the CIO had created a new organizational form and placed interest group electoral activity on a nationalized and permanent basis – thus dramatically expanding its scale, and altering its strategic orientation. In its rhetoric, P.A.C. would seek to downplay any innovation in its mode of organization or operation – seeking to place itself within a longer stream of labor’s political activity. “*Labor has always been in politics*,” came the claim from Joseph Gaer (1944), the P.A.C.’s prolific pamphleteer – one that would be echoed by other labor leaders down the line.¹⁹⁴

Yet as Joseph G. LaPalombara (1952) observed, this claim was only valid “[i]f the terms “politics” and “labor” are used in a very broad sense.”¹⁹⁵ While labor had “long participated in lobbying activities,” LaPalombara conceded, they had added to their activities “the direct and veiled threats of reprisal at the polls.”¹⁹⁶ But *reprisal* was only a second-best strategy for the new P.A.C. Permanence would allow a sustained and *proactive* approach to the electoral arena, unlike the temporary and *reactive* efforts of the past. Indeed, the P.A.C. would aim to operate from the very beginning of the electoral process – in the cultivation of candidates – to its culmination on Election Day – in the mobilization of voters.¹⁹⁷ As the *New Republic* had reported in 1946, the belief that “elections are won between campaigns” had become the fundamental mantra of the “political action movement.”¹⁹⁸

LaPalombara also deemed the P.A.C.’s stance out of step with past labor politics, since Gompers had equated being “in politics” with *partisanship*. The P.A.C.’s “non-partisanship” would steadily move away from an earlier vision that had been as much opposed to entanglements with the existing major parties as the creation of new “independent” ones.

The various invocations of “non-partisanship” in the past had one thing in common – beyond their rejection of third party politics: they stood against the idea of an overarching national preference or enduring commitment toward either of the major parties. Their efforts exhibited some amount of party *balance* in outcomes – whether across time or space. Thus the Non-Partisan League approach involved indifference to the party infiltrated in a particular state – simply targeting whichever was strongest. In the aggregate, since no one party dominated everywhere, the various state NPL’s could not be definitively associated with one “side.”¹⁹⁹ In the Anti-Saloon League case, since Prohibitionist sentiments cut across both parties, the ASL could support only “dry” candidates and still point to an abundance of both Republicans and Democrats whom they had supported.²⁰⁰ The AFL’s overall political posture reflected elements of both approaches in terms of state organizations, and support for congressional candidates. But their avoidance of presidential

endorsements also avoided a contest in which support for one party's candidate could not be offset or balanced elsewhere. Labor's Non-Partisan League had moved into that arena, but sought to reduce the partisan sting by extending the candidate- and issue-based rationale applied at the congressional level – emphasizing their support for *Roosevelt* rather than his party. But LNPL's history also suggested some semblance of balance over time, if not space. To the extent that John L. Lewis's endorsement of Wendell Willkie in 1940 can be viewed as an organizational expression, then LNPL fulfilled the avoidance of an *enduring* commitment that nonpartisan outcomes would seem to require.

But the idea of balance would be largely absent from P.A.C. practice, its nonpartisan claim resting in the assertion of principle alone – that issues dictated candidate support, and if candidates from a particular party tended to fit the bill, then this was simply incidental to what had driven support in the first place. It was a claim that would be tenuous in 1944, and increasingly so over time. For all it might try to emphasize support for Roosevelt in individual terms, the P.A.C.'s endorsement of his candidacy in 1944 “made clear that it would function, for the present, mainly within the Democratic Party,” a contemporary observer noted in the *Washington Post*.²⁰¹ Indeed, the P.A.C.'s overt support for Roosevelt, Garson (1974) observes, “was largely responsible for the refusal of the A.F. of L. to associate with the PAC.”²⁰² In the AFL's formulation, the non-partisan policy still required abstention in the presidential race (thus putting aside their support for Bryan in 1908, or their tepid endorsement of Robert La Follette's independent presidential candidacy in 1924).²⁰³ Garson even interprets the P.A.C.'s endorsement as a “formalization” of the alliance.²⁰⁴

P.A.C.'s activities at the Democratic convention in July 1944 did little to diminish the impression of partisanship. Instead, it fueled a narrative that P.A.C. was seeking to *take over* the Democratic Party.²⁰⁵ This related primarily to its efforts to retain Henry Wallace – a strong supporter of the labor cause – as the vice-presidential candidate.²⁰⁶ P.A.C. was unable to rally enough support

for Wallace on the convention floor, but in considering a suitable alternative candidate (which would ultimately be Senator Harry S. Truman of Missouri), Roosevelt had allegedly instructed aides to “clear it with Sidney.”²⁰⁷ Whether or not Roosevelt uttered this contested line, it captured a feeling that the P.A.C. had been rapidly elevated in the *Democratic* political world.

In an effort to reinforce the non-partisan claim at the presidential level, Hillman noted that representatives of the P.A.C. had sought to present this program before the platform-drafting committees at both party conventions – thus presenting a neutral posture by which the P.A.C. threw the ball into the party court.²⁰⁸ If one declined to catch it, the P.A.C. could claim additional cause to pick the other side in the election, while remaining officially “non-partisan.” When the P.A.C. was refused a hearing at the Republican convention, it was easy for the media to portray it as a “snub,” and for the P.A.C. to claim the higher ground. Yet the “snub” itself appeared more the result of P.A.C. intentionally delaying its official request to testify before the G.O.P. resolutions committee, so as to prevent their being accommodated. As reported in the *Washington Post*, “CIO officials were not chagrined at the snub to the PAC. “After all,” one explained, “it was like asking them to hear the Democratic Party.”²⁰⁹

Moreover, behind closed doors, P.A.C. was more explicit about its true intentions. As Hillman explained in a letter to FDR, it would seek to elect congressmen who would “support you.”²¹⁰ While this did not preclude support for Republicans in theory, it appeared to do so in practice. At the presidential level, the P.A.C. would subsequently endorse the Democratic nominee in both 1948 and 1952 – sustaining a commitment to one side over multiple elections, unlike Labor’s Non-Partisan League. Its congressional support would also appear to be lopsided, though a lack of firm information on overall endorsements and financial support makes such a conclusion only an impressionistic one.²¹¹ The sum of such activities would convey an overall national party preference – one clearly lodged in the Democratic column.

Perhaps most revealing are the strategic suggestions offered within the Cowan-Brophy-Walsh memo, that which established the framework for P.A.C. The authors explicitly recommended “that work be carried on largely within the Democratic Party” – suggesting an intentional Democratic focus from the outset. “Labor cannot continue with its old-time non-partisan attitude of rewarding individual friends and punishing individual enemies,” they wrote, “for the fundamental policies of the major parties are too dissimilar.”²¹² While this might indicate extant party divisions as prompting the CIO to pick a side, Cowan et al.’s subsequent comments are more suggestive of nascent divisions around a polarizing president, which the CIO could help to push along. “We should not pretend that there is the slightest possibility of our achieving genuine influence in the Republican Party. Our influence in the Democratic Party, on the other hand, is already large and can be increased greatly if the proper methods are followed.”²¹³

The “proper methods” would require active involvement in Democratic primary contests, they emphasized. The 1942 general election experience had suggested that “labor’s choice was all too frequently confined to equally unsatisfactory candidates in the two major parties.”²¹⁴ “These considerations, taken together,” they concluded, mean that labor should be thinking at this time of an independent political league which would direct its attention mainly, though not exclusively, to the primaries of the Democratic Party.²¹⁵ The primary campaigns against Southern Democrats like Dies and his colleagues on the Un-American Activities Committee were thus in accord with this purpose – *enemies* within the Democratic Party would still be targeted.

“A certain flexibility of policy as regards methods of achieving political influence,” would also be “desirable,” they suggested – in states where the Republican party was dominant, for example, or where there was a chance to aid “individual progressive Republicans” or defeat “reactionaries.” There might even be “occasional independent and third party candidates who should have support.”²¹⁶ But such support would *not* flow automatically on the basis of their issue

positions alone – other “long-range considerations” would come into play.²¹⁷ Those considerations would increasingly be partisan ones. And they would soon be joined by other organizations in pursuing them.

7. Labor Takes the Partisan Plunge

In this chapter, I explore the emulation of P.A.C. by other actors within the labor movement, and thereafter by “liberal” groups more generally. Thus the American Federation of Labor (AFL) followed the CIO’s example in 1947, overcoming long-term hostility to electoral involvement and creating “Labor’s League for Political Education.” When the two labor federations merged in 1955, the resulting AFL-CIO would fuse its groups into the “Committee on Political Education” or “COPE,” active after 1955). Ideological groups like the Americans for Democratic Action, formed in 1947, or the National Committee for an Effective Congress, following in 1948, would also appear on the scene. These groups would approximate the P.A.C. model in terms of financial aggregation and campaign support, while offering a somewhat broader set of liberal principles on which their support was premised. In influencing the activities of other interest groups, the CIO’s innovation would inaugurate an important new stage in interest group politics – both in organizational, and strategic terms. It was through these permanent entities that labor would cast its lot with the Democratic Party. Along with a growing number of allied “liberal” organizations that imitated the P.A.C.’s form, they set about reshaping the party’s contours in a direction amenable to their cause.

Union Insecurity – The Taft-Hartley Act of 1947

If elections were won between campaigns, the P.A.C. realized it had much more to do after the midterm elections of 1946. With labor agitation stimulating a popular backlash, conservative candidates had done well at the ballot box – P.A.C. endorsements sometimes being viewed as an electoral “kiss of death” for their liberal recipients. Republicans had recaptured control of both the House and the Senate, breaking the unified congressional control Democrats had enjoyed since 1932.¹ And the new Republican majority (with support from conservative Democrats), would soon

demonstrate the legislative costs of their electoral failure, and further undermine any prospect of a more balanced “nonpartisanship” moving forward. With many having faced opposition from the P.A.C. or its subnational affiliates in their campaigns, by implication at the very least, these newly-elected legislators were in no mood to forgive and forget. The “Labor Management Relations Act of 1947” – more commonly known by the names of its sponsors, Senator Robert Taft (R-OH) and Representative Fred Hartley (R-NJ) – was their legislative revenge.

Passed over the veto of President Truman, the Taft-Hartley Act looked to weaken unions in a number of respects – both organizationally and politically.² In organizational terms, it struck at the heart of the labor movement – union security agreements – contracts with management in which status for the union was built in. The Act proceeded to outlaw the most “secure” of such agreements – the “closed shop” – in which union membership was a condition of employment. And though it permitted the “union shop,” where new employees were required to join the union within a set timeframe, it did so only where *state law* allowed – thus making state “right-to-work” laws a possibility. It also made changes to the check-off – the practice of automatically deducting union dues from a payroll, viewed as another important basis of union security. Now workers would have to sign cards explicitly authorizing the union to deduct their dues. In addition, Taft-Hartley placed limitations on expanded forms of union protest by outlawing secondary boycotts, *common situs* picketing, and jurisdictional strikes.³

But it also contained provisions affecting union political activity. The Smith-Connally Act’s prohibition on union political contributions had been a temporary measure – valid for the duration of the war and set to expire six months after the cessation of hostilities.⁴ The Taft-Hartley Act would now make that provision permanent.⁵ Moreover, it would extend that prohibition from one affecting *contributions* in connection with federal elections, to one proscribing *expenditures* too.⁶ This move was meant to cut off the major way that unions – or more specifically, P.A.C. – had continued to utilize

treasury money (that is, money from member *dues*) in the political arena. Direct *contributions* from labor organizations had been forbidden by Smith-Connally, though the P.A.C. and NCPAC had found ways around this in 1944. In the P.A.C.'s case, it relied largely on a distinction between the pre-convention period, in which no official general election candidates existed, and the post-convention period, in which the "campaign" had begun. After the Democratic convention, and the P.A.C.'s endorsement of Franklin Roosevelt, it ceased using funds received directly from union treasuries and relied instead on "voluntary" contributions from members. It refrained, moreover, from making any direct campaign contributions after this point, even with voluntary funds. The NCPAC, on the other hand, did utilize voluntary funds to make direct campaign contributions – though its looser connection to the CIO made it unclear if it could be considered a "labor organization" anyway. Attorney General Nicholas Biddle had deemed the NCPAC's actions in accordance with the law, since the funds had stemmed from individual voluntary contributors, and the law was not intended to restrict individual political activity.

In 1946, however, both groups had continued to utilize funds derived from union treasuries throughout what would be considered the "general election" period, even for activities that appeared explicitly "political" in nature, advocating support for particular candidates.⁷ Moving from legal arguments based on the timeframe or the source of the contribution, these PACs placed greater emphasis on the nature of the *activities* for which union funds would be utilized. With the rise of mass media, Baker (2012) points out, campaign costs increasingly became the costs of *communication*, of advertising and publicity – not, as was the 19th Century concern, for the direct "corruption" of voters through bribes.⁸ While the "educational" claim might serve to facilitate the use of dues money for certain kinds of communications, where the emphasis was on general political principles or particular kinds of issues with which unions and their PACs were concerned, such an argument would not suffice where the communications were explicitly designed to aid particular candidates, or

overtly oriented to specific elections in some way. The solution the unions had turned to was emphasizing the “independent” nature of their spending – that the Smith-Connally Act had only prohibited *contributions* in connection with federal elections, but was silent on *spending* that a union might choose to engage in independently of a particular candidate or party. The legislators who had hoped to stem the flow of labor money into elections, therefore, had seemed to misunderstand exactly what the unions were doing.

Independent Expenditures

The House campaign expenditures committee in 1946, chaired by J. Percy Priest (D-TN), tried to make amends, offering legislative recommendations that would have simply banned political activity by unions altogether.⁹ These recommendations were effectively incorporated into the House version of the Taft-Hartley bill – forbidding union political activity whatever its nature, and whatever the source of money used to fund it.¹⁰ But Taft’s Senate version contained no comparable measure. Instead, it followed the recommendation of the Senate’s 1946 campaign expenditure committee, chaired by Senator Allen J. Ellender (D-LA), to simply add the word “expenditures” to the contribution ban.¹¹ As Ellender saw it, the move would neatly stem the use of treasury funds in and around election contests, while still permitting the use of voluntary funds by PACs, which he felt could not be restricted on the grounds of free expression.¹² The inclusion of this “expenditure” language in the final version of Taft-Hartley thus reflected a compromise made in the conference committee – broadening the prohibition’s scope beyond the status quo, but not as dramatically as the House bill would have.¹³ Senator Taft even defended the provision as in no way inhibiting the creation or operation of PACs, providing they only utilized *voluntary* contributions: “If the labor people should desire to set up a political organization and obtain direct contributions for it, there would be nothing unlawful in that” he announced on the Senate floor.¹⁴

The expenditure ban was not, however, as neat a solution as Ellender or Taft seemed to think. Since expenditures made independently of a candidate's campaign invariably involved overt forms of expression – purchasing advertising and so forth – the prohibition raised concerns on First Amendment grounds. Irrespective of where money had been drawn from, restricting its use in this way appeared deeply problematic to CIO lawyers, among many others. In 1944, Attorney General Biddle had already indicated grave reservations as to whether Congress could place restrictions on such spending, since to do so would effectively place a burden on expression. And they took heart from the Massachusetts Supreme Court decision in *Bowe v. Secretary of Commonwealth* (1946), which had struck down a similar state prohibition on independent expenditures proposed by referendum, deeming it unconstitutional.¹⁵ Thus unsurprisingly, upon passage of Taft-Hartley, its political provisions were immediately challenged in court.¹⁶

When those union challenges reached the Supreme Court, however, the Justices avoided the thorny constitutional issues surrounding the nature of PAC funds and the types of action for which they were utilized, and instead focused on considerations of *audience*. In *United States v. Congress of Industrial Organizations* (1948), the “*CIO News*” case, the Court considered the publication of an editorial in the *CIO News* – the CIO's internal newspaper – advocating that members vote for a particular Democratic congressional candidate in a Maryland special election. The Court held that such *internal* communications aimed at members were not covered by the Taft-Hartley prohibition, and thus statements of candidate advocacy could appear in such forums even though they would be financed through treasury funds.¹⁷ Through statutory construction, they avoided ruling on the constitutionality of the expenditure ban as it related to First Amendment issues.¹⁸ In the other main campaign finance case of the period – *United States v. UAW* (1957) – the Court discerned a Congressional intent to proscribe *commercial* broadcasts – such as the television advertisements the UAW had sponsored in Michigan in this case (ads that advocated particular candidates, and for

which they had utilized treasury funds).¹⁹ Since the Court did not definitively rule on the merits of this particular case, however, the constitutional status of “independent expenditures” was left hanging. The intended audience, therefore, would remain the most important criteria for thinking about campaign finance cases up through the 1970s.

Leading union counsel had been encouraged by the Massachusetts Supreme Court decision in *Bowe v. Secretary of Commonwealth* (1946), and tended to believe a constitutional ruling would go their way. Nonetheless, they took steps after the *CIO News* case to avoid any such case arising – monitoring their *external* communications more closely. With the major exception of the UAW in Michigan, unions and labor PACs generally sought to avoid explicit candidate advocacy intended for public consumption, paid for with treasury funds. But that did not mean they avoided *all* kinds of advocacy or public communication. Here “political education” could save the day. Provided that a vaguely plausible claim of generality or issue concerns could be made for their communications, PACs could employ claims of “educational” publicity, and speak to whichever audiences it wanted, still using union funds.

Political Education

On the surface, political “education” was defined by its apparent lack of concern with particular *candidates* or particular pieces of *legislation* – hence it was neither strictly *electioneering* nor *lobbying*. It was educational in stressing particular kinds of *issues* or indeed broader *ideological* perspectives that cast political life in a particular light. Since it urged no direct action – whether to vote for a particular candidate, or impress upon a particular legislator the need to support or oppose a particular bill – it was increasingly carved out as a distinct arena of interest group communications, undertaken by PACs and regular pressure groups alike. But that was not to say that “educational”

efforts had no bearing on elections or legislation – in many cases, they simply took away the last steps, directly connecting the general with the particular, and urging specific action upon it.

In 1951, for example, David Truman had acknowledged that publicity supposedly concerned with *issues* could be of great benefit to *candidates*: “Where two candidates are identified with quite sharply differentiated policies, propaganda that on its face is wholly concerned with the issues may contribute significantly to the success of the aspirant whose position on the issues is similar to the propagandist’s.”²⁰ Truman provides a number of examples of such early “issue” advertising from groups like the CIO-PAC, but also the Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers.²¹ At the same time, Truman added, “[s]uch propaganda has the disadvantage that it cannot openly support the candidate identified with the policies defended by the sponsoring group, for only by maintaining a “nonpartisan, nonpolitical” facade can the group avoid threats to its internal cohesion and minimize the effects of the *low prestige* of openly one-sided appeals among undecided voters.”²² This disadvantage from a propaganda standpoint offered legal benefits, however. Truman’s analysis, for example, suggests the relevance of tax benefits in conditioning interest group activities. Non-profit groups, he had observed, would be especially wary of becoming directly involved in campaign politics, since their tax-free status depended on their being “non-political” in particular ways.²³ “Political education” offered a workaround.

When the Anti-Saloon League had finally filed a political committee report in 1920, for example, it did so under protest that its activities were “educational, scientific, and charitable rather than political as intended by the law.”²⁴ This objection, Holman and Claybrook (2004) have argued, established in practice a “distinction between educational and campaign advertising” that would ultimately be enshrined in the Supreme Court’s decision in *Buckley v. Valeo* (1976), which required communications to include “express words of advocacy” to be considered electoral in nature.²⁵ But the distinction between “educational” and more overtly “political” types of activity was enshrined in

tax law somewhat earlier. As discussed in Chapter 4, restrictions on *lobbying* activities were first built into the tax code, applying to “charitable” organizations, in 1934 (with equivalent restrictions on *campaign* activity not added until 1954).²⁶ To the extent groups could claim to be engaging in “education” rather than overt legislative lobbying, therefore, their non-profit tax status was secure. Passage of the Federal Regulation of Lobbying Act in 1946 would enhance the benefits to such a claim, as a way to deny being actively engaged in lobbying, and thus avoid the registration and disclosure requirements the act imposed.²⁷

But there was a *rhetorical* value involved in making this educational claim – one that attempted to invoke the higher ground of education and the implication of factual information to be conveyed, rather than the sordid world of politics and mere opinion. Looking to the 1950 House investigation into lobbying, chaired by Rep. Frank Buchanan (D-PA), Cook (1956) noted how the witnesses across the board “seem[ed] reluctant to admit that their work is not entirely ‘educational.’” – and legal advantages alone did not seem to be driving the claim, she concluded.²⁸ Programs of education and public opinion formation, she observed, were pursued continuously by the groups that appeared, sometimes “used to complement programs involving specific issues” on which they were seeking specific legislative measures.²⁹ Likewise, such ongoing publicity programs were pursued by PACs as a sustaining activity – the realms of lobbying and electioneering, through forms of “indirect lobbying” and “political education,” were coming closer together. And invoking the normative power of the educational ideal in its very name, a new political *action* organization would now enter the electoral fray.

A United Labor Front

The passage of Taft-Hartley had drawn a line in the sand for the AFL. Its restrictions on union security agreements posed a direct threat to the labor movement that even the AFL could not

ignore, and its prohibition on practices like *common situs* picketing outraged the building trades unions which were particularly powerful with the AFL. These direct threats would now induce this more traditional union federation to abandon its traditional political policy for good.³⁰

Frustration with that policy had been growing for some time. The CIO's more assertive political stance had seen it thrive organizationally in the late 1930s and early 40s. By 1937, its affiliated membership had grown larger than that of the AFL.³¹ But the AFL, still marked by its ill-fated past involvement in electoral affairs, and having enjoyed relative security under Roosevelt's four terms in office, had been reluctant to change. Now it would reject its earlier hostility to overt political action and embrace the electoral realm, forming its own counterpart to the P.A.C. Yet the name it would choose for its new organization would suggest some sensitivity to the "optics" of the situation, as modern political professionals might label it, and the uneasy position that political action still occupied. Their new political action committee would be named "Labor's League for Political *Education*" or LLPE, and it would throw itself into the 1948 elections. Taft-Hartley would serve as the "acid test" for LLPE's support, AFL leaders announced.³²

The AFL's reaction to what might be considered the CIO-PAC's *failure* in 1946 – its inability to prevent the election of hostile congressmen, which had established the conditions for Taft-Hartley's passage – was to respond with *more* political action.

An "Acid" Test?

The 1948 contest provides a useful test of "friends and enemies" in congressional terms, because it most clearly approximated a "single issue" campaign for labor – focused on the Taft-Hartley Act. While LLPE data itself is not available for 1948, partial information on *P.A.C.* endorsements and election outcomes can offer some perspective. According to an overview prepared by its Research Department, P.A.C. had made general election endorsements in 239 House races and 21 Senatorial

contests, yielding an impressive 71% and 81% success rate respectively, with P.A.C. endorsees comprising 35% of the newly-elected 81st Congress (whether P.A.C. support made the *difference* to their victories is, of course, unclear).³³ Though information on the party breakdown across these 260 general election endorsements is not provided, that for *successful* candidates is given in detail – as shown in Table 7.1.³⁴

Table 7.1. *Members of the 81st Congress Endorsed by P.A.C.*

| <i>Chamber</i> | <i>Democrat</i> | <i>Republican</i> | <i>Total</i> |
|----------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------|
| <i>HOUSE</i> | 158 | 11 | 169 |
| <i>SENATE</i> | 16 | 1 | 17 |
| <i>Total</i> | 174 | 12 | 186 |

Sources: CIO-PAC Research Department, “Congressional Elections Results, 1948,” March 3, 1949 and “Members of Congress Supported by PAC,” March 11, 1949. CIO Political Action Committee (PAC) Collection Papers, 1943-1960s, Accession # 647. Box 17, Folder 19, “Elections; PAC Research, 1948-54.” Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan.

Of the 186 legislators who had received an endorsement from state P.A.C.s, and been successful in their general election contest, just 12 were Republicans – 6.5% of that total (and approximately 2% of the Congress overall). These select few included prominent Republican liberals such as Rep. Jacob Javits of New York, and newly-elected Congressman Gerald R. Ford of Michigan.³⁵ Some primary activity is also detailed elsewhere, with P.A.C. backing at least 105 candidates in Democratic contests, compared to 14 in Republican primaries – again suggesting substantially lopsided involvement.³⁶

Financial data analyzed by Cook (1956), moreover, has also demonstrated a strong bias toward Democratic candidates in 1952.³⁷ Drawing on *Congressional Quarterly* data, she concludes that out “of all labor contributions, including state, local, and national groups of all labor unions, only one Republican candidate for the Senate and five Republican candidates for the House received financial aid from labor sources.”³⁸ Thus, she notes, “the little financial support given to Republican

candidates in 1952 hardly warrants being evidence to conclude that a relationship of any sort exists between the PAC and the Republican Party.”³⁹ Scoble came to a similar conclusion, though he provided data primarily on COPE activity in 1958 and 1960.⁴⁰

Such apparently partisan outcomes are not necessarily inconsistent with a non-partisan claim, however. They might be regarded, in some sense, as simply *incidental* to other criteria upon which support was based. That is, if P.A.C. awarded endorsements and financial aid on the basis of a candidate’s support for labor, and if Democrats were more likely to take such positions, then P.A.C.’s patterns of support would *appear* partisan without being *driven by* partisan considerations. Democrats were simply more likely to be labor’s “friends.” As LaPalombara summarizes a 1950 P.A.C. pamphlet which essentially stated “that the organization is non-partisan, but, as it has worked out, it supports Democratic candidates almost exclusively.”⁴¹ Indeed, the dominant association of Republicans with the Taft-Hartley legislation did little to diminish the perception that the GOP was, in general, hostile to labor’s aims.

But several Republican lawmakers did *oppose* Taft-Hartley, and would thereby be potential candidates for P.A.C. support. The P.A.C. endorsement data reviewed above (which includes all those candidates who received support and *won* in 1948, even if it does not reflect the entire pool of P.A.C. endorsements), in fact, suggests that all of the successful Republican *House* candidates P.A.C. endorsed had either voted against Taft-Hartley, or had not been in Congress at that point.⁴² The only victorious Republican *Senator* who gained P.A.C. support, however, Margaret Chase Smith of Maine, had actually voted *in favor* of Taft-Hartley while serving in the House during the 80th Congress. The “flexibility of policy” required in a one-party state such as Maine thus makes an appearance.

Yet there were two other Republican congressmen – William Lemke (R-ND) and Thor Carl Tollefson (R-WA) – who both voted against Taft-Hartley and won their reelection contests, but did *not* receive P.A.C. support.⁴³ This lack of support appears related to internal conflicts within the

labor movement in those states, but still suggests some variation from the ideal of issue stances determining support.⁴⁴ But the failure to support Republican “friends” could suggest a more significant violation of the claim to “incidental” partisanship than the failure to punish some “enemies” (if Chase Smith can be so classified), as suggested by an example Foster (1975) provides. Senator Wayne Morse (R-OR) was one of three Republican senators who had voted *against* Taft-Hartley, and was up for reelection in 1950. But Morse felt support from labor was lacking. “Late in 1949,” Foster notes, Morse “loosed a bitter barrage of criticism against the CIO and its Political Action Committee” in a letter to Jack Kroll:

I think you people in the CIO are going to have to make up your minds in respect to my candidacy for reelection as to whether or not you want any liberals in the Republican Party. The attitude of your CIO critics in Oregon leads me to the opinion that, apparently, at least some of you in the CIO want liberals only in the Democratic Party. If and when that ever comes, I respectfully suggest to you that the best interest of American Labor will then be more seriously jeopardized than it is at the present time.”⁴⁵

Morse pointed to further evidence of P.A.C.’s failure to support its Republican “friends” in the case of Robert LaFollette, Jr., the Wisconsin senator who they had not fully backed in his 1946 reelection bid, and who, Morse suggested, might have helped prevent passage of Taft-Hartley.⁴⁶ As Foster summarizes a lingering question: “Did the CIO and the PAC really want a liberal Congress, or did they support Democratic candidates regardless of ideology?”⁴⁷

The answer, in fact, was neither. P.A.C. did not support Democratic candidates *regardless* of ideology – as its opposition to conservative Southern Democrats attests. And P.A.C. did want a liberal Congress. But Liberal Republicans had become largely irrelevant to the long-term project of building a liberal congressional majority. P.A.C. had set upon re-shaping the Democratic Party as the means to achieve this, rather than building support from wherever it might be gained. This involved a recognition that party mechanisms could aid in such coalition formation, and an emphasis on electing members *pre-committed* to your policy positions. Fundamentally, they sought to *increase* the number of Democratic “friends” overall – an effort that implied *reducing* the number of Republican ones. (Morse himself seemed to get the message, becoming an independent around

1952, before switching to the Democratic Party in 1955). The P.A.C., in essence, developed a new strategic orientation premised on permanent and *partisan* political action.

Partisan Political Action

A stylized rendering of the older strategic orientation highlights the critical ways in which P.A.C.'s approach differed. The traditional “friends and enemies” strategy, as explored with respect to the early AFL, seeks to draw support from any potential legislator (or president), on the theory that this maximizes potential allies for your cause in the legislature. It sought to create reliable legislative allies by seeking pledges from candidates and “rewarding” or “punishing” incumbents on the basis of their actions in office. The enforcement mechanism is electoral *threat* – as reflected in the parallel characterization of this strategy as a “balance of power” approach. It encourages legislators to act in accordance with its policy goals by threatening to go elsewhere – this was not really credible, they already recognized. It did not assume, however, that legislative majorities could be automatically constructed through such methods. Indeed, the scale of activity required would be prohibitive anyway. Rather, coalitions must be built around issues on an ad hoc basis. Legislative lobbying, therefore, was still the primary tool of influence.

P.A.C.'s organizational innovations alone would likely improve effectiveness under these guidelines. Channeling the resources available to industrial unions, Labor's Non-Partisan League had already added to its ability to reward and threaten – becoming a net financial *contributor* to campaigns. With its legal interpretation approved, P.A.C. could also deploy such resources, and, combined with a permanent basis of operation, could operate on a much wider scale than its predecessors. But it still could not hope to be a decisive force in enough campaigns to build its own majority (as the 1948 data suggests, P.A.C. was active in less than half of the races). Its efforts would still have to be *selective*.

At the same time, the evolving partisan context lead to a reevaluation of bipartisan electoral threat itself. To be credible, a group must be *willing* and *able* to take their support elsewhere.⁴⁸ Part of that ability requires that there be *somewhere else to go*, and tends to assume theoretically that there is an even distribution of support and opposition among the members of each party. But as Cowan and his co-authors had pointed out, the credibility of the Republican Party as an alternative venue for P.A.C. was itself suspect. So how can you build influence without *bipartisan* threat? P.A.C.'s strategic innovation was to recognize that the institution of the primary, the psychology of party affiliation, and the formal apparatus of the party itself, could augment their selective efforts.⁴⁹ What they developed, in sum, was a new strategy of *partisan* political action.

This approach sought to generate influence from the inside, becoming a *reliable* source of votes and resources for selected party allies. **But a partisan strategy, to clarify, does not imply a wholesale commitment to the party *as is*.** Rather, the critical component involves reshaping the party's composition itself through primaries, with the aim of finding and electing candidates who would be *pre-committed* to the group's goals. A party so composed would have internalized those goals, and thus appear "disciplined" in pursuit of them. Indeed, majorities should form *automatically*, if the right candidates have been cultivated and elected. Translating this into models of representation, while all interest group activity sought to encourage legislators to act more as delegates than trustees, a partisan strategy seeks candidates who will *act* as delegates while believing they are trustees, because they are pre-committed to the same objectives. In this respect, legislative lobbying becomes far less important – even redundant in the most idealized version of the strategy. The party machinery itself exists as a first line of defense, in case pre-commitment is not perfectly realized. Thus the single party strategy also brings greater potential enforcement mechanisms to bear, even as it hopes not to need them. In essence, a commitment to realigning the party becomes

the substitute for bipartisan electoral threat as a mechanism of enforcement. In theory, it creates a commitment that *needs* no enforcement.

This partisan strategy reflected a fundamental change of attitude that went against prevailing understandings of the political realm. Thus where early critics might have doubted P.A.C.'s "non-partisan" claim, they also seemed unable to fathom this new approach. The National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), for example, engaged in somewhat covert activity in 1946 in order to better understand the new methods of the political action groups – sending two young staffers to attend an NCPAC "campaign school." As one participant noted in a confidential report, "[w]hile the NCPAC leaders declared they did not represent labor and that this school was non-partisan, it seemed obvious that they consider the labor groups as the most fertile ground for their doctrine and that they realize their program can only be affected through political agitation within the Democratic party."⁵⁰ Despite "repeated warnings or hints that a Republican victory this fall appeared likely" another reported, "they didn't seem interested in the possible strategy of jumping the fence and working inside the Republican party to get the "right" candidates, whom they would then have a chance of electing."⁵¹ If you want to build a majority in your favor, these observers seemed to say, why not try to persuade *everyone*?

In 1944, the assistant chairman of P.A.C. (and of NCPAC) – C.B. Baldwin – had claimed it would do just that. "We are not in favor of a third party. We want liberals and progressives to do all they can to liberalize the two parties."⁵² But by 1946, P.A.C. Director Kroll hinted that while they "hope[d] to influence the decisions of both political parties," they would also "be ready to follow whatever course of action the future may find proper."⁵³ By 1948, the P.A.C.'s new Assistant Director – Tilford Dudley – dropped the bipartisan language altogether. In an internal memo following the Democratic convention, he stressed P.A.C.'s "hope of liberalizing the Democratic Party and making it the instrument of the so-called common people of the country."⁵⁴

The partisan strategy was, in essence, a *realigning* project. It sought to shift Democratic enemies into the Republican column, if not out of politics altogether. This was a different vision of realignment than that which had prevailed little over a decade earlier – in which a realignment of the party system required the entry of a new element – a new party – around which the system would reset. That the CIO had finally abandoned any thoughts in the direction of an “independent” party, and instead committed itself to a realignment of the existing parties through “independent” political action, was evident from its presidential stance in 1948. It was not simply that they once again endorsed a Democratic candidate for president – Harry Truman – but that they refused to support the independent presidential candidacy of a longtime “friend” to labor, former vice-president Henry A. Wallace. That their reasons for taking this course were both pragmatic, and increasingly *partisan*, suggests the full realization of a new strategy.

The Presidential Contenders – 1948

When CIO president Phillip Murray had announced the formation of P.A.C., at the CIO convention in 1943, he emphasized both the “magnitude of the work before us,” and a goal toward which they should strive: “nominating and electing a candidate such as Vice-President Henry A. Wallace for the Presidency in 1944, and electing a Congress disposed to support him.”⁵⁵ A progressive Republican whom Roosevelt had tapped as his Secretary of Agriculture in 1933, Wallace was an ardent New Dealer, switched his party registration by 1938, and joined Roosevelt on the ticket in 1940 as the Democratic nominee for vice-president. When it became clear that it would be Franklin Roosevelt at the top of the ticket again in 1944, Wallace’s place seemed less certain – having feuded with members of the cabinet, and always been viewed warily by the Democratic Party establishment. It was P.A.C.’s national leadership that fought hard at the Democratic convention to retain Wallace as the vice-presidential pick. Their failure to do so would, ironically, set up the most famous story of

the P.A.C.'s rising power. When the president's advisors floated Harry Truman as a possible V-P pick, Roosevelt reportedly told them to "Clear it with Sidney" – referring to Sidney Hillman, the P.A.C.'s director.

But P.A.C. did not abandon Wallace even as they acquiesced in the Truman nomination. They proved instrumental in engineering his confirmation as Commerce Secretary – a position Wallace would hold until 1946, when his increasingly vocal criticism of U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union led now-president Truman to demand his resignation. Freed from the political strictures of a cabinet position, Wallace would transform his critique of the emerging Cold War into a fully-fledged assault and a call to third party action. But when Wallace split with the Democratic Party, it was the CIO – and P.A.C. – that would ultimately split with him.⁵⁶

The "Decisive Mistake" of the New Deal

If "the control of reactionary interests over the Democratic Party is too strong to be broken," Brophy, Cowan, and Walsh had written in 1942, then a third party option might be the only reasonable path for the CIO to pursue.⁵⁷ For Wallace, as the 1948 election dawned, the time to take that position had come. "Progressives can no longer work within the traditional parties," he wrote, since both parties were "harnessed to the car of monopoly" and attentive to big business interests (though he pointedly absolved Franklin Roosevelt of any complicity in this regard).⁵⁸ "The decisive mistake of the New Deal," Wallace argued, "was its failure to recognize that it had to break through the limitations of the old parties to forge a new party of the people if its program was to be developed and carried forward."⁵⁹ From this perspective, P.A.C.'s decision to work within the two-party framework had been misguided, and it now had a chance to help rectify the mistake.

But the calculus that had once left open the possibility of third party action had changed for the P.A.C. in the intervening years. With international developments posing new hazards for labor at

home, and the domestic threat of Taft-Hartley itself, the dynamics of the 1948 election solidified P.A.C.'s commitment to partisan political action.

The international considerations revolved around the growing threat of Communism. By 1946, the wartime alliance between the United States and the Soviet Union was fraying. Franklin Roosevelt, whose personal relationship with Stalin had helped to sustain it, was now dead. And the new president, Harry Truman, was exhibiting an increasingly hostile posture toward the Soviets. That spring, former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill had spoken of an “iron curtain” that had descended over Europe, as the Soviets consolidated control in the east.⁶⁰ In March, 1947, the president outlined what would become known as the “Truman Doctrine,” assuring both economic and military assistance to “free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures” – effectively those threatened by Soviet expansionism.⁶¹ In this increasingly tense international context, the massive package of financial aid for the devastated European countries, proposed by Secretary of State George Marshall in June 1947, served as both economic reconstruction and containment policy rolled into one.⁶²

It also served to foster division within the American left – alienating those more sympathetic to the Soviet cause, or more dubious of the economic motivations behind the Marshall plan. Was this apparently altruistic move simply a way to gain new markets and reestablish capitalist dominance in these countries, they asked? Moreover, the barely veiled effort to offset growing Soviet influence inspired opposition in Communist-aligned organizations. And Henry Wallace was among the most outspoken critics. Though he denied any formal Communist identification, his sympathies were well-known, and he had already been fired as Commerce Secretary following a speech in September 1946, which seemed to directly challenge the direction of Truman's policy – emphasizing international cooperation and a commitment to improved standards of living worldwide, as the most important post-war priorities.⁶³ Speculation as to what Wallace would do now he was a private

citizen began to grow. How might he seek to promote his position in the political sphere? And if he sought to do so in elected office, on what *organizational* platform might he run?

Such questions were swirling when the CIO met for its annual convention in October, 1947. There they struck a moderate position that sought to bridge the range of positions within their own organization – passing resolutions endorsing “aid to Europe” in a general sense, and “political nonalignment” in the electoral sphere.⁶⁴ Whatever Henry Wallace chose to do, it seems, the CIO had made no commitments. But the situation began to shift at the end of December, when Wallace announced he would seek the presidency in 1948 – not by challenging Truman for the Democratic nomination, but as an independent presidential candidate at the head of what he hoped would be a new third party movement in the United States.⁶⁵

In the wake of Wallace’s announcement, the leaders of the Communist Party of the USA (CPUSA) instructed its members and sympathizers, leaders of CIO-affiliated unions among them, to back Wallace.⁶⁶ In this respect, the CPUSA would be acting not so much as a political party in the 1948 campaign, but more like a PAC – waging an independent campaign on behalf of, in this case, an independent presidential candidate. Indeed, the CPUSA had been looking less like a third party for some time. In 1944, it had actually “downgraded” its status from Communist Party to “Communist Political Association,” effectively *becoming* a PAC in that election – offering no candidates of own and backing Democrat Franklin Roosevelt for reelection.⁶⁷ Though it had subsequently reformulated itself once again as a party, on paper at least, its decision in 1948 would sustain a pseudo-party reality.

But the CIO itself would now adopt a firmer position too – one that set it against the Wallace campaign, even as it was reluctant to embrace Harry Truman. In January, 1948, the CIO’s executive board met to plan its next steps. But behind closed doors, a group of high-level officials drew up new resolutions on foreign policy and political action that went beyond what the

convention had agreed to.⁶⁸ Their new language “defined nonpartisanship so as to exclude third party politics and explicitly endorsed the emerging Marshall Plan,” as Zieger (1995) summarizes.⁶⁹ A union leader more sympathetic to the Soviet cause, Harry Bridges of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU), voiced strong objections at the full board meeting the next day.⁷⁰ The resolutions effectively “put the CIO in the Truman camp” and made “a mockery of the putative nonpartisanship of the industrial union organization,” Zieger sums up Bridges’ critique.⁷¹ Under pressure from the CPUSA to support Wallace, the CIO’s stance placed unions with pro-Soviet views in an impossible position. As a last resort, Bridges pushed to confine P.A.C. activity in 1948 to the congressional races, allowing for flexibility at the presidential level, at least.⁷² He failed. Swiftly adopted by the board, the new resolutions put the CIO on record as being opposed to Communism – a position that might have broader reputational benefits – and suggested that pragmatism was winning out over pure principle in the determination of political support.⁷³

Where once CIO leaders had kept the door open to third party possibilities, they now viewed Wallace’s bid “as an invitation to Republican victory.”⁷⁴ “We do not agree with the argument that a third-party Presidential campaign would mean a larger vote and a greater possibility of electing progressive Senators and Congressmen,” the new resolution asserted.⁷⁵ Wallace’s candidacy would simply sow “confusion and division,” Phillip Murray declared in a radio address a few months later.⁷⁶ To offset the pragmatic position, Murray also argued against the creation of a new third party from the top down: the CIO would not back the Wallace effort, “because it believes that such a party must first find roots and aspirations in the American labor movement.”⁷⁷ Wallace’s party was *not* a grassroots assertion of labor sentiment, in this depiction, but a Communist-fostered sham.⁷⁸ Despite Wallace’s protestations to the contrary, his candidacy was inevitably seen in a Communist light. This was not so much a matter of the ideas themselves as their reputation – the CIO had long been fighting accusations of Communist-leanings, toward which the American public was

increasingly hostile. Though Wallace tried to “Americanize” the most contentious aspects of his program – nationalization of the railroads, for example, or public ownership of the banks – he made few inroads into a public consciousness that increasingly saw the conflict with the Soviets in terms of “good” versus “evil.” “No new progressive party has ever escaped denunciation as subversive, communistic, un-American,” Wallace tried to convey.⁷⁹ But such reassurances did little to reassure.

For all it critiqued the roots of the Wallace effort, the CIO was in no mood to *encourage* a grassroots movement in a third party direction from within their own ranks.⁸⁰ They were, Zieger explains, “convinced that the CIO’s best hope for advancing its agenda lay within the Democratic Party, although not necessarily with support for Truman’s 1948 bid for reelection.”⁸¹ The CIO leadership had even backed a plan to draft Dwight D. Eisenhower to run as the Democratic standard-bearer – back when no one was entirely sure which way his partisan proclivities lay.⁸² And many liberals from outside the labor movement had also been feeling torn – their staunch anti-Communism precluding support for a Wallace bid, but finding themselves unsure as to whether Truman was the right guardian of Franklin Roosevelt’s legacy.⁸³ Personal and partisan loyalties had been so intermingled in the figure of FDR that it was always going to be challenging for his successor to negotiate the political fallout.⁸⁴ But these hesitant actors would ultimately fall into line, as Truman made overtures to the left by vetoing the Taft-Hartley Act (if not preventing its becoming law), and creating the Committee on Civil Rights.⁸⁵ Once reconciled to his re-nomination, they would work for Truman’s re-election.⁸⁶

Thus in August, following the Democratic convention at which Truman was re-nominated, the CIO executive board reaffirmed its political position against “the so-called Progressive Party.” It was *weakening* liberal forces by creating disunity, they said.⁸⁷ “[B]y sponsoring candidates in the various states and congressional districts against *liberal pro-labor* officeholders and candidates,” it was “contributing to the growth of reaction.” Suggesting the very different meaning that “independent”

had come to hold, the board affirmed: “The political activity of CIO must and will be continued *on an independent and non-partisan basis*, giving support to the progressive forces in *both major parties* and basing its judgment of candidates solely on their records and their stand on the important issues of the campaign.”⁸⁸ And they proceeded to offer that support, at the presidential level, to President Truman, voting 35-12 to endorse.⁸⁹

“Nonpartisanship” as the CIO leadership deployed it, therefore, did not necessitate official neutrality – as some, such as Bridges, asserted it must. The AFL, in fact, still clung to this older conception, even as it had moved closer toward the CIO’s approach to politics by creating LLPE.⁹⁰ Neither the AFL Executive Committee nor LLPE would endorse Truman officially, though a number of AFL leaders formed an ostensibly separate organization, “The Committee of Labor Executives,” to do just that.⁹¹ For the CIO, “nonpartisanship” was understood as a definitive position *against* third party activity, and a “coded reference,” as Zieger labels it, to a particular stance in terms of the major parties.⁹²

“Since its inception the CIO had been part of the Democratic coalition. Nonpartisanship in this context meant continuing to promote the liberal agenda in the only plausible arena the Democratic Party, whatever its many flaws. Clearly, then, the nonpartisan convention resolution was really a declaration against a third party initiative and a reaffirmation of the CIO’s efforts to liberalize the Democratic Party.”⁹³

For Zieger, the disjuncture between the P.A.C.’s professed nonpartisanship and actual partisanship was just a basic reality (because Democratic support was the only plausible option, he indicates, though he does not why they chose to claim continued “nonpartisanship”). The National P.A.C. even dissolved uncooperative state and local PACs that refused to abandon their commitment to Wallace – putting lie to claims of decentralized authority in endorsements.⁹⁴

But if the P.A.C. was emphasizing a “plausibility” that led effectively to partisanship, its sibling organization, the NCPAC, would remain committed to *principle* first. The NCPAC would live up to the supposed independence of its politics, and cast its lot with Wallace. Indeed, NCPAC

would become the organizational nucleus of Wallace's 1948 campaign. And in doing so, that campaign would become its last.

A Split in the P.A.C. Family

The NCPAC's long-term future had never been planned out in the way the P.A.C.'s had. It had initially been created for the 1944 campaign, but a decision had been made to continue its life thereafter. In the wake of what liberals viewed as disastrous 1946 midterms, the NCPAC determined to pool resources with other emerging liberal groups, in an effort to unify, concentrate, and improve their efforts. This new entity would be called "Progressive Citizens of America" (PCA).⁹⁵

Launched in December, 1946, with a two-day convention in New York, the NCPAC's chairman – Frank Kingdon – became co-chairman of the newly formed Progressive Citizens group. Reflecting the NCPAC's parentage, moreover, CIO president Phillip Murray was chosen as a vice chairman, along with other prominent progressives such as Fiorello La Guardia.⁹⁶ It would be a political action organization – oriented to achieving liberal goals within the existing system. Yet in the immediate aftermath of the 1946 election results, even admitting that could be a strain for some. The group had initially planned to call itself the "Independent Citizens for Political Action," but the title was rejected "after protests from Midwest and Far West delegations that prejudice existed in their communities against the words "Political Action.""⁹⁷ With naming controversies resolved, the delegates could look to their future plans – with an important aim supplied by none other than Henry Wallace, who, as the convention's closing speaker, told the assembled delegates that the PCA's immediate objective should be making the Democratic Party "out and out progressive."⁹⁸ But, as the *Chicago Daily Tribune* reported, the convention did not rule out "the possibility of a new political party whose fidelity to our goals can be relied on."⁹⁹ The PCA would ultimately pursue that

path, becoming the basis of the pseudo-party structure that would nominate Wallace.¹⁰⁰ The old NCPAC, therefore, was now in opposition to its old associate, the P.A.C.

It would not prove to be an auspicious organizational decision. Wallace won less than 2.5% of the popular vote and nothing in the Electoral College – just slightly less in popular terms than Strom Thurmond pulled in as the Dixiecrat candidate (having bolted the Democratic Convention over the placement of a civil rights plank in the platform). Thurmond, however, would win four states in the Deep South and thereby gain 39 electoral votes. Wallace’s performance as the “Progressive” candidate would hardly rival Robert La Follette’s unsuccessful turn in 1924, when he polled almost 17% of the popular vote.¹⁰¹ Tied to a failed candidate, the PCA fizzled away. The results of the 1948 election also erased any remaining third party sentiment among labor leaders. Walter Reuther, for example, had expected Dewey to win, whereupon he was ready to launch a drive for a new labor party. Truman’s victory, however, scrapped those plans and put Reuther on a path that would see him, by the early 1960s, as a staunch advocate of the Democratic Party and its broader electoral success.¹⁰²

Thus the prospect of a truly nonpartisan idea of labor political action had disappeared too. The CIO had refused to support Wallace, in part, because it felt that splitting the vote would allow a conservative Republican to win – further endangering their basic legislative accomplishments. But Wallace thought differently. “It does not worry Wallace that the immediate effect of a third party in 1948 would probably be to assure the election of a Republican, because he feels that an “all-out, clear-cut reactionary” would sharpen the issues between conservatives and liberals and hasten the political realignment which he desires.”¹⁰³ Both Wallace and the P.A.C. had the same goals to a large extent, but they went about achieving them in different ways. For Wallace, a true realignment could only be achieved from without. For the P.A.C., they hoped to launch just that from within.

The Perils of Partisanship Revisited

“[T]he problem of moving the Republicans into the Republican Party is still with us,” Tilford Dudley would bemoan following the 1952 elections.¹⁰⁴ At the same time, he was encouraged by reports that the newly-elected Eisenhower administration would distribute patronage to the Dixiecrats (thus building up their linkage and potentially enticing them into the GOP). “This is an important step in building the Republican Party in the South,” Dudley wrote: “CIO has always favored building a two party system in the South. Ike thus helps in the realignment of parties which we seek, which might give us a Congress of better consistency when the Democrats win.”¹⁰⁵ Even the A.F.L. had endorsed Stevenson in 1952, moving beyond the special separate committee they had set up to offer their support to Truman in 1948.¹⁰⁶

But partisan politics was not without its frustrations, even when that “consistency” was starting to be achieved. A perceived lack of total support from liberal party leaders, and the continued prominence of Southern Democratic congressmen gained formal expression in late 1955 – just prior to the AFL merger – when Walter Reuther, by this point president of the CIO, asked Jack Kroll to provide a frank assessment of the P.A.C.’s relationship with the Democratic Party. The resulting memo suggested a *recommitment* to the single party policy, not a step back from it or a return to earlier models of interest group influence – primarily that of bipartisan electoral threat.¹⁰⁷ Indeed, the memo provides the strongest evidence of P.A.C.’s *unwillingness* to threaten the party with electoral defection.

Examining a version of this memo, Foster portrays Kroll as deeply troubled by the state of the relationship, emphasizing a strongly negative orientation and bleak tone: “he blasted the Democrats for everything from refusing to give the CIO an official position on the national committee to allowing too many conservative congressmen the use of the party’s name,” Foster summarizes.¹⁰⁸ But an earlier draft of the memo, prepared for Kroll by Dudley, suggests a more

nuanced assessment.¹⁰⁹ Kroll had, in fact, assigned Dudley to write the memo, following a meeting with Reuther. “You know the money we spent and the efforts put forth and the results we get in successful elections,” Kroll wrote Dudley, explaining the task, “The cooperation we get from the Party is not commensurate with these things.” The report should mention “some of the outstanding rebuffs we have received on the Hill,” he added, and consider who should present these “grievances” and to whom, and finally, “what is it that we should ask to be done?”¹¹⁰

Dudley’s draft systematically examined the various components that made up “the party” as conceived at that time – the convention, the national committee, and the congressional delegation. The CIO’s problem was not, he concluded, with the convention delegates or the “leading Democrats” in that body.¹¹¹ Nor was it with the national committee – at least in terms of outlook. “Its publications are right down our line. Its emphasis is the same as ours. Its officers make our kind of speeches; listen to our advice; are anxious to get along with us,” he noted, and would “generally do what we ask them to do, as long as it does not get them in trouble elsewhere.” The problem that emerged here, however, was the committee’s lack of *real power* in the decentralized party system.¹¹² “Our real problem,” Dudley concluded, “is with the Congress.” “Here we are not dealing with the Democratic Party as a whole” – in which “the liberals and the friends of labor” were dominant, he asserted – “but only with those who get elected. That is a significant difference.”

The key question therefore, was how to make the Congressional delegation more reflective of the party “as a whole.” “How can we tighten up the Democratic Party? How can we make it into an organization? How can we refine its ingredients so as to make them purer liberals? How can we improve its discipline or sense of responsibility so that wandering congressmen can be tied to the party line?”¹¹³ These blunt questions revealed how far P.A.C. was from the claim of “incidental” partisanship. Indeed, Dudley admitted that “when liberal Democrats are defeated by Republicans, and conservative Democrats are elected, the proportion changes” – i.e. that the congressional

delegation became even less reflective of the broader party.¹¹⁴ This suggests that where liberal Republicans might prevail over liberal Democrats – *even if they both might be “friends” of labor* – partisan considerations rather than issue positions would dictate P.A.C.’s response.

Given that the problem was largely a congressional one, Dudley’s solutions also focused here. He thus presented an array of suggestions “for making the congressmen more responsible to the Party as a whole,” such as biannual national conventions to adopt a party platform, enhanced use of the party caucus in Congress, abolition of seniority rules (which advantaged long-serving Southern Democrats), and a “Party Council” consisting “of important Senators, Congressmen, Governors, and leaders of the National Committee” which could provide unity and guidance on issues and policy.¹¹⁵ The use of the term “responsible” here is significant, as the suggestions Dudley offered were essentially identical with those recommended five years earlier by the Committee on Political Parties of the American Political Science Association.¹¹⁶ The APSA Committee, chaired by E.E. Schattschneider – had expressed concern over the lack of party discipline in the United States, which impeded government accountability to citizens, and prevented its commitment to the kinds of coherent public policy programs they deemed necessary in the modern age. The report thus considered way to enhance party discipline so as to make parties more “responsible” to their membership and to the voters at large.

The APSA Committee had, in fact, sought feedback on their initial drafts from individuals working in the political sphere – including from Dudley.¹¹⁷ In addition to serving as P.A.C.’s Assistant Director, Dudley was also the Alternate Democratic National Committeeman for the District of Columbia, in which capacity he wrote to other DNC members and state chairmen to promote the APSA report.¹¹⁸ But he also sent them free copies of the report, courtesy of P.A.C.¹¹⁹ Indeed, Dudley even corresponded directly with Schattschneider in regard to the report and his ideas about responsible parties (Dudley was an alumnus of Wesleyan University, where

Schattschneider was a member of the faculty, although it is not clear if Dudley was a former student of his).¹²⁰ The APSA report, this evidence suggests, served as both a source of justification and a tool to promote the realigning strategy to which the P.A.C. was already committed.

Indeed the major problem with P.A.C.'s extant approach, Dudley claimed, was that it was *not partisan enough*. "So far. Labor has been inclined to stay out of the Party's internal affairs and to avoid working from within, or through official, organizational bridges," Dudley summarized. "Our inclination has been instead to bargain with the Party from the outside, as with an employer."¹²¹ The A.F.L., he claimed, was even more committed to this "bargaining from a distance" approach than the CIO – a point that suggests the continued influence of its "non-political" heritage and later conversion to partisan political action.¹²²

"The Basic Question for Labor" was whether to seek more formal integration into the Democratic apparatus. Remaining somewhat distanced "has the advantage of saving us money and embarrassing responsibilities. But it also means that the Party thinks it has fulfilled its obligation when it presents us with candidates and platforms that come within our general concept of acceptability, or at least are significantly better than the Republicans." "If we don't participate in the day to day problems of the party, why should they bother to consult with us on such matters?"¹²³ Without such day-to-day involvement, moreover, P.A.C.'s visibility was diminished, making "it hard for the elected office-holder or the party leader to measure our contributions and the strength of our pressures. It is clear to us that we spend huge sums in the campaigns and turn out millions of voters. But how does he know that to be true?" Dudley asks.¹²⁴ But it was also "hard for the party official to measure what we contribute because so much of it is immeasurable."¹²⁵

Denying those contributions might make the point clearer, Dudley contemplates at one point in the memo – suggesting that an electoral threat idea was still apparent, and attractive, in some respects. "Maybe the present policy of "bargaining from a distance" might work better if we really

tried it,” he mused, raising the possibility that a threat of sitting out the 1954 elections might have induced the congressional Democratic leadership to strip the Southern Democratic chairmen of their power. “But Labor did not do that; nor did the CIO. We spoke too late and too softly,” he concluded. Importantly, this “threat” was not to offer its support elsewhere, but to simply abstain from the contest. Labor still had time to make this threat for 1956, Dudley added. “If we really did this, and meant it, it would be a thrilling revolution in American politics,” he summed up; “But we won't do it.”¹²⁶

While Dudley’s musings demonstrate the continued ideational power of threat-based influence, the *real* “revolution” – thrilling or not – was P.A.C.’s very unwillingness to threaten. As the rest of Dudley’s memo makes clear, improving Democratic Party cohesion was the main goal, and that to achieve it, the CIO and P.A.C. must become *more* deeply enmeshed in the structures and procedures of the regular apparatus.¹²⁷ Formal integration need not go as far as the British Labour Party model, where the trade unions had official representation in its national body.¹²⁸ “It is assumed that in the U.S.A. the unions would not want such direct representation on the national Democratic Committee,” Dudley observes, asserting also that “PAC and most unions have refrained from organizational affiliation of any kind and from direct, open financial contributions to the Party.”¹²⁹ (This was not an entirely accurate characterization. CIO-PAC *did* contribute directly to the DNC several times in the early 1950s, at least - \$1000 in May 1951, for example, and at least \$8400 during 1952 – as well as to presidential campaign committees).¹³⁰

But they did not *need* such a formal position, in order to infiltrate the party apparatus more fully. A benefit of the decentralized American party structure – for all its lack of party discipline – was its permeability. It was possible to gain representation on various party committees anyway, and thus the CIO could gain influence by more assertively encouraging members to seek these positions. “We sometimes tend to support such activity by recommending "participation in the party of your

choice," Dudley observed – acknowledging the partisan intent behind apparently nonpartisan statements – “but our recommendations have been so mild, unwritten, secretive and half-hearted that they have been ineffective.”¹³¹ A more assertive effort could increase this source of internal strength, while also having the advantage of *not* appearing so official, reducing liabilities in terms of association with party actions, or exhibiting other “on-the-surface contributions.”¹³²

From behind-the-scenes, P.A.C. also bolstered party-initiated efforts to increase Democratic “responsibility.” In the wake of the 1948 Dixiecrat bolt, for example, it lent support to the push for a “loyalty oath” at the next convention, committing delegates to listing the convention’s nominees under the regular party label in their state.¹³³ In the mid-50s, moreover, it sought to increase circulation of the *Democratic Digest* – a new national committee publication that portrayed a distinctly liberal vision of the party. “Being an organ of the National Committee,” Dudley noted in 1955, “it represents the Committee and the Convention - which are on *our side*. By pushing its circulation widely, we could push what is in effect *our concept of the Democratic Party*.”¹³⁴

Not for nothing, then, did Indiana’s Commissioner of Labor dismiss claims of union “non-partisanship” as “nothing but a lot of hog wash.” “It is time people began to realize that the organized labor movement of America is fast becoming an arm of the Democrat Party,” he claimed, “despite Mr. Meany’s avoidance of both conventions in an attempt to show neutrality on the part of the AFL-CIO.”¹³⁵ The P.A.C.’s activities did involve efforts to *push* party responsibility forward on their own initiative. Indeed, the very tactics developed by political action organizations like P.A.C. were designed to challenge the traditional decentralization of the American party system. The distribution of voting records, for example, and the allocation of electoral resources on that basis, served as a way to hold congressmen to account and to encourage greater party discipline. Endorsements were meant to signal that a candidate was a certain *kind* of partisan, while voting records themselves were increasingly transformed so as to serve a similar purpose.

Voting Records – The Power of Tactics

The P.A.C.’s early voting records, as noted earlier, were less than user-friendly. Compiled in deference to state and local endorsement power, they were also designed to sustain an idea that the P.A.C. did not direct or coerce voters, but let them make up their own mind. But the more nationalized and hierarchical L.L.P.E. had fewer such qualms. As such, L.L.P.E. voting records were much easier to interpret at a glance. They selected a smaller number of key votes, and marked each congressman or Senator’s vote “R” or “W” – making it immediately clear who voted “Right” or “Wrong.”¹³⁶ In becoming easier to interpret at a glance, LLPE records made it easier to categorize a congressman himself as a friend or foe.¹³⁷

Figure 7.1. LLPE Voting Record Example


The Record They Stand On!

CONGRESSIONAL VOTING RECORD:
Many bills which vitally affect working men and women are never reported out of committee and many bills are passed by a voice vote with no record of how individual Congressmen vote.

However the voting record for each individual Senator and Representative on twelve key roll calls are presented herein.

WARNING:
The TAFT-HARTLEY ACT is the sole test for L. L. P. E. endorsement of an incumbent Congressman running for re-election. This Act is the acid test which made every Congressman stand up and be counted . . . for or against organized labor. No matter how many favorable votes a Congressman may have had in the past, his vote on the TAFT-HARTLEY ACT was the one that proved whether he was a fair weather friend or a man of principle.

The other votes shown herein are to demonstrate the record on other issues of interest not only to labor but to all American citizens. They are not to be considered as of equal importance to the Taft-Hartley Act. This record is neither a black list nor a list of endorsements, but is offered as a guide to voters so that they may know THE RECORD THEIR CONGRESSMEN "STAND ON".



LABOR'S LEAGUE FOR POLITICAL EDUCATION
1525 H ST., N.W., WASHINGTON 5, D.C.

| Representatives | District | Party | Taft-Hartley Act | Smith-May. Amends. | Case Bill | Price Control | Railroad Retirement | Postal-to-Postal | Fed. Employers' Liability | Taxes | Social Security | Rent Control | European Recovery | Department |
|----------------------|----------|-------|------------------|--------------------|-----------|---------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------------------|-------|-----------------|--------------|-------------------|------------|
| TENNESSEE | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Continued | 9 | D | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| Thompson | 15 | D | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| West | 16 | D | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| Warley | 18 | D | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| UTAH | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Dawson | 2 | R | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| Ganger | 1 | D | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| VERMONT | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Plumley | AL | R | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| VIRGINIA | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Almond | 6 | D | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| Bland | 1 | D | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| Abbott | 4 | D | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| Flanagan | 9 | D | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| Gary | 3 | D | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| Handy | 7 | D | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| Harrison | 8 | D | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| Smith | 5 | D | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| Stanley | 5 | D | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| WASHINGTON | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Holmes | 4 | R | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| Horan | 5 | R | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| Jackson | 2 | D | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| Jones | 1 | R | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| Meek | 3 | R | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| Tollefson | 6 | R | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| WEST VIRGINIA | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Ella | 4 | R | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| Hedrick | 6 | D | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| Kee | 5 | D | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| Love | 1 | R | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| Rohrbough | 3 | R | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| Snyder | 2 | R | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| WISCONSIN | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Boaghy | 4 | R | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| Byrnes | 8 | R | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| Davis | 2 | R | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| Hull | 9 | R | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| Keefe | 6 | R | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| Kersten | 5 | R | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| Murray | 7 | R | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| O'Rourke | 10 | R | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| Smith | 1 | R | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| Stevenson | 3 | R | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |
| WYOMING | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Barnett | AL | R | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W |

Source: CIO Political Action Committee (PAC) Collection Papers, 1943-1960s, Accession # 647. Box 12, Folder 4, "PAC Congressional Voting Record Newsletter, 1950-52." Reuther Library.

In the early 1950s, the analysis of congressional voting was becoming increasingly widespread. *Congressional Quarterly* was providing information on congressional votes.¹³⁸ Even the parties were getting in on the act. As P.A.C. research director Mary Goddard observed: “[t]he job of preparing such a record has been simplified by the comprehensive records now being published by the Democratic National Committee, which lists votes chronologically by subject.”¹³⁹ “The descriptions of votes should be re-written and, in some cases, expanded for labor use,” Goddard wrote.¹⁴⁰ The DNC had also begun to produce “Fact Sheets,” which Goddard admired for their delivery of both basic information on a particular national issue, and ways to answer opposition charges about them.¹⁴¹ Of this early form of “rapid response” operation, Goddard suggested that “[t]he national office of labor’s political action arm should be equipped to perform the same service for its local people.”¹⁴² But indicative of the cozy relationship developing between the DNC and the P.A.C., Goddard sought ways to build directly upon the Democratic effort. “As long as the Democratic National Committee continues its excellent service, there should be no duplication of effort on the issues covered in the Fact Sheets. What is needed is the equipment to do a similar job on issues of importance to labor but not covered by the Committee.”¹⁴³ At the same time, she scoffs, “[t]he Republican anti-labor campaign made a big splash on the front pages with a “staff” report on labor’s political expenditures. This report actually appeared months before in *Congressional Quarterly*.”¹⁴⁴

Coping with Merger: The Committee on Political Education (COPE)

The AFL’s 1952 endorsement of Stevenson was the culmination of its increasingly political orientation since forming Labor’s League for Political Education. In drawing closer to the CIO in this regard – its rival for over a decade – Hower (2010) argues that the political barriers to coordination between the two labor federations were effectively removed.¹⁴⁵ Eisenhower’s election

put unions on the defensive. Though they had faced hostility to their aims in the legislature at various points, a Republican occupant of the nation's top office for the first time since 1932 was a major concern. They had enjoyed a "friend" in the presidency throughout the Roosevelt and Truman administrations – a friend that had become far more powerful with the growth of the New Deal state. Despite the CIO's flirtation with Eisenhower in 1948, his coming out as a Republican seemed to shift the sands. His election brought into office "an administration considered unfriendly by most labor unions"¹⁴⁶ Eisenhower's appointments to the National Labor Relations Board were considered evidence of the difficulties labor would face in this new political environment, and they feared the prospect of further legislation hostile to labor organizations.¹⁴⁷ Since intra-labor disunity had been partly blamed for the passage of Taft-Hartley (and the failure to repeal it despite Truman's 1948 presidential victory), labor leaders were in no mood to repeat their past mistakes. And other pressures served to bring the two labor federations closer.

"Unity negotiations had been conducted periodically since the split," Zeigler (1964) observes, though they had never come to anything before.¹⁴⁸ But now a number of other internal barriers had begun to diminish. The specter of Communism within the CIO that had reared its head in 1948, for example, had been largely eliminated by 1952. In 1950, those Communist-leaning unions that had supported the Wallace candidacy were expelled from the CIO, and an internal "purge" had removed individuals from the national organization whose leanings were suspect.¹⁴⁹ And the A.F.L.'s longtime hostility to industrial unionism itself was abating. By the early 1950s, it had permitted some craft unions to reformulate along industrial lines, and even began to charter new industry-wide unions.¹⁵⁰

This new attitude in the A.F.L. was related, in part, to a changing of the guard at the top. William Green, its president since 1924, had passed away in the fall of 1952, with George Meany of the Plumbers Union being elected to fill his position. That same year, the CIO would also see a

leadership change, with the death of its president, Philip Murray. His replacement would usher in a new era for the CIO, and for labor political action more generally – with Walter Reuther of the United Automobile Workers taking the reins. With new occupants of the top offices, neither so deeply scarred by the split as their predecessors had been, new possibilities were opening up.¹⁵¹ Indeed, some CIO leaders had backed Reuther's bid for the presidency on the condition that he would push for a merger.¹⁵²

The CIO, in fact, now saw merger as crucial to its organizational survival, feeling that they needed to find new strength in numbers.¹⁵³ Though the CIO had overtaken the AFL's membership in the late 1930s, the AFL managed to recalibrate and regain much of what they had lost, and more. By the mid-1950s it was more than double the size of the CIO.¹⁵⁴ The AFL's embrace of industrial unionism, moreover, placed limitations on the CIO's future growth as much as it placed the two federations on the same ideological plane. The stage was set, therefore, for reunification. After lengthy negotiations, and seventeen years apart, the two labor federations reunited in 1955.

From the perspective of political action, the merger would have concrete and immediate implications. The newly formed AFL-CIO moved to establish a unified political action committee to replace the operations of P.A.C. and the L.L.P.E., making the 1954 congressional contests their last as separate entities. In 1955, they were merged into the Committee on Political Education or "COPE." For the AFL-CIO, COPE presented a new opportunity for labor political action – the chance to pool resources, talent, and experience into an electoral powerhouse that could be a dominant player in the burgeoning Democratic coalition. At the same time, it created a vastly enlarged target for conservative critics of labor and its growing role in the political process. These tensions would play out for the rest of the decade in the public sphere, and within Congress itself.

COPE and the Gore Committee Investigation

In 1956, circumstances conspired to bring the congressional spotlight once again onto money politics. This time, however, money in the lobbying sphere and in the electoral sphere would be directly tied together. A scandal had erupted when Senator Francis Case (R-SD) claimed he had been offered a sizeable campaign contribution from an oil company in exchange for supporting an energy bill then being debated.¹⁵⁵ This was exactly the kind of *quid pro quo* that had long underpinned the anxiety over campaign contributions.¹⁵⁶ And it linked campaigning and lobbying together in explicit ways. Following an investigation into the specifics of the attempted bribe of Case, Senator Albert Gore (D-TN) decided to launch a broader investigation that would offer the most comprehensive assessment of campaigning and lobbying to that date.

Rather than forming a special committee, Gore conducted the investigation under the auspices of the Privileges and Election Subcommittee of the Senate Rules Committee, which he chaired.¹⁵⁷ The academics he recruited to serve as consultants to the committee – including Alexander Heard and Herbert Alexander – would go on to form the “Citizen’s Research Foundation” – a permanent body dedicated to compiling, analyzing, and publicizing what limited campaign finance information was then available, and to pushing for reforms.¹⁵⁸ With the hearings highlighting concerns about the influence of large donors, the Gore committee itself, Zelizer (2006) argues, played an important role in forging a coalition of liberal reformers who would push for changes in campaign finance law for the next two decades.¹⁵⁹ But the Committee’s data also helps to round out the picture of COPE’s first foray into the electoral realm – the 1956 general election.

Though Eisenhower was reelected, the Democrats retained control of Congress (which they had recaptured in 1954) – the first time since 1848 that a presidential candidate had won while his party failed to secure a majority in even one chamber.¹⁶⁰ While it is difficult to distill the specific impact of COPE, the scale of their activity is suggestive – though intriguingly, the combined

expenditure of their two PACs in 1954 appears higher than the spending of their single organization in 1956. This might suggest the emptying of these accounts in preparation for merger, or an enhanced emphasis on the congressional races that year in an attempt to win back control from the Republicans, who had ridden Eisenhower’s coattails to majorities in both chambers in 1952. Of course, the data in Table 7.2 is not a compilation of all money expended by labor groups – even if the reporting by the AFL and CIO was entirely accurate. The number of labor PACs operating at the national level was now 17, and there were 155 PACs at the state and local level.¹⁶¹

Table 7.2. Disbursements by AFL/CIO PACs, 1952-1958

| | 1952 | 1953 | 1954 | 1955* | 1956 | 1957 | 1958 |
|---|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|
| AFL – LLPE | 249,258 | 28,737 | 485,082 | 53,969 | 148,080 | <i>No data</i> | - |
| CIO-PAC | | | | | | | |
| Individual Contributions Account | 505,722 | 29,747 | 415,042 | 18,038 | 23,220 | <i>No data</i> | - |
| Educational Account | 433,259 | 321,455 | 339,992 | 108,940* | 8134 | | - |
| COPE | - | - | - | - | 670,985 | <i>No data</i> | 709,813 |
| Total | \$1,188,239 | \$379,939 | \$1,240,116 | \$180,947 | \$850,419 | <i>No data</i> | \$709,813 |

*January 1 to May 31, 1955.

Source: 1953 and 1955 data comes from “Labor Union Political Expenditures.” Staff of the Senate Republican Policy Committee, November 1955. NAM Papers, Acc. 1411. Series V, Box 62a. Hagley Library. 1952, 1954, 1956, and 1958 data comes from Alexander Heard, *The Costs of Democracy*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press (1960). See “Table 21: Continuing Labor Political Committees, National Level: Gross Receipts and Disbursements, 1952, 1954, 1956, and 1958,” pp. 180-181. After the creation of COPE, the CIO-PAC and LLPE still made some expenditures in 1956, reported by Heard, presumably emptying their accounts.

“Our committee is a nonpartisan organization,” COPE’s co-director James L. McDevitt told the Gore Committee in 1956.¹⁶² Asked by a committee member whether it supported candidates of both parties, McDevitt affirmed “Yes, Senator, we do.”¹⁶³ He offered no examples, however, and the data to assess such a claim is sparse. The Gore Committee’s information does not illuminate the question in terms of the general election, and though internal records of the COPE’s 1956 activities

suggest they did give contributions in the primaries, the candidates and districts are not identified.¹⁶⁴ Yet the *perception* of the COPE's partisan orientation is as important politically as any objective reality – for it can take on a reality of its own. And it was clear in 1956 that the COPE's own leaders recognized the perception that their activities were partisan. “It will be charged that COPE has either taken over the Democratic party or is about to take over the Democratic party, nationally and locally,” an internal memo discussing preparations for the coming campaign acknowledged. Indeed, COPE leaders were expecting an intense attack on all fronts, since their merged political action committee presented a bigger target.

COPE would be “subjected to a more concentrated and bitter attack by some elements in the 1956 campaign that have heretofore been directed at either the PAC or LLPE,” the memo noted.¹⁶⁵ It would be “charged that COPE is expending illegally vast sums of money, secured from the membership by extortion, in the campaign; that it is seeking to dictate to the membership how it shall vote; that it is merely an instrument to satisfy the personal desires for power of “labor bosses.””¹⁶⁶ But an older critique would also be in the mix – that the COPE had a “blacklist.” As McDevitt told the Gore Committee, the COPE did not have “any purge list either public or secret,” he told the Gore Committee, and dismissed all accusations along those lines as “mere products of a political campaign.”¹⁶⁷ And yet there were ways in which aspects of COPE activity could increasingly be viewed as the basis for a “purge.”

Whose Political Action?

Since the AFL was larger than the CIO, the extent to which it might dominate the merged organization extended to the conduct of political action – which vision would win out? On endorsements, at least, the CIO's decentralized structure in which local and congressional district P.A.C.s made endorsements for everything but the presidency, was adopted. In his statement before

the Gore committee, James L. McDevitt, co-director of the AFL-CIO Committee on Political Education, noted that the national COPE organization did not *endorse*, so to speak: “We should like to make it clear that our organization, the Committee on Political Education, does not and will not recommend candidates for senatorial, congressional, State, or local offices. That is not our job. It is the job of the local and State organizations and the local voters, and they would and properly do resent any attempt to have an outside judgment imposed upon them.”¹⁶⁸ But the A.F.L.’s vision would win out in the arena of congressional analysis and the presentation of voting records. And in this respect, the records they produced would come closer than ever to being endorsements in themselves.

COPE retained the “right” versus “wrong” notation that had made the L.L.P.E.’s records so much easier to interpret, and even tried to help the undecided reader still further by indicating “wrong” votes in bold. They also broke down the information into particular legislative areas. The mostly retrospective COPE booklet “How Your Senators and Representatives Voted 1947-1956,” for example, divided legislation into four groups: (1) Labor Legislation; (2) General Welfare Legislation (3) Domestic Policy (4) Foreign Aid.¹⁶⁹ This design itself had strategic purpose. That labor was concerned with such a wide variety of issues areas was meant to assure members and the public “that the AFL-CIO does not judge Congressmen on selfish narrow lines but with the broad public interest in mind.”¹⁷⁰ A 1957-58 compilation also offered another testament to the “disinterestedness” of labor: “We hold firmly that trade union members are citizens first and that what helps our country helps us.”¹⁷¹

In producing this booklet, however, COPE’s innovations would go beyond font choices or formatting. In covering such a large swathe of time, they now offered summary scores on a congressman’s past behavior – comparing the number of times they voted “right” on the issues with which the AFL-CIO had been concerned, and the number of times they had voted “wrong.”¹⁷² With

this seemingly minor change, COPE records were now beginning to encapsulate entire careers, to categorize congressmen in general ways by their positions on labor's policy concerns. A relatively simple idea, the box score had profound implications for how quickly and easily a congressman's entire record could be summed up – and be deemed winning or wanting.

Figure 7.2. C.O.P.E. Voting Record Example

How Your Senators and Representatives Voted

1947-1956

If the voters have full information about the record of candidates running for office, they will vote for the best ones. On that belief is built the political education program of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations.

AFL-CIO members have a right to know how their Congressmen and Senators actually voted on the important national issues. That is why we have distributed a record of key Congressional roll call votes prior to each national election. The votes included in this record have been prepared in joint cooperation with the Legislative Committee.

It should be noted that the votes are arranged in four groups: (1) Labor Legislation, (2) General Welfare Legislation, (3) Domestic Policy, and (4) Foreign Aid. Thus AFL-CIO members and the public at large are assured that the AFL-CIO does not judge Congressmen on selfish narrow lines but with the broad public interest in mind.

AFL-CIO COMMITTEE ON POLITICAL EDUCATION, 815 16th ST., N. W., WASHINGTON 6, D. C.

ALABAMA

| | LABOR | | | | | | | | | | GENERAL WELFARE | | | | | | | DOMESTIC POLICY | | | | | FOREIGN AID | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------|---------------|------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|---------------------|----------------|---------------------------|---------------|----------|------------------|-------------|--------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|------------|-------------|----|----|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| | Textile Industry | Leave Act-Injunction Amendment | Labor Education Amendment | Minimum Wage | Civil Service | Postal Pay | Unemployment Compensation | Unemployment Compensation | Public Housing | Hospital Construction | Rehab. Construction | Med. Education | 1700 Income Tax Exemption | Alaska Energy | Greenery | Oil Conservation | Natural Gas | Supplies in Armed Forces | Health in Government | Fair Employment Practices | Farm Price Supports | Public Law | | | |
| Senators | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ROLL CALL VOTES | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Lister Hill..... | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | |
| John Sparkman..... | R | R | R | W | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | |
| House of Representatives | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ROLL CALL VOTES | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 Frank W. Boykin..... | W | W | W | W | R | R | W | R | W | R | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | |
| 2 George M. Grant..... | W | W | W | W | R | R | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | |
| 3 George W. Andrews..... | W | W | W | R | R | R | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | |
| 4 Kenneth A. Roberts..... | W | W | W | R | R | R | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | |
| 5 Albert Rains..... | W | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | |
| 6 Arminsd. Selden, Jr..... | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | |
| 7 Carl Elliott..... | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | |
| 8 Robert E. Jones, Jr..... | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | |
| 9 George Huddleston, Jr..... | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | |

KEY

W means Voted Right or Paired Right
 W means Voted Wrong or Paired Wrong

— means Absent or General Pair
 * means before taking office

Names of DEPOSITORS in OFFICE 1956
 Names of REPRESENTATIVES in OFFICE 1956

Source: CIO Political Action Committee (PAC) Collection Papers, 1943-1960s, Accession # 647. Box 12, Folder 4, "PAC Congressional Voting Record Newsletter, 1950-52." Reuther Library.

And other groups infused with a broadly liberal purpose would soon take these kinds of innovations to a new level of effectiveness.

Ideology and Electioneering

Labor unions were not the only ones to begin experimenting with political action in the 1940s. In 1946, the Priest Committee had expressed concern that “[p]olitical activities on an extensive scale are being engaged in by many organizations, most of whom are motivated by the desire to elect to Congress Members whose views and manner of voting conform to the ideologies adopted by the respective organizations.”¹⁷³ Beyond economic interest groups themselves, whose viewpoints were increasingly aligned with ideological perspectives, purely “ideological” groups had also emerged on both sides of the political spectrum – groups whose memberships were not formally anchored in economic interests. In addition to their political differences, these groups would seek to impress their views upon the political scene in distinctive ways. While “conservative” groups pursued their aims through a heavily ideological variant of political education, “liberal” groups were more willing to embrace political action, emulating the labor PAC models with whose aims they were in close sympathy. Thus, much as the CIO had formed the NCPAC to try and tap into a broader liberal sensibility, so “independent” liberal groups would move into that space as the NCPAC itself dissolved. And while they would emulate their labor allies, liberal groups would also offer innovations in the realm of political action, with important long-term impact on the political scene.

Mobilizing for “Democratic Action”

Just a week after the formation of the Progressive Citizens of America, in early January 1947, a more enduring liberal organization would be founded: the Americans for Democratic Action (ADA).

Staunchly anti-Communist, the ADA strove to distance American liberalism from the extremities of

the left. Still mourning politically the passing of Franklin Roosevelt – Eleanor Roosevelt was a founding member – it would aim to preserve and promote his New Deal legacy. It would pursue this ideologically-infused agenda through electoral involvement, while remaining within the extant party structure – supporting the candidates that best reflected FDR’s values and goals.¹⁷⁴

Testifying before the Gore Committee in 1956, the ADA’s Executive Committee Chairman, Robert R. Nathan, described it as “a permanent, liberal, independent, political organization,” one that was “not affiliated with any political party” and “concerned primarily with issues, with research and education on issues, and with candidates only on the basis of their stands on the issues.”¹⁷⁵ What he described were the operations of a political action committee: the ADA contributed money directly to candidates, issued endorsements, undertook voter mobilization efforts, and engaged in general “political education.”¹⁷⁶ The ADA paid for the latter from a separate fund like that labor PACs had – a “nonpolitical” account – kept separate from the contributions from its individual members. Indeed, this separate fund was largely funded by labor unions, hence could only be used for “political education” or internal advocacy communications.¹⁷⁷ National union leaders such as Walter Reuther had helped found the ADA, and they opened their union treasuries to support it.¹⁷⁸ According to Nathan, this was a relationship forged on policy agreement – union leaders felt that supporting the ADA was “consistent with the well-being of the union membership” as a whole, since they shared similar policy goals.¹⁷⁹ Financially and ideologically, then, the ADA was intertwined with the labor movement – and labor political action – from the start. In a sense, its formation suggested functional specialization within a broader liberal constellation – where the ADA could serve the purpose from which the NCPAC had originally been formed, of broadening the appeal beyond union members.

Indeed, the ADA presented a classic issue-based rationale for its political action: it was “organizing for *policy purposes*,” Nathan explained.¹⁸⁰ And it placed policy positions over pragmatism

in the selection of candidates: “we are mainly concerned with issues rather than whether a man is likely to win or not,” Nathan added. Supporting candidates with the right issue stances was their “fundamental purpose.”¹⁸¹ And yet victory was not entirely irrelevant to their plans. “We have found that to an increasing extent elections can be decided by the independent voters, that is, those who owe no fixed allegiance to any political party,” Nathan remarked, “and we have found that these voters are very receptive to appeals based on issues.”¹⁸² And mobilizing the independent vote required being an “independent” organization – one equally without “fixed allegiance to any political party.” “It is one of the strengths of ADA's political operation that in doing this we are independent of the political parties,” Nathan said, thus they were “free to take a position on the issues without having to compromise to satisfy intraparty differences, and therefore free to appeal to independent voters on the issues in behalf of candidates of either party.”¹⁸³ The ADA was “not interested in any party as a party or in any candidate as such,” he claimed.¹⁸⁴

Yet the ADA’s congressional support went overwhelmingly to Democrats – over 90% at each election since its formation, Nathan admitted.¹⁸⁵ And at the presidential level, it had only ever supported Democratic candidates.¹⁸⁶ In 1956 they had endorsed Democrat Adlai Stevenson in his second bid for the presidency, even though, as Nathan admitted, “*both* the Republican and Democratic candidates for President [in 1956] have embraced liberal proposals long advocated by ADA...”¹⁸⁷ “Now, we would not be unhappy if candidates of both parties meant what they said,” he continued, only to deem Eisenhower’s commitments less trustworthy, and thus rationalize why the ADA’s endorsement had gone elsewhere.¹⁸⁸

But once again, their evidence of non-partisanship was grounded more in their willingness to *oppose* certain Democrats – largely *Southern* Democrats – than their affirmative willingness to *support* particular Republicans.¹⁸⁹ Opposing a Democrat in the primary, moreover, still involved aiding his Democratic rival. And the ADA gave no hint of intervening in *Republican* primaries so as bolster

liberal candidates in both parties and potentially create the favored situation of the Anti-Saloon League, where a victory of *either* candidate would mean a victory for its issues. The crux of issue-based non-partisanship rested not in opposition to conservative Southern Democrats, or the occasional willingness to provide support for moderate Republicans where their issue positions were sympathetic – but in whether they would support a Republican candidate against that Southern Democrat (since whether a candidate was likely to win was supposedly irrelevant to the ADA). Or lend their support to an ideologically favorable Republican facing a Democrat with similar or slightly less favorable views? The bottom line was whether they hoped to foster *more* ideologically sympathetic candidates on both sides of the aisle, or whether majority-building through a single party had become the most practical and appealing route to follow. In this light, neither the ADA, nor liberal-leaning labor PACs, could be considered truly non-partisan in their approach.

In fact, the ADA's very formation had been intertwined with concerns over *Democratic Party* politics – suggesting a lack of faith in the leadership of Harry Truman, hence the need for an alternative vehicle through which to ensure the vitality of New Deal liberalism. Its prominent role at the 1948 Democratic convention – pushing the civil rights plank in the party platform that would ultimately prompt the Dixiecrat “bolt” – was evidence of this partisan preoccupation.¹⁹⁰ The ADA was essentially the liberal Roosevelt wing of the Democratic Party – more like a *faction* than a pressure group, and moreso than the labor PACs, which at least had ties to economic interest groups with concerns beyond politics too.¹⁹¹ And yet, as a political action committee, it was also a new kind of party faction – taking the idea outside the halls of Congress, beyond traditional ideas of legislative “cabals,” and giving it new organization form – as a mass-oriented, bureaucratic body.

In 1959, moreover, the ADA would make a seemingly small tactical innovation that would have a large impact in terms of remaking the Democratic Party, and the political world more generally. ADA is perhaps most famous among political scientists for the *product* of this innovation:

the ADA Index. It translated a congressman's roll-call votes on legislation of concern to the ADA into a single percentage score – an expression of how well his votes accorded with ADA preferences. As the longest-running measure of its kind, the ADA index is often used as a proxy for ideological liberalism, and regularly employed for a range of quantitative research purposes.¹⁹² But this index was a tool of political action long before it was an instrument for analysis. For if LLPE and later COPE voting records were making it easier to categorize a congressman as a friend or foe – thus bringing “educational” and *endorsement* activities closer together – the ADA index would effectively fuse the two.¹⁹³ A high ADA score, in essence, *was* an endorsement. Thus an “educational” act was translated into a *political* one – yet one for which union treasury funds could still be used.¹⁹⁴

Groups on both side of the political divide would exploit this distinction to the hilt, demonstrating the extent to which claims of “political education” could be stretched toward explicitly *electoral* ends. And *partisan* ends too. As Senator Curtis had claimed in 1956, the ADA's voting guides were designed “pretty much to show how an individual measures up to the Democratic position.”¹⁹⁵ With the index, a high score could thus indicate the right kind of *Democrat* from the ADA's perspective, serving as a signal in primary contests even if they did not directly participate. Of course, it could equally signal the *wrong* kind of elected official for the ADA's opponents. But the shorthand in which such opposition could now be expressed – high or low scores, right or wrong politicians – would have an enduring impact on political debate. And it would not be the only liberal group to make important tactical innovations in the realm of political action – this time in terms of campaign finance itself.

Making Congress More “Effective”

A year after the ADA’s formation, the National Committee for an Effective Congress (NCEC) emerged. Like that organization, the NCEC could count Eleanor Roosevelt as a founding member. But it was much more a purely electoral vehicle than the ADA, focusing solely on congressional races, in pursuit of a Congress that would better fit its vision of “effectiveness.” As Senator Barry Goldwater (R-AZ) established during the McClellan Committee hearings, at which NCEC chairman Sidney Scheuer testified, an “effective Congress” was surely a “*liberal-minded Congress*” for the NCEC.¹⁹⁶ The NCEC’s main activity was raising and distributing money nationally to support liberal candidates, particularly for U.S. Senate seats – a goal Goldwater claimed no issue with in itself (his libertarian credentials thus established). Nonetheless, he quizzed Scheuer on the way a candidate’s “liberality” might be determined, prompting the now-typical trading of partisan accusations and denials.¹⁹⁷ For his part, Scheuer denied that the NCEC even sought *liberals* per se, rather it opposed *radicalism* at either end of the political spectrum, thus distancing it from the Communist fringes of liberal politics as much as an emerging “radical right.”¹⁹⁸ But how “radical” a legislator must be to earn the NCEC’s enmity was less clear.¹⁹⁹

It was not a straightforward case of roll-call analysis, at least. Though legislative votes factored into the NCEC’s decisions, Scheuer admitted, “we do not go into the voting record the way you see published in your liberal magazines.” “Personally, I don’t credit that kind of thing,” he added, deeming assessments based solely upon a “statistical record” to be “a very unfortunate and unfair evaluation” of candidates.²⁰⁰ He could, at least, name one Republican they had supported – Senator Flanders of Vermont – whom they had endorsed several times, and though “we certainly did not agree with all of his votes,” Scheuer explained, “we did not change our views as to his qualities.”²⁰¹ Indeed, support for Flanders seemed premised less on any minimum mix of issue overlap, as on his commitment to one *particular* issue close to the NCEC’s heart: the censure of

Senator Joe McCarthy (R-WI). The NCEC had been heavily involved in these efforts, the resolution for which Flanders had proposed in the Senate.²⁰² This, in fact, was the single instance of NCEC “lobbying” to which Scheuer would admit. The NCEC was, with this one exception, a purely *electoral* vehicle, and much less concerned with the kinds of pseudo-educational activities that groups like the ADA and labor PACs engaged in. And as Goldwater inferred from data provided to the McClellan committee – concerning the Republican senators whom the NCEC had actively opposed in 1956 – it could be assumed that “every Senator who voted against the censure of Joe McCarthy will receive the blessing of your bullets, come election time.”²⁰³

In this Goldwater invoked a “friends and enemies” idea of electoral action.²⁰⁴ But the NCEC did not so much oppose candidates by independently waging a publicity war against them, as cultivate and proactively *support* particular candidates through direct contributions to their campaigns. Goldwater was essentially confounding older forms of interest group organization and tactics with the newer model emerging with permanent, dedicated, electoral *PACs*. Steeped in the vision of temporary electoral activity for punishment or reward, designed to achieve long-term legislative influence sustained through lobbying, Goldwater did not fully recognize the new model of electoral influence through which the NCEC was working. The essential point of the NCEC’s electoral strategy was that congressional “effectiveness” would be built in from the start – by electing reliable liberal legislators – rather than trying to persuade them after the election.²⁰⁵ Indeed, when McClellan inquired later in Scheuer’s testimony, as to whether the NCEC was registered as a lobbying organization, Scheuer responded with seeming indignation: “We certainly are not,” he told the chairman.²⁰⁶

The NCEC sought to achieve the right policies by getting the right candidates elected, even participating in primaries to do so – though, as a general principle, Scheuer stated, they were only active in primaries “in one-party States where the nomination is tantamount to election” – thus

primarily, the solid Democratic South.²⁰⁷ In offering electoral support, moreover, the NCEC's tactics would prove especially powerful. From a contemporary perspective, it is difficult to imagine that their tactics ever represented something *innovative* as much as something straightforward, rational, and obvious. For the NCEC essentially fine-tuned methods of national fundraising and targeted redistribution to key congressional districts, using a combination of ideological consistency, financial need, and electoral prospects to guide its decisions.²⁰⁸ Where the ADA might exhibit more idealism in its electoral support, the NCEC combined it with pragmatism.

Yet such sober, pragmatic, seemingly rational methods elicited the most dramatic of Goldwater's critiques – a denunciation of such nationalized political action, even reaching the level of a *Constitutional* concern from his perspective. For though Goldwater might claim to have no quarrel with the NCEC's goals, he did object to its methods. In distributing their financial support to candidates who fit with their vision of an effective Congress, irrespective of the views of those living in the district and the choices they might have expressed in a party primary, Goldwater saw the NCEC as infringing upon local self-governance.²⁰⁹ “I do not criticize a group of citizens for wanting liberals or conservatives,” Goldwater prefaced, “but there is a great question in my mind of the propriety of groups operating outside of States for the election of people that they have no concern in other than...election of a liberal group [in Congress].”²¹⁰

And this was not simply a matter of *propriety*, at least where the House was concerned, Goldwater argued.²¹¹ Groups like the NCEC were based *outside* of the districts, but were sending their money and manpower *in*. Since Article I required that congressmen be chosen “by the People of the several States” and specified residency requirements for their candidates – indicating the importance of local connections to this element of the Constitutional scheme – there were “legitimate questions” to be considered about the role of “outside organizations” in congressional elections, Goldwater said.²¹² For Goldwater, the very mechanisms by which national PACs like the

NCEC operated – by aggregating contributions at the national level and then redistributing them to where they might do the most good – was subverting the geographic integrity of the electoral process.

Though hardly a robust Constitutional case, Scheuer still acknowledged the objection as a “troublesome one.”²¹³ It tapped into long-cherished norms of local political autonomy, and anxieties that had been raised by “outside” interventions such as Roosevelt’s “purge” campaign of 1938. As Jim Farley had written of the purge, it “violated a cardinal political creed which demanded that he keep out of local matters,” adding that “[i]n any political entity, voters naturally and rightfully resent the unwarranted invasion of outsiders.”²¹⁴ On the campaign trail in 1952, Eisenhower had decried presidential “intervention” in congressional races, while Truman (1984) observed that state party leaders had been able throughout the 1950s “to tell leading presidential aspirants...to stay out of their states—and get away with it.”²¹⁵ And these concerns were not entirely absent in terms of other political actors or activities. In 1914, for example, the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections had even reported out a bill limiting the amounts of money that could be “sent from one State to another State” in federal elections, though it did not proceed further.²¹⁶

But Scheuer pointed to a general trend toward the nationalization of politics, where economic emergency and war had enlarged the scope of a legislator’s interests, and so the geographic scope of political action had accordingly widened too.²¹⁷ At the same time, its popular scope had narrowed – the NCEC’s targeted vision was about pinpointing the “individual Americans all over the country” who shared its values, in the words of its Executive Secretary, George E. Agree, and seeking “their support for individual candidates.”²¹⁸ It was about vertical connections based on ideological appeal, not the horizontal, geographic contours of the traditional party structure.

Scheuer also justified by analogy – if groups like the NCEC were condemned for aggregating money nationally and redistributing it back to states and localities, were not the party committees equally guilty, especially the congressional committees?²¹⁹ As then-chairman of the National Republican Senatorial Committee, Goldwater bristled at Scheuer’s equation of the two. “You cannot compare a national party, I hope we cannot, with the Committee for an Effective Congress or for any other group that operates in that manner,” Goldwater objected.²²⁰ Such fundraising was the traditional task of the national party committees, one they were explicitly charged with “under our political system,” and did so with transparency and according to fixed rules, he claimed.²²¹ If such a comparison could be made, Goldwater warned, “then this country is in danger of developing splintered parties.”²²² In this moment, Goldwater seemed to grasp the very heart of his objection: “[t]hat is what I am getting at,” he said. “You actually are beginning to operate like a political party,” even “to *operate dangerously in the way of a splinter party*.”²²³ PACs like the NCEC, Goldwater was suggesting, were simply party factions with a new face.²²⁴

Goldwater’s critique of national intervention and “splinter” groups seemed to apply *whatever* their ideological orientation – a suggestion that would sit poorly with his later actions, in the wake of the 1964 election, as I discuss in Chapter 9. But in its time and place, his perspective fit within a larger set of criticisms of political action emanating from conservative sources. Those critiques were undoubtedly shaped by the ideological identities of those actors most prominently engaged in direct political action – labor and liberal groups. With conservative-leaning groups largely avoiding the electoral sphere directly, such “principled” criticisms could be leveled without the practical complications of opposing your “own.” Yet it was, in part, those ideological objections that *inhibited* conservative groups from greater electoral involvement, as I explore in the next two chapters – looking to both purely “ideological” groups on this end of the spectrum, and especially the economically conservative business groups who seemed so prominent in other political contexts.

For those objections were embedded in a larger conservative critique of unionism gathering steam in the late 1940s and early 50s – one that emphasized the *collectivism* and *compulsion* inherent in such organizations, inspired by a new strain of economic thought that linked economic, political, and social freedoms together.

As Senator Carl T. Curtis (R-NE) – the sole Republican member of the Gore Committee – had characterized the contributions from labor unions the ADA received: “In other words, you got money paid in by people that had to pay it to hold their jobs, and they may not believe that any of the things you stand for are good for America.”²²⁵ Dues money was dirty money, in Curtis’s account, since union members had no choice but to pay it, and no control over which causes it might be used to support. If members might have a different conception to the leadership of what was good for America, then they were out of luck. “I can understand how a political party anxious to get into power would grab such money,” the Senator continued, “but I cannot understand how anybody who claims himself to be a liberal would have anything to do with such involuntary, compulsory collection of money.”²²⁶ Stressing the protection of individual union members and their rights of dissent, Curtis and Goldwater would launch an attack on the “violation of political freedoms” they perceived in union organizations.²²⁷ In comparison to “Liberty League Liberty,” a more convincing set of rights-based claims seemed to be in the ascendance.

Cash v. Coercion

For labor unions, political action was still cast in the terms *New Republic* journalist George Soule had identified in 1935, as a means of fulfilling “the right of the industrial citizen to have a share, through democratic procedure, in the decisions that govern his life.”²²⁸ Looking to federal elections as the democratic procedures in question, union leaders emphasized the ways the very concept of their PACs fulfilled this mission. With each member giving small and equal amounts, the act of

contributing to campaigns was recast in civic terms. Contributing money was a form of democratic participation – if it was contributed in small amounts, that is.

The manner by which money became “civic participation” is closely intertwined with the way money became “speech” in the 1930s, as Paula Baker’s work has illuminated. In that decade, Baker (2012) argues, a transition in the meaning of electoral financial transactions was completed: campaign cash became less a medium for the direct purchase of votes, as it had been in the past, and more a medium facilitating the communication of ideas.²²⁹ But “free speech” is not free. As it became increasingly unthinkable to conduct a campaign without mass media, so a new communications technology – television – made the financial costs of doing so even higher. These costs did not simply affect the outside groups that were mounting their independent publicity campaigns, but the party organizations themselves. The parties were now competing with these other groups for donations, to some extent, and still lacking an efficient, permanent infrastructure for fundraising, they found themselves increasingly unable to bear the rising costs. Thus the drive to recast campaign contributions as a civic duty had support beyond labor too, as both parties recognized a need to tap small donors in a way they had not before. As the title of John Van Doren’s 1956 monograph on campaign fundraising suggests, they needed to get “Big Money in Little Sums.”²³⁰ The appearance of bipartisan funding drives in the 1950s, sponsored by the Advertising Council, was evidence of this widespread need to generate new streams of revenue, ideally by making campaign contributions a habit for the average citizen.²³¹

But *choice* was still the operative word. A civic duty is not a compulsory one. The critique that conservatives were increasingly successful in deploying against labor PACs revolved around exactly this issue. How voluntary were the “voluntary contributions” to PACs themselves? And where they were not voluntary, how could a member dissent?

A concern had arisen among members of the Green Committee in 1944, as to whether PAC support for particularly candidates compromised the rights of political dissenters within the membership. Senators Joseph H. Ball (R-MN) and Homer S. Ferguson (R-MI) offered a “Minority Comment” with that committee’s report in which they expressed such concerns, arguing that the “use of union funds to support a particular candidate or course of political action is wrong in that it opens the way for use of money paid in by individuals for political action which they as a minority would oppose.”²³² But this concern only applied to “union funds” – money derived from member dues. “If the Political Action Committee had been organized on a voluntary basis and obtained its funds from voluntary individual contributions from the beginning, there could be no quarrel with its activities or program,” Ball and Ferguson conclude, adding both were, in fact, “desirable in a democracy.”²³³ Where members *chose* to give money to a political fund, they must run the risk that it be used to support candidates they might not personally approve of.

But what if it was not *truly* their choice? Labor’s opponents increasingly turned their attention to the construction of voluntary funds themselves – no longer critiquing the basic arguments as to why such a fund could be created and utilized for direct campaign contributions (especially as a series of legal opinions and court cases had now upheld the basic concept of a voluntary fund). Instead, they embraced that rationale and claimed that labor organizations were not fulfilling their own requirements – that “voluntary” contributions were, in fact, coerced.

Appeals from PACs for donations from union members were hardly subtle. As one UAW-PAC poster announced in 1954: “You can buy four packs of cigarettes and puff ‘em until they’re gone. What have you got then for your buck? Lung Cancer.”²³⁴ But such blunt efforts at persuasion, critics argued, belied the fact that most members felt obliged to contribute, and were even directly forced. The “checkoff” was a point of particular contention – an important feature of union security often negotiated into contracts, whereby employers would agree to automatically deduct

union dues from a workers paycheck, ensuring a reliable stream of income to the union.²³⁵ Often, union leaders simply had the political contributions tagged on, leaving the worker with no effective choice in the matter.²³⁶

The benefit of this argument was that it was difficult to level against business groups or other interests.²³⁷ When the ADA's Robert Nathan tried to defend his organization's accepting union donations, he pointed to the belief of union leaders that the ADA's goals were positive ones for their membership too.²³⁸ Should enough of the members disagree, then the unions' leadership would be changed. This still left the individual union member in a difficult position, however, where he must pay dues, at least, that might be used for purposes with which he disagreed. As Senator Curtis pointed out, if businessmen disagreed with the NAM's agenda, they could simply refuse to pay their dues.²³⁹ The bottom line was that union members had to accept the use of their dues money for whatever purpose union leaders chose, at the risk of losing their job. This was a form of compulsion which, its opponents argued ever more vociferously, went against the American Way. Individual workers were made into "political prisoners" Curtis claimed.²⁴⁰ "How it can be defended under our American system is just beyond me."²⁴¹

The main recourse, as Nathan's argument has suggested, was to a faith in the union's *internal* democracy. That if the leadership took political actions insufficiently representative of member opinion, they would be replaced.²⁴² But in the late 1950's, the supposed rights of the "industrial citizen" in terms of *internal* democratic procedure were coming under scrutiny too. For if COPE was attacked as a "juggernaut" that sought selfish benefits from the legislature at the expense of the public interest, the pernicious impact of union political action was about to be cast as *anti-democratic* in a more fundamental sense – reflective of an internal union structure that coerced individual members, subverted their individual views, and bred corruption. Coercion, collectivism, and

corruption were a trifecta of rhetorical arrows that gained greater legitimacy in the mid-1950s, as another congressional investigation served to highlight the dark side of union life.

The Other McClellan Committee

Senator John L. McClellan (D-AR) was a prominent opponent of organized labor, viewing it as a den of corruption. In 1958, he chaired the Senate Select Committee on Improper Activities in Labor or Management Field, in which committee counsel Robert F. Kennedy famously dressed down Teamsters president Jimmy Hoffa during a televised hearing. John F. Kennedy and Barry Goldwater were also members of that committee, which severely damaged the reputation of organized labor at large.²⁴³ But McClellan had already chaired another committee that would preview some of these themes, and explicitly tie political action to internal concerns over union democracy. In 1956-57, he presided over the “Special Committee to Investigate Political Activities, Lobbying, and Campaign Contributions,” part of which assessed union *political* activity – and abuses.²⁴⁴

If Gore’s 1956 investigation served to promote an emerging liberal vision of campaign finance reform, McClellan’s would suggest a very different vision. “[T]hese investigations put labor on the defensive,” Zelizer explains (even though no campaign finance legislation resulted from either), generating a hostility toward campaign finance reform that would create an important tension within the growing liberal-labor universe. “[U]nion leaders perceived campaign finance reform as a tool for conservatives to emasculate their political power,” Zelizer explains, and thus “opposed PAC regulations.”²⁴⁵ One such proposal in 1959 was simply “aimed at labor and other liberal groups” in Walter Reuther’s estimation, and if advanced to the floor raised the prospect of “anti-labor forces in both parties” trying to amend it “so as to block and if possible prohibit all political activity by labor,” Reuther feared.²⁴⁶

But legislation considered damaging to unions would pass in 1959, in the form of the Landrum-Griffin Act. The fallout from the McClellan “rackets” hearings, Landrum-Griffin reached in to the internal operations of unions: requiring secret ballots in its elections – subject to federal review – and financial disclosure. It also moved to protect the rights of individual union members, through secret ballots in part, but also through a “bill of rights” that explicitly guaranteed members’ freedom of speech. These guarantees would subsequently be used to garner refunds for union members, for the parts of their dues used for politically-oriented purposes.

Assessing Labor Political Action

“We in America are undergoing a profound political revolution,” P.A.C. Director Jack Kroll told the ADA’s convention in 1952, foretelling an array of important political developments that would characterize the 20th Century, and situating the P.A.C. at their heart.²⁴⁷

“It is a re-shifting of alignments, a re-orientation by our political parties, a groping by large groups of people for a clearly-charted course of action. How long it will take to reach its climax I do not know. Nor do I profess to know what form that climax will take. I do say that it is underway and that its effects will be felt in the elections this year. As far as I am concerned, I welcome the development. I think CIO-PAC, in giving labor political expression, had something to do with it. I think we will play a role in future developments...a role that will depend to a large degree upon how well we carry on our work of political organization. And I think in doing that we are making a contribution to the political life of America. We are making a contribution to the practical functioning of our democracy...”²⁴⁸

The political realm was dramatically transformed by labor political action. Other labor groups emulated the P.A.C. model, as with the LLPE in 1947 and ultimately the AFL-CIO Committee on Political Education, active from 1956 onward, along with various P.A.C.’s set up by international unions and subnational affiliations. The formation of key liberal groups such as the ADA in 1947 and the National Committee for an Effective Congress in ’48 also suggests the importance of the P.A.C. model. Yet that action, it seemed, had not secured the policy aims for which it was intended. Despite massive expenditures of money and manpower throughout the 1940s and 50s, restrictive

labor legislation like the Taft-Hartley Act, along with the failure to repeal it, plus the Landrum-Griffin Act of 1959, are usually cited as evidence of labor's lack of political success.²⁴⁹

The Landrum-Griffin Act of 1959 passed despite a major Democratic success at the polls in 1958, demonstrating the insufficiency of electoral action alone. Installing “friends” from the get-go did not always pay off – and the conservative coalition could still close ranks to both frustrate and facilitate legislation, as they did in the case of Landrum-Griffin. Despite almost two decades of political action, labor was faced with another legislative defeat. And while the election of 1960 would bring a Democrat back into the White House, it was one who was less comfortable with labor than his predecessors, and whose brother had so famously sought to extirpate corruption from within their ranks. The partisan electoral strategy associated with labor political action thus shaped and constrained the legislative efforts of the AFL-CIO, but did not entirely supplant more traditional forms of legislator-focused, even bipartisan, lobbying – helping us to understand the mix of strategies we still see today.

It was through traditional *collective* action that labor made some of its most important gains during this period – Walter Reuther's famous “Treaty of Detroit” being a prominent example, negotiated in 1950, in which he secured an unprecedented deal with General Motors in terms of wage adjustment policies and benefits.²⁵⁰ Such analyses suggest that *neither* labor's lobbying *nor* its political action strategies were particularly “effective” in policy terms. That labor groups such as the CIO *persisted* with this strategy suggests, on the one hand, an important dynamic of political action – its insatiable quality, a tendency to believe that the answer to a failed effort is always “more.” On the other, it points to important changes in the broader political realm that could be viewed as essentially trapping labor in to the strategy – changes their innovation had largely initiated.

By the mid-1950s, the diffusion of political action had begun to spread to *competitors* as much as admirers. The Americans for Constitutional Action, for example, was formed in 1958 – openly

acknowledged as a conservative counterweight to the ADA, and joined in this mission by the American Conservative Union in 1964.²⁵¹ By the late 1950s, labor political action had also sparked a dramatic reaction within the business community – realizing Clemens’ (1997) warning that the danger of successful organizational innovation was that your *enemies* might turn your methods against you, and do so more effectively. Outlining the new developments in labor political activity, a Chamber of Commerce publication in 1949 had warned that “[t]he forces outside Labor have no counterpart to the League [L.L.P.E.] and the P.A.C.”²⁵² “Business men and their friends,” it concluded, “are compelled to decide whether they should remain quiescent in the face of these events or devise their own program of affirmative action.”²⁵³ Activities over the course of the next decade would resolve this question in favor of the latter.

8. When Business is Not ‘Business-Like’

“The forces outside Labor have no counterpart to Labor’s League and the P.A.C.,” a Chamber of Commerce brochure warned in 1949.¹ “Business men and their friends” were thus “compelled to decide whether they should remain quiescent in the face of these events or devise their own program of affirmative action.”² “Business men,” of course, was a “dangerous” designation, as Truman (1951) observed, since it implied a unity across all that might not exist.³ But the organizations that most clearly represented “the political interests of business,” in Odegard and Helms’ (1938) estimation, were exhibiting a kind of unity – when it came to their approach to politics.⁴ The Chamber and “its twin,” the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) had certainly not been quiescent. But the “program of affirmative action” they hit upon was not a program of *political* action – at least not at first. The Chamber and NAM, in fact, had spent much of the 1940s and ‘50s attacking the very idea of political action, as practiced by labor and liberal groups. They had instead, joined by a growing number of conservative “friends,” met political action with political *education*.

Through much of the immediate post-war period, they devoted their energies to waging the “free enterprise campaign” – a publicity program infused with ideology, that would educate Americans in the economic, social, and *political* benefits of capitalism. It linked business-friendly politics to a broader vision of individualism and freedom – a vision with universalist appeal.⁵ Yet, even as it avoided campaign contributions, endorsements, or voter mobilization activities, political education was not unconcerned with electoral affairs. Rather, it involved an extension of the sophisticated publicity techniques developed by lobbyists and pressure groups since the 1920s – the goal was to influence the broader electoral context, rather than advocate for a particular candidate, or a particular piece of legislation. The Free-Enterprise campaign was thus a long-term effort to ensure the strong position of business within American society and political culture, to create a context in which legislators sympathetic to business could be elected, and to ensure the maintenance

of that context given the rocky experiences of the 1930s. Combined with traditional lobbying, this publicity-based approach would be dominant among business interests for the next two decades.

That business groups launched such a publicity campaign does not, however, explain why they avoided direct political action in this period. Nor, indeed, does it explain why, as the 1950s drew to a close, business organizations and their allies began to embrace it. Calls for a different approach would mount over the years, amid concerns that “business” was not taking a truly “businesslike” approach to meeting the perceived threat of labor and liberal political action. In this chapter, I address the first concern – examining in more detail *what* business and conservative groups did in the post-war period, and assessing why they avoided a more direct electoral approach. While existing scholarship does not directly address this question, some suggestions emerge across the various literatures on campaign finance and interest groups I have reviewed. To the extent answers have been offered, they suggest legal uncertainty surrounding corporate political action that embraced member companies as much as the incorporated business associations themselves. An important emphasis is also placed on the nature and configuration of *resources* available to these groups, and the economic interests underlying them – possessing large financial resources but small memberships, money over manpower, business groups had a natural orientation toward publicity over direct electoral activities, it was claimed. Moreover, since the individual businessmen controlling their member organizations possessed substantial financial resources themselves, their ability to engage in *individual* political action would offset the need for a group approach.⁶ As I discuss in the second part of this chapter, such explanations are insufficient for understanding the contours of business political action over time, since business associations, and corporations themselves, did ultimately create PACs, while these supposed explanatory factors remained largely unchanged. This trend became especially noticeable in the mid-to-late 1960s, and especially in the 1970s, from which point scholars have documented an enormous growth in corporate political

action.⁷ But the basis had already been laid through internal debates over political action in the 1950s, and decisions to move more aggressively in that direction – as I look to in the next chapter.

Understanding the early avoidance and ultimate embrace of direct political action within the business community involves much more than resources and legal rulings. It involves recognizing the role played by experience, ideology, culture, and electoral competition in shaping the “business viewpoint” toward political action over time. Only with a gradual shift in these attitudes, evident by the early 1960s, was the stage set for the corporate “PAC explosion” of the 1970s and beyond.

Restored Influence, Reinvigorated Ideology

Business Hostility to the New Deal

By the mid-1930s, the “business civilization” of the 1920s lay in ruin. Businessmen and bankers were the objects of popular scorn, and the nation’s premier business organizations – the National Association of Manufacturers and the United States Chamber of Commerce – found their position as “insiders” in the halls of political power attenuated. While the Chamber and NAM had initially lent their support to the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA), they had become increasingly hostile toward it, and to New Deal measures more generally, as Roosevelt’s first term wore on. This kind of hostility emanating from the business community, Weed (1994) argues, informed the oppositional stance adopted by the Republican Party in the run-up to the 1936 election – one that went against the Downsian expectation that political parties would moderate in response to defeat.⁸ Yet Weed sees Willkie’s candidacy in 1940 as evidence of a more moderate GOP stance, which he in turn attributes to a softening of business opposition – a change, he suggests, that had much to do with the coming of Keynesianism.

First published in early 1936, John Maynard Keynes’ *General Theory Employment, Interest and Money* offered a new theoretical framework in which to understand government’s role in the

economy, and a new language in which to discuss and justify it – assets that Franklin Roosevelt was quick to take advantage of. But Keynes’ argument for increased government spending during economic downturns “was not incompatible with the interests of private corporations,” Weed suggests.⁹ Thus it also served to take the edge off business hostility to the New Deal, he argues – promoting an “intellectual transformation” within the business community that aided a Republican return to the center.¹⁰ Though “the process of adjustment on the part of the business community was by no means complete by 1938,” Weed concedes, he points to “a new pattern of response [that] had begun among business groups that would eventually lead to both the acceptance of government macroeconomic management and the emergence of the modern welfare state after the conclusion of the Second World War.”¹¹ From this perspective, in effect, the business embrace of Keynesianism leads inexorably toward a Schlesingerian “vital center.”¹²

But such a wholesale embrace is not wholly evident. Certainly, specific *parts* of the business community were becoming more reliably supportive of New Deal measures – and of an enhanced role for the federal government at large. Ferguson (1995), for example, has argued that particular industrial sectors – less negatively impacted by changes in labor law, and more positively aided by international engagement – became important members of the emerging New Deal coalition during the 1930s.¹³ Sectors like banking, the tobacco industry, even oil interests, which were much less labor-intensive than car manufacturing, the steel industry, and especially textile production, and also had a more international outlook than these sectors, are important examples.¹⁴ Individuals identified with these industries became important financial backers of the Democratic Party, supporting Ferguson’s broader “investment theory” of party competition – which locates critical changes in the party system within the changing configuration of industry itself, and the political causes those industries choose to invest in.¹⁵

At the same time, other parts of the business community were becoming intractably opposed to all things “New Deal.” Certainly the labor-intensive, inwardly focused industries that form Ferguson’s comparison group were not becoming more amenable to it. And nor were the major “spokesmen for business” – the Chamber and, especially, the NAM. As Alfred Cleveland (1948) calculated, the NAM opposed thirty-one of the thirty-eight major laws passed between 1933 and 1941- over 80% of the initiatives associated with the various “New Deals.”¹⁶ “With the coming of the New Deal,” Zeigler (1964) summarizes, “there was a manifestation of the shift of business goals from a position of dominance to one of a militant opposition.”¹⁷

Indeed, recent historical scholarship, such as that of Fones-Wolf (1994) and Phillips-Fein (2009), have challenged Schlesinger’s vision of post-war consensus in the political realm altogether, pointing to pockets of resistance to the New Deal among “business conservatives” – opposition that bubbled under the surface during the 1950s, exploded into the open with Barry Goldwater’s 1964 presidential campaign, and eventually fueled the conservative resurgence of the 1970s and beyond.¹⁸ The Chamber and, especially, the NAM, might be viewed as incubators of this oppositional stream – a stance they soon found had organizational benefits. The booming economy and largely sympathetic political environment of the 1920s, in fact, had made for complacency among their existing and prospective members.¹⁹ The Chamber’s membership, steadily rising since its founding in 1912, had plateaued in the early 1920s, while the NAM’s began to plummet.²⁰ As Zeigler concludes, “the ‘normalcy’ of the 1920’s was, in fact, nearly disastrous for the NAM.”²¹ In this light, hostility to the New Deal would reinvigorate their organizations – addressing their membership decline and providing a new sense of purpose.²² In fact, when opponents of the New Deal achieved a stunning legislative reversal with the Taft-Hartley Act in 1948, the NAM’s membership actually *declined* once again.²³ The maintenance of political conflict, it seemed – stressing constant vigilance against the *possibility* of external threats – was becoming essential to organizational maintenance.²⁴

Opposing the New Deal, in fact, would animate an array of new groups forged purely for that purpose, beyond those like the Chamber and NAM which had explicit ties to specific economic interests. For if the labor movement was forging a broader network of organizations sympathetic to liberal causes, and to the Democratic president, it did not want for opponents. Yet these latter groups seemed to heed lessons from the failures of the Liberty League – from the reputational dangers of being deemed “economic royalists,” merely out to benefit an already-advantaged class, and the electoral dangers of a named opponent, as was apparent even in their “non-partisan opposition to Franklin Roosevelt.” Thus where liberal groups plunged deeper into political *action* and developed new techniques that further embedded them in the electoral scene, conservative groups largely kept within the hazy boundaries of political *education*. That is, claims to be educating voters about *issues* but where the end goal appears more as an effort to reshape a general *electoral* context than to change the dynamics of public opinion on a specific bill before the legislature. In this manner, publicity would be extended from a grassroots lobbying technique to a form of electoral activity, though not quite as direct and overt a form as the *political action* that labor groups would formulate in the ensuing decade.

The nature of that message, however, would alter in important ways over time. Anti-New Deal groups would initially seek to broaden the appeal of a Liberty League-style message by stressing its patriotic qualities, against a backdrop of growing international turmoil. Business groups, however, would increasingly locate their economic goals within a broader message that more cohesively embraced individual and political liberties too. The themes that had animated Constitution-saving and patriotic groups would be rewoven into a broader, and more positive, narrative premised upon an all-encompassing concept of “freedom.”

The “Patriotic Action Committees”

If the “liberty-saving” groups of the 1930s had emphasized their commitment to “the Constitution,” the international crises and conflict of the early 1940s would see their successors channel that sentiment as an appeal to “patriotism.” The “Committee for Constitutional Government” (CCG) was one such group, a new entity forged from the embers of Frank Gannett’s National Committee to Uphold Constitutional Government (NCUCG), which had folded in April 1941. And a similar group came to prominence at this time – the “Constitutional Educational League,” which described itself as one of the first “patriotic” and anti-subversive groups.²⁵ This positive assertion of “patriotism” was often defined in the negative, however – whether as strident anti-Communism, fervent isolationism, or even anti-Semitism.²⁶ The similarity of these two groups went beyond their aims and message, however, extending to the arguments they would make about the *nature* of their activity, and the lengths they would go to in support of those claims.

Thus when Gannett appeared before the House campaign expenditures investigation in September 1944, chaired by Rep. Clinton Anderson (D-NM), he proceeded to describe the CCG as purely educational, non-partisan, even *non-political* to a certain degree.²⁷ It operated an “educational program,” the “final object” of which was “the preservation of constitutional government,” Gannett explained.²⁸ Such political education, Gannett argued, was not partisan and thus not “political” as far as the Corrupt Practices Act was concerned. (The IRS had seemed to disagree, at least when it came to the CCG’s predecessor organization – which had contributed to the demise of that entity).²⁹ But the newly reconstituted CCG would deny that it was a “political committee” at all. “There has been a good deal of talk about politics,” Gannett announced to the Committee, but they had not defined their terms.³⁰ “If it is partisan politics, that is one thing; if it is working for the good of government, politics in general, that is another thing,” Gannett distinguished.³¹ The CCG, of course, was firmly in the latter camp, as far as Gannett was concerned.

Unlike true “political committees” such as the P.A.C. or the NCPAC, the CCG had made no active candidate endorsements – its message would be about “the good of government,” he implied.³² The substantial funds it would use to spread that message (in the region of “several hundred thousand dollars this year”) had been raised from individuals who had chosen to contribute.³³ In contrast, Gannett argued, the P.A.C. had been largely utilizing dues money, irrespective of the members’ political opinions. “It is sort of a coercive movement to raise a vast sum to be used frankly for the election of President Roosevelt,” Gannett remarked. “That I should say, is politics.”³⁴

A Constitutional Educational League pamphlet described itself in similar terms – as being “just what its name implies—an educational organization with a patriotic objective: the preservation of constitutional government. The league is not a political movement. It takes no part in partisan politics. It considers the fight for Americanism above politics.”³⁵ The CEL would be a different kind of “PAC” – a “Patriotic Action Committee” – one that would give the American people “the facts” and thereby ensure the nation’s safety.³⁶ It made no candidate endorsements, exhibited no party preference, and had a membership “composed of both Democrats and Republicans in every walk of life,” CEL’s executive vice-chairman Joseph Kamp told the Anderson committee, to which he had also been called to testify.³⁷ Kamp himself was a registered Democrat, he noted.³⁸ The CEL’s activities had been “strictly *nonpartisan*,” he emphasized, “and by nonpartisan I mean *for America*.”³⁹ Patriotism and nonpartisanship were one and the same.

Being nonpartisan was still compatible with being explicitly *against* the Communist Party, however, and the “kindred subversive groups which it dominates.”⁴⁰ CPUSA was simply *not* a political party as far as Kamp was concerned, since it forfeited such legal status by advocating un-American objectives.⁴¹ Since this argument conveniently encompassed any group linked to the CPUSA – whether in fact or reputation – opposing them was equally nonpartisan and patriotic.

Thus could Kamp excoriate the trifecta of “Sidney Hillman, the C.I.O., and the Communist Party...”⁴² These forces may have managed to “take over” his Democratic party, he said, but the CCG was determined to prevent their “taking over the country” altogether.⁴³

One might suspect this effort would involve supporting the Republican Party as a counterweight – and, indeed, both these groups were viewed in a largely partisan light, despite their protestations to the contrary.⁴⁴ And yet Kamp’s protest seemed to suggest no greater faith in the GOP’s ability to resist Communist infiltration than the Democratic Party had shown. The CEL had “exposed the attempt on the part of subversive elements to *bore from within* both political parties,” Kamp said.⁴⁵ Nor had they *stopped boring* on the Republican side, he believed, when asked explicitly by the committee’s counsel. “[I]t would not be to their advantage” to do so, Kamp explained. “If they can take over the Republican Party they are going to do that.”⁴⁶ Why would the “radical elements” cease their activities within one party, his answer seemed to say? Why *reduce* their chances of success by focusing only on one? In this respect, the CEL’s “nonpartisanship” was actually arrayed against the pernicious *bipartisanship* of these Communist infiltrators, as Kamp saw it.

Nor did the CEL’s hostility to such infiltration reach the level of “political” activity, Kamp argued. While their overt opposition to the CIO might be construed as encouraging opposition to P.A.C.-backed candidates, Kamp claimed the CEL merely provided *information* to citizens on which they might base their decision.⁴⁷ Since the CEL did not actively endorse anyone, he appeared to argue, they were not explicitly seeking to direct a citizen’s vote, and thus remained within the realm of “education.”⁴⁸ The difference was one of command and compulsion, over cultivation and suggestion. Foreshadowing the “magic words” assessments that dominated the campaign finance debates of the 1990s, Kamp asserted that “if I came out and said, “Now, vote for Roosevelt,” or “Vote for Dewey,” then I would be engaging in political activity; I would not be asking them to use their own judgment; I would be asking them to follow my advice.”⁴⁹ On such an account, CEL

pamphlets with such unsubtle titles as “Vote C.I.O. and Get a Soviet America,” were not giving any electoral advice at all.⁵⁰

“[E]ducation and political activities are two different things,” Kamp stated bluntly to the Anderson committee, leading an exasperated John Sparkman (D-AL), then a congressman, to remark: “That is what we have been told by every organization that has come before us” – even the CIO⁵¹ But Kamp used the claim to explicitly deny that his organization was a “political committee” under the meaning of the Corrupt Practices Acts, and to thereby deny the legal authority of the Anderson committee even to investigate it – claims that were mirrored by the CCG’s executive director, Edward A. Rumely.⁵² The Anderson Committee, however, thought differently and demanded their financial information anyway. When Kamp and Rumely refused to comply, even when subpoenaed, they were held in contempt of Congress.⁵³

While the CEL and CCG’s “educational” claims were deemed beyond legal bounds in this instance, the drive to make such claims was not solely legalistic in basis. It was often employed more for its *cultural* value, which in itself encouraged increasingly strained uses of the term. As noted in previous chapters, Clemens (1997) points to the ways that ‘educational’ claims helped women’s groups to expand the normative bounds imposed on their activities, and disguising their entry into the political sphere by clothing it in a more widely accepted educational role.⁵⁴ Similarly, for pressure groups in the post-New Deal era, the educational claim could enhance efforts to circumvent normative proscriptions on more assertive political activity. Along with the claim to non-partisanship, it served to bolster the legitimacy of group action. But the emphasis upon particular *issues* that had once underlain both claims was replaced with a much more *ideological* emphasis, as issue positions themselves came to cohere in more systematic ways. “[T]he New Deal is not a political party, it is a philosophy of government,” Kamp had asserted.⁵⁵ Waging war on a *philosophy* was an intellectual endeavor before it was an *electoral* one.

And it was a philosophic recalibration that would increasingly tie together anti-New Deal groups of various stripes, and business organizations like the NAM and the Chamber, united by a more cohesive, economically-based message – one that linked hostility to government economic intervention at home – particularly in terms of labor relations – to opposition to Communism abroad, through an emphasis on the collectivism and coercion apparent in each. For if Keynesianism offered a new language of justification for proponents of government intervention, its opponents would soon be speaking a new language too, inspired by the economic thinking of the Austrian School. And the message they presented was a powerful one: the inextricable link between free markets, free individuals, and free societies.

The “Free Enterprise” Campaign

Beginning in the late 1930s and accelerating after World War II, the business community launched an “intellectual reconquest” of America, Fones-Wolf argues – an effort to reshape American political culture away from the liberalism of the New Deal, and respond to the threat posed by an increasingly active labor movement.⁵⁶ In part, this campaign marked an effort to continue rebuilding the reputation of business, which though buoyed by the WWII “miracle of production,” still felt the lingering taint of the Depression.⁵⁷ But it also sought to facilitate economic expansion and to change the terms of political debate.⁵⁸ Where the Landon-Liberty League efforts of 1936 had “revealed the political bankruptcy of business conservatism,” as Phillips-Fein suggests, and in which “the support of wealthy businessmen became its downfall,” the new publicity efforts of the 1940s were designed to overcome it.⁵⁹ They would not so much *hide* an association with business from the broader political realm, so much as reduce the *stigma* of such an association: they would make *business* something *everyone* could identify with.

In part, their effort benefited from a kind of economic patriotism and stemming from the American war effort. For if the prestige, status, and influence of business had been imperiled in the 1930s by the Great Depression, they would be restored in the 1940s – due, in large measure, to America’s entry into World War II. The “miracle of production” that enabled U.S. factories to rapidly turn out the planes, ships, munitions, and materiel necessary for the American war effort (and even beforehand, through the Lend-Lease program), had served to demonstrate the massive capabilities of America’s industrial core, and helped to undo some of the negative reputational effects of the Depression.⁶⁰ It had also put business leaders firmly back in the lobbying game, as they vied for the enormous government contracts paying for the “miracle.”⁶¹ The NAM and the Chamber were back in business, so to speak – their voices resurgent in the inner councils of government, their traditional approach – direct lobbying – restored. But the 1930s had revealed how fragile this position could be. Insider status also depended on outside support, they had learned. “Business” would have to *remain* popular too.

Business leaders would thus invoke a different vision of “liberty” than the “Liberty League Liberty,” that Soule had condemned a decade earlier in the *New Republic*. Though they had long presented their appeals in terms of *rights*, Soule noted, such claims by business interests had ultimately boiled down to *property* rights. The Liberty League and its sympathizers had moved beyond traditional claims of something like a “divine right” to their property, at least. Instead, they had pursued a rhetorical thread apparent since the 1920s, to place property-based arguments in broader individualist terms – emphasizing a workers’ right to contract for the hours and wages he saw fit, for example, or to *choose* to bargain through a company union rather than an independent one.⁶² But they had failed to do so convincingly, Soule argued. In this depiction of workers rights, the only liberty really being preserved was that of the company.⁶³ Their efforts to depict government as impeding the freedom of the citizen were little more successful – particularly given Roosevelt’s

arguments that citizens could not make use of their freedoms without government help to do so.⁶⁴ Thus in politics, Soule argued, “Liberty League liberty simply means fighting against government as a dangerous regulator or rival of private business enterprise.”⁶⁵

In the early 1940s and beyond, a much different vision of liberty was being formed and articulated by business leaders. They would offer new arguments about the value of business in the context of the broader society, linking the realms of employment and politics. They would emphasize “freedom” over “constitutionalism,” *profit* over property, and the benefits of profit, and free markets, for all. The message that everyone’s *individual* freedom – in all contexts – was caught up in the freedom of business to act and prosper, was one that the Liberty League had not quite managed to articulate.⁶⁶

The Austrian School of economists provided much of the intellectual foundations for this new message. Friedrich Hayek’s *The Road to Serfdom* was first published in the United States in September 1944, and the following April was summarized in *Reader’s Digest*, thereby reaching a wide audience. Henry Hazlitt’s *Economics in One Lesson* was first published in 1946, and quickly became a best seller. The “one lesson” was stated at the outset: “The art of economics consists in looking not merely at the immediate but at the longer effects of any act or policy; it consists in tracing the consequences of that policy not merely for one group but for all groups.” It was business universalism in a new form. Only the acts or policies that aided business and its long-term productive capacity, in essence, had the ability to improve the lot of all through economic growth.

Thus, where Liberty Leaguers had been castigated as “apostles of greed,” the new businessmen would be “apostles of ideas” as the Chamber of Commerce’s Executive Vice-President Arch N. Booth envisaged in 1951.⁶⁷ And this new approach, both Phillips-Fein and Fones-Wolf suggest, would be a much more successful one.

A Congressional Reappearance

At the forefront of the “free enterprise” campaign were the Chamber of Commerce and the NAM, retooling their internal structures and devoting substantial resources to their publicity efforts as the 1940s progressed.⁶⁸ As early as 1934, the NAM had created a publicity committee designed to foster these kinds of ideas – the “The National Industrial Information Committee” (NIIC). As NAM president Robert M. Gaylord informed the Anderson Committee in 1944, the NIIC had been established to address the “vital need” for a better understanding among the public, and within the business community itself, “of the economic relationship of business to society at large.”⁶⁹ In this sense it was a defensive move, “a byproduct of the great depression of the thirties,” which “had raised doubts among a large section of our people as to the desirability of maintaining free enterprise as the keystone of a modern economic system.”⁷⁰ That may long have been the goal, but the “free enterprise” terminology he utilized was of a more recent vintage.⁷¹ By the early 1940s, the NIIC was spending over \$1 million a year promoting the cause.⁷²

Other groups would also take up the “free enterprise” mission, including some of the earlier “constitution-saving” groups, who could appropriate the principles and promote their most virulent anti-Communist formulation. The basic point of the “free enterprise” message, after all, was “to promote the capitalistic system as opposed to communism or socialism,” as Gaylord conceded.⁷³ Thus the Committee for Constitutional Government and the Constitutional Education League, for example, would continue their activities throughout the 1940s – beyond Roosevelt’s tenure in the presidency, and into the post-war world – by partly integrating this message. New organizations also sprang up to proselytize for free enterprise, including “think tanks” like the Foundation for Economic Education and the American Enterprise Association (forerunner of AEI).⁷⁴ A nascent, and relatively cohesive, conservative constellation was emerging around these ideas.

With the exception of the American Enterprise Association, representatives from all of these organizations would be called to testify before one or more of the various investigations of campaign expenditures or lobbying conducted in the 1940s and 1950s – as shown in Table 8.1. Their efforts to disseminate economic principles thus gained *political* attention.

Table 8.1. *Lobbying/Campaign Investigations Involving Major Business/Conservative Groups*

| Committee | Chairman | Chamber | Hearings held (Cong.) | Relevant groups represented |
|---|---|---------|---|--|
| Committee on Privileges and Elections, Subcommittee | Moses E. Clapp (R-MN) | Senate | 1912-1913 (62 nd) | National Association of Manufacturers |
| Subcommittee on S. Res. 92, Committee on Judiciary | Lee S. Overman (D-NC) | Senate | 1913-1914 (63 rd) | National Association of Manufacturers National Council for Industrial Defense |
| Select Committee to Investigate Lobby Charges | Finis J. Garrett (D-TN) | House | 1913 -14 (63 rd) | National Association of Manufacturers |
| Subcommittee on S. Res. 20, Committee on Judiciary | Thaddeus H. Caraway (D-AR) | Senate | 1929-1931 (71 st -72 nd) | Chamber of Commerce of US |
| Special Committee to Investigate Lobbying Activities | Hugo L. Black, (D-AL))/ Sherman Minton (D-IN) | Senate | 1935-1938 (74 th -75 th) | Crusaders Sentinels of the Republic National Comm. to Uphold Constitutional Government |
| Special Committee Investigating Campaign Expenditures | Guy M. Gillette (D-IA) | Senate | 1940-41 (76 th -77 th) | Independent Business Men's Committee |
| Committee to Investigate Campaign Expenditures | Clinton P. Anderson (D-NM) | House | 1944 (78 th) | Comm. for Constitutional Government Constitutional Education League National Association of Manufacturers |
| Committee to Investigate Campaign Expenditures | J. Percy Priest (D-TN) | House | 1946 (79 th) | American Action Inc. National Association of Manufacturers |
| Select Committee on Lobbying Activities | Frank Buchanan (D-PA) | House | 1950 (81 st) | Comm. for Constitutional Government Constitutional Educational League Foundation for Economic Education National Economic Council |
| Committee on Rules and Administration, Subcommittee on Privileges and Elections | Albert Gore (D-TN) | Senate | 1956 (84 th) | For America US Chamber of Commerce |
| Special Committee to Investigate Political Activities, Lobbying, and Campaign Contributions | John L. McClellan (D-AR) | Senate | 1956-57 (84 th) | American Medical Association US Chamber of Commerce |

Gaylord's appearance in 1944, in fact, marked the first time his organization had been called before a campaign-related committee in thirty years.⁷⁵ And yet Gaylord would claim, as indeed all of these groups would do in various ways, that their activity was in some sense *non-political*. Moreover, none of the organizations represented could be properly classified as PACs. Indeed Gaylord backed up his assertion that the NIIC was "not a political organization" with the fact that it "makes no contributions to candidates for public office or to any political organizations."⁷⁶ Instead, groups like the NIIC, the NAM itself, or the Chamber, were engaged in an *educational* enterprise – something they distinguished clearly from a political one.

Of course, the "educational" campaign was not *entirely* non-political in a strict sense, Gaylord could acknowledge. Since their outreach effort – including grassroots meetings with women's groups and church organizations across the country – was designed to "promote the capitalistic system as opposed to communism or socialism," it was certainly concerned with politics at the systemic level.⁷⁷ The NIIC program in 1944, after all, was designed "to show the public that the enterprise and initiative of its individual citizens, not the super-planning of an all-powerful state, offer the key to the better world we all are seeking."⁷⁸ The distinction was, as indeed labor and liberal groups had also claimed, "that this is asked in no partisan political sense."⁷⁹

Gaylord, in fact, would suggest that the NAM itself, and the activities of the NIIC, were "thoroughly nonpartisan."⁸⁰ The message the NAM was promoting were not oriented to any party persuasion. Both parties had included platform planks pledging support for the free enterprise system, he stated proudly.⁸¹ "[W]e have members in both political parties," he told the committee – should the NAM engage as an organization in partisan politics, "[m]y life would not be worth living."⁸² Indeed, Gaylord went so far as to criticize any organizations that did aim to aid partisan causes, suggesting they had "not found out yet they cannot dictate to their members."⁸³ "You cannot tell the American people, you cannot tell the American Congressmen or other public servants, how

they ought to vote,” Gaylord summed up – embracing both electioneering and aggressive lobbying in one fell swoop. “You can give them the facts and they are going to do what they think is right. But when you attempt to tell them how to do it, you only defeat your own purposes.”⁸⁴ The “free enterprise” perspective, after all, celebrated those who “dare to think as individuals and do not think as a group dominated by the opinion of one small set of brains.”⁸⁵ Actively *directing* voters toward a particular kind of candidate – even one who believed in such principles – would be self-contradictory.

That the NAM avoided the electoral arena directly was an important part of its “non-political” claim. Organizations such as his went “[i]nto the field of politics inasmuch as you try to influence public opinion, Gaylord conceded. “But we cannot go into the field to contribute to or endorse candidates or political parties.”⁸⁶ The NAM would be taking no active part in the 1944 election campaign, he affirmed, or any other, for that matter.⁸⁷

But it did provide congressional roll-call votes to its members on occasion, Gaylord admitted, though he was concerned to present this as being as far from an indication of candidate preference as possible. Only when a matter of vital concern to industry had been before the Congress, and the votes not widely publicized in the public press, would the NAM print them in its newsletter, he said.⁸⁸ In doing so, it would explain the measure under consideration and the NAM’s perspective, but offer no statement as to who had voted “right” or “wrong” – that was “a matter of the conscience of the individual Congressman so far as we are concerned,” Gaylord noted.⁸⁹ There was no summary of a legislator’s past behavior or expected future conduct around election time.⁹⁰ There was nothing that should suggest to those receiving it “that certain Members of Congress who voted one way were entitled to commendation and, perhaps, political support, and those who voted the opposite were subject to condemnation and perhaps political opposition” as one congressman queried.⁹¹ Indeed, when Congressman Anderson posed the question more bluntly, as to whether the

NAM provided a legislator's voting record "to help him or to hurt him" in an electoral sense – that they were a *political* tool – Gaylord affected surprise. "It never occurred to me in that light," he told the committee.⁹²

While the publication of voting records by the *New Republic* or the American Federation of Labor *was* widely regarded in a political light, as Anderson suggested, that did not mean the NAM was doing the same, in Gaylord's view.⁹³ Rather, "[w]hat we are trying to do," Gaylord explained, "is to provide a general reminder that, if you believe in the legislation that was adopted, or defeated, and your Congressman voted differently, *you ought to talk with him and show him why you believe as you do.*"⁹⁴ It was to encourage members to be their *own* lobbyists, Gaylord was suggesting, that the NAM published roll-call votes on occasion – not to elicit reward or punishment at the polls.⁹⁵ Of course, the prominent executives that effectively filled its membership roster were in a better position than most to talk directly with a legislator "and show him why you believe as you do." But when Anderson quipped that the obvious alternative was to "retire him to private life by a large and enthusiastic majority," Gaylord offered a curt response. "Manufacturers do not retire anybody to private life," he said. "We have less influence in elections than anybody."⁹⁶

They certainly did not command a "large and enthusiastic majority" of voters, their resources much more concentrated in financial terms. But money had become as much of a crucial resource in elections as manpower. The press might throw around claims that "some organizations come to Congressmen and say, "If you don't vote the way we think, we will see you don't come back here, and if you do vote the way we think, we will find some way to get some money for you."⁹⁷ But the NAM did not work that way, Gaylord affirmed.⁹⁸ The NAM, for its part, had no plans at all "for the raising of any funds, either through the association or through voluntary contributions, for the purpose of educating the people as to how they should vote on issues, or candidates, at the coming election," nor had it "sent individuals into any congressional district in the recent primaries,

or in past general elections, to organize or speak in behalf of candidates, or to recommend them to [] individual members.”⁹⁹

Gaylord even told the Anderson Committee of suggestions that the NAM set up its own PAC, and how he had instantly dismissed them.¹⁰⁰ There were some NAM members who “would like to see some political activity,” Gaylord acknowledged, and one such member had written him in June, “suggesting that since the Attorney General had given his blessing to the P.A.C, that we ought to take some of the money...from the N.I.I.C. program and appropriate it for political work.”¹⁰¹

Gaylord’s response was swift and negative:

“The suggestion contained in your letter of June 12 shocks me. The Federal Corrupt Practices Act prevents organizations such as ours from making political contributions.

The fact that an Attorney General has approved the actions of the Congress of Industrial Organizations Political Action Committee *has not changed that law.*

Also, *even if the law did not exist the course you suggest would be highly improper.* The money collected by the National Industrial Information Committee and the National Association of Manufacturers has been collected for specific purposes.

The officers are trustees for this fund and can only properly spend it for the purposes for which it was raised. Some of the contributors are Democrats, some Republicans, and some New Dealers. It would be grossly unfair to even consider using these funds in a political campaign.”¹⁰²

Thus, as Gaylord clarified for the congressman, “even though the Attorney General's opinion might be construed to legalize and perhaps authorize political activity on the part of your organization,” as one of them put it, the NAM should still not do so.¹⁰³ Indeed, he had not even sought an opinion from the NAM’s own lawyers on the matter, he explained, as “[i]t just seemed to me the statute is clear, and I have always felt that you consult a lawyer only when you are in doubt as to the meaning of the statute.”¹⁰⁴

Gaylord’s point was that the statute’s meaning was clear – it meant to prohibit labor unions and corporations (including incorporated groups), from “political” activity – advocating for particular candidates and supporting them financially, however that might be funded. He disagreed with any and all “subterfuges” to get around that basic meaning, he noted on several occasions in his testimony.¹⁰⁵ “Even if you take the law off the books,” Gaylord emphasized, “we would not do it.”

In terms of campaign contributions especially, he remarked, “I do not think business has any right doing that.”¹⁰⁶

Yet he did believe in the *individual's* right to participate in political activity, and the individual *businessman* at that. As he clarified his position for the committee: “I think certainly that businessmen must take an interest in politics, must have some political activity as citizens of our country. But I think a corporation has no right to use funds, regardless of the law, that belong to stockholders, to promote the election or the nomination of any individual candidate or to promote the political campaign of any political party.”¹⁰⁷ Was this not a subterfuge of sorts, the committee asked, given the ability of some individuals – associated with particular business concerns, or from prominent and wealthy families – to make large contributions? Gaylord thought not, considering such contributions perfectly proper “[i]f it is done within the law *as individuals*.”¹⁰⁸ Nonetheless, the NAM did not try to actively *stimulate* such individual participation, Gaylord was quick to point out.¹⁰⁹

He was, however, prepared to admit that they actively *lobbied*.¹¹⁰ Lobbying was, in Gaylord’s view, simply “a modified right of petition” which it was happy to deploy with impunity.¹¹¹ The NAM *lobbied*, it might even engage in indirect lobbying via publicity, but it did not *electioneer* was the claim.¹¹² Still, with ideological conflict drawn more tightly, the NAM’s apparent endorsement could be considered as much a “kiss of death” for certain bills, as the CIO’s electoral support could be for some candidates.¹¹³ For its part, the Chamber was reluctant to admit even to being a “lobby” – let alone an *electoral* group. It utilized the “educational” claim to justify its refusal to register under the Federal Regulation of Lobbying Act (1946). Thus claims to be engaging in “political education” at the grassroots had the benefit of avoiding essentially *all* the relevant legal restrictions on business association political activity – the ban on direct corporate contributions to elections that had emerged beginning with the Tillman Act, the registration and disclosure requirements associated with direct lobbying, and the tax-status that required a non-political purpose.¹¹⁴

Exceptional Experiments with Action

Not all of these “constitution-saving” or “patriotic” groups entirely avoided direct electoral activities. But in such cases they did not approximate the kinds of organizations the P.A.C. or NCPAC were building, nor the “non-partisan” claims they proffered. The “American Democratic National Committee” (ADNC), for example, was an anti-Roosevelt committee formed in 1944, which had isolationist ties and connections to the “Christian Front” – the remnants of Father Coughlin’s political movement.¹¹⁵ The ADNC felt that an “educational campaign” like that being waged by the CCG was “entirely too slow” a way to proceed.¹¹⁶ “We want some direct action,” its representative, Ralph Moore, told the Senate’s campaign expenditure committee that year, chaired by Theodore Green.¹¹⁷ But as its name suggested, the ADNC was acknowledged to be a conservative faction within the Democratic Party, largely composed of Southerners, which aimed to prevent Roosevelt’s presidential re-nomination by operating within the Democratic primaries, the state conventions, and ultimately the national convention.¹¹⁸ When Roosevelt was re-nominated anyway, the ADNC devolved into a pseudo-third party effort, and ultimately petered out.¹¹⁹

The ADNC did not seem to have the hang of the new language of opposition either. “I have been in all the movements to lick Roosevelt since 1934,” Moore told the Anderson Committee.¹²⁰ And he was pouring his own resources into this latest movement because “I would rather come out of this thing without a dime and get rid of Roosevelt than keep what little I have got and re-elect Roosevelt,” he said. The reason being, he explained – in a spectacular non-sequitur that suggested, in essence, that he would sacrifice his own pecuniary incentives in order to preserve them for all – “the re-election of Roosevelt means the end of property rights in the United States.”¹²¹ He would emerge from the ADNC experience, however, with neither.

In the campaign expenditure hearings of the 1940s, in fact, only one conservative group seemed to come close to approximating the form that the P.A.C. had pioneered: “American Action

Inc.” But it was one that disappeared almost as soon as its representative had made his statement before the Priest Committee in 1946. Its Executive Director – Edward A. Hayes – described American Action as “an American, non-partisan, non-sectarian organization dedicated to uphold and defend America against communism, fascism, anti-Semitism, and all alien or anti-American groups that are attempting to destroy our form of government and our American way of life.”¹²² It intended to make direction contributions, and, Hayes added, it was “a *permanent* organization.”¹²³ American Action, therefore, seemed to fulfill the major requirements of PAC status.¹²⁴

Indeed, according to Cook (1956), it was “specifically a political action organization,” conceived as the electoral arm of the “National Economic Council” (NEC) – though the relationship would be much less openly acknowledged than the CIO’s connection to its PAC.¹²⁵ The NEC itself was an “educational” advocacy group that had been incorporated in New York in 1939, expanding to a national basis in 1943.¹²⁶ And its orientation was much more explicitly *economic* than the “constitution-saving” or “patriotic” groups of the 1944 election cycle.¹²⁷ The formation of American Action, Cook suggested, reflected the NEC’s recognition of “the limitations of influencing individual Congressmen,” even where the group may have established personal contacts with them.¹²⁸ Even a friendly legislator could be constrained by the climate of opinion in his constituency – a concern that the NEC’s own efforts of “education and opinion formation” could help to assuage to some extent. But there were more basic problems with the “standard lobbying techniques” that employed individual contact, relationship-building, and persuasion.¹²⁹ Personal relationships were all well and good, but they did not serve to *convert* legislators not already sympathetic to the group’s concerns, she observed.¹³⁰ And it was hard to build such “friendly personal relationships” with the less sympathetic members in the first place.

The NEC thus had two options for dealing with hostile or borderline legislators, Cook summarized: “It can bring pressure to bear through their constituencies or it can attempt to prevent

his re-election.”¹³¹ In essence, it could utilize the tools of “indirect lobbying” through constituents, and broader “political education” to create a sympathetic climate therein – or it could turn to political *action*. American Action, she suggests, was the NEC’s attempt to engage in the latter, without appearing directly to do so.¹³² While she points to some legal considerations for why they “outsourced” this effort, she also brings in a normative dimension – that they feared a backlash against perceived electoral involvement.¹³³ “[S]omething like fear of “guilt by association” may have been operating, at least for a while,” Cook notes.¹³⁴

But it is unclear how far into the electoral realm American Action actually proceeded. Hayes appeared before the Priest committee only a few weeks after its founding, and thus had no concrete activity to report. There is little other apparent evidence detailing the scope of its activity that fall. Writing in the mid-1950s, and primarily concerned with a subsequent congressional investigation into lobbying groups (the Buchanan Committee), Cook characterized the NEC’s ideological orientation as conservative, and pointed to working relationships with members of the Republican Party’s “right-wing.”¹³⁵ But the information to assess how extensive or partisan any support *American Action* might have provided in 1946 has not been unearthed. What is clear, however, is that it did little *beyond* 1946. For all its claims to permanence, American Action was nowhere to be seen in the next election cycle. In 1948, in fact, the NEC’s president, Merwin K. Hart bemoaned the *absence* of a conservative-leaning organization that might be active in elections. Writing to a friend, he suggested that “the present trend in public affairs” might be “arrested and turned back,” by an organization along the lines of “the old Anti-Saloon League.”¹³⁶ In this, however, he seemed influenced more by the old ideas of *rewarding and punishing* so as to influence congressmen in *both* parties in a favorable direction.

Congressman Ralph Gwinn (R-NY), at least, had absorbed some of the new ideas – as he wrote Hart the following year: “Politically speaking, literally there is nothing for all patriotic groups

to do, so important as organizing themselves into an army of volunteers at the election district level.”¹³⁷ “Your forces must become election district leaders,” Gwinn emphasized. “Where that is not practical, they must be lieutenants in the district. *They must influence the selection of the candidates in the first place*, and after electing them, support them by a *permanent organization*, one that is articulate.”¹³⁸ The NEC’s ground troops must, in sum, reclaim local party machinery for the right – but they should not discriminate as to where they sought to reclaim it. “Gradually the infiltration of good men and women for the right will take over the regular party machinery and thus replace the Socialist infiltration that has already succeeded 80 percent of the Democratic Party and 20 percent into the Republican Party.”¹³⁹ The point was to recapture *both* parties, even if one was further “in the hole” than the other.

Indeed, it was the very *absence* of concern for both parties in labor political action that seemed to strike business-affiliated observers as odd. In 1946, for example, the NAM had engaged in “covert” activity to ascertain how the labor-liberal PACs were functioning, sending representatives to attend the “National Citizens Political Action Committee School” – an early training program for PAC operatives. As one under-cover NAM participant noted in a confidential report, “[w]hile the NCPAC leaders declared they did not represent labor and that this school was non-partisan, it seemed obvious that they consider the labor groups as the most fertile ground for their doctrine *and that they realize their program can only be affected through political agitation within the Democratic party.*”¹⁴⁰ Other attendees noted “repeated warnings or hints that a Republican victory this fall appeared likely” yet, they observed, “they didn’t seem interested in the possible strategy of jumping the fence and working inside the Republican party to get the “right” candidates, whom they would then have a chance of electing.”¹⁴¹ They even speculated that the NCPAC might try such a bipartisan strategy in 1948, “if Republicans capture the House this year.”¹⁴² Republicans did capture the House, but the PAC approach did not change.

Gwinn, however, was calling for a change in the general approach of “patriotic” groups and their allies in the business community, moving away from the education-heavy emphasis of the 1940s. In the next section, I assess possible reasons why business organizations, in particular, had resisted this approach, before turning in the next chapter to an examination of its gradual embrace throughout the 1950s.

Why No “Business” PAC?

Both Fones-Wolf and Phillips-Fein acknowledge concern among business conservatives with labor political action, but they describe business responses in terms of publicity or education.¹⁴³ Indeed, prior to 1964, they suggest a general aversion to electoral activity among business conservatives. Phillips-Fein speaks of an “ideological mobilization” gaining ground in the 1950s, as numerous groups dedicated to defending free enterprise, and opposing labor unions and the growth of the state emerged.¹⁴⁴ But these groups “avoided the harsh glare of electoral politics,” she observes.¹⁴⁵

The Legal Status of Corporate Political Action

Gaylord’s testimony spoke to legal qualms about corporate political action. But they were certainly not universal ones. Senator Robert Taft, the father of the Taft-Hartley Act – “Mr. Republican” himself – accepted the basic idea of a PAC. As noted in the last chapter, he found “nothing unlawful” in labor unions choosing “to set up a political organization and obtain direct contributions for it.”¹⁴⁶ But Taft had not confined his reasoning to labor organizations. “[I]t seems to me the conditions are exactly parallel, both as to corporations and labor organizations,” Taft said, speaking from the Senate Floor on June 5th, 1947.¹⁴⁷ And those parallel conditions extended to business *associations* too, Taft specified:

“If the labor people should desire to set up a political organization and obtain direct contributions for it, there would be nothing unlawful in that. If the National Association of Manufacturers, we will say, wanted to obtain individual contributions for a series of advertisements, and if it, itself, were not a corporation, then, just as in the case of PAC, it could take an active part in a political campaign.”¹⁴⁸

And indeed, by the mid-1950s, the NAM’s own counsel had been asked to clarify the law – despite Gaylord’s faith in its apparently obvious meaning. They reached the conclusion obvious to most outside observers, that since the Attorney General’s approval of the P.A.C. scheme had stood largely unscathed in the ensuing years, and that the statute as written applied to both labor unions and corporations equally, then the constraints and opportunities were the same for both. “Under the statute what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander,” the NAM’s Law Department had concluded in 1956, as the *United Auto Workers* case was working its way through the legal system.¹⁴⁹

That case had involved a union directly purchasing television advertising that promoted particular candidates, which the Supreme Court would eventually indicate was a step too far. But the conclusion the NAM’s counsel had drawn would still hold true: “it would seem to follow that corporations may well be entitled to engage in the identical types of activities apparently permitted to labor organizations.”¹⁵⁰ Nor, as Taft had indicated, did the law explicitly preclude corporations (and incorporated business associations) from creating *PACs*, in line with what labor organizations had already done. And *unincorporated* business associations were free from restriction under the Corrupt Practices Acts altogether – though other statutory frameworks, such as the tax code, might inhibit any political dalliances they were inclined to consider.¹⁵¹

What’s more, very few legal challenges surrounding labor political action had actually emerged – still less convictions. And for improper *corporate* political activity, the numbers were even lower.¹⁵² Between 1950 and 1956, for example the Department of Justice received 54 complaints concerning possible violations of the law restricting union and corporate political contributions.¹⁵³ 39 of the complaints involved labor organizations, 11 involved national banks and corporations (i.e. national banks, federal saving and loan associations), and only four involved private corporations.¹⁵⁴

Of those four, an indictment was only sought in one case, and the grand jury refused to grant it.¹⁵⁵ Of the entire 54 cases in this period, the only one brought to trial involved a labor union, and resulted in an acquittal.¹⁵⁶ The UAW complaint which would eventually reach the Supreme Court – originally filed in December 1954, was still pending in the Courts at that time, and does not appear in the data.¹⁵⁷ As noted in earlier chapters, neither that case – *United States v. United Auto Workers* (1957) – nor the earlier *CIO News* decision (1948), offered a constitutional ruling on PACs, or decisively limited the activities in which non-party groups might engage. Still, since both those cases involved *labor* unions, some corporate counsel were more cautious – hesitant to draw generalizable conclusions from them.¹⁵⁸

The problem was that while the *law* might apply equally, labor unions, business associations, and corporations were not entirely equivalent in their organizational structures. In 1958, the NAM Legal Department produced a handy memo on corporate political activity entitled “What Corporations Can and Can’t Do.” Having emphasized the rights of businessmen as *individuals* to participate, the memo got down to business.¹⁵⁹ The *CIO News* case had excluded *internal* communications from a labor union to its members from the restrictions of the Corrupt Practices Act, however political those internal communications might be. But who counted as a “member” of a corporation? What constituted *internal* communications? For incorporated business associations like the NAM or the Chamber this was somewhat more straightforward, since they had explicit “members” – though these were some mix of corporations, state organizations, and individuals. For corporations it was reasonable to assume that *stockholders* could be considered as “members” in some sense, such that communications with them would be *internal*. But stockholders were hardly the most numerous group in any corporate structure – or in the electorate at large, more importantly. What corporations, and the business associations of which they were members, wanted to know, was whether *employees* might count.

“Still untested is whether a corporation may safely urge employees to support a political party or candidate,” the NAM memo reported, though they offered a possible rationale for doing so, arguing for a corporation’s right to inform “its stockholders, employees and others of danger or advantage to their interest in the adoption of measures, or the election to office of men espousing such measures.”¹⁶⁰ The operative word, however, was “untested.” The relevant prohibitions in the Corrupt Practices Act carried with them *criminal* liability for corporate directors convicted of violating them – punishable by fine and/or imprisonment. Did anyone want to take that chance?¹⁶¹ And that was just at the federal level, there were state laws to consider too.¹⁶²

Nonetheless, the scope of legally acceptable activity would have been widened through establishment of a PAC. As is still the case in campaign finance law today, the more regulated the money coming in, the less regulated what one can do with it politically. If “what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander,” as the NAM’s counsel so eloquently put it, why did business organizations and even individual corporations not take this step? The point to be made is that the NAM and other incorporated business organizations recognized that, from a legal standpoint, they could create a PAC. Yet for some reason, throughout the 1940s and 50s, they did not. Why?

Resource Constraints – Money vs. Manpower

A second response to the absence of a business-based PAC in this period points to *resources* – specifically the configuration of financial resources available to individual members or associates.¹⁶³

On the one hand, it has been argued, business associations did not *need* such a vehicle to deliver financial resources into the political realm. On the other, it is argued they lacked the *ability* to create a vehicle for political action in a broader, not strictly financial sense. Instead, corporations and business associations pursued the path for which their resources best suited them – a barrage of *publicity*.

To the extent Phillips-Fein offers an explanation for business conservatives avoiding “the harsh glare of electoral politics,” it is one that points to the financial resources typically available to them. Corporations could provide substantial funds to support their representative business associations, and “[m]oney could, after all, support ideas, print legislative analyses, and hire scholars, far more easily than it could create a mass following in support of conservative economic policies.”¹⁶⁴ Fones-Wolf too points to financial resources that gave business an advantage in the realm of publicity – one that labor could not hope to match, she claims – which enabled business groups to essentially *purchase* dominance for their political vision.¹⁶⁵ Such comments reflect long-standing ideas about the nature of business resources and their possible uses.¹⁶⁶

It was widely argued by scholars such as Schattschneider, Key, and Truman – among others – that the kinds of financial resources that the NAM and its fellow business organizations enjoyed were more naturally suited to publicity-based activities, those they only needed to *pay* for. In contrast, these corporations and groups lacked the *manpower* and organizational capacity to mount *electoral* efforts.¹⁶⁷ The NAM’s limited membership made it ill-suited to electoral activity, Truman argued: “Its fifteen or twenty thousand members are too few and too widely distributed over the country to do this work effectively,” he remarked.¹⁶⁸ In essence, they lacked a sufficiently large mass membership to make a difference in terms of *votes* – they could make no claim to being a voting bloc, and grassroots mobilization efforts were thereby redundant.¹⁶⁹ The manpower emphasis itself is evidence that the early pressure group scholars continued to see electioneering through the lens of the Anti-Saloon League. In that perspective, interest group participation in elections involved the mobilization of *members* to vote, such that the threat of a voting *bloc* might be deployed, and influence over an elected official thereby gained. Though there were some concerns about the influence executives might have over the votes of their *employees*, business groups themselves had no

mass membership to mobilize.¹⁷⁰ The best they could do, Zeigler argued, was “offer their services as proselytizers of a larger public.”¹⁷¹

But PACs themselves were a way for labor to build financial capacity, thus addressing a comparative resource disadvantage to some extent. In addition to circumventing some of the legal restrictions placed on labor union political activity, PACs also served the important function of *aggregating* the limited individual resources of its members. Labor union members, in contrast, needed to *pool* their resources in order to participate effectively in this manner. PACs offered unions a counterweight to “fat cat” contributors – still providing a large proportion of party and candidate resources, according to Zelizer (2002).¹⁷² In this light, some scholars have pointed out that corporations and business groups had no need for a similar aggregating mechanism, since they could rely on the individual political action of executives to get around the law.¹⁷³

Urofsky (2008), for example, points to lingering legal questions that continued to inhibit corporate PAC formation (particularly the question of whether company funds might be used for establishing and maintaining PACs), but he also suggests that “company officials *felt no need to do so*.”¹⁷⁴ While the Hatch Act Amendments had imposed a \$5000 cap on individual contributions to political committees or candidates, this was still a substantial amount that an individual might give (and to multiple recipients), and many businessmen were in the position to afford such sums out their personal financial resources. Moreover, they might contribute similar amounts in their spouse’s name, or induce other family members to make donations, thus circumventing the cap to some extent. Gaylord, after all, had deemed such contributions perfectly proper if “done within the law *as individuals*” – regardless of family ties that might enhance the *number* of individuals so inclined.¹⁷⁵ In this sense, businessmen did not need to utilize “subterfuges” to get around the law – though there were claims they employed them anyway, and of a more nefarious nature than PACs. Some corporations, it was said, paid their employees special “bonuses” on the understanding that the

amount would be contributed to particular political candidates (a practice of dubious legality, but hard to prove had occurred).¹⁷⁶

Whether legal or less so, such avenues to individual contribution obviated the need for a corporate or group-level business PAC, it is argued.¹⁷⁷ Such a stance suggests that the resources available to business groups like the Chamber or NAM conditioned the nature of their political activities up to the early 1940s and their response to labor political action thereafter. Since their resource advantages favored “air wars” over “ground wars” in the contemporary sense, they emphasized political education over direct action – presumably hoping that these efforts would ultimately register in electoral success, but pursuing a more indirect route to getting there.¹⁷⁸ And on an individual level, they could hope that businessmen were making contributions so as to make their influence felt more immediately. But in this respect, there may have been little more than hope.

Assessing the Resources Argument

For all these claims might seem reasonable, they rest on assumptions about the nature and size of business resources, and the possibilities to which they most directly lend themselves. It is not clear in reality, however, that resources did so neatly shape action, nor indeed, that business financial advantage was quite so stark. Hacker and Aberbach (1962), for example, claimed that if national and local business donations were combined, “it is safe to assume that these form a greater total than that provided by labor unions.”¹⁷⁹ Though the data available to assess such claims is limited, it does not suggest that assumptions about business financial advantage are entirely “safe.”

The resources individual businessmen might have available did not necessarily mean that they deployed them politically. For example, Alexander Heard, one of the few political scientists who collected campaign finance data in the postwar decades, assessed “business” money in politics by examining the contributions of corporate officials. Though this data is drawn from the 1950s, it is

illustrative of how assumptions about the resources available to individual businessmen do not necessarily translate into political *use*. Examining contributions from corporate officials associated with the top 100 largest U.S. corporations, Heard found such individuals had donated just over \$1 million in 1952, and almost \$2 million, in 1956.¹⁸⁰ As shown in Table 8.2, disbursements from the 15 national labor political action committees in continuous operation from 1952 to 1958, however, came to almost \$2 million in 1952 *and* again in 1954, dropping slightly to \$1.7 million in 1956, and \$1.6 million in 1958.¹⁸¹ While certainly drawing on a much narrower population to deliver these amounts, the differences in terms of a discernable “big business” interest here are not staggering.

Table 8.2. Chamber of Commerce & NAM Officials, Contributors in 1952 & 1956

| | # Names Checked | Rep. | Dem. | Other | Actual Contributors |
|----------------|-----------------|-------------|------|-------|---------------------|
| | | <i>1952</i> | | | |
| <i>Chamber</i> | 14 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 5* (36%) |
| <i>NAM</i> | 171 | 29 | 3 | 0 | 32 (19%) |
| | | <i>1956</i> | | | |
| <i>Chamber</i> | 18 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 4 (22%) |
| <i>NAM</i> | 130 | 17 | 0 | 0 | 17 (13%) |

Notes: * One individual gave to both parties. I have counted him twice, hence why the total here is one lower. ** For 1952, Heard also provides information on officers and vice presidents of NAM, in addition to directors, while for 1956 he only gives information for directors.

Source: Alexander Heard, *The Costs of Democracy* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1960), 115.

Moreover, the extent to which a “business interest” was discernable at all is unclear, given the efforts that Heard had to go to here to identify individuals associated with corporations and systematically aggregate their contributions. From the perspective of politicians, why should we assume that the individual contributions of businessmen truly did translate into impact as an identifiable “sector”? The influence of labor PACs came from more than just their “bundling” of small contributions to permit more significant – and hopefully *influential* – contributions. PACs concentrated and directed the explicit political activity of the labor movement, going beyond

contributions to help coordinate labor's political positions and orientation, and *educate* its membership in the political arena. Could "business" really have the same kind of identifiable impact if executives simply contributed as individuals?

Even those businessmen whose public identities were wrapped up in being "spokesmen for business" – officers of the NAM and the Chamber – did not contribute to campaigns in particularly dramatic numbers, considering the individual resources presumably at their disposal, and that their official positions involved being attuned to politics. Heard found that just 36% of officers and directors of the Chamber of Commerce made campaign contributions of \$500 or more in 1952, and only 22% did so in 1956. For the National Association of Manufacturers, only looking at 1952, Heard found that 24% of its officers had contributed to campaigns, 21% of its regional vice-presidents, 15% of its directors, and the highest proportion, still under half – 43% of its honorary vice-presidents.¹⁸² When so many association officials were not making contributions – at the national level at least – why should we assume that so many corporate executives were?

Even the group-level financial advantage of business associations might not have been quite so great as supposed. Bauer et al. (1963) found that many trade associations lacked the resources for effective lobbying typically ascribed to them, for example.¹⁸³ And as Calkins (1952) acknowledged, even "[t]he famed purse of the National Association of Manufacturers has a bottom somewhere, and its popular vote has definite bounds. No group has unlimited resources. None is utterly invincible."¹⁸⁴ The NAM's National Industrial Information Committee had spent \$1,037,000 on "free-enterprise" publicity in 1943, and was on track to spend \$1,385,000 in 1944 – certainly huge amounts for the time.¹⁸⁵ In the late 1950s, the AFL-CIO was still not quite at such levels, even before adjustments for inflation – spending about \$1 million on a publicity campaign designed to undo the bad press generated by the McClellan Committee.¹⁸⁶ But perhaps most interesting, even if business organizations like the NAM did enjoy a financial advantage here, is that they did not

necessarily *perceive* it. In 1959, for example, NAM officials expressed anxiety about the “virtually unlimited” funds available to unions to spend “in every channel of communication.”¹⁸⁷

“The labor unions, thanks to the check-off, have hundreds of millions of dollars in their war chest with which to fight the battle of ideas...By comparison, in terms of dollars, the NAM literally has “chicken feed.” The NAM cannot hope to match its competition in funds. It is futile even to think in these terms. The only practical way the NAM can compete is to counterbalance opposition money with ideas.”¹⁸⁸

And they did not always feel they were making strides in doing so – even as Fones-Wolf suggests they enjoyed growing dominance of the public debate. Far from feeling it had won the publicity war, a survey of the NAM membership in 1959 showed that members dramatically *underestimated* “NAM’s good standing with the public” – concluding that “[l]abor leaders and left-wing columnists have fooled members into thinking NAM has a bad name with the public.”¹⁸⁹

The essential point is that business groups may not have *perceived* the resource advantages that are attributed to them. Other factors were shaping how they thought about their political activities, and how effective they perceived them to be. Indeed, as I show in the next chapter, they would increasingly pursue more direct forms of political action, suggesting they no longer felt political education alone was sufficient to achieve their aims. And such a development is not explicable in terms of resources or legality, since neither of these factors changed.

The manpower discussion is a particularly static explanation – it cannot explain the eventual *creation* of a PAC except in terms of a massive expansion in membership, or the votes that business groups might be said to “control.” When the N.A.M. moved to establish a PAC in 1963, no such gain in membership was apparent – though both the NAM and the Chamber would actively seek during the 1950s to encourage electoral activity by *non*-members – as I discuss in the next chapter – but with little success. The financial explanation is also static. The ability of individuals members to contribute to political causes remained unchanged throughout this period – from 1940, when the Hatch Act Amendments went into effect, to 1963, when the NAM established its PAC. The

question thus again appears, as to why these alternative modes of political financing were no longer sufficient.

On the legal front, the campaign finance reforms of the 1970s have been pointed to in understanding the growth in corporate political action after that point, with a particular emphasis on the FEC's Sun Oil decision in 1975, which clarified exactly who within a corporate structure might be permitted to contribute to a company PAC. But this explanation presents the reverse temporal concern. While it might explain the rapid growth of this phenomenon, clarified legal status does not explain the origins of these PACs, since business groups and corporations were already experimenting with this organizational form. Indeed, by the mid-1950s, as Zelizer acknowledges, some corporations such as Gulf Oil, Union Carbide, Ford, and General Electric were maintaining “*PAC-like* operations without public knowledge” – programs to solicit corporate executives and distribute that money to candidates, while keeping news of them tightly under wraps.¹⁹⁰ If resources and law did not determine business group political activity, therefore, what inhibited their engagement in direct electioneering in the immediate post-war period? And what would begin to encourage it in the 1950s? In the former regard, I point to constraints drawn more from experience, culture, and ideology as holding the key. In the latter, to which I turn in the next chapter, I point to changes in the calculus of political competition wrought by the rise of political action elsewhere.¹⁹¹

Inhibiting Political Action

Political Action as Subversion

When political action committees had first appeared on the scene, the opponents of the labor groups creating them had attacked the very legality of the concept. Though Attorney General Francis Biddle had deemed the PAC's structure and operations did not violate the Smith-Connally Act, his answer had hardly satisfied these critics.¹⁹² And NAM President Robert Gaylord, as

indicated in the discussion above, was among them. He had implicitly critiqued Biddle's legal judgment, and the P.A.C. itself, in his 1944 testimony before the Anderson Committee. And his reasons for doing so channeled a number of themes that would recur in conservative rhetoric – even as the strict *legality* of the P.A.C. became more widely accepted. Conservative hostility to political action came to embrace more than just a distaste for the unions involved – but broader normative and ideological concerns which led some of them to oppose group political action itself, regardless of who might be pursuing it.

Gaylord, after all, had employed ideological criteria to warn against directing voters toward particular candidates – were business interests to do so, they would go against the very principles for which they were arguing. “[B]usiness would defeat its own purposes,” he explained.

“You cannot tell the American people, you cannot tell the American Congressmen or other public servants, how they ought to vote. You can give them the facts and they are going to do what they think is right. But when you attempt to tell them how to do it, you only defeat your own purposes. I believe that from the bottom of my heart.”¹⁹³

Thus the *individualism* inherent in the American conservative persuasion – especially as promoted through the thinking of the Austrian School – and promoted via the “free enterprise” campaign itself, impeded the adoption of a directive and especially *partisan* strategy – regardless of whether one candidate or one party had a more favorable position.

Another strain hinted at in Gaylord's testimony and increasing evident in the 1950s, was that of *minority rights* in some sense. Gaylord had offered several objections to using the NIIC's funds for more actively political purposes, among them the lack of unanimity among contributors as to whom that might be used to support. “Some of the contributors are Democrats, some Republicans, and some New Dealers,” he said, making the latter itself into something of an intermediate position. “It would be grossly unfair to even consider using these funds in a political campaign.”¹⁹⁴ But labor political action offered no similar respect for those unions members who might disagree with the political stance taken by its leaders. Such members were “second-class citizens in the labor

movement,” according George F. Hinkle, Indiana’s Commissioner of Labor.¹⁹⁵ Supposedly “voluntary” funds were coerced, it was alleged. As Raymond Moley quipped, union members were giving contributions to PACs “voluntarily,” but only “after specific and pointed requests.”¹⁹⁶ Moley also charged that the supposed firewalls between voluntary and treasury funds did not hold in practice.¹⁹⁷

Even the “political education” in which labor PACs engaged was normatively inferior, since it relied on compulsory dues to fund it. Unions did not simply advocate certain causes against the preferences of their members, they did so using money those members were forced to contribute – or so the argument went. Doing so was both “immoral and unconstitutional,” according to Hinkle, and he was not alone in this conviction.¹⁹⁸ This theme would reach a pinnacle in the late 1950s, as the lack of democratic procedures within many unions was exposed in the Senate’s McClellan Committee hearings, as discussed in the last chapter.

To coincide with those hearings in 1957, the NAM launched a public relations campaign on “Labor Abuses” – highlighting a number of apparent misdeeds, and claiming growing resentment among workers that their unions were promoting candidates and causes that went against their preferences.¹⁹⁹ As the NAM’s chairman, Cola G. Parker, summarized their position in 1956: “the NAM upholds the right of union leaders, as individuals, to state their views on candidates, parties and issues, and to try to persuade their own members that their official position is right. But, we do not believe union leaders should be permitted to use union funds and union organizations for partisan political purposes.”²⁰⁰ To the extent that “political education” verged into this territory, it was a largely accurate critique, in that compulsory union dues were going toward the promotion of the union’s particular message. Thus the overall lack of *voluntariness* in union political activity was simply another reflection of the lack of individual choice inherent to unionism, as NAM leaders and

other critics saw it – cutting against the vision of freedom and individualism that business was seeking to promote.

In the “fusion” that was 1950s conservatism, however, that atomistic vision of individualism lived alongside a holistic vision of society, in which business was at one with the people at large. It was this view, along with the long-term experience of business interests in the political arena, that shaped a very different perspective on partisanship than that held by labor leaders. In the 1940s and early 1950s, business groups like the NAM and the Chamber of Commerce were not “nonpartisan” in the sense that had often been used in the past – to convey *hostility* toward parties and partisanship in general. Nor did they fully comprehend the non-partisanship that labor and liberal organizations had come to embrace, which accepted a kind of incidental partisanship on the basis of their favored *issues* lining up more clearly on one side (and, as I have argued, seeking to encourage the alignment of parties in that direction). Rather, for all business leaders might often lean Republican in their personal proclivities, their organizations struck a more *bipartisan* posture, actively willing to embrace both sides of the party aisle, since they still expected both sides to be responsive.

The Commitment to Bipartisanship

For *Fortune* magazine reporter William Whyte, Jr., the “free enterprise” campaign had both an electoral and a *partisan* edge. Writing in 1952, he observed that “the businessman engaged in the [Free Enterprise] campaign is not sure *what* he is trying to communicate,” but he was clear about the *why*.²⁰¹ “[T]o oversimplify, he is doing it because he is sincerely worried over what has been happening at the polls,” Whyte wrote. “What he is after, to put it bluntly, is a Republican victory.”²⁰² That propaganda could have electoral import was apparent to Key (1964), who noted that the “general propaganda campaign of a pressure organization many incidentally promote the candidates

of the party most in tune with its cause” – using the Chamber of Commerce magazine, *Nation's Business*, as his example.²⁰³

But business was vehement in their denials of partisanship – perhaps moreso than labor unions. Whyte dismisses such claims as a kind of self-delusion, unwilling to admit that they are “a partisan in the great debate...”²⁰⁴ The businessman had “cherished the illusion that he can be politically persuasive and nonpartisan in the same breath.” The Free Enterprise campaign, in this view, was a simple presentation of “the facts.” But “those who read sense the conflict,” Whyte continued, because “the facts” were often more like “the conclusions.” “The conclusions may be sound,” Whyte remarked, but “[a]s long as they are essentially political...the claim of nonpartisanship simply makes business look silly.”²⁰⁵ But Whyte’s own analysis had suggested businessmen themselves thought it anything but silly.

As noted earlier, NAM personnel had expressed surprise in the early years of PAC activity, that labor organizations did not seek to influence *both* parties through their political action techniques. And both parties did still try to appeal to the business community at large. In 1958, for example, DNC Chairman Paul Butler emphasized his party’s pro-business credentials when speaking at a NAM event. He observed “the fact that the Democratic Party has more businessmen in Congress than any other occupational group except lawyers” and “the facts of economic life” which had “forced the Republican Party to accept all the basic economic reforms of Roosevelt and Truman as the backbone of our economic stability today.” It was a *Democratic* president and Congress, he emphasized, that had saved the free-enterprise system, and it was only after they were “well and happy and prosperous again that certain businessmen got the strange idea that the Republican Party was responsible for it all and that the G.O.P. was the great friend of the businessman.”²⁰⁶ Indeed, a large number of legislators – from *both* parties – hailed from a business background (in contrast to the rarity of labor politicians), presenting legislators who might be receptive to direct lobbying

appeals on either side.²⁰⁷ The party's positions were themselves more ambiguous on business issues, and sectional divisions that sustained conservative Southern Democrats presented the possibility that support could come from both parties, and their own members might be affiliated with either.

The bipartisanship of business was also enduring because it was born of a sense of universalism – a sense that had long been apparent in terms of business *dominance* of society, but that came, through “free enterprise” ideas, to mean that business *infused* society in all respects. From opposing “vicious class legislation” at the turn of the 20th Century, as former NAM president John Kirby Jr. had emphasized before the Overman Committee in 1913, this strand of thinking came to be expressed as a positive commitment to individual *freedom*.²⁰⁸ From either perspective, *both* parties should be on side – thus business associations were less able to *conceive* the strategic situation regarding parties in the diametric terms that labor did. Their thinking seemed to reflect a belief that with the right type of “education” – through free-market business rhetoric – *everyone* would realize that business interests were, in fact, *their interests*. Unlike the pluralistic contest between everyone's personal “interests” that Clemens sees emerging by the 1920s, the post-war business vision seems more akin to the old agricultural perspective, that its interests and the nation's interests were one and the same.

Such a perspective was famously expressed by former General Motors CEO Charles E. Wilson in 1953 – President Eisenhower's nominee for Defense Secretary. Wilson would remain a major stockholder in GM, and thus his confirmation hearings before the Senate Armed Services Committee focused largely on potential conflicts of interest between these two roles, since GM was one of the biggest Defense contractors.²⁰⁹ What if a situation arose, Senator Robert C. Hendrickson (R-NJ) questioned Wilson, in which he would have to make a decision as Defense Secretary that would be “extremely adverse to the interests of your stock and General Motors Corp.”²¹⁰ Could he make such a decision, Hendrickson wanted to know? “Yes, sir; I could,” Wilson replied, though he

qualified with a famous statement – that he could not actually *conceive* of such a situation “because for years I thought what was good for our country was good for General Motors, and vice versa. The difference did not exist. Our company is too big. It goes with the welfare of the country.”²¹¹

To the extent political action was connected with a distinctly partisan approach, business organizations were holding back.²¹²

Assessing Business Political Education

Though the individual resources typically enjoyed by business group officials, and corporate executives more generally, may have offset the need to develop a mechanism for collective action, the universalism of the business self-conception, and the individualism at the heart of the “free enterprise” ideology (especially the aversion to the direction of individuals *en masse*) served to constrain the political activity of business groups. The negative experiences of the 1930s, moreover, still shaped business attitudes toward electoral involvement. “[N]othing is more stupid, than for an organization of big businessmen to get out and “carry a flag in a political parade,” the RNC’s then chairman had concluded of the Liberty League’s failed campaign in 1936.²¹³ And the lesson would not be lost on groups like the Chamber and NAM who were avowedly identified with business.

They were also wary of the connection of political action with *partisanship* – which went against the long-term bipartisan perspective with which business had approached the political world. This was not necessarily a bipartisanship infused with positive normative connotations – as with the willingness of big business in the 19th Century to buy off legislators of *both* parties, for example, or to lobby members on both sides of the aisle in the early 20th Century. On the other hand, a more positive view of business bipartisanship was also apparent – at least from within the ranks of midcentury businessmen. This was a universalistic view that identified the interests of society at large with those of business, and thus expected to enjoy an elevated position within *both* parties. Indeed,

the “free enterprise” view bolstered this position in a more systematic way, providing a new lease of life for business publicity, through the promotion of new economic “principles” that could link the concerns of business to those of *everyone*. As such, business interests exhibited greater reluctance to cast their lot with one side and essentially write the other party off. If the Democratic Party had fallen under the grip of labor and liberal interests, then it must be *saved* from those interests. If a more economically conservative Congress was the ultimate aim, then why not try to persuade *both* parties to your point of view? Thus, where a business-Republican sympathy had long been asserted, business groups would not quickly and definitively cast their lot with the GOP as labor groups had seemed to do with the Democrats.

What the NAM and Chamber therefore embarked upon was a long-term plan to reshape political culture, as Fones-Wolf sees it. In contrast to the P.A.C.’s plan for a slow and steady internal transformation of one party, these business groups sought to externally reshape the political context, such that *all* legislators would be chosen in accordance with these generally accepted values. How long it would take to reset the public’s basic framework was less than clear, but these business groups were in it for the long-haul, and committed to shifting the dialogue across the board.²¹⁴ “The issue between individual freedom and bureaucratic control will not be settled by an election in 1944,” the NIIC 1944 program had stated. “As long as the public thinks that only bureaucratic action can provide the results it wants, any party in power—Democratic or Republican—will use bureaucracy for the solution of the problems it must face.” “Politicians, irrespective of party, would have no choice. They must give the public what it wants, because it is the only way to stay in office.”²¹⁵

These “educational” efforts would even produce such apparently incongruous documents as “A Political Philosophy for America (Some Suggestions by the National Association of Manufacturers).”²¹⁶ But the education of Americans in this political philosophy was designed for

both *legislative* and *electoral* effect – over time. It was issue-based advocacy at its most general, its most removed from specific pieces of legislation or candidates, and yet, at once, infusing everything. But as the 1950s wore on, business leaders began to worry that everyone was *not* getting the message, and that perhaps the changes in the Democratic Party had gone too far to be undone. The idea of turning to direct political action, and to a partisan counterweight, began to take shape.

9. A Tale of Two PACs

“The labor unions themselves have blazed the trail for the rest of us,” Charles Sligh Jr. would tell his colleagues in the National Association of Manufacturers in 1958. “We must do as they have done.”¹ Yet it would be five more years before the NAM would take steps to truly emulate labor’s example in the political realm – by establishing their own PAC. Thus twenty years would pass between the inception of this new mode of political organization by a major labor federation, and its eventual adoption by a leading business group.

Though they had focused their efforts on “political education” in the post-war years, calls for business groups to adopt exactly that direct approach had become more strident, and more regular as the years wore on. And by the early 1950s, major U.S. business groups would embark on an effort to build a grassroots network, and play a role in *popular* politics. Throughout the decade they would move, cautiously, hesitantly, toward direct political action. Though they had long expressed opposition to the very concept of political action as developed and deployed by labor and liberal groups, they had elected, by the early 1960s, to abandon their efforts to “beat ‘em” and simply *joined* them instead. If the 1936 election had seen business and labor take their economic conflicts into the electoral realm through nascent political “leagues,” the 1964 election would see the organizational culmination of that political contest, now expressed through major labor and business political action committees.

In this chapter, I explore the program of activity these business groups initially embarked upon, their hesitant embrace of a more direct approach through the 1950s, and the ultimate creation of a business PAC in 1963, when the National Association of Manufacturers established the “Business-Industry Political Action Committee,” or “BIPAC.” What eventually brings major business interests around to direct political action, I suggest – in line with my broader diffusion

argument – is the perceived success of labor and liberal groups in altering the composition of the Democratic Party. As the strategic context shifted, business groups began to reevaluate their approach. This was apparent in 1959, for example, when the NAM’s executive vice-president warned an audience of businessmen that “in recent years, the money and manpower of the vast American trade union movement have been thrown into the balance on the side of wrong-headed so-called liberalism.”² It was the “negligence” of the business community that had “allowed” these spendthrift – and, importantly, *Democratic* – politicians to be elected, he continued, and he urged businessmen to “organize ourselves for a sales job” at the grassroots level.³

BIPAC would be part of the sales force, along with a growing number of conservative ideological groups that had also come to embrace a more direct approach to political action, further encouraging business groups along this path. As I turn to in the concluding chapter, the timing and sequence of these developments would have important long-term implications for the relationships forged between business groups and their presumed “ally” in the party realm, the Republican Party.

Business Puts Down Roots

In 1950, Senator Karl Mundt – a Republican from South Dakota – wrote dejectedly to the Committee for Constitutional Government’s Edward A. Rumely:

The thing we must continue to work on and perfect is to find a definite device for recruiting those in every walk of life who believe in our American creed so that they will become an effective, organized, working unit to help revise political inroads upon our freedoms from every angle and from every source. We still have not been able to develop the closely knit and effective type of organization on our side of this fight for freedom that the CIO PAC and Americans for Democratic Action have been able to develop for their side of the controversy, which, of course, is the side favoring big government. I think we should stay with this task until we are positive that we have just as many doorbell ringers and vote getters in our organization as they have in theirs.⁴

Since the 1940s, Rumely’s organization had been active in the political arena through a campaign of “political education” – one that would enlighten citizens on the *conservative* American way, dispelling the myths and misinformation that might lead them to vote for liberal candidates. And yet words

alone were no longer enough, in Mundt's assessment. As Cook (1956) observed, Mundt's attitude suggested "a significant lack of confidence in existing party organizations" to do a job that had once been their sole charge.⁵ Someone else would now have to step into the world of elections. And business organizations, it seemed, were beginning to make hesitant moves in that direction.

The Ohio Plans

The first signs appeared during 1950 midterms at the state level, in which contests LaPalombara (1952) observed a newfound "inclination on the part of certain business groups to become involved in the campaigns." The Chamber of Commerce in Colorado, he noted, "actually participated in the campaign in a manner not characteristic of traditional Chamber activity," and in Ohio, businessmen and professionals formed "The Ohio Voters," a group that "entered politics on an unprecedented scale and used techniques that differed radically from what one is accustomed to expect in American campaigns."⁶

The occasion for the Ohio Voters bursting onto the scene was the re-election campaign of Senator Robert Taft. With his co-authorship of the Taft-Hartley legislation, the bête noire of the labor movement, Taft was a major target for their electoral retribution. AFL president William Green rallied union forces in the state with the cry "Cost what it may, let it be what it will, we're going to bring about the defeat of Senator Taft."⁷ To offset this expected onslaught, a committee began quietly forming, mostly made up of trade association executives, who hoped to ensure Taft's reelection. They would do so through a decentralized plan built around individual political action. Having scoured the state to identify key opinion leaders in every county and community, they essentially asked those individuals to launch their own independent campaigns on Taft's behalf in their locality. "Each of these local influentials was urged to arrange meetings, to register Taft supporters and get them to the polls, and to have voters visited by members of their professions,"

Zeigler (1964) describes.⁸ These trade association men, therefore, were attempting to persuade and mobilize voters on a larger scale, but through individual, private means. They also claimed to be doing so on a non-partisan basis, which LaPalombara (1952) acknowledged was not entirely without foundation – the group “actually included Republicans, Democrats, and Independent voters who put their interests as businessmen above any party affiliation,” he reported.⁹ And their plan was successful – Taft was reelected by a substantial margin, and went on to become Senate majority leader in the following Congress, before his untimely death in 1953.

It was not long before national business groups would move into the voter mobilization arena on a broader, more systematic, and more openly *public* basis. Thus in late in 1951, the NAM began to sketch out a voter mobilization plan for the coming election year, proposing a voter registration campaign that it described as a “purely public service.”¹⁰ But serving the public could also serve the NAM’s ends, at least of a legislative variety. “It was felt that this purely public service campaign would fit into our plans on more specific issue campaigns exceedingly well,” a NAM internal memo summarized, setting the stage “for more specific issue publicity.”¹¹ Thus a hint of openly electoral activity was being integrated with political education around issues, or indirect lobbying around particular legislative bills.

In reaching out to voters, NAM’s registration campaign suggests an effort to *alter their resource portfolio* – rather than simply concede a “natural” deficiency and accept the lack of “manpower” that scholars such as Schattschneider and Key had emphasized. And the experiment would gain at least some attention on the national stage. Several of those involved in the 1950 Ohio campaign developed a broader plan for business electoral mobilization that came to the attention of the national trade associations around the 1956 presidential election. “The Ohio Plan” or “The 1956 Plan” in its national form, was “based upon the knowledge that there are a lot of right-thinking business and professional people who don’t vote” – 30% of salaried industrial employees were not

even *registered*, it stated – and, moreover, “40 per cent of the regular voters are classed as “independent” and their votes are won by approaching them intelligently.”¹² The implication was a large pool of untapped voters, potentially in sympathy with business aims, if only business groups could mobilize them. “There are enough of these people to provide the balance of power in any election,” the plan continued, “AND THEY CAN BE REACHED AND INFLUENCED BY THE LEADERS OF INDUSTRY AND BUSINESS.” Business and industrial leaders, the plan’s authors argued, should try to mobilize a *voting bloc*.

The plan proceeded in three stages (color coded so as to produce a “a Red, White and Blue Campaign”) which emphasized local industrialists recruiting others and educating them in practical politics, non-partisan registration and get-out-the-vote campaigns conducted in their plants, and a final “partisan” stage in which they would supply information to local party committees on potential activists from among their employees. This stage would support the party of whichever candidate “stands for Americanism as opposed to Socialism.” Like the Liberty League, then, it would support one side in a presidential contest, but unlike the League, it had no visible organizational identity: it required only the efforts of individual business leaders reaching individual workers, who would forge individual-level links with a local party. Moreover, where the League had been hampered by a visible business identity and identification with a side, the 1956 plan sought to assure industrialists of their distance from the final stage – they would essentially prime workers for political activity, and channel them into the party organization, but without engaging in *visible* “partisan” activity.

The NAM, at least, showed signs it had been influenced by these ideas. It approved a new public affairs program in 1956 that also followed a three-stage plan, emphasizing in-plant training and education in the first two, aiming to encourage businessmen to get more actively involved in political affairs.¹³ The Chamber of Commerce too, was spreading a similar message – sending speakers out to local companies throughout 1956, emphasizing the civic duties of businessmen, and

even creating a “Committee on Political Participation” to consider ways to encourage greater turnout within this constituency, and even ongoing political involvement.¹⁴ But neither embraced the “partisan” third stage of the Ohio Plan, which would funnel activists into local party organization. The NAM’s program simply outlined the possibility of voluntary citizens committees being created for “short-range, immediate action” in election years.¹⁵

As the 1958 midterms rolled around, plans did not seem to have progressed much further – and any efforts along these lines were lacking in overall focus and direction. As Elizabeth Churchill Browns observed in August 1958, writing on business in the political sphere for conservative magazine *Human Events*, “Businessmen in this arena approach the fight in a haphazard manner which they would never dream of using in business.”¹⁶ But becoming more *professional* in their approach to politics did not mean, in Browns’ assessment, becoming more open or direct about their activity. “It would pay America’s capitalists to hire experts to teach them how to fight carefully, intelligently, unobtrusively,” to learn how to “utilize the flank attack.”¹⁷

The NAM, it seemed, took such advice to heart – becoming “quietly active” in 13 regions across the country, as later described by journalist Victor Riesel, undertaking mobilization efforts centered in the plants of local manufacturers.¹⁸ In each of the regions, researchers selected districts with potential for a conservative candidate to win, and then worked with local manufacturers to conduct seminars encouraging political involvement in their plants, as the Ohio Plan had called for.¹⁹ To whose benefit such seminars were intended is unclear, since the effort was so unobtrusive, the NAM revealed no details of it until after the election. Where the COPE had publicly and directly backed more than 300 candidates, the NAM had undertaken what its own executive vice-president even deemed “an amateurish effort.”²⁰

And such amateurism had not paid off. For the 1958 midterm elections appeared to businessmen to augur a shift in a much less friendly direction. Since the 80th Congress in which the

Taft-Hartley Act had passed, party control of Congress had changed hands several times.²¹ But throughout those transitions, the informal conservative coalition of Southern Democrats and Northern Republicans had remained relatively strong. Through a Faustian bargain in which Northern Republicans upheld Southern Democrats' procedural rights, which they utilized to stifle civil rights legislation, the conservative coalition also served to protect business interests, particularly in the realm of labor relations. Following Truman's reelection in 1948, for example, in which the Democrats had also recaptured control of Congress, this cross-party legislative bloc had prevented a weakening of Taft-Hartley. Riding Eisenhower's coattails in 1952, Republicans had won back the House and the Senate, but they lost them both in 1954, and Democratic majorities had *increased* in 1956 – despite Eisenhower's landslide reelection. In the 1958 midterms, Democratic majorities would increase still further, amid a severe economic downturn that was lain at President Eisenhower's door. That November, the Republicans would lose 48 seats in the House, and 13 in the Senate – the largest single-year party shift in Senate history.²² It would be heightened by the admission of Alaska to the union in January 1959, which returned two more Democratic senators. Thus from relative parity in 1956, with 49 Democrats and 47 Republicans in the upper chamber, the Democratic majority in the Senate stood at 64 to 34 when the new 86th Congress met.

But the problem was not of Democratic majorities per se, but of what those majorities *looked like*. Rohde (1991) has pointed to the 1958 elections for the beginnings of a clear “ideological gap” between junior and senior members in the House of Representatives, as an influx of younger, liberal Democrats were elected.²³ In the Senate, moreover, Southern Democrats now found themselves outnumbered by colleagues for the north and west, eroding their position of strength within the Democratic delegation, though it would be many years before their grip on power would be truly broken.²⁴ As far as the NAM was concerned, these liberal gains were the result of trade union money and the groundwork of COPE.

From the perspective of business interests, the conservative coalition was beginning to look less like a long-term solution. “For the next two years, the conservative coalition in Congress, the Northern Republicans and the Southern Democrats, will continue to fight a holding operation, slowing down America’s march to the left,” Sligh acknowledged. But “slowing down” and *stopping* were not the same thing. “Let us give thanks to these men from North and South, because they are ones who are going to give us – the businessmen of America – one last big chance to do what we should have done 20 years ago,” Sligh said. “These men are going to give us some time to get organized so that we may assume our full obligations as citizens of our country before the great test of the 1960 Presidential and Congressional elections.”²⁵

But what exactly would assuming their “full obligations” mean? What should they have done 20 years ago – back when Labor’s Non-Partisan League was beginning to expand its horizons beyond presidential contests, laying some of the foundations for the CIO-P.A.C.? As early as 1954, there had been explicit calls for a political action committee to counteract those of labor and liberal groups. The suggestion had come, in fact, from journalist and former Brains-Truster Raymond Moley, who argued in an editorial that business needed to promote the interests of capital, just as union PACs did for workers.²⁶ “[W]hat is wrong about a nationwide stockholders’ PAC?” he asked.²⁷ And in April 1958, James Brubacker had denounced the absence of such a vehicle in *Human Events*. “What business lacks” he asserted, “is leaders...men with intelligence and courage, and above all, the *will* to climb the mountain named “The Business PAC.””²⁸

But it still did not seem that business leaders had that will. Their new plan would simply expand the corporate education programs they had begun to consider in 1956, though on a dramatic scale – forging what would be labeled the “businessmen in politics” movement. As Hacker and Aberbach (1962) reported, this was a movement among businessmen “to get into politics and to act as a countervailing force against trade union power and the general trend towards socialistic

legislation” – one that “began in earnest” when the 1958 election returns came in.²⁹ The NAM and the Chamber would be at the forefront of this effort, but their “countervailing force” would still not amount to a direct organizational counterpart to COPE. Instead, it looked to voters rather than candidates, and to mobilizing an untapped community of pro-business, conservative activists.

The “Businessmen in Politics” Movement

As the trade union officials behind the 1956 Ohio Plan had observed, many “salaried industrial employees” were failing to vote. These employees were reflective of a largely new class of workers, expanding dramatically after World War II – “middle-management” and white-collar corporate employees. These workers “were impervious to unionization,” Hacker and Aberbach explained, with some even self-identifying as “businessmen” themselves, “albeit of the managerial rather than the entrepreneurial variety.”³⁰ That business groups now sought to mobilize this untapped pool of likely supportive voters, suggests the extent to which they now recognized a connection between the ballot box and ultimate legislation. Direct legislative lobbying, or even indirect lobbying through publicity, was no longer considered sufficient. And this concern spoke to *perceptions* as much as any actual legislative outcomes.

There was a growing sense of disconnect between “big business” leaders and legislators more generally. Hacker (1961) explored the distinct social, educational, and attitudinal differences between these two “elites,” and noted a concern among the former that even legislators who were largely sympathetic to “business” concerns, had no real understanding of the very specific issues facing large business enterprises such as those the NAM in particular represented. Legislators were more provincial in their origins, Hacker observed, and while many had a background in smaller businesses or the professions, few had come to Congress from the world of large corporations.³¹ This feeling of being misunderstood, Zeigler noted, drawing on Hacker’s work, was evident “in the

repeated assertion that Congress is dominated by labor unions, in spite of the fact that the trend since passage of the Taft-Hartley Act has been to place further restrictions on unions.”³² “The ‘businessmen in politics’ movement,” Zeigler added, “is a further symptom of this dissatisfaction.”³³

Beyond the nascent efforts in this direction from 1956 onwards, its concrete origins could be found the following year, in Syracuse, New York, where the Syracuse Manufacturers’ Association had become concerned with the “business climate” in the state. It authorized a “Task Force on Practical Politics” to develop plans to address the situation by encouraging businessmen to mobilize politically. The result was a training program that would teach middle-management executives the nuts-and-bolts of political organizing, help them to better understand the workings of the local party organizations, and to encourage them to get involved in political campaigns.³⁴ “Practical politics” was not simply about mobilizing businessmen to *vote*, as to become actively involved in their local party organizations – even to take them over.³⁵

Local General Electric executives had played an important part in developing the Syracuse plan, and GE was generally becoming much more politically engaged in the 1950s. Their vice-president, Lemuel Ricketts Boulware, believed in a “ceaseless education campaign in the ideology of the free market,” as Phillips-Fein describes, and GE would be the incubator for Ronald Reagan’s conservative awakening, when they hired him as a host for their television programming, and as an all-round celebrity spokesman.³⁶ But the NAM and the Chamber took up the mantle of national leadership for the “businessmen in politics” program, exhorting executives and employees across the country to “get into politics” at the local level and beyond.³⁷

The Chamber’s program emphasized executive seminars, producing an “Action Course in Practical Politics” that corporations could use for staff training. “By the end of 1959 the Chamber reported that their text had been adopted by 107 corporations in 532 communities and forty-seven states,” Hacker and Aberbach noted, and that 100,000 people would eventually participate in the

associated programs.³⁸ The NAM also claimed to have “provided the kit from which many businessmen and middle management personnel are getting their first instruction in practical politics,” offering courses such as “Citizen at Work” for the 1960 elections.³⁹ But as Sligh explained in 1958, NAM’s role would be limited to providing the *tools* for political activity – through its practical politics instruction courses – and helping to shape the *environment* in which such activity would place – through publicity efforts – but the groundwork must be done by individuals and organizations at the state and local level.⁴⁰ “We are only too well aware that any kind of success will depend on what is done much nearer the grassroots than any national organization such as ours can reach,” he added.⁴¹

Through practical politics, Sligh affirmed, businessmen were “in a position to help determine that the right men occupy the seats in council, in the legislature and in the Congress,” which was “a much better way to insure a good economic climate than trying to convince the wrong men to do right once they are elected by others.”⁴² But neither the NAM nor the Chamber would explicitly tell their participants *who* the “right men” were. Or in which party they might be found. As a handout from one of the NAM’s mobilization programs addressed the reader: “What YOU as a businessman can do to help the candidates of your choice,” because – “Let’s face it; third parties have proved mostly ineffective.”⁴³ Individualism and bipartisanship were thus wound together in the NAM’s approach.⁴⁴

The point of the programs was to mobilize executives into *both* parties – into the “party of your choice.” The Chamber and NAM would thus help to build a leadership cadre in each party committed to their viewpoint. These businessmen-politicians were to work from the inside to arrest the liberalizing direction of the Democratic Party as much as to consolidate any pro-business attitude within the Republican Party. As Hacker and Aberbach observed of a specific “businessmen-in-politics” course, it “was bipartisan at all times even if the syllabus was less than sympathetic to

labor unions,” and “the organizers of the program...felt that it was the Democratic Party that especially needed a conservative leaven and that the infiltration of businessmen could achieve this end.” “The theory, in short, was one of infiltration,” they concluded – by channeling businessmen into party work on both sides “both major parties would be brought to nominate candidates sympathetic to business.”⁴⁵ Whether the theory could be put into practice was another matter – Hacker and Aberbach, concluded that the courses had little impact at the individual level, activating, at best those who already had some prior interest in politics.⁴⁶

The approach itself, however, suggests that the bipartisan ideal, stemming from a universalistic self-conception, was still very much in evidence. In 1959, Raymond Moley even offered an extended disquisition on this theme, moving away from his blunt suggestion of a “capital PAC” in 1954 (and its apparently Republican orientation), encouraging instead a more nuanced, and less directly hostile response to labor political action, much more in sync with what the NAM and Chamber were beginning to do.

In 1956, Moley had privately published a pamphlet on “The Political Responsibility of Businessmen,” which went through further printings in 1958 and 1959. Here he spoke to the reputational concerns that had long kept businessmen away from the world of electoral politics:

Because of decades of political attacks upon business — and “big business” especially — management came to feel that it was a proscribed class. With this came a conviction not only that business talents were unsuited to political management but that there would be an actual injury to the candidates and causes. This reaction was rationalized in the concept that politics and business should not mix—that it hurts business competitively to take sides in political affairs.⁴⁷

But the businessman needed to alter his perspective, Moley argued, and embrace his “political responsibility.” “Manpower, rather than money is the major factor in winning elections,” Moley emphasized, and businessmen needed to organize on the ground, as the NAM and Chamber’s action programs were encouraging them to do.⁴⁸ Thus he congratulated those business leaders who were “seeking by amicable and helpful means to strengthen the party organization of their preference” –

“amicable and helpful” in that they were “not seeking to depose the officially constituted leadership of their parties or to set up a rival private organization.”⁴⁹ “Businessmen in politics” were not to set up their own pseudo-party vehicles like COPE. Indeed, they should not challenge COPE directly either. The business response “should avoid specific antagonism to what the labor unions are doing in politics,” Moley said.⁵⁰ And his reasons tapped into the universalistic conception of business and society.

“[A] profound change in our political system is under way,” Moley told his readers, and it was one that put the two-party system, and the very essence of representative government, in peril.⁵¹ The Democratic Party was becoming the “prisoner” of COPE, Moley warned, transforming into “a special-interest or class organization.”⁵² Though he acknowledged “the weakness and hypocrisy of parties in the past,” they at least sought “to represent all groups,” Moley claimed. “They were the instruments of a classless society,” he asserted, channeling almost as much as idealism as Schattschneider.⁵³ With COPE’s backing, the Democratic Party was now threatening to “reduce the Republican Party to a long period of impotence” – leaving the political field open for the pure class legislation that would ensue.⁵⁴

Yet despite this dire description, Moley’s solution was not one that focused solely on the Republican Party, or business alone, as a counterweight to the COPE-Democratic threat. To do so, in fact, would simply propagate the very societal divisions to which he was objecting. “A counter movement to the unions centered in business as business, would merely invite class conflicts inimical to an orderly society,” Moley explained. “What is needed is to activate all Americans, especially those with marked capacity for organization and leadership, to behave as good American citizens.”⁵⁵ Thus, the emphasis he placed “upon the responsibility of businessmen to participate in politics is certainly not to suggest that there should be a businessmen's party or government.”⁵⁶ But it was to suggest there should not be a *labor* party, which businessmen could prevent through their

active involvement in *both* parties – as the Chamber and NAM action programs encouraged them to do. Indeed, those programs were “non-partisan,” Moley pointed out, “because both parties are concerned in the contest of political and economic policies now prevailing on the national scene.”⁵⁷ “[T]he ideal of a classless society has been tarnished by the political power of special interests,” Moley concluded. Of which business, it appeared, was not one.⁵⁸

Assessing Legislators

If business organizations were still resisting the creation of explicit vehicles for political action, they also largely avoided a core tactic that liberal and labor groups had defended as a form of political “education”: the analysis and publication of congressional roll-call votes. As then-president of the NAM, Robert M. Gaylord, had informed the Anderson Committee in 1944, his organization did occasionally publish congressional roll-call votes in its newsletter, where the issue was of vital concern to its members, and the vote had not been widely carried in the public press.⁵⁹ But Gaylord had been eager to emphasize the lack of *judgment* associated with their presentation, or intent to shape the voting decisions of the members who would receive the information – whether Anderson was convinced or not.⁶⁰ Labor and liberal groups, however, had increasingly fashioned vote analysis into the functional equivalent of an endorsement, particularly through the ADA’s “index” summarizing a legislator’s position on issues of concern to the group as a single percentage score.

At least internally, NAM was using roll-call voting data to shape their legislative strategies in the 1950s. In 1954, for example, they compiled extensive records on congressional voting, which they used to rank legislators and assess likely lobbying prospects.⁶¹ One such report on the 86th Congress was deemed “confidential” by the NAM’s Director of Public Affairs, Carl L. Biemiller, and “not for publication or wide-spread dissemination.” Sending it to NAM managers and Public Affairs Directors, he encouraged them to “use your discretion as to the manner which you handle any set of

Congressional rankings,” and bear in mind that with the results of 1958, it was “likely to be a long, cold legislative winter.” There was no sense in making *enemies* by careless handling of something they clearly viewed as sensitive. The information would not even be made available to NAM’s own members.

Indeed, no publicized index suggesting “business-friendly” or “conservative” legislators even existed until 1959 – though presumably the liberal indices could be used in a reverse fashion.⁶² In 1959, Civic Affairs Associates, Incorporated produced the “The Free Citizens Voting Record,” which scored votes according to “six principles of economic and political freedom”⁶³ A former Assistant Manager for Political Participation at the Chamber of Commerce, and author of its “Action Course” helped produce it. While COPE’s ratings may have been criticized as a “blackball,” promotional material for the *Record* featured an article by Raymond Moley describing them as a “perfectly legitimate and proper means by which to carry on the work of political organization” suggesting an effort to enhance their cultural acceptability among those who had critiqued such productions from other quarters.⁶⁴ One year later, another conservative organization would get in on the act – the Americans for Constitutional Action – which offered its “ACA Index” in 1960, an equivalent summary score to that the ADA was producing based on liberal legislation.⁶⁵ Indeed, the ACA had been explicitly founded as a counterweight to the ADA, its name alone suggesting the connection. And it was one of a number of conservative ideological groups mobilizing in the late 1950s – striking out more aggressively against liberalism and labor “domination” in ways that the business community did not yet seem prepared to do.

The Rise of “The Right”

A recent wave of historical research has looked to the origins and impact of the conservative movement which exploded onto the national political scene in 1964, with Barry Goldwater’s

presidential bid. Scholars working in this vein have uncovered roots of this movement stretching back through the 1950s – a time of apparent consensus and moderation – with ideological divergence beginning with the New Deal itself. McGirr’s (2001) study of 1950s conservative activism in suburban Orange County, California, for example, locates it within a broader national trend at that time. As she notes, the founding of conservative journals such as the *National Review* in 1955 – which aimed “to formulate a cohesive set of conservative ideas and policies” – was matched by “a spate of new national organizations [that] translated ideas into politics.”⁶⁶ Both the intellectual and organizational foundations for the Goldwater campaign and beyond, she concludes, “had already been laid in the 1950s.”⁶⁷

After 1960, “more activist organizations” were created, Brennan (1995) reports, with newer groups such as the ACA and the “Young Americans for Freedom” joining the existing entities founded to promote “free enterprise” in the late 1940s, such as the Foundation for Economic Education, or the American Enterprise Association (soon to be renamed the “American Enterprise Institute”).⁶⁸ A relatively cohesive conservative constellation was thus emerging around these ideas. But the emphasis in this literature has tended to be on the ideological developments, and their ultimate translation into electoral politics in 1964.⁶⁹ Phillips-Fein, for example, suggests that the ideological groups emerging in the late 1950s and early 1960s “avoided the harsh glare of electoral politics.”⁷⁰ But the ACA did not avoid that glare, suggesting a longer-running development in terms of conservative electoral involvement too. Along with various “think tanks” and a continuing emphasis on “educational” organizations, more explicitly political and electorally active groups were already beginning to emerge within this conservative constellation.

A Conservative Constellation

An early sign of this directional shift was the appearance before the 1956 Gore Committee of “For America.” It was part of the growing web of right-wing organizations that wove together national patriotic sentiment with laissez-faire economics and a commitment to “States Rights” – a variant of the “fusion” conservatism that was gaining momentum in this period, though one that combined its fervent anti-Communism with a more traditional Republican isolationism. Formed in Chicago in May 1954, it was “an educational organization considerably right of center,” according to its National Director – Retired Brigadier General Bonner Fellers – testifying in October 1956, with objectives ranging from passage of the Bricker Amendment (affirming Constitutional supremacy over international treaties) to arresting “the drift into socialism” its leaders’ perceived in the United States.⁷¹ But “For America” had not remained *purely* educational, Fellers conceded. Though it was organized as “a patriotic, nonprofit corporation,” it had been denied tax-exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service, late in 1955.⁷² So “then we went political,” Fellers explained, endorsing the States’ Rights Party’s presidential ticket for 1956, and raising \$12,000 to aid their campaign.⁷³ But by the mid-1950s, this was small change in politics, and “For America” was a small-time operation. Much more significant would be an organization founded in August, 1958 – the “Americans for Constitutional Action.”

The ACA’s formation was greeted with particular joy in one quarter. Senator Karl Mundt, the conservative South Dakota Republican who had lamented the lack of conservative counterforces to the growing liberal-labor threat, inserted its first announcement into the *Congressional Record*.⁷⁴ Led by retired Admiral Ben Moreell (previously chairman of the board at the Jones and Laughlin Steel Corporation), the ACA set out to roll back the New Deal.⁷⁵ Only the ACA, its announcement stated, “could force back together the conservative coalition which for over 20 years successfully stopped the greatest excesses toward statism in this country.”⁷⁶ Even before the 1958

election, it seemed, faith in the conservative coalition was fading. Instead, there was a growing anxiety among conservatives that the labor-liberal axis was gaining the upper hand – particularly through its “infiltration” of the Democratic Party. The ACA would take on one part of that axis, being explicitly intended, as Smith (1972) summarized, “to counterbalance ADA’s influence.”⁷⁷

And this counterbalancing would involve emulation not just of names, but practices too. Olson (1967) classified the ACA as an “electoral group,” which is a “special variation of the interest group.”⁷⁸ It was a special variation that, as Diamond (1995) summarized, “was an early effort to channel conservative movement support toward selected candidates.”⁷⁹ The ACA was, in essence, a PAC: it began to make direct contributions to candidates – becoming, by 1960, one of the most significant non-party donors in congressional races.⁸⁰ And it put its mouth where its money was, issuing direct endorsements of supported candidates.⁸¹

Endorsements, of course, went hand in hand with the other major tool of political action committees – congressional vote analyses and ratings. Thus the ACA began to compile its own index of “conservatism” to rival the ADA’s.⁸² Of course, if a high ADA rating meant a congressman was a solid liberal, then a low rating would suggest a more conservative legislator.⁸³ But the selection of legislative votes on which the ADA based its ratings was reflective of the liberal concerns of that organization, not necessarily the issues more important to conservatives. Plus having the “high” score on the liberal side seemed to cede an important psychological and rhetorical advantage. The ACA, therefore, decided to create its own rating schema, which would identify those legislators who stood for conservative principles and values, as the ACA saw them. In 1960, the first “ACA Index” appeared.⁸⁴

It is in terms of these ratings, in fact, that ACA makes its brief entry into academic discourse – as data for congressional analyses, for the most part.⁸⁵ But the *rhetorical* value of indices raises the prospect of a more diffuse, immeasurable impact. In his seminal work, *The Electoral Connection*,

Mayhew (1975) noted that individual roll call positions did not usually “cause much of a ripple at home,” except on specific issues monitored by single-issue interest groups. More important were “broad voting patterns,” such as the “member “ratings” calculated by the Americans for Democratic Action, Americans for Constitutional Action, and other outfits are used as guidelines in the deploying of electoral resources.”⁸⁶ As Fenno (1978) would observe in his study of congressmen’s “home style” – their personas and policies toward their districts – incumbents were sensitive to the reality that interest group ratings would be reported by the local press and provided constituents with “a sense of a person’s voting record.”⁸⁷ Interest group ratings, particularly *indices* that brought many different votes together into a single, neat “score,” were shaping the way the voting public *saw* different candidates and *thought* about politics. The conflict between liberal and conservative could now be invoked with a percentage point.

And there was a partisan dimension to such a scheme. Much as the ADA index could indicate the “right” kind of Democrat, so too the ACA index could be utilized as a guide to the right kind of Republican. According to Richard Viguerie, a pioneering conservative fundraiser from the late ‘60s onwards, the ACA’s ratings gave conservatives “a precise way of knowing which Republicans to support or oppose...and they used these ratings to help change the face of the GOP.”⁸⁸ Diamond (1995) also presents the ACA within an explicitly partisan context, as part of an initial effort “to reconstitute the Republican Party,” prior to the Goldwater movement in the run-up to 1964.⁸⁹ And McGirr (2001) describes the founders of the ACA as a mix of “conservative Republican Party politicians and business leaders” intent on repealing, as they expressed, “the socialistic laws now on our books.”⁹⁰ While these later assessments might infer intent from outcomes, a more explicitly partisan strategy on the part of the ACA would suggest a complete emulation of the ADA – copying its fundamental strategic orientation, if one that leant in the

opposite direction. In this perspective, like the ADA, the ACA was intertwined with party politics from the get-go.

But the ACA was also intertwined with another development – the rise of the “radical right,” as the growing number of organizations at this end of the ideological spectrum would soon be labeled.⁹¹ Radical” in this sense implied a negative extremism, and in such company, the ACA’s support could – like the NAM’s “kiss of death” – turn into a liability. But even as Scoble (1963) described the ACA as “an ultra-conservative political organization,” its brand of ultra-conservatism still remained slightly more “respectable” than some of the other emerging groups tagged with this label, such as the John Birch Society.⁹²

Named for an American missionary killed by Chinese communists in 1945, the John Birch Society had been founded in 1958 – the same year as the ACA – to fight Communist infiltration and any hint of “collectivism” on the domestic front.⁹³ The poster child of the “radical right,” it was the brainchild of candy manufacturer Robert Welch, who had once served as a vice-president of the NAM, noted for a paranoia about Communist infiltration that extended to President Eisenhower himself.⁹⁴

But Welch was not the only one exhibiting paranoia, or anxiety at the very least. In the early 1960s, concern about the “radical right” was sufficiently high that the Kennedy administration took behind-the-scenes steps to address it.⁹⁵ The impetus, however, came from without – from a memo penned by UAW president Walter Reuther to Robert Kennedy, now Attorney General, recommending executive action to combat the radical threat.⁹⁶ The memo prompted an internal White House effort to monitor right-wing organizations and probe deeper into their sources of funding, an effort that would eventually draw on the services of the FBI, and employ the Internal Revenue Service in an effort to destabilize the financial status of numerous conservative groups.⁹⁷

The ACA was monitored as part of this effort, with internal White House reports revealing its success in the 1962 midterms, where more than half of the candidates it supported were elected.⁹⁸ It is unclear, however, whether the ACA was targeted as part of the administration's boldest effort to counteract the growing power of the right – through the secret “Ideological Organizations Project” within the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). This was an “unprecedented effort by the administration to silence right-wing critics, chiefly by using the Internal Revenue Service to conduct politically motivated financial audits,” as Andrew (1997) observes.⁹⁹ It was also illegal, and remained secret until revealed by the Church Committee in the mid-1970s.¹⁰⁰ (The Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities, chaired by Senator Frank Church (D-ID), had been established in the wake of Watergate to investigate some of the government monitoring activities that scandal had revealed). The aim was to deny tax-exempt status to these targeted organizations, so as to undermine their financial viability, though it is unclear how many actually lost exemptions as a result of this probe.¹⁰¹

One Step Closer

With the ACA offering new ratings that incorporated roll-call votes often of interest to business organizations, and in which a high score translated into a positive from a broader conservative perspective, the NAM's public affairs division in 1960 finally began to make information on congressional voting and ratings available to member firms.¹⁰² But in keeping with their claims about individual choice in politics, they provided several different ratings from both “leading “conservative” and “liberal” organizations” – including the ACA, the ADA, and COPE.¹⁰³ Without an explicit guide for which should be accorded more weight, explicit preference was not to be inferred.¹⁰⁴

Nor was it apparent that calls for greater political involvement among businessmen were registering in terms of individual *financial* participation – even among the NAM and the Chamber’s own officers. As Table 9.1 shows, considering data from 1960 and 1964 collected by Herbert Alexander, only 8% of Chamber officers and directors contributed in 1960 and 11% in 1964, though 100% of those contributions went to Republicans. Considering all the categories as a whole, 12% of individuals holding a position with NAM contributed in 1960, and 13% in 1964 – hardly impressive proportions for organizations pushing all forms of individual political involvement at the time. Of the \$61,000 that NAM officers contributed to the major parties and its candidates in 1964, 95% went to Republican causes.¹⁰⁵ Still, half of that amount came from a single donor and his wife – Liberty League veteran, J. Howard Pew.

Table 9.1. Chamber of Commerce & NAM Officials, Contributors in 1960 & 1964

| | Possible Contributors | Rep. | Dem. | Other | Actual Contributors |
|----------------|-----------------------|------|------|-------|---------------------|
| | <i>1960</i> | | | | |
| <i>Chamber</i> | 60 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 5 (8%) |
| <i>NAM</i> | 172 | 18 | 2 | 1 | 21 (12%) |
| | <i>1964</i> | | | | |
| <i>Chamber</i> | 63 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 7 (11%) |
| <i>NAM</i> | 158 | 17 | 4 | 2 | 21* (13%) |

Note: This includes Officers and Members of the Board of Directors of the United States Chamber of Commerce, and Officers, Divisional Vice-Presidents, Regional Vice-President, Honorary Vice-Presidents, and Members of the Board of Directors of the National Association of Manufacturers). * The two contributors to “other” causes also donated to Republicans, and thus are counted only once in the total number of contributors.

Sources: 1960 data, Herbert E. Alexander. *Financing the 1960 Election*. Princeton, New Jersey: Citizens’ Research Foundation. “Table 11 – Contributions of Officials of 13 Selected Groups, 1960,” Page 65; 1964 data, Overacker-Heard Campaign Finance Data Archive (Alexander continuation). “[1964?] Political Contributions [Contents uncertain] (No box number).” Institute of Governmental Studies, University of California, Berkeley.

The AMA Takes the Plunge

But by the early 1960s, some corporations had begun to experiment with informal political action funds financed by contributions from their executives – suggesting a desire to more clearly associate

individual contributions with a distinct corporate identity.¹⁰⁶ And in 1961, these executives would have an organized manifestation of non-labor political action to look to, when the American Medical Association decided to take the leap. The creation of its political action committee, AMPAC, was a watershed moment in the rise of political action – a flagship professional association announcing its intention to oppose legislation at the ballot box. The creation of AMPAC, after all, was a response to the threat posed by the Forand Bill in 1958 – a proposal similar to Medicare – and the election of John F. Kennedy in 1960, who had supported it.¹⁰⁷ But its formation suggested more than just the emergence of distinct legislative threat to the AMA. It suggested the diminution of cultural boundaries on political action more generally – doctors being the main group Truman had singled out, only ten years earlier, as being culturally constrained from overt political involvement. “Doctors aren’t expected to act that way,” he had observed.¹⁰⁸ At the same time, the AMA’s concerns beyond Medicare were less apparent – thus their “acid test” might lend itself to a more traditional “reward and punish” style rather than the active party-reshaping strategy that labor and liberal PACs had been developing.

Business organizations, in contrast, faced no obvious legislative threat in this sense. In objective terms, they had achieved the Landrum-Griffin Act in 1959, placing regulations upon unions – even with the influx of liberal legislators in 1958. And they had sustained the Taft-Hartley Act against repeated onslaughts. While a Democratic might have reached the White House again in 1960, John F. Kennedy was neither an ardent labor ally, nor an unabashed tax-and-spend liberal. And his brother Robert had served as a crusading legal counsel on the McClellan rackets committee. As a young Senator in 1953, moreover, he had announced in a *Saturday Evening Post* interview that he was “not a liberal at all...I never joined the Americans for Democratic Action or the American Veterans Committee. I’m not comfortable with those people.”¹⁰⁹ Though his relations with the business community were never glowing, he did act as president to push through substantial tax *cuts*

for both individuals and corporations, and the economy itself was recovering from the recession of 1958.¹¹⁰

Yet voices in the business community pressed with greater urgency for an explicit move into political action to protect and promote business interests. That publicity and individual political action were no longer considered sufficient was more a product of changing perceptions of the political environment, than objective realities – changing perceptions that were starting to outweigh older concerns about political action. For the threat that loomed large from the perspective of business organizations, was not what Kennedy administration or Democratic legislators were necessarily *doing*, but what they *might* do – that the trend was toward a more liberal Democratic Party, one more opposed to business interests, and one that their publicity campaign in the 1940s and 50s had not arrested. As Charles Sligh had noted of the Landrum-Griffin Act in 1959: “the new law presents an advance, but that the advance is threatened by labor political activity.”¹¹¹

What business organizations feared, in spite of evidence of their own legislative successes, was the impact labor organizations like COPE were having on the political scene. The anxiety COPE inspired in business leaders was not necessarily proportional, but the threat always seemed to loom large in their internal discussions. As a 1962 report from the NAM’s Public Affairs division warned, the COPE was “the most articulate voice in the area of public affairs.” Public Affairs director Robert L. Humphrey told his staff that the entirety of their efforts in the coming year would “be based upon the challenge to industry presented by the AFL-CIO through its political arm, COPE” – a message that had been repeated in various forms for several years.¹¹² The report emphasized the need for leadership of and coordination: some individual business organizations were “getting their feet wet” in public affairs, and “want action” – “But individually, they’re scattering their buckshot. They desperately want leadership.”¹¹³ The NAM began to consider the prospect of providing it. Thus an item was quietly placed on the agenda for the NAM’s January,

1963 executive committee meeting. To be discussed, a proposed “direct political action organization under the sponsorship of NAM.”¹¹⁴

The Business-Industry Political Action Committee

“At Last – A Political Organization for Businessmen” announced the *NAM News* in mid-1963.¹¹⁵ In April, the NAM Board of Directors had approved \$100,000 in seed money for a new political action organization that would take the business message directly into the electoral battlefield. “The Business-Industry Political Action Committee,” or “BIPAC” as it would come to be known, had been born, and with it a new wave of business political action would begin. BIPAC was set up “to raise money to assist House and Senate candidates sympathetic to the business point of view and to conduct a program of political information at the local, state and national levels,” according to a NAM spokesman announcing its creation.¹¹⁶

A BIPAC primer explained directly that it “was established to serve as a political education and action arm of American business and industry,” that it sought “to promote a system of government in which the individual liberties of all citizens would be of paramount concern,” to which end it would “encourage and assist individual citizens in organizing themselves for more effective political action.”¹¹⁷ As such, it was intended as a direct electoral counterweight to labor – an effort “to give business the same organized national focus that COPE gave labor,” its president, Joseph J. Fannelli, recalled in 1979.¹¹⁸ And for the first time, it would directly replicate elements of the COPE organization. It was, like COPE, a separate organized entity and a *permanent* one – because “[o]ne-shot political action programs would not produce lasting results,” a promotional leaflet explained.¹¹⁹ It was directly modeled on COPE at the national level, but did not have state or affiliated organizations.¹²⁰ Once again, a business effort would not seek to build its own grassroots machinery, expressing an intention instead to seek cooperation from existing sub-national groups.¹²¹

As BIPAC's own literature was quick to point out, any similarity to COPE ended at the organizational level: "BIPAC's economic and political principles differ in that they reflect the views of the business community generally."¹²² This effort to reflect general views might suggest why the NAM was quick to deny a continuing link to BIPAC: "after BIPAC is set up and functioning, it will have no official relationship to the NAM," a NAM spokesman said during the initial announcement.¹²³ Alternatively, they may have sought, once again, to distance themselves from direct political action. Yet it was initially funded by NAM, staffed with former NAM personnel, and its board populated with NAM directors.¹²⁴ Robert L. Humphrey, the NAM Director of Public Affairs who had conceived the basic plan in 1962, became its first Executive Director.¹²⁵ The NAM had even expressed internal concern with participation from other groups in BIPAC's management or direction "because this would risk turning it into a debating society instead of an action group and tend to paralyze its decision making," though they publicly expressed hope that the Chamber might be involved.¹²⁶

Even with sponsorship from one organization, BIPAC still provided the first effort from business representatives to fight labor political action in kind. In doing so, they sought to build on and coordinate past efforts. Thus in spite of the claims of separation, the operations of NAM and BIPAC suggest a complementary division of labor. The NAM itself continued to produce "non-partisan" mobilization courses, which now also sought to promote BIPAC. Its 1964 course was entitled "The Bill Boyntons go into Politics (featuring a suburban businessman and his wife undertaking this great adventure together). And it also held "Precinct Action Workshops" in targeted districts.¹²⁷ A NAM memo explained that "[t]he goal is to produce effective manpower within critical congressional districts" with these combined efforts – for which the "NAM cannot help but get a lions share of the credit since it has been responsible for creating BIPAC (money) and Bill Boynton (manpower)."¹²⁸

Thus the NAM, now with BIPAC, was still seeking to generate *both* resources that it saw labor groups as already able to deliver. Its newfound willingness to attempt this via a PAC may be attributable, in part, to the example presented by AMPAC. NAM public affairs director Humphrey had, in fact, attended its national conference and workshops in Chicago, shortly before the official founding of BIPAC.¹²⁹ It is not clear that the business community had a similarly direct legislative “trigger” as the AMA, but it now had a non-union precedent it could follow, and an example to assuage any lingering legal concerns.

More important to the change in tactics may have been a change of argument about the political threat posed by COPE – one that could justify greater action within the context of NAM’s extant ideology and the legacy of its publicity campaign. For the free enterprise campaign had promoted the value of competition (even if, in practice, companies were often willing to enjoy the benefits that restricted competition might bring). Out of the right-to-work battles, a new favorite term had emerged for the status labor unions enjoyed through the “union shop” – “labor monopolies.” Redirecting a negative term long associated with business, the union shop was cast as a kind of monopoly, pitted against the individual’s “right to work” and the broader idea of free competition.¹³⁰ Such ideas could also be applied to the political context, as a member of BIPAC’s founding Board of Directors expressed 1964: “[t]he leaders of big labor unions . . . have achieved also what amounts to a political monopoly in most of the nation’s congressional constituencies,” he complained, deeming this “the outstanding political fact of today.”¹³¹ Applying this theme could help justify the need for expanded and direct action by business associations. As Hall (1969), suggested, with AMPAC and BIPAC “the battle between groups representing labor, business, and professions has been made public, and the public should stand to profit from the open competition.”¹³²

While BIPAC might now seek to compete with labor through political action, it would not openly embrace party competition to do so. “BIPAC is nonpartisan. It is not affiliated with any

political party,” its primer explained.¹³³ Like COPE – which also retained a non-partisan claim – it would point to an issue- or ideology-based rationale in the distribution of its resources (“a sound philosophy of government” was the marker). BIPAC thus adopted COPE’s tactical approach in selecting sympathetic candidates from districts across the nation according to the competitiveness of the race, and the possibility of victory.¹³⁴ Though certain contests would be targeted, party affiliation was *not* the relevant factor, they assured.¹³⁵

With the NAM having often attacked the veracity of COPE’s non-partisan claim, however, it might seem that BIPAC’s was similarly superficial. A *Wall Street Journal* profile in February, 1964, for example, reported BIPAC’s intention to support “Congressmen whose voting records draw high marks from conservative organizations such as Americans for Constitutional Action,” who, in turn, were “mostly Republicans.”¹³⁶ And BIPAC’s director – Robert Humphrey, had been the RNC’s campaign director in 1956 and 1958, before going to work for the NAM. But in a slide presentation entitled “The BIPAC Story,” corporate audiences were told that “BIPAC money will go to deserving candidates of both major political parties,” so long as they “advocate sound economic and political principles.”¹³⁷ Brochures explained that candidates would be selected by “[a] bipartisan review committee composed of members of the BIPAC board” they emphasized, and assured potential contributors that “[t]he Board of Directors is made up of both Democrats and Republicans.”¹³⁸

Any operational partisanship in BIPAC’s contributions was a moot point, however, until after the election, since it did not publicize who it had given support to beforehand. In this sense, it was not utilizing its campaign contributions as a signal of public preference, despite the lack of legal constraint on their doing so. Seeming to reflect the lingering concerns Moley had raised, “that it hurts business competitively to take sides in political affairs,” BIPAC’s board adopted a policy prohibiting such announcements during the campaign.¹³⁹ Indeed, the absence of explicit preference, the emphasis placed on bipartisanship and on choice that pervaded BIPAC’s pronouncements, all

seemed designed to uphold the individualist message business groups had long been disseminating, even as it had embarked upon a more collective political enterprise.

BIPAC's formative mission was "to encourage and assist *individual citizens* in organizing themselves for more effective political action" in order "to promote a system of government in which the individual liberties of all citizens would be of paramount concern."¹⁴⁰ It described itself as "a voluntary movement of citizens acting on their own deep-seated beliefs as individuals."¹⁴¹ A group committed to individual freedom and action has to give credence to individual free *choice*. Yet the tensions involved in making an argument for organized collective action on an *individualized* basis were evident. A convoluted explanation for why a businessman should give to BIPAC in the first place is but one example:

Certainly you can give directly to any candidate, and we do not intend to suggest that such contributions be stopped. However, as you can see from the scope of the organizational planning and the specialized information being enlisted for BIPAC, this organization is working for you to carry on in a purposeful, business-like manner this vital phase of effective, political action on a national basis. Obviously you are aware of the dire need of "individual action in politics." BIPAC offers you the opportunity to express this interest in a tangible and fruitful way.¹⁴²

BIPAC was a way to make individual action more "tangible and fruitful," in this account; it was an "opportunity to become politically effective"; it offered "a *practical* and realistic approach to politics for every individual who wants to preserve the individual rights and privileges embodied in the Constitution, and its amendments."¹⁴³ BIPAC was supposed to appear anything *but* collective, from its rhetoric at least. Moreover, supporting BIPAC was "not a substitute for support of the candidates and party of your choice," as the corporate presentation assured.¹⁴⁴

For all the parsing, BIPAC gave the NAM an important collective tool – a singular identity in politics. Not simply individual businessmen contributing on a decentralized, and not necessarily identifiable basis. And for all its non-partisan protestations, it would become part of the cluster of conservative groups aiming to reshape the Republican Party in a more conservative direction – an effort that gained momentum in 1964, with the presidential campaign of Barry Goldwater.

The 1964 Election

The Goldwater Movement

The campaign to make Barry Goldwater the Republican nominee in 1964, and to get him to the White House, brought together ideologically-motivated activists and the organizations they had already formed, with a new structure built around an individual candidate. While trends toward a more active style of candidate-centered campaign organization had been evident since the Willkie Clubs in 1940, and taken to new levels in the 1950s with Citizens for Eisenhower, Goldwater's campaign would reveal just how far the fusion of ideology and individual had come, and the implications it could pose for party organization. Indeed, the analytic tendency to pose "candidate-centered" forms of campaign organization in *opposition* to "party-centered" modes ignores the extent to which they too could become important tools of party-directed change.

"Goldwater was neither ideologically in sympathy with, or organizationally indebted to, the establishment that had controlled the national party organization" noted Agranoff (1972) in a study of new campaigning techniques. "He therefore felt no compulsion to adopt a traditional party strategy."¹⁴⁵ With his roots in the West, Goldwater had emerged from a regional political culture that Kleppner (1989) described as largely "'antiparty, or at least nonpartisan" – suggesting the legacy of the grassroots movements that had swept over the area in the late 19th Century.¹⁴⁶ He was also a reluctant standard-bearer, his candidacy largely being engineered by leaders of these emerging conservative organizations, and in particular through the actions of F. Clifton White – a Cornell political science professor who combined his academic life with that of a partisan, a former Chairman of the Young Republicans and director of "Citizens for Nixon-Lodge" in 1960.¹⁴⁷ White organized the National Draft Goldwater Committee and been instrumental in shepherding delegates on the floor at the Republican Convention to ensure his success in the ballot.¹⁴⁸ For his services, he was placed in charge of the Citizens for Goldwater-Miller after the convention (which was basically

the reformulated draft movement) – not, as he would have preferred, in charge of the Republican National Committee.¹⁴⁹

But not being indebted to the *establishment* did not mean Goldwater was distanced from the *party* – one in which he had served a number of leadership roles before being selected as its presidential candidate. His candidacy had been backed by 70% of the Republican County chairmen polled by the Associated Press in 1964, suggesting conservative activists had already made substantial inroads into the party apparatus.¹⁵⁰ And Goldwater activists had a partisan vision – united by ideology and rallying behind a focusing candidate, they envisaged a thorough-going takeover of the Republican Party in a single swoop. As Wildavsky (1965) concluded from interviews with Goldwater delegates at the 1964 Republican convention, they were “purists” rather than “politicians” in their outlook, willing to lose an election to preserve a principle.¹⁵¹ “Has the United States...given birth to a new kind of political activist for whom other things rank above winning office?” Wildavsky asked.¹⁵² “For the politicians, the desire to win is intimately connected with the belief that a political party should try to get as much support from as many diverse groups as possible,” he observed.¹⁵³ But for the purists, “[t]he ideal party...is not merely a conservative party; it is also a distinct and separate community of co-believers who differ with the opposition party all down the line.”¹⁵⁴

Such a divided notion was Schattschneider’s “responsible parties” ideal gone wrong. For responsible parties were meant to be distinctive, programmatic, but still ultimately moderate – open to differing ideas and interests, but with party leaders serving to reconcile them with the broader public good. The Goldwater campaign suggested a different vision of what a party leader might desire, and how extensive the support he would seek to realize it. Wildavsky concluded that such purism would ultimately fail – that if the “purists” remained in control and nominated more Goldwater-style candidates, the Republican Party itself would go into chronic decline.¹⁵⁵ Thus

Wildavsky concluded that “those who see in this development the likelihood of a realignment of the major parties along conservative and liberal lines will be grievously disappointed.”¹⁵⁶ With the Republican Party a “lost cause,” why should Southern Democrats jump ship? Their Democratic affiliation “at least promises them continued influence in Congress and some chance to modify the policies of Democratic Presidents.” Republican moderates might well be drawn to the Democratic standard, he acknowledged, thus the likely result was not a realignment of the two-party system, but a “a modified one-party system with a dominant Democratic Party.”¹⁵⁷ Both Moley and Wildavsky, in different ways, thus pointed to the need for a diversity of views in *both* parties in order to preserve the proper mode of two-party competition in the United States.

The results of the 1964 election, in any case, were meant to serve as a salutary warning that a “purist” party would not succeed, with Goldwater suffering a massive defeat, winning only his home state of Arizona and a handful of states in the Deep South, drawn into the Republican column by Goldwater’s vote against the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In the wake of this public renunciation, moderates within the party moved to take back the reins – with a new chairman, Ray Bliss, replacing Goldwater’s pick at the Republican National Committee, Dean Burch.¹⁵⁸ And yet historians of conservatism have pointed to 1964 as a key moment en route to a much more purist, and yet also electorally successful, Republican Party. Indifferent to immediate electoral victory, as Wildavsky had observed, the purists seemed energized by defeat, rather than diminished by it. But a neglected part of this post-1964 story is the organizational mechanics by which this “purification” played out – one in which conservative interest groups employed the strategy of partisan political action with the Republican Party as a target.

The Organizational Dimensions of Realignment

With moderates in the Republican party moving to undo his RNC appointments, Goldwater was said to be musing on the prospects for a third party. As Klinker (1994) relates, “[h]e stated that there were approximately 10 million conservative activists in the country which he thought was “something like 12 times as much as any so-called third party or outside party ever started with.”¹⁵⁹ But Goldwater made a different choice. The “Citizens for Goldwater-Miller” organization had ended the campaign with a surplus, somewhere in the realm of \$700,000.¹⁶⁰ As an “independent” committee, the Citizens group had raised its money separately from the RNC. And now it refused to transfer the surplus over.¹⁶¹ With Goldwater’s quiet assent, it continued in operation, even receiving further contributions, and began to disburse its funds to conservative Republican congressional candidates.¹⁶² On January 1st, 1966, it changed its name to the “Citizens Committee for Conservatives’ and plunged in to the 1966 midterm elections.¹⁶³ The “Citizens for Goldwater-Miller” organization had become a partisan PAC.

Another conservative electoral group would be founded in aftermath of Goldwater’s defeat, under the guidance of conservative editor William F. Buckley, Jr. Like the ACA, the “American Conservative Union” would look to the Americans for Democratic Action for inspiration, and competitive motivation – and would ultimately supersede the ACA in doing so. Buckley saw the need for an overarching organization that could bring structure and leadership to the conservative constellation, as the ADA had for the liberal community.¹⁶⁴ “They intended to emulate that model,” Andrew (1997) explains.¹⁶⁵

And Goldwater himself would step back into the fray in 1965, creating his own electoral organization – his own PAC – the “The Free Society Committee.” Forged on the fusion of his ideology and personal appeal, it would in “no way be a third party movement,” he explained, but simply an “attempt to educate more and more American people into the values of the Republican

party.”¹⁶⁶ That education, however, would proceed through the financial support of conservative Republicans in their congressional contests.

For all he had attacked the National Committee for an Effective Congress almost a decade prior, Goldwater had himself embraced direct political action, just as “business men and their friends” had too.¹⁶⁷ When Goldwater had spoken as a member of the Gore Committee, critiquing the NCEC’s brand of national political action and raising the prospect of “a big argument about outside organizations,” he had made no distinctions as to who his critique applied to: “I do not care who they are, the NAM, the UAW, your organization, the American Medical Association,” he said, “anybody getting in a congressional district fight.”¹⁶⁸ By 1964, in fact, all of those organizations were “getting in congressional district fights” on a nationwide, systematic basis. And they were doing so in a largely partisan manner. In 1956, Goldwater had feared that such action risked creating “splintered parties.” In fact, he had accused the NCEC itself of “beginning to operate like a political party,” even “to *operate dangerously in the way of a splinter party.*”¹⁶⁹

Now RNC chairman Ray Bliss would accuse the various groups still swirling around Goldwater of being just that. As Klinkner reports, in June 1965, Bliss “issued an uncharacteristic public denunciation” of the Free Society Committee and its ilk, labeling them “splinter groups” that were “destructive of party unity.”¹⁷⁰ BIPAC, for its part, moved quickly to assert in its newsletter that it was “not a “splinter group” or an appendage of either political party.”¹⁷¹ But BIPAC had become part of a broader constellation of conservative groups that openly or otherwise, looked to shape the Republican Party into a counterweight to the liberalizing trend of the Democrats, under what they perceived to be the influence of labor and liberal PACs. They would help to create not “splintered parties,” but nationalized, programmatically cohesive parties, realigned along the major ideological dimension of conflict stemming from the New Deal.

The personal vehicles forged by and around Goldwater would not endure, nor would the Americans for Constitutional Action. But BIPAC would, along with the ACU, AMPAC, the ADA, the NCEC, and COPE.¹⁷² All of these organizations still exist today. And the basis for the kinds of electoral conflict in which they still engage today on behalf of favored parties – business versus labor, conservative versus liberal, Republican versus Democrat – was first fully realized in the election of 1964.

10. Political Action and the Party System

“I was crying because I can't get my shadow to stick on.”

- J.M. Barrie, *Peter Pan*¹

The national political parties today are far from the “ghosts” they once were – with robust, permanent organizations, ensconced in Washington office buildings, with far more than a skeleton staff active at all times. They too have adopted the mantra of the “independent political action movement,” that “elections are won between campaigns.”² The very permanence of their operations is but one institutional imprint of a political style forged at midcentury by the first political action committees. Many of those early PACs, along with newer groups modeled upon them, form part of the broad networks that contemporary scholars have posed as the most meaningful way of understanding party organizations today – networks that rest on party-group alliances, exhibited most clearly in the electoral arena. These groups have become part of the “shadow” party behind the “official” party – the constellation of informal groups that work toward its cause. But their role in shaping the party system of which they now form part, lies far from the background.

As I argued in Chapter 1, and have advanced throughout this dissertation, I see the rise of political action as a critical development for understanding contemporary politics – particularly in terms of a partisan strategy which was first fully conceived in the 1940s and implemented through PACs. The appearance of the CIO-P.A.C. in 1943, I suggest, marks a transition point between legislative lobbying as the dominant activity in which interest groups engaged – one associated with a largely bipartisan orientation – to an emphasis upon electioneering as a crucial part of the interest group repertoire, often (though not exclusively) associated with a partisan approach. Indeed, the various groups – friend and foe alike – that adopted this new organizational model and strategic approach would build upon and refine P.A.C.’s techniques. Though I do not suggest an entirely

mechanistic, automatic process that unfolds from that point, P.A.C.'s example helped set the stage for more partisan interest group activity broadly – setting in motion forces of allied and oppositional emulation in the interest group world, and providing a model of political action based on partisan realignment. To this extent, the rise of interest group electioneering itself, and the partisan variant with which it was foundationally associated, made party-group alliances more likely over time. As such, this transition – the rise of political action – has important implications for the polity at large. In this concluding chapter, I aim to summarize and highlight what those are.

“Independence” and “Non-Partisanship”

Clemens (1997) locates the origins of modern interest group politics in the frustrations popular associations with party politics writ large. The pressure group model they forged offered an alternative to the repeated failures of third party politics on the one hand, and to the major party politics that had frustrated their reformist objectives on the other. To take “independent political action” was associated with the former – it meant to create a third party vehicle, and was thus to be avoided at all costs, in favor of a “non-partisan,” largely legislative, form of pressure politics.

This was the attitude exhibited by the early American Federation of Labor, the Anti-Saloon League, or the Farm Bureau. But “independent” politics as traditionally conceived was still very much in view: as in the Progressive Party of 1912, the Farmer-Labor Party of 1920, and Robert La Follette’s independent presidential campaign of 1924. All made an impression on the legislators investigating campaign expenditures in those years, and – with the exception of Farmer-Labor – a strong impression at the ballot box too. The new kinds of interest group electoral actor that emerged in the 1930s and 1940s, however, were more likely to be backing a *major* party candidate than an independent one. In so doing, they would claim “independence” of a new sort – independence *from* the major political parties, in a financial and structural sense, but without looking beyond those

parties for candidates to support. To be independent in this new understanding, was a way to support a continued a claim of “non-partisanship,” even as groups began to offer their support to a major party’s presidential nominee – something that had once been viewed as the definitive act of partisanship. It was part of the attempt to make a once-partisan act comport with the rhetoric and strategies of issue-based non-partisanship that groups like the AFL and the Anti-Saloon League had developed at the congressional level and below. “Independent political action,” and “non-partisan political action” would come to be used as synonyms rather than antonyms.

Yet, as the meaning of “independence” had shifted, so too would the meaning of “non-partisanship.” It was long justified as the elevation of issue positions over partisanship, where a candidate’s stance on key policies drove support or opposition. Where the parties were divided on particular issues, groups would back a mix of Democrats and Republicans – where multiple candidates were a possibility, at least. But if the parties became more cohesive, more divided on particular issues, then the partisan composition of the candidates’ groups backed would become lopsided. Such was the claim of “incidental” partisanship, where apparently partisan *outcomes* were explained as a byproduct of what the *party’s* looked like, of what the *parties* did, not what the group did. This argument, by which “non-partisan” intentions were squared with partisan outcomes, I have argued, is incompatible with the kinds of active efforts on the part of liberal and labor groups at first, and then conservative and business groups in later years, to actively encourage a more lopsided distribution of candidates. It is a disjuncture that is still apparent today.

The NRA and NARAL

Consider the National Rifle Association, and its “Political Victory Fund” – its PAC, formed in 1976. The “NRA-PVF is non-partisan in issuing its candidate grades and endorsements,” its website explains.³ “We do not base our grades or endorsement decisions on a candidate’s party affiliation,” it

continues – rather, the candidates’ stated positions or legislative record on Second Amendment issues is what counts. Indeed, the NRA does back pro-gun legislators on both sides of the party aisle, but its support is much more heavily weighted toward Republicans – an incidental product, they might say, of a stronger tendency to support gun rights on that side. But the critical question for assessing the true scope of any claim of “incidental” partisanship is not whether *any* candidates from the opposite party are supported, but what happens at the margins. What does the NRA do when *both* candidates are in favor of gun rights? What does it do when *neither* are?

Skinner’s (2007) interviews with NRA leaders can illuminate at least the latter situation. Where neither candidate is supportive of a group’s position, we might expect it to ignore that contest entirely. The NRA, at least, does not provide active support for candidates that do not share its viewpoint. But it does send members in the particular district a “RINO letter” (implying that the candidate is a “Republican In Name Only”) – a letter which “while not endorsing the Republican, criticizes the Democrat much more vehemently.”⁴ As Skinner quoted an NRA official: “We’re not going to lose credibility by saying, go out and support the Republican, but we’re going to highlight how bad the Democrat would be.”⁵ It does so, as Skinner reports, because the NRA sees its interests as best served by a majority Republican Congress.⁶ Even a Republican who favors gun control is better than a Democrat who does, since a Republican majority is their best bet overall.⁷ This suggests a much stronger investment in party outcomes than a claim of mere “incidental” partisanship can support.

In fact, in 1995, the *Nation* reported that the NRA had determined to make “a risky strategic shift” – moving away from “pressuring, punishing and rewarding politicians of both parties” to becoming, instead, “an appendage to the Republican Party.”⁸ Alongside the Christian Coalition, the article continued, or “liberal labor unions and civil rights groups” for the Democrats, the NRA would join the list of those that “ultimately and unconditionally serve up their catch to The Party

every election day.”⁹ The *Nation’s* analysis suggests a movement away from an older idea of non-partisan electioneering through reward and punishment, to partisan alliance and the reliable provision of support. But “ultimately and unconditionally” serving up their votes to the GOP on Election Day, does not mean indifference to who the candidate upon that ballot will be. The NRA’s strategic shift involved the kinds of calculation, and resulting dynamic alliance I outlined in Chapter 1 – the determination that one’s aims would be best achieved through a single party, the decision to try to hone that party’s cohesion on your issues through the selective support of primary candidates, and the effort to get those candidates elected and into a majority. Indeed, the institutional advantages accompanying majority control, which appear to have factored into the NRA’s approach, suggest another important element of the institutional framework that can guide a group’s strategic calculation.¹⁰

Consider another example of “incidental” partisanship stretched to its limits – this time from NARAL, which describes itself as “the nation’s leading non-partisan pro-choice political organization” and has an active PAC.¹¹ In the 2012 Senate election in Massachusetts, NARAL endorsed Democratic challenger Elizabeth Warren over Republican incumbent Scott Brown. They did so on the grounds that Brown – a moderate Republican – was only “mixed choice” while Warren was “pro-choice.” The meaning of “mixed choice,” according to NARAL’s 2012 Voter Guide, was someone who “[a]grees with NARAL Pro-Choice America on some, but not all, issues related to a woman’s right to choose.”¹² The “some” issues turned out to be three Senate votes, out of which Brown was awarded a score of “45%.” Yet two of those votes were linked, and the third concerned the appointment of a federal judge that one can only assume involved the nominee’s position on choice, since the voter guide offers no further explanation.¹³ On the one vote that most clearly and directly involved issues of choice – an amendment to defund Planned Parenthood – Brown voted the “right” way, from NARAL’s perspective. He publicly described himself as pro-

choice, moreover, presenting a rarity within a Republican Party that has become increasingly defined by a pro-life stance. Yet NARAL backed the Democratic challenger, Elizabeth Warren, for whom they offered no comparable analysis of how she *would have* voted on these measures had she been in the Senate, or information about her public statements on these issues at all. Warren was labeled “pro-choice,” and the evidence offered was the endorsements she had received from other electoral groups with which NARAL is closely allied: Feminist Majority PAC, and EMILY’s List.

Warren’s likely policy stances may well have accorded better with NARAL’s broader agenda, but their decision to support her illuminates another aspect of the partisan strategy: the abandonment of efforts to influence the other side. An argument might have been made for supporting Brown, on the grounds that maintaining a corps of supporters in the Republican Party would be an important baseline for building further support. The ideal of business groups in the early 1950s, for example, was a situation in which *both* parties were receptive to their goals – in pursuit of which they launched action programs, encouraging executives to “infiltrate” the party apparatus on both sides. The loss of this mentality – however naïve or, alternatively, arrogant – is mirrored on the party side by a narrowing of appeals. In the Cohen et al. (2008) vision, the party coalition expands only so far as it needs to secure a majority – it seeks the most policy concessions for the least number of people. The ideal of a universalistic party appeal is lost to the idea of a base strategy – winning by pleasing your most reliable group allies, and a minimal number of voters beyond.

Campaigns Have Consequences

The NARAL example also illuminates another important aspect of contemporary political style – the importance of scores calculated from congressional roll-call votes – the “45%” which determined exactly how NARAL would classify him. In this case, NARAL’s average was based on only three

bills – hardly sufficient to average out in a meaningful sense – but where the resulting score appeared on the lower side. Sidney Scheuer of the National Committee for an Effective Congress had once suggested as much. Using a “statistical record” as the sole basis by which to assess candidates, Scheuer had told the McClellan Committee in 1957, made for “a very unfortunate and unfair evaluation.”¹⁴

Fenno (1978) noted that the kinds of index scores produced by groups like the Americans for Democratic Action and Americans for Constitutional Action were reported by the local press and provided constituents with “a sense of a person's voting record.”¹⁵ But they also served a different function. CIO-P.A.C. Research Director Mary Goddard noted in the early 1950s that the DNC was producing its own roll-call vote analyses for the use of state and local party workers.¹⁶ One such compilation from 1954 suggests the importance of identifying a congressman’s “vulnerable votes,” defined as those where he had voted against the “Democratic Majority Vote” – the position of a majority of congressional Democrats against a majority of Republicans. “By and large, when your Congressman votes contrary to the ‘Democratic Majority Vote,’” the DNC report instructs, “you can probably use that vote in a campaign against him.”¹⁷ Only “probably,” however, since some *Democrats* may have voted against the “Democratic Majority Vote” – Southern Democrats being a particularly likely case. Regular party officials had limited tools to “punish” such deviation from a majority party position – as P.A.C. Assistant Director Tilford Dudley had observed in his 1955 memo.¹⁸ The decentralized U.S. party structure, and the institution of primaries, denied political parties in the United States control over their label – unlike their European counterparts. And national party funds were primarily distributed on the basis of *need*, not on party orthodoxy.¹⁹

“The parties have no system of quality control so as to be able to deliver a standard product under their trade-mark,” was the way Key put it in his lecture notes. “The customer has to beware.”²⁰ But political action committees *could* serve as a kind of “quality control,” with roll-call

vote analysis being one tool by which to do so. Indeed, as I argued in Chapter 7, the creation of summary index scores turned vote analysis into the functional equivalent of an endorsement. Through such implicit and explicit endorsements, groups signaled that a candidate was a certain *kind* of partisan, with particular relevance for primary contests. The selective allocation of electoral resources toward primary and general election candidates was designed to realize a party oriented toward the right kind of partisan.

In the case of labor and liberal groups, as I argued in chapters 6 and 7, they sought to “purge” the Democratic Party of its conservative elements, and thus redefine what it meant to be a Democrat. Into the early 1950s, the P.A.C.’s former congressional director, Thomas Amlie was still arguing that the proper provision of roll call data would help voters to recognize, “that a Republican is a person who votes like a Republican” – even, perhaps, if their party label said otherwise.²¹ Groups like the ADA would help to make that connection clear. Through their selection of particular roll-call votes, they would help to define what “voting like a Republican” really meant – in effect, opposing the ADA’s preferred positions on particular bills. The scores themselves, I suggest, served as a kind of implicit endorsement, with broader discursive effects – helping to polarize the way we *speak* about legislators, as much as primary interventions and the provision of selective support to general election candidates served to push greater cohesion within the parties, and greater disparity between them. In undertaking this effort to reshape the party’s composition at the candidate level, the CIO-P.A.C. and its allies undertook something that a president had prominently tried – and failed – to do, and that the regular party *could not do*.²² Over time, it helped to create a Democratic Party filled with the “right men” from the start.

Realignment and Responsibility

By the 1940s, then, both the meaning of “independence” and “non-partisanship” in politics had altered substantially from what they had indicated at the turn of the 20th Century. In the former case, from working outside the extant party system to working inside of it; in the latter, from an outright aversion to parties, to a commitment to shaping them; and together, from opposed meanings, to complementary ones. The kinds of action underlying these rhetorical transformations, moreover, would have an important transformative impact upon the party system.

To the extent the labor and liberal PACs of the 1940s, in particular, were aiming to systematically reshape the Democratic Party, they were utilizing “independent political action” to make a major party look more like the “independent party” – the *third* party they had once desired.²³ In so doing, they were seeking a realignment of the party system around a new dimension of conflict in a new way.²⁴ For a third party was long considered the only vehicle by which a thoroughgoing realignment of party competition could be brought about.

Radical intellectuals like John Dewey had looked to a third party as the only way to recast the political scene, so as to reflect the major changes of modern industrial society – the division of capital and labor. That is, in idealized terms, the two party-system would be maintained, but realignment would involve the *replacement* of one of the major parties with a new one. At the very least, only a third party could make the major parties sit up and take notice, encouraging them to take up new issues they may have otherwise ignored. They were so committed to this belief in the need for a third party’s disruptive force, to break apart the extant conflicts and commitments of the party system, that they opposed giving support to major party candidates whose positions were largely in sympathy with theirs. An individual “good man” was no good at all within an overall “bad party.” And *both* the parties were bad, as far as they could see.

Thus Dewey was an opponent of Franklin Roosevelt in the 1932 election. Even Senator La Follette, who was “friendly to Roosevelt's policies” nationally, had long remained committed to a third party vision of political change – initially at the state level, then at the national level – in part because he subscribed to such a view.²⁵ As Seidman (1934), observed, La Follette’s main reservation in terms of supporting Roosevelt electorally, was that he “feels that the liberalism of the Democratic party is sustained only by the President, with the majority of the party just as conservative as are the Republicans.”²⁶ La Follette had helped forge the Progressive National Committee in 1936, to lend support to Roosevelt’s re-election bid as a pragmatic interim step that would prevent a much worse candidate winning the White House. But when some at the PNC’s founding conference had suggested a closer alliance with the president’s party, another Wisconsin progressive – Representative Thomas R. Amlie – had urged caution. Amlie “asserted that the Democratic Party as such was basically unsympathetic to progressivism,” and “indicated that the time would come when progressives would have to stand alone,” as McCoy (1956) reported.²⁷

Amlie, however, would soon change his tune, becoming the P.A.C.’s first congressional director, helping forge their effort *enhance* that sympathy within the Democratic Party, to make it more consistent and enduring, to ensure that the liberalism exhibited by President Roosevelt was sustained. Amlie and the P.A.C. would offer a different vision of how realignment could be achieved – not from the outside, in one fell swoop through the disruptive force of a third party, but from the inside, progressively over time. “Realignment” would start to be seen as altering the configuration and consistency of issue positions and ideology within the confines of the existing party system.

As late as 1952, Norman Thomas – the Socialist party’s perennial presidential candidate – was still expressing something of the traditional view. In written testimony submitted to the House campaign expenditures committee, chaired by Rep. Hale Boggs (D-LA), he argued for tighter regulation of campaign finance as a means of ensuring minor party candidates like himself had a fair

chance to contest elections.²⁸ “I believe in the value of a two-party system in America,” Thomas prefaced his remarks.²⁹ But his “deep objection” to that system as it stood was the lack of “a guiding principle of division between the two major parties or major coalitions,” Thomas explained.³⁰ “It is bad for America and democracy that the difference within each party are demonstrably greater than the average differences between them,” he continued.³¹

Indeed, in terms of which the APSA Committee on Political Parties would be proud, Thomas announced that “[t]he best democracy requires responsible party government and that we do not have in America.”³² And his third party candidacies had been designed to promote that aim, he now suggested. “[W]hat I have sought is a political realignment,” Thomas explained.³³ “My principal effort as a minor party candidate was not to establish a permanent third party but to bring about a realignment which would give us two responsible parties with a major principle of division between them.”³⁴ But what the P.A.C. and its imitators had shown was that an independent *party* was no longer a necessary precondition for such substantial change. Indeed, this alternative model may help account for an overall decline in the number of third parties from the early to mid-20th Century that Ansolabehere, Hirano and Snyder (2007) have pointed to.³⁵ Through partisan political action, setting in motion a process of competitive emulation, interest groups would work to reconfigure the party system.

As P.A.C. Director Jack Kroll told the ADA convention in 1952, the same year Thomas made his case, America was “undergoing a profound political revolution”:³⁶

“It is a re-shifting of alignments, a re-orientation by our political parties, a groping by large groups of people for a clearly-charted course of action. How long it will take to reach its climax I do not know. Nor do I profess to know what form that climax will take. I do say that it is underway and that its effects will be felt in the elections this year. As far as I am concerned, I welcome the development. I think CIO-PAC, in giving labor political expression, had something to do with it...”³⁷

The Inverse Relationship Revisited

This realigning role highlights tensions within the traditional theoretical conceptions of party-pressure group relations. While P.A.C's strategy might fit with E.E. Schattschneider's vision of responsible parties, for example, its role and relationship with the Democratic Party appeared to push against other strands of Schattschneider's theoretical view – one that was long dominant in the discipline. In 1948, he had famously proposed a basic rivalry between party and pressure group organizations, for example, with the latter portrayed as *subversive* of party discipline – or, at least, as taking advantage of indiscipline to secure their self-interested aims. As such, Schattschneider's theoretical perspective envisaged no role for an outside group in forging greater party discipline, in *pushing* his conception of more “responsible” parties forward.³⁸ The actions of PACs especially, I have argued, helped to realize part of Schattschneider's vision – the idea of more nationally cohesive, programmatically distinctive parties. But his vision was motivated by a normative conception too – that such parties would be *responsible* for their actions, that they would become centralized and coordinated entities who could be held to account for their actions by voters. Holding to account thus involved a centralized repository of responsibility – one that Schattschneider had thought would inhere in the national committees themselves.

Yet the more “cohesive” party did not become a more *centralized* one. Intra-party power may have shifted horizontally to the upper tier of party organization, with the national committees now much stronger in relation to the state and local party committees than in the past. But that national organization itself exhibits a dispersion of power across different formal party committees and allied groups – each connecting individual citizens on a vertical basis, direct to the national level, through commitment to particular issues, ideologies, or individual candidates. Thus the party system as a whole exhibits a new kind of “decentralization,” and a new kind of accountability problem. If interest group allies are now an integral part of the party, yet lack official status and publicly deny

any such affiliation, then how do we hold “the party” accountable? In a reconfigured system characterized by “shadow” parties, “responsibility” cannot be centered in any one particular place – least of all, it may seem, in the official party structures.

Campaign Finance Reforms

An important factor that has served to exacerbate and legitimize this new kind of decentralization stems from the various campaign finance laws touched on throughout this dissertation. Despite successive efforts to legally restrict the financial activities of organized interests in campaigns, that activity has consistently expanded. Campaign finance scholars have pointed to an ineffective regulatory regime as part of the problem.³⁹ In 1936, *The New Republic* could assert that “[t]he federal corrupt practices act contains as many holes as a kitchen colander...”⁴⁰ But as much as campaign finance reforms failed to constrain, they also served to *encourage* certain kinds of campaign spending, and to guide it in particular directions. The common thread of various legal changes, at least from the 1925 Corrupt Practices and including the Federal Election Campaigns Act of 1971 (FECA), has been a tendency to encourage the proliferation of alternative vehicles to the national party committees as recipients, and spenders, of campaign funds in federal elections.

“Political speech is so ingrained in this country’s culture that speakers find ways around campaign finance laws,” is how this phenomenon is summarized in the Syllabus to the *Citizens United* (2010) decision.⁴¹ And yet the nature of that speech, as Baker (2012) has suggested, was not primarily understood in financial terms until the mid-1930s.⁴² And as I have shown throughout this dissertation – the nature of the “speakers” in the electoral context changed substantially over the course of the early and mid-20th Century. These developments, in fact, inaugurated a cultural *shift* in the kinds of electoral activity that were considered appropriate and by what kinds of actors. Through rhetorical efforts, PACs sought to reduce hostility toward interest group action in the electoral

sphere, and succeeded to some extent in doing so – to embed “political speech” by interest groups into American political culture, to make it acceptable.

The P.A.C. concept had to be formulated and defended in the wake of the Smith-Connally Act. Modes and means of engaging in both primary and general elections had to be developed and refined. A group’s basic decision to enter the electoral fray itself had to be carefully presented and justified, in the face of a public hostile to “special interests” in general, and often the opposition of its own members. The impact of FECA and its amendments can actually be viewed in *cultural* terms, as putting the final approval on the mode of interest group political action institutionalized in PACs – as defining its legal parameters after they had largely been established, and deeming acceptable all that took place within them. In this sense, one might see the “explosion” of corporate political action in the wake of FECA as more a product of a long-term cultural shift in which the final question marks over legal scope were finally lifted. Campaign finance changes can legitimize as well as constrain, and they may not effectively constrain at all.

This does not bode well for an effort to address new developments on the political scene through campaign finance alone. The “SuperPACs” that the *Citizens United* decision paved the way for – groups that can raise and spend money in unlimited amounts, providing they do not coordinate directly with a candidate or party – are another manifestation of organizational “independence” in the electoral realm. Indeed, they operate in principle exactly as the CIO P.A.C. did in 1946, when it utilized union treasury funds throughout the general election campaign period, arguing that only direct contributions to parties or candidates had been prohibited by the Smith-Connally Act. When the Taft-Hartley Act imposed a prohibition on “expenditures” too, CIO lawyers believed such a prohibition to be unconstitutional, though the Supreme Court chose not to offer a direct ruling. Changes in campaign finance law that enhanced the position of the political parties relative to other electoral actors could be a useful corrective – allowing coordination and

consolidation of political money in entities more directly tied to voters. But considering the changes in political culture and competition in the interim, and the lessons of past campaign finance reform, any effort to constrain SuperPACs through new legislation is as likely to create the next campaign finance problem as to diminish this one.

Competition and Emulation

The rise of SuperPACs themselves points to the cyclical process I sketched out in Chapter 1, where the past decade has been characterized by the creation of new types of organization, and new uses for old ones, to fill the void created when party “soft money” was banned – the signature provision of the 2002 Bipartisan Campaign Finance Reform Act (BCRA). Thus “527” groups rose to prominence in the 2004 election, “501(c)4” groups in the 2008 contest, and in 2012 the “SuperPACs” deployed their efforts (With the exception of the last example, these terms denote tax code classifications for various kinds of non-profit organization, each permitted to engage in a narrower range of political activities than PACs, but subject to far less stringent regulation). Where the initiative in each phase has swung back and forth between the party constellations, the replication has been almost instant – and sometimes more effective.

In 2004, it was the Republican-leaning 527s, particularly the “Swift Boat Veterans for Truth” that had the bigger impact, though Democrats had been the first to see their potential as an alternative “soft money” vehicle. In 2008, 501(c)4 groups rose to the fore as a means of channeling money with greater anonymity, and it was hard for any group to match the weight of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in this regard.⁴³ In 2012, Democratic-leaning SuperPACs hoped to outmatch those that first emerged as “shadows” around the GOP, including the “shadow party” group par excellence, Karl Rove’s “American Crossroads.” Shaped by a constantly evolving body of campaign finance law, the creation and emulation of these organizational vehicles reflects the

underlying pressures toward emulation and escalation in a competitive electoral environment.⁴⁴

These examples, moreover, are suggestive of an increasing *pave* to that cyclical process, though a full examination of such a possibility is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

In terms of such contemporary problems, of which SuperPACs are considered but one, the rise of political action might be viewed as a story tinged with irony, since competitive emulation appeared to trap labor and business groups into a form of partisan political activity that did not necessarily prove more efficacious in policy terms, particularly once mobilization had been met with counter-mobilization. When a group encountered policy failures, as labor notably did in 1947 and 1959, it was explained in terms of the insufficient *scale* of political action, not a failure of the underlying strategy involved. More generally, such experiences led not to an *abandonment* of electoral effort, but to a desire to mount a larger one next time, and to perfect the procedures involved.⁴⁵ Even if such failures provoked more fundamental soul-searching, it would be difficult for a group to abandon the field after a certain point, unless it could be assured that its opponent would too.

There are some groups, of course, that might still be regarded as “non-partisan” in a substantive sense – the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) being a prominent case. My claim is not that *all* interest groups have become partisan (or that they must necessarily be *equally* so).⁴⁶ But many of the most important interest groups *have* exhibited partisan leanings, and this tends to encourage more groups to move in that direction. My larger argument captures that idea by seeing an interest group’s party orientation as being shaped by its position within the interest group environment, the status of its policy issues in relation to the parties, and the dominant approach to politics exhibited by its allies and competitors – primarily whether they have adopted a strategy of partisan political action in the electoral realm.

The AARP faces no direct organized opponent in the interest group world, and party positions on its major issues of concern – social security and Medicare, for example – tend toward

similarity rather than difference. And while the AARP might be a political “juggernaut” if ever there was one, it achieves its aims through direct and grassroots lobbying efforts, encouraging its 37 million members to “call your congressman” and put pressure on lawmakers to support the group’s position. Though it produces voter guides detailing candidate positions, the AARP does not endorse candidates or make contributions to candidates. It does not have a PAC.⁴⁷ Should an American Association of *Un-Retired* Persons emerge, however, the AARP’s calculation and strategy may well change – particularly if that group determined that one party offered greater potential as a vehicle for pursuing its aims. In such a case, the AARP would likely respond in kind – with partisan political action.⁴⁸

The likelihood of such a development might seem doubtful – issues of concern to seniors are often considered “valence” issues, that is, imbued with a normative status that makes them impossible to oppose. Veterans’ affairs might be placed in the same category. Such a status may play into the interesting dynamics surrounding agriculture – an economic interest which has been far less prominent in electoral politics than labor or business, and appears less marked by a partisan persuasion. Indeed, this is a stream of future research that I hope to pursue. But groups arising around *new* issues may also enjoy the absence of opposition, at least for a time, and the ways parties will approach such issues may not be immediately clear. New issues, then, might bring new opportunities for non-partisan political action, but in a strategic world critically shaped by the actions of others, the chances of maintaining such a stance may be increasingly fleeting.

A Happier Ending?

All of this makes for less than happy reading for those who would wish to alter contemporary party dynamics – to lessen the polarization and combative style of politics, to reduce the power of “special interests” and the financial resources they bring into the political system. On one level, I hope the

rhetorical analysis of “non-partisanship” might make us more discerning consumers of political discourse, to recognize that neither side has a claim to the kinds of cultural authority bound up in this term. Interest groups have claimed non-partisanship on the grounds that it is *issue* positions driving their support, not partisan affiliation itself. But where political action involves efforts to line up those positions on a particular side, then the issue-based claim becomes effectively meaningless. One possibility, then, is for members of these groups themselves to insist on a purely issue-based criteria for the provision of electoral support, irrespective of their own partisan leanings. A more practical alternative, though no easier to accomplish, would be to utilize the strategy and tactics bound up with “partisan political action” itself – to reverse engineer some of the changes in the party system, by seeking to reshape the composition of *both* parties in line with a more moderate agenda.⁴⁹

Such an approach would involve what the Constitutional Educational League’s Joseph Kamp once decried as “boring from within.”⁵⁰ It involves a long-term commitment, as the early political action committees exhibited. As Wildavsky had noted in the wake of the Goldwater revolution: “If these conservatives are to be defeated they will have to be challenged by a rival, moderate elite, willing to engage in the daily tasks of political organization over the next four years.”⁵¹ Whether four years or even longer, such commitment would need to be matched by a broadening of strategic horizons, beyond the targeted mentality that has reigned supreme. As Susan Dunn observed of President Eisenhower, he “understood the value of a forty-eight state strategy, he insisted that if Republicans worked long and hard, “there can be no such thing as a hopeless state.”⁵² Through such sustained citizen activism, working with the cyclical dynamic by turning existing political strategies to an opposing end, we might arrive at a happier ending.

Notes

Introduction

¹ E.E. Schattschneider, *Party Government* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1942/2004).

² Above the state and local machines “there are visible only the transparent filaments of the ghost of a party,” p. 163. See also figure 8 on p. 164, where the top layer of party organization is labeled “a ghost party.”

³ *Ibid.*, 27.

⁴ *Ibid.* His contemporary, V.O. Key concurred – it was “unwise,” he pronounced, for pressure groups “to back either party.” V.O. Key, *Politics, Parties, and Pressure Groups* (New York: Crowell, 1942), 212.

⁵ See, for example, Matt Grossmann and Casey B. K. Dominguez, “Party Coalitions and Interest Group Networks,” *American Politics Research* 37:5 (2009): 767-800; Gregory Koger, Seth Masket, and Hans Noel, “Cooperative Party Factions in American Politics,” *American Politics Research* 38:1(2010): 33-53; Richard M. Skinner, “Do 527’s Add Up to a Party? Thinking About the “Shadows” of Politics.” *The Forum* 3:3 (2005); Richard M. Skinner, *More Than Money: Interest Group Action in Congressional Elections* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007).

⁶ The “shadow party” label first appeared to describe the operations of 527 groups in the 2004 election.

⁷ Daniel J. Tichenor and Richard A. Harris, “Organized Interests and American Political Development,” *Political Science Quarterly*, 117: 4 (Winter 2002): 587-612. Page 266.

⁸ This perspective is associated with Kathleen Bawn, Martin Cohen, David Karol, Seth Masket, Hans Noel, and John Zaller, and developed across a number of working papers from 2006 to 2012. In 2012, they published an article version in *Perspectives on Politics*, while the basic elements of the model were earlier discussed in Cohen, Karol, Noel, and Zaller’s 2008 book *The Party Decides*. I draw primarily from the latter, and from the September 5, 2011 version of the working paper. See Kathleen Bawn, Martin Cohen, David Karol, Seth Masket, Hans Noel, and John Zaller, “A Theory of Political Parties: Groups, Policy Demands and Nominations in American Politics,” *Perspectives on Politics* 10:3 (September 2012): 571-597; Marty Cohen, David Karol, Hans Noel, and John Zaller, *The Party Decides: Presidential Nominations Before and After Reform* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008); Kathleen Bawn, Martin Cohen, David Karol, Seth Masket, Hans Noel, and John Zaller, “A Theory of Political Parties,” September 5, 2011. (A newer version of the working paper also appeared on March 23, 2012, but the elements of concern from my perspective are not substantially altered).

⁹ Consider Herrnsen (2005), for example, who states: “The modern political action committee (PAC), for example, emerged during the 1970s as a specialized form of organization that contributes money and other kinds of campaign support directly to federal candidates” (26). Paul S. Herrnsen. “Interest Groups and Campaigns: The Electoral Connection.” Paul S. Herrnsen, Ronald G. Shaiko, and Clyde Wilcox (eds.) *The Interest Group Connection: Electioneering, Lobbying, and Policymaking in Washington* 2d. ed., (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2005).

¹⁰ Fiorina (2006) has argued that such polarized *choices* then give the false appearance of mass polarization. Morris P. Fiorina, with Samuel J. Abrams and Jeremy C. Pope, *Culture War: The Myth of a Polarized America*, 2d. ed. (New York: Pearson Longman, 2006), 178-179.

¹¹ Skinner (2005), for example, points to the campaign finance reforms of the 1970s as one of several factors that encouraged the development of contemporary party networks “in recent decades,” also emphasizing the concurrent explosion of issue-based or ideological (“purposive”) groups, a more polarized media environment, and the rise of political consultants. (26-27). Berry (1999), points to the rise of citizen advocacy groups in the 1970s and observes: “[c]itizen groups, ideological by definition, have no need to pretend that they value each political party equally.” In contrast, he suggests, most “corporate, trade, and professional lobbies” “want to maintain at least a veneer of bipartisanship” (96). Wilson (1974) also makes this distinction, where the more ideological groups based on purposive incentives tended “tend to acquire a semipartisan status” – taking positions “that are consistent from the point of view of some general political outlook or ideology” in contrast to traditional materialist interest groups. See James Q. Wilson, *Political Organizations* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), 312. Finally, Herrnsen (2005) both points to the growth of PACs in the 1970s, while acknowledging a longer-term role for interest groups in “recruiting candidates, organizing campaign-related activities and voter drives, and financing campaigns” prior to the 1970s (25).

¹² This describes the status of a “connected” PAC – one that has an interest group “parent” of some description. Other types of unconnected PAC do exist, where the PAC itself is the only organization.

¹³ Hershey (1993) expresses something similar, after noting the kinds of alliances that emerged in the 1970s: “This is not unprecedented, of course; consider the lengthy, close relationship between the Democratic Party and the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations. This relationship has taken on a new dimension, however, with the increase in PACs, including those of citizens’ groups.”(149).

¹⁴ This phrase, cited as the fundamental mantra of the “political action movement,” appeared in *The New Republic* in 1946. “We Were Licked!” *The New Republic*, November 18, 1946, p. 656.

¹⁵ The American Federation of Labor, for example, formed Labor’s League for Political Education – a PAC – in 1947. When the AFL and CIO merged in 1955, they formed the Committee on Political Education (COPE) to conduct their combined electoral efforts. Liberal and conservative ideological organizations also appeared that were essentially PACs – the Americans for Democratic Action (ADA), for example, which appeared in 1947, and the Americans for Constitutional Action (ACA), formed in 1958. The first professional association PAC appeared in 1961 when American Medical Association created AMPAC. And finally, in 1963, the first

business group PAC made its debut, when the National Association of Manufacturers formed the Business-Industry Political Action Committee, or BIPAC. Some, like AMPAC and BIPAC, were associated with a larger parent group, but others like the ADA and ACA were free-standing “unconnected PACs,” to use the current legal term.

¹⁶ 1964 count: Herbert E. Alexander, *Financing the 1964 Election* (Princeton, NJ: Citizens Research Foundation, 1966), Tables 13 and 14, on “Labor National Committees” and “Miscellaneous National Committees,” pp. 64–65. 1970 count: “List of National Political Action Committees,” in David L. Rosenbloom (ed.), *The Political Marketplace* (New York: Quadrangle Books, 1972), pp. 376–383.

¹⁷ Federal Election Commission, “PAC Count – 1974 to Present.” Retrieved 9/20/2012 from <http://www.fec.gov/press/summaries/2011/2011paccount.shtml>. The most recent update listed is 7/1/2012.

¹⁸ If a ‘party system’ consists in the dominant actors and alignments of political competition, then that system has become more nationalized, polarized, and *inclusive* of interest groups, where they had once operated beyond its reach. For a discussion of this “new” kind of party system, and the role of presidents, in particular, in helping to forge it, see Sidney M. Milkis and Jesse H. Rhodes. “George W. Bush, the Republican Party, and the ‘New’ American Party System,” *Perspectives on Politics* 5 No. 3 (2007): 461–488; “Barack Obama, the Democratic Party, and the Future of the ‘New American Party System.’” *The Forum* 7 No. 1 (2009): Article 7. My work contributes to this line of scholarship in emphasizing another factor that helps to push the party system in this direction. For my understanding of what a “party system” consists in, I draw upon the discussion there, and also the work of Hofstadter (1969), who depicts a party *system* as existing once regularized two-party competition was established in the United States – suggesting the importance of the number and identity of party actors involved (see, for example, p. viii). Richard Hofstadter, *The Idea of a Party System: The Rise of Legitimate Opposition in the United States, 1780-1840* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1969).

¹⁹ This position, favoring responsible parties, was most famously expressed by the Committee on Political Parties of the American Political Science Association, which Schattschneider chaired. The Committee’s report was “Toward a More Responsible Two-Party System,” *American Political Science Review* 44 No. 3 Part 2 (September 1950): 1-96.

²⁰ On party “shadows” – a term particularly used to describe the extensive 527 group structures that sprang up in parallel to the party organizations the early 2000s – see Skinner (2005).

²¹ Drawing on the scholarship of Schattschneider, I examine the basic assumptions driving their view of party-interest group competition, and contrast these to the assumptions that point to party-group cooperation and alliances in party network theory.

²² I begin to show how a distinct concept of “non-partisan” electoral activity emerged, serving as an intermediate position between political inactivity and a third party effort. Non-partisan strategies developed by the Anti-Saloon League or the AFL – efforts to elect “friends” and defeat “enemies” irrespective of party affiliation – facilitated involvement in elections through the extant party system. But those efforts were temporary, spatially limited, and reactive – often based on the idea of electoral *threat* to keep legislators “in line.” Involvement in *presidential* races was suspect – given the singular nature of the office, an endorsement here was widely viewed as *partisan*. But another strategy emerged among those discontented with the “friends and enemies” approach – often among advocates for reform who longed for a third party but recognized the practical limitations on such a prospect in the short term. Their solution was to back a major party *presidential* candidate but remain organizationally “independent” of the political parties themselves. Such “independent political action” was intended as a transitional phase prior to the establishment of a fully independent third party.

²³ Though campaign finance legislation in 1910 had established reporting requirements for all political committees, and tasked the Clerk of the House with receiving them, the requirements were loose and enforcement weak. The Clerk, moreover, had no duties in regard to the reports but to receive and retain them for a minimum period of time. Not until 1974, when the Federal Election Commission was established, are systematic records available – of groups registering as PACs, at least. As such, I reconstruct a partial list of major groups active in national politics by drawing on congressional investigations of campaign expenditures conducted throughout this period, and special reports that utilize the information received by the Clerk.

²⁴ In fact, Hansen’s (1991) prominent account of interest group influence, which stressed “access” to lawmakers as the key to legislative success, was based heavily on a case study of agriculture. The absence of major agricultural groups from this list – indeed, the absence of political action committees today among prominent farm groups like the American Farm Bureau Federation – adds weight to my basic argument about the ways in which direct and organized opposition play into a group’s electoral and political orientation. Agriculture, more like veterans and retirees, faces no clear opponent in this sense. Though beyond the scope of this dissertation, further exploration of these dynamics would be important to consider. See John Mark Hansen, *Gaining Access: Congress and the Farm Lobby, 1919-1981* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1991).

²⁵ In 1960, for example, Schattschneider, suggested that “[t]he relation of business and the Republican party is much like that of organized labor and the Democratic party. Republican critics of the Democratic party like to portray the Democratic party as the slave of organized labor. Actually, labor usually has no place else to go. As long as it thinks that elections are important, it *must* support the Democratic party, generally. The facts of political life are that neither business nor labor is able to win elections by itself.” Schattschneider (1960), 55-56.

²⁶ For a discussion of this alliance at the state level, see John C. Green,, James L. Guth, and Clyde Wilcox, “Less than Conquerors: The Christian Right in State Republican Parties,” 117-135 in *Social Movements and American Political Institutions*, eds. Anne N. Costain and Andrew S. McFarland (eds.) (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998).

²⁷ This approach is appropriate to the questions of strategy formation, attitudes, and culture with which I am concerned, but there is also a dearth of usable quantitative information with which to assess these relationships. Ferguson’s work, however, does point to an important archival source: campaign contribution data recorded by early scholars of campaign finance, Louise Overacker and Alexander Heard. This resource has been little used, and Ferguson only draws upon a small part of it. My study includes data from this archive for interest group actors specifically, and across a range of elections between 1936 and 1952, with this last presidential election offering the most comprehensive information from which to draw. In addition to compiling this campaign finance

information, I have also sought to reconstruct at least partially systematic indicators, where possible, in terms of endorsement patterns.

²⁸ This date is the earliest indicated in Center for Responsive Politics data. See

<http://www.opensecrets.org/pacs/lookup2.php?strID=C00082040>

²⁹ Tichenor and Harris (2002), 266.

³⁰ The activities of P.A.C., for example, went beyond direct contributions to doing things “on behalf of” candidates – inspiring the first language on *expenditures* (in the Taft-Hartley Act of 1947). This is relevant for considering the SuperPACs of today, and raising the kinds of questions about accountability that are a major source of concern with contemporary shadow parties.

Chapter 1. Competitors or Collaborators?

¹ E. E. Schattschneider, “Pressure Groups versus Political Parties,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 259 (1948): 17-23.

² Schattschneider (1948), 18.

³ The most prominent exponent of the pluralist viewpoint was Robert A. Dahl, exemplified in his 1961 case study of politics in New Haven, Connecticut. See Robert A. Dahl, *Who Governs? Democracy and Power in an American City* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1961). Schattschneider was taking on a longer strain of group-based political thinking, however, expressed, for example, in Pendleton Herring, *Group Representation Before Congress* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1929). This kind of viewpoint could be traced all the way back to James Madison, who had argued in *Federalist #10* that the danger of “faction” would be reduced in an extended republic, where numerous perspectives and interests would contest, and none would dominate.

⁴ As such, their actions fostered self-serving legislation and governmental incoherence more generally, Schattschneider believed. As Schattschneider famously summarized in a later work, “[t]he flaw in the pluralist heaven is that the heavenly chorus sings with a strong upper-class accent.” E.E. Schattschneider. *The Semi-Sovereign People: A Realist's View of Democracy in America* (Wadsworth Publishing, 1960/1988), 34-35.

⁵ Schattschneider (1942), 163. In a diagram of the party structure, moreover, Schattschneider labels the national level with “A ghost party” (see p. 164, figure 8).

⁶ See Note 53, below, for an overview of recent empirical literature on party networks.

⁷ On the challenges this seemed to pose to the Schattschneider’s hypothesized inverse relationship, see Larry J. Sabato, “PACs and Parties,” pp. 73-93 in Annelise Anderson (ed.), *Political Money: Deregulating American Politics: Selected Writings on Campaign Finance Reform* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 2000), 87.

⁸ Occasional speculations point to the 1970s as a baseline for understanding contemporary networks – a tumultuous decade in which new kinds of advocacy organization exploded, the presidential nomination process underwent significant change, and major campaign finance reforms were passed.

⁹ Marty Cohen, David Karol, Hans Noel, and John Zaller, *The Party Decides: Presidential Nominations Before and After Reform* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 18. See also Kathleen Bawn, Martin Cohen, David Karol, Seth Masket, Hans Noel, and John Zaller, “A Theory of Political Parties: Groups, Policy Demands and Nominations in American Politics,” *Perspectives on Politics* 10:3 (September 2012): 571-597 (plus working papers from 2006, 2011, and 2012).

¹⁰ See, for example, Cohen et al. p. 31.

¹¹ Pre-commitment is used here in a broader sense, discussed more fully in Chapter 1.

It is not that pressure groups *never* sought to precommit candidates – to obtain pledges of support from candidates, and so forth – which had long been a part of interest group electioneering. Rather, it is about pre-commitment in a bigger sense, including partisan primary activity, intended to reshape the whole ethos of the party, such that the group’s commitments would be ingrained in any candidates from the start. The scale of more concrete pre-commitment efforts today is also much larger today, such as efforts to procure public pledges of support. Consider the activities of the Americans for Tax Reform, for example, which first offered its “Taxpayer Protection Pledge” in 1986, which commits any candidate that signs it “to oppose *any* effort to increase income taxes on individuals and businesses.”

¹² In this respect I draw to some extent on the work of Tichenor and Harris (2005), and Heaney (2010) who reconsider aspects of Key, Schattschneider, and David Truman’s early scholarship, and are discussed in more detail below. See Daniel J. Tichenor and Richard A. Harris, “The Development of Interest Group Politics in America: Beyond the Conceits of Modern Times.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 8:1 (2005): 251-270; Michael T. Heaney, “Linking Political Parties and Interest Groups,” 568-587 in L. Sandy Maisel and Jeffrey M. Berry (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of American Political Parties and Interest Groups* (New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 2010).

¹³ Engaging in elections could actually jeopardize the achievement of such aims, he argued – risking *isolation* on the political scene if a favored candidate or party lost. Thus interest groups largely avoided campaign activity. But changing conditions of party competition might alter the calculation. Where national parties were strong and cohesive, pressure groups would be less able to play both sides. Where the parties divided directly on their issue of concern, the risk of isolation would become irrelevant, since groups only had a chance of achieving their aims if the more favorable party won. In such circumstances, they had nothing to lose by entering the electoral fray and trying to secure a favored outcome.

¹⁴ Schattschneider (1942), 27.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Parties, in turn, faced their own strategic incentives to avoid too close an identification with any one interest – it compromised their ability to adapt and move with the flow of public opinion. “The hospitality of the parties to all interests” was therefore “one of their most pronounced characteristics.” “Specimens of nearly all shades of opinion” could be found within them. Ibid, 88.

¹⁷ Key (1942), 212.

¹⁸ Pressure groups were incapable by definition of presenting their own candidates for election, in Schattschneider’s classification, even if they did engage in some amount of electoral activity. Nominating candidates for office was the definitional act of a party, in his schema. Schattschneider, (1942), 61.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid, 27.

²¹ The AFL pursued its “friends and enemies” approach in selected congressional contests beginning in 1906, and more extensively on the state level. The Anti-Saloon League’s approach was similar, with the threat of electoral intervention used to great effect in the ‘teens and twenties, helping to foster sufficient pro-temperance sentiment among legislators (or fear of electoral punishment for voting “wet”), as to pass the Prohibition amendment. Both groups are discussed in detail in Chapter 3. On the Anti-Saloon League, see especially Peter H. Odegard, *Pressure Politics: The Story of the Anti-Saloon League* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1928). On the AFL, see Julie Greene, *Pure and Simple Politics: The American Federation of Labor and Political Activision, 1881-1917* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 1998).

²² Odegard (1928), 87.

²³ Key (1942), 212.

²⁴ Schattschneider (1942) even formulated a “law of imperfect mobilization” which showed that groups could never deliver the votes they claimed to control (87). Truman (1951) also commented on the inability of interest groups to truly mobilize their membership (314-315). Similarly, Key (1942) observed: “Rarely, except in limited areas, has any other group matched the Anti-Saloon League in capacity to deliver substantial blocs of voters” (211).

²⁵ Schattschneider (1942), 163. In a diagram of the party structure, moreover, Schattschneider labels the national level with “A ghost party” (see p. 164, figure 8).

²⁶ Ibid., 192.

²⁷ Schattschneider (1942), for example, acknowledged “important differences in the geographical and social distribution” of support for each party (88).

²⁸ As Schattschneider (1942) explained: American parties lacked institutions that could produce “authoritative” declarations of party policy, and lacked organizations that could effectively discipline or mobilize their officials within the government (18). As he noted later, “it is safe to assume that party lines on public issues will hold only if the central leadership is strong enough to control congressmen effectively” (137).

²⁹ Schattschneider (1942), 137.

³⁰ “The mobilization of majorities in recognition of the great public interests, the integration of special interests with public policy, and the over-all management and planning involved in discriminating among special interests cannot be done by organized special interests on their own initiative,” Schattschneider explained. “These are the functions of an entirely different kind of organization, the political party. The majorities formed by the parties are never mere aggregates of special interests, i.e., the parties and pressure groups consist of two different syntheses of interests.” (1942, 31). It was through “[t]he management of interests” that “government preserves its freedom of action in spite of the pressure groups without destroying the right of free association,” Schattschneider added later, specifying parties “as superior control mechanisms of government” (1942, 109).

³¹ Key (1942) did not appear to be quite such as partisan of parties as Schattschneider, and did suggest ways in which pressure groups themselves might self-monitor, to some extent, in relation to the public good. “The American Association of Railroads, the Edison Electric Institute, the Congress of Industrial Organizations, the American Federation of Labor, the Anti-Saloon League, the Democratic Party, or any other group seeking power or seeking to influence the course of public action tends to rationalize its own interests with the public good; and through the necessity for this process of moral justification groups may, indeed, be brought to modify their more extreme demands” (10).

³² Schattschneider (1948), 18.

³³ Tichenor and Harris (2005) describe its interpretation as a “zero-sum model,” with a clean inverse logic that “has appealed to countless scholars over the years” – even becoming a “common wisdom” in the discipline. They suggest, however, that it was a “speculative” claim, and one that has not been adequately tested “with systematic qualitative or quantitative longitudinal data” (265).

³⁴ Pressure group *effectiveness* denoted their ability to gain policy concessions at the expense of the public interest, not necessarily their organizational strength or prevalence. And pressure groups did not so much actively *weaken* the national parties as *take advantage* of that extant weakness (a status attributed to the *strength* of local parties and the concern of local leaders with *patronage*, as explained in 1942). “[T]he pressure groups thrive on the weaknesses of the parties,” he asserted, but party weakness was “more apparent than the strength of the pressure groups” (1948, 18). Nor had pressure groups *caused* this party weakness: though groups benefited from this situation, “it probably does not follow that the parties have been seriously weakened by the pressure groups,” he conceded (1948, 23).

³⁵ Schattschneider (1942), 192. *Emphasis in original*. He adds later: “A well-centralized party system has nothing to fear from the pressure groups,” he also asserted (197).

³⁶ A prominent narrative in American political science throughout the 1960s and 1970s was of “party decline,” with citizens reporting lower levels of identification with political parties than in the past, and with an increasing emphasis on individual candidates rather than party organizations in campaigns. See, for example, Martin P. Wattenberg, “The Decline of Political Partisanship in the United States: Negativity or Neutrality?” *The American Political Science Review* 75:4 (1981): 941-950; Martin P. Wattenberg, *The Decline of American Political Parties, 1952-1980* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984). By the early 1980s, however, a trend of party

strengthening, especial in organizational terms, was becoming apparent. See, for example, James W. Ceaser, “Political Parties – Declining, Stabilizing, or Resurging?” 87-137 in Anthony Stephen King (ed.), *The New American Political System* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1990).

³⁷ Sabato (2000), 87.

³⁸ These new groups have generated a number of terms – activist, advocacy, or “citizen” groups – as Berry (1999) labels them, though the basic non-material/non-professional definition remains the same. See Jeffrey M. Berry, *The New Liberalism: The Rising Power of Citizen Groups* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1999), 2. For similar definitions see Frank R. Baumgartner et al., *Lobbying and Policy Change: Who Wins, Who Loses, and Why* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 9; Theda Skocpol, *Diminished Democracy: From Membership to Management in American Civic Life* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004), 140, 142. Berry distinguishes such citizens groups from “public-interest groups” more broadly, which seek “a collective good, the achievement of which will not selectively and materially benefit the membership or activists of the organization.” Some citizens groups, however, such as those promoting equality for women or racial minorities, do seek certain kinds of selective benefits, even if their purpose is not primarily “material.” (190, n1). The rise of such groups, in the very lack of “selective incentives” they offer to members, serves to challenge Mancur Olson’s prominent theory of interest group formation and action, Berry notes (2).

Schattschneider (1948) was somewhat hostile to the notion of “public interest” groups, seeing *parties* as the best vehicle to serve that interest, and such groups as an inefficient and ineffective alternative that siphoned talent away from the parties (20). See Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971).

³⁹ Though these purposive citizens groups were typically “single-issue” groups pursuing policy in a specific policy area (unlike the broadly ideological groups of the 1960s), Wilson (1974) suggests they had explicit ideological orientations. Because the activists within these groups were motivated by *purposive* incentives, Wilson explains, they tended to have a stronger ideological bent than most traditional materialist interest groups (312). He notes, however, that some material groups, such as the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) and the National Federation of Independent Businessmen, were important exceptions as both materialist in basis and ideological in orientation (155, 162). James Q. Wilson, *Political Organizations* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1974).

⁴⁰ Schlozman and Tierney (1986) referred to the rivalry thesis as a “common wisdom” (201). So influential was his thesis, other scholars have argued, that it long impeded the recognition of cooperative relationships, and shaped party and interest group scholarship along separate tracks. See Allan J. Cigler, “Research Gaps in the Study of Interest Group Representation,” 29-36 in William Crotty, Mildred A. Schwartz, and John C. Green (eds.), *Representing Interests and Interest Group Representation* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1994); Kristi Andersen, “Political Parties and Civil Society: Learning from the American Case,” 15-26 in Edward R. McMahon and Thomas Sinclair (eds.), *Democratic Institution Performance: Learning from the American Case* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2002); and Kay Lehman Schlozman and John T. Tierney, *Organized Interests and American Democracy* (New York, NY: Harper and Row, 1986).

⁴¹ The “Commission on Party Structure and Delegate Selection” was commonly known by the names of its successive chairmen, Senator George McGovern (D-SD) and Representative Donald Fraser (D-MN). Though intended to shape a new selection process for the 1972 Democratic presidential nomination, its promotion of primaries affected candidates down the ballot and from both parties, as a result of widespread Democratic control at the state level – where nominations are regulated. See James W. Ceaser, *Presidential Selection: Theory and Development* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979), 276-284.

⁴² Important cases, as discussed in subsequent chapters, include: *Pipefitters v. United States* 407 U.S. 385 (1972), *Buckley v. Valeo* 424 U.S. 1 (1976), and the 1975 Federal Election Commission Advisory Opinion in the SunPAC case (AO 1975-23).

⁴³ Ceaser (1990) notes that “[p]arty organizations had lost any say in recruiting and nominating candidates for most offices, and they played only a modest role in the campaigns for “their” nominees” at this point (88). See also Pippa Norris, *A Virtuous Circle: Political Communications in Postindustrial Societies* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 137-161.

⁴⁴ David B. Truman, “Party Reform, Party Atrophy, and Constitutional Change: Some Reflections,” *Political Science Quarterly* 99:4 (Winter 1984-85): 637-655. Pp. 653-654.

⁴⁵ This term refers to unregulated funds raised for voter mobilization and “party building” purposes, created in the late 1970s in response to a series of judicial and regulatory challenges. Though it could be contributed to party organizations at any level, the national party committees quickly established an important role in coordinating it. See Anthony Corrado, Thomas E. Mann, Daniel R. Ortiz, Trevor Potter, and Frank J. Sorauf (eds.), *Campaign Finance Reform: A Sourcebook* (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1997), pp. 379-380. Serving to strengthen their national organization and enhance their financial utility to candidates, Aldrich (1995) coined a new term for the rejuvenated parties – “parties-in-service.” John H. Aldrich, *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Political Parties in America* (Chicago, IL: University Of Chicago Press, 1995), 289.

⁴⁶ Overarching patterns of PAC contributions have been discerned, where labor unions contribute more to Democratic candidates, while corporate and business association PACs lean Republican in their donations. The skew in either direction is not equivalent, however. Sabato (2000), for example, notes that while business and trade PACs “are commonly believed to be Republican-oriented...since 1978 more than a third of corporate PAC gifts and well over 40 percent of all trade PAC donations in congressional races have gone to Democratic candidates (84-85). However, he notes, “[u]nlike the business and trade PACs, labor union committees make no pretense of bipartisanship; an average of 94 percent of all labor PAC money has flowed to the Democrats since 1978” (85). See Larry J. Sabato, “PACs and Parties,” 73-93 in Annelise Anderson ed., *Political Money: Deregulating American Politics: Selected Writings on Campaign Finance Reform* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 2000).

⁴⁷ Wilson (1974) suggested that the new advocacy groups had a stronger ideological bent than most traditional materialist interest groups, since the activists within them were motivated by *purposive* incentives (312). Lacking major material stakes in political outcomes, Wilson argued, the purposive advocacy groups found it easier to take positions on a wide variety of issues, and were even

driven to do so by the need for organizational maintenance. In doing so, they “tend to acquire a semipartisan status,” he claimed, taking positions “that are consistent from the point of view of some general political outlook or ideology” (312). Wilson did, however, point to some notable exceptions to this lesser ideological tendency among materialist group, including the National Association of Manufacturers and the National Federation of Independent Businessmen, which had a highly ideological outlook (155, 162). Partisan association also helped interest groups to build a “distinctive competence,” he argued – a “reasonably clear identity,” which enabled members to establish “affiliational consistency” (312). Similarly, Berry (1999) draws a link between ideological and party identities. Berry identifies both overtly liberal and conservative advocacy groups appearing first in the 1970s – with liberal groups generally preceding the conservative ones, he notes (33) – a pattern also observed by Skocpol (2004, 144-145). As Berry summarized in terms of party affiliation: “[c]itizen groups, ideological by definition, have no need to pretend that they value each political party equally” (96). In contrast, most “corporate, trade, and professional lobbies,” he claimed, “want to maintain at least a veneer of bipartisanship” (96). If these scholars suggested the nature of the new advocacy groups might lead them to the parties, Hershey (1993) conveyed the reverse perspective. She pointed to the *parties*, and an apparent increase in their ideological tendencies, to explain the orientation of new advocacy groups toward them. Such groups found themselves “being drawn into alliances with one of the two major political parties in order to protect their futures, whether they like[d] it or not,” Hershey explained (149). Marjorie Randon Hershey, “Citizens’ Groups and Political Parties in the United States,” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 528 (July 1993): 142-156. Hershey makes reference here to Jack L. Walker, *Mobilizing Interest Groups in America: Patrons, Professions, and Social Movements* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1991), 10, 150. See also Jack L. Walker, “The Origins and Maintenance of Interest Groups in America,” *The American Political Science Review* 77:2 (June 1983): 390-406.

⁴⁸ Paul S. Herrnsen, “The Roles of Party Organizations, Party-Connected Committees, and Party Allies in Elections,” *The Journal of Politics* 71:4 (October 2009): 1207-1224.

⁴⁹ Mildred A. Schwartz, *The Party Network: The Robust Organization of Illinois Republicans* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990). A traditional and formalistic view of the party, as offered by Cigler (1994), states that the party “is best thought of as composed of its Senate campaign committee, its House campaign committee, its national committee, and the respective state party organizations” (34). Similarly, Ceaser (1990) describes the national party as “the national committees plus the two congressional campaign committees” (316, n23). This emphasis on the formal apparatus draws on V.O. Key’s famous tri-partite definition of parties emphasizing the “party-as-organization,” over the “party-in-government,” and the “party-in-the-electorate” – a framework he first fully offered in the 1958 edition of *Politics, Parties, and Pressure Groups*. As noted there, Key borrowed the “party-in-the-electorate” term from Ralph M. Goldman’s 1951 doctoral dissertation, *Party Chairmen and Party Factions* (Key 1958, 180-182).

⁵⁰ Grossmann and Dominguez (2009), 796. As Grossmann and Dominguez clarify elsewhere, this expansion includes the “loyal interest groups that pursue issues that fall within a party’s stated positions” (770).

⁵¹ As Schwartz (1990) explains: “A party network is not an atomized set of actors. No matter how poorly defined its boundaries, loosely linked its participants, or varied the interpretation of its goals, it remains an organized entity” (16).

⁵² Schwartz (1990), 5.

⁵³ Scholars working in this approach have offered a number of empirical findings addressing the size, composition and cohesion of contemporary party networks, and begun to reveal important differences in the membership and operation of the Democratic and Republican sides. See, for example, Matt Grossmann and Casey B. K. Dominguez, “Party Coalitions and Interest Group Networks,” *American Politics Research* 37:5 (2009): 767-800; Gregory Koger, Seth Masket, and Hans Noel, “Cooperative Party Factions in American Politics,” *American Politics Research* 38:1(2010): 33-53; Richard M. Skinner, *More Than Money: Interest Group Action in Congressional Elections* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007); Richard M. Skinner, Seth E. Masket, and David A. Dulio, “527 Committees and the Political Party Network” (2009). A general result across these various contributions is the lack of overlap between members of each party’s network – suggesting a very polarized configuration of affiliation among the groups they identify. In terms of party asymmetries, *differences* in the organization and operations of the national parties have been noted since the “resurgence” of parties was first suggested in the 1980s. David Mayhew (1986), for example, described “a pronounced new asymmetry between Republicans and Democrats in their array of parties and associated structures” – identifying unions and activist groups as actors within such structures. David R. Mayhew, *Placing Parties in American Politics: Organization, Electoral Settings, and Government Activity in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), 331-332 (*emphasis mine*). Cotter, Gibson, Bibby, and Huckshorn (1984) connected party strength directly to these broader constellations of groups, providing a rare systematic examination of party relationships with “extra-partisan” organizations. Based on interviews with *state* party chairs, they found that state Democratic parties were “organizationally weaker” than their Republican counterparts, were far more reliant *overall* on support from extra partisan groups, and received a different *mix* of services from such groups. Cornelius P. Cotter, James L. Gibson, John F. Bibby, and Robert J. Huckshorn, *Party Organizations and American Politics* (New York: Praeger, 1984), 138, 141. Freeman (1986) described different party “cultures” in which the Republican Party was more authoritarian and hierarchical, and the Democratic Party more sensitive to internal democracy (343). Jo Freeman, “The Political Culture of the Democratic and Republican Parties,” *Political Science Quarterly* 101:3 (1986): 327-356. Typically, the Democrats have been portrayed as a somewhat disparate party of interests, with the Republicans as a more homogenous and hierarchical entity. Koger, Masket, and Noel (2010), for example, invoke Will Rogers’s quip, “I’m a member of no organized political party—I’m a Democrat” (37), while adding that “Republicans are often considered more unified than the Democrats (39). Andersen (2002) notes “the criticism directed at the national Democratic Party over the past several decades for being a ‘collection of special interests’” (22). Gilman (2004) describes the Democrats as “an old-fashioned non-ideological party” that “instinctually sees its role as serving interests groups on a more or less tactical basis,” while, in contrast, “the Republicans have all but completed their transformation into an ideological party in the classic European sense. Nils Gilman, “What the Rise of the Republicans as America’s First Ideological Party Means for the Democrats,” *The Forum* 2 No. 1 (2004): 1. The Republican-leaning interest group environment is supposed to be smaller and more tightly organized (see, for example, Grossmann and Dominguez (2009), 781; or Robert G.

Boatright, "Situating the New 527 Organizations in Interest Group Theory." *The Forum* 5:2 (2007): Article 5, p. 10). But network scholars have begun to provide more details on the coalitions, and, importantly, have suggested that such party asymmetries are declining. Grossmann and Dominguez (2009), for example, label these traditional images "folk theories" without broad empirical underpinnings (797). Looking at party networks in different arenas, they suggest a similar size on both sides (777), and find some evidence that Democratic networks are *tighter* than Republican ones, while the latter are more factionalized (particularly in terms of legislative partners, or networks of endorsers) – challenging the sense that Republicans are more coordinated (781). Koger, Masket and Noel (2010) also find more factionalization on the Republican side, when looking at the exchange of donor names among groups (44). In contrast, Skinner, Masket, and Dulio (2009), utilizing the employment records of 527 groups (which became prominent in the wake of Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002 due to their ability to raise soft money), find differences in the use of such groups that accord with traditional images: Democrats, they suggest, utilized 527s more heavily, but the Republican arrangement was more hierarchical (1, 17-18).

⁵⁴ The data used by Grossmann and Dominguez, for example, covers three years at most (1999-2002, though part of their data looks at 2002 only); Koger, Masket, and Noel's data covers only two years (2004-2005). For a discussion of 527 groups that takes a somewhat more developmental perspective see Richard M. Skinner, "Do 527s Add Up to a Party? Thinking About the "Shadows" of Politics." *The Forum* 3:3 (2005).

⁵⁵ Richard Skinner, "Interest Groups and the Party Networks: Views from Inside the Beltway." Paper prepared for delivery at the 2004 Annual Meeting of the Southern Political Science Association, New Orleans, LA, January 8-11, 2004, p. 26.

⁵⁶ Cohen et al. point to a stream of scholarship in this vein, beginning with Joseph Schumpeter's *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy* (1942), running through Anthony Downs' *An Economy Theory of Democracy* (1957), furthered in Thomas Schwartz's unpublished paper "Why Parties?" (1989), which was then refined and extended in John H. Aldrich's *Why Parties: The Origin and Transformation of Political Parties in America* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1995). See Cohen et al., pp. 20, 26.

⁵⁷ Cohen et al., 31.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 18.

⁵⁹ "Few if any groups of intense policy demanders are big enough to get what they want working alone," Cohen et al. note on p., 31, "[s]o they seek allies." The process by which two distinct coalitions emerges is detailed elsewhere, see pp. 34-35, for example. They basically suggest that the composition of coalitions will be conditioned by the way each group's desired policies interact. Some are simply irreconcilable, maybe even diametrically opposed, while others will be complementary. The coalition works best if "each group wants a policy other don't care about, but some amount of conflict may be negotiated in forming coalitions (34). Groups with severe conflicts, however, "would typically be in different parties." (366). The number of coalitions will ultimately reduce to two – aiming for a minimum-winning coalition that can provide the most to each member while still ensuring electoral victory.

⁶⁰ Bawn et al. (2011) use the term "textbook party," which they describe as "a different animal from the one we have theorized" – one that puts office-seekers rather than policy demanders at the center (16).

⁶¹ As "single-minded seekers of reelection," in David Mayhew's famous phrase, Down's analysis suggests that party "teams" (composed of office-seekers) should take whatever position will gain them a majority – which would be that of the median voter. See David R. Mayhew, *Congress: The Electoral Connection* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1974/2004), 5.

⁶² Aldrich (1995), esp. 180-193. See also John H. Aldrich, "A Downsian Spatial Model with Party Activism." *The American Political Science Review* 77:4 (1983): 974-90. It is not too far from this position to seeing interest groups themselves as an important force pushing polarization. Poole and Rosenthal (1984), for example, suggest that the tendency for interest groups to have more extreme positions than lawmakers, helps to explain why "general constituency interests [are] so often sacrificed to those of support coalitions." "Groups with moderate views do not get involved in politics," they explain. "Candidates in turn need people willing to contribute money and ring doorbells. While some competitive pressures may push candidates toward the center, the need for resources retains them at the extremes" (1075). Keith T. Poole and Howard Rosenthal, "The Polarization of American Politics," *The Journal of Politics* 46:4 (November 1984): 1061-1079. Nicol Rae (2007) explicitly implicates interest group activity in primaries as one of several factors pushing the polarized parties of today. In presidential nomination contests, he explains, "[i]nterest groups and large donors contribute to the candidate who holds issue positions that they approve of but who they also bet can defeat the other party's candidate in the general election." "The outcome in primary politics is to drive candidates toward their party's ideological agenda and single-issue interest group supporters," he continued, with the "overall effect" being "a polarization of party candidates that mirrors the increased partisanship in Congress" (182). Nicol Rae, "Be Careful What You Wish For: The Rise of Responsible Parties in American National Politics," *Annual Review of Political Science* 10 (June 2007): 169-191.

⁶³ Morris P. Fiorina, with Samuel J. Abrams and Jeremy C. Pope, *Culture War: The Myth of a Polarized America*, 2d. ed. (New York: Pearson Longman, 2006). See esp. pp. 25-32, 178-179.

⁶⁴ Indeed, as Bawn et al. note in their 2011 paper, moving from issue activists to advocacy groups that take a particular side in the party conflict: "[p]arty-linked' interest groups are recognized in the textbook view as important to parties, but as potentially rival influences, not core components" (15).

⁶⁵ Cohen et al.'s book, *The Party Decides*, was inspired by an effort to reconcile apparently "candidate-centered" politics – where candidates can essentially self-nominate, and even *force* themselves upon an unwilling party – with their belief that, in fact, "party insiders" were still controlling presidential nominations, much as they had in the period prior to 1970s (36, 191). Their solution was to expand who counted as a "party insider" beyond the state and local bosses (those in charge of formal party committees) of the earlier era. By viewing issue activists, among others, as a constitutive element of the party, then their influence in the selection of nominees (during the "invisible primary" especially) need not mean that "the party" as a whole has lost power in this process (191). There may have been a brief window when "outside" actors of sorts were able to use the primary process to nominate dark horse candidates, but as Bawn et al. argue in their (2011) paper, argue "party insiders have managed to reassert much of their lost influence" (5). Employing

their broader conception of party composition, they argue that parties have regained much of the control over nominations they had apparently lost through the shift toward primaries

⁶⁶ In a politician-centered theory, parties are supposedly unconcerned with the nature of their policy commitments, and will take whatever positions appear most likely to lead to victory (i.e. the median voter's preferences). In Cohen et al.'s account, the "intense policy demanders" who form parties are *very* concerned about policy commitments, and have positions further to the extremes than the median. The party will thus try to gain a policy as close to its preference as possible – benefiting its constituent interests rather than the general public per se. The extent to which it will achieve its preference depends on the level of general voter attentiveness – the less attentive the public, the further away from the median the policy result will be. "A degree of voter blindness is central to our analysis because it creates the possibility for politicians, or groups that may influence them, to convert public policies and resources to group purposes," they explain (32).

⁶⁷ "Of the older theories, the one most similar to ours is that of E.E. Schattschneider in *Party Government*," Cohen et al. state (38). "Schattschneider saw interest groups as the "raw material of politics" and described parties as coalitions of groups," they explain (38). He also emphasized the control of nominations as the signature task of parties – fitting with their larger focus on presidential nominations – emphasizing "the formation of a "united front" to control nominations for office" as the "central act of a party coalition" (38). "He who can make the nomination is the owner of the party," Schattschneider said (38, quoting from Schattschneider, 1942, p. 64). [In the 2011 version of the paper, they take quotes both from Schattschneider 1942 (p. 2) and 1960. (p. 9).]

But in other ways, Schattschneider's scholarship appears at odds with some of the lines that Cohen et al. pursue. Beyond the normative mismatch already noted, Schattschneider's general denial of the partisan orientation of interest groups sits awkwardly with their theory, as does his limited acknowledgment of electoral activity by groups. In fairness, failing to address other aspects of Schattschneider's work is partially an occupational hazard of invoking him – he wrote so extensively on so many topics that his positions are not always in perfect accord, and can often lead in a variety of directions. They also cite V.O. Key's *Politics, Parties, and Pressure Groups* (1965, 5th edition) as offering a perspective "that is quite similar to our view" (38).

⁶⁸ Indeed, for Cohen et al., parties are simply "a means to an end" for the groups that compose them, "and the end is the group's own policy agenda" (31). In this sense, the "collaborative" dynamic involved is an anemic one, since that term would imply some amount of mutual respect and reciprocity. In their depiction, the interests never become "partisans" so to speak, for "in joining party coalitions, groups do not put the good of the party ahead of their own goals," rather, they "cooperate in party business only insofar as cooperation serves their interests" (31). Group and party identities thus remain distinct, even as the organizations involved may be treated as functionally equivalent. Compare this position to Daniel Galvin's recent research on the Democratic Party in Michigan, which suggests that interest group leaders begin to internalize broader party aims after long periods of alliance. See Daniel J. Galvin, *Rust Belt Democrats: Party Legacies and Adaptive Capacities in Postindustrial America* (New York: Oxford University Press, forthcoming).

⁶⁹ Societal interests rather than individual (rational) legislators were certainly the building blocks of politics for Schattschneider – with parties the superior organizational mode for managing and reconciling them. But the coalitions so formed would not be rigid or permanently divided, as he envisaged them. And in terms of building a presidential electoral coalition, Schattschneider explicitly denied that parties simply aggregated formal or informal interest groups – to win elections, parties had to do much more than appeal to special interest audiences, he argued, they had to balance those interests and make a broader appeal on the basis of the *public* interest. For example, in 1960, he explicitly critiqued prevailing views of presidential party coalitions as simply "aggregates of special-interest groups held together by an endless process of negotiation and concession," as an unrealistic perspective that "greatly exaggerates the group composition of the parties" (53-54). Parties could not build electoral majorities by just appealing to specific interests, he argued – the "law of imperfect mobilization" meant that such appeals would never translate perfectly into votes (due to the heterogeneity of group membership), while at the same time, the "unearned increment" of organization in politics meant they would gain some support automatically, simply by virtue of being an option under constrained choice. The point was that in order to *win*, parties must make broad appeals to the general public, in Schattschneider's views. Thus there was a Rousseauian quality to party politics as he saw it – with parties expressing the "general will" rather than the "will of all." Critiquing pluralism, Schattschneider (1942) asserted that "[n]o public policy could ever be the mere sum of the demands of the organized special interests" (31).

⁷⁰ Cohen et al., 32-33.

⁷¹ Ibid., 31.

⁷² Ibid., 34.

⁷³ "Political sense": Ibid, 33. "[W]e conclude that groups can often get more from government by funneling their resources through a party coalition to nominate and elect officeholders friendly to their interests than by buying policies one at a time from independent officeholders after they have taken office" (Ibid., 34). In their related paper with Zaller and Bawn, which lays out this model more formally, they show how it is rational for intense policy demanders to secure a candidate who is closest to their views, in order to ensure that candidate will be responsive to them post-election (see Bawn et al., 2011).

⁷⁴ Ibid. Essentially, the elected policy dictator may seek to drive a hard bargain with them – unless the policy they desire is popular and beneficial to most voters, the dictator may require other inducements to promote the group's desired aims. Such an inducement, they indicate, would be "the promise to donate money to the dictator's reelection," for which "the dictator may demand a high price, and if one group won't meet her price, she can do business with another group and adopt its policies instead... The bottom line, then, is that an incumbent politician can drive hard bargains with groups that try to buy policy from her and may not sell on any terms" (33).

⁷⁵ If more and more groups simply try and promote their own favored candidate, their chances of success will keep falling (Cohen et al., 33). Forming a coalition, in contrast, augments their chances of success – by "combining forces behind a single politician who is committed to a program that gives each of the groups what it wants" (Cohen et al., 34).

⁷⁶ Ibid., 34. Cohen et al.'s analysis suggests the importance of "fit" between extant groups within a coalition, and those coming into it. That is, groups with irreconcilable policy conflicts will not be in the same party, while the more complementary their interests might be, the more likely they would be to join the same coalition (see 31, 34, 366).

⁷⁷ Ibid., 362.

⁷⁸ "[I]t is *more effective* to capture politicians at the nominating stage than to bid for their support after they gain office," Cohen et al. observe (18, *emphasis mine*). While Bawn et al. note in their paper, "[p]olicy demanders focus on nominations because it is *easier* to gain a reliable agent at this stage than to capture an independent office holder later on" (1, *emphasis mine*). Efficiency, ease, and effectiveness are slightly different rationales that are all offered to explain the superiority of lobbying over electioneering.

⁷⁹ "[A]cross the entire span of American history," Cohen et al. assert, "parties behave in the same basic way – as vehicles by which the most energized segments of the population attempt to pull government policy toward their own preferences" (7). Such coalitions of intense policy demanders "should be viewed as a real political party, similar in nature to parties throughout American history," they emphasize, "rather than a haphazard collection of special interests and unsavory characters." (16). Thus the "basic character" of the parties, they argue has remained fundamentally *the same* across time, they claim, though "the institutional form and performance of parties" might vary (362). Thus at different times, the formal party apparatus might capture more of the important party behavior, as in most the 19th Century (354). In the 20th Century, however, "much of the business of the national parties was conducted by a more informal means, the invisible primary" (354). "[P]arties have been using the invisible primary to choose nominees since the 1930s," they argue, adding that "the process did not change much in the aftermath of the McGovern-Fraser reforms" (13). At another point they suggest that dynamics similar to today's "invisible primary" have played out "since at least the 1940s," adding that important players in both the pre- and post-McGovern-Fraser nomination systems included "nationally oriented interest groups" (172). "From the framing of the Constitution to the present," they reaffirm, "parties may be fruitfully understood as organized attempts by intense policy demanders to get control of government." (362). As Bawn et al. (2011) put it in their paper: "[o]ur view resonates with the contemporary surge in activism in American politics, but we maintain that it applies broadly in American history" (1).

⁸⁰ One possible response to this question involves the formal status of "intense policy demanders" in Cohen et al.'s depiction. They make no claim that "intense policy demanders" must be organized as formal interest groups – official "representatives" of a particular interest. Perhaps "interests" in some looser sense could be playing an important *partisan* role at a time when Schattschneider suggested the "official" representatives of such interests were not? Perhaps even the *leaders* of such official groups played an important partisan role behind-the-scenes? But such speculations raise a deeper question, as to why there would be such a disjuncture between the activity of formal and informal interest groups at all? And for all formal interest groups do not appear as such in the "founding myth," the bulk of Cohen et al.'s discussion of nomination politics *is* geared toward them, making it difficult to draw consistent distinctions. In sum, the fact that organized representatives of major interests do not always behave as expected is not accounted for in the theory itself.

⁸¹ In the contemporary realm, at least, the recommended strategy seems to resonate. As Skinner (2004) observes, it is difficult to disentangle policy goals from party control in today's polarized environment. Skinner (2004), 15.

⁸² Mark J. Rozell, Clyde Wilcox, Michael M. Franz, *Interest Groups in American Campaigns: The New Face of Electioneering*, 3d ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 24.

⁸³ As Hall and Wayman (1990) summarize: "Considerable research on members' voting decisions offers little support for the popular view that PAC money permits interests to buy or rent votes on matters that affect them" (798). In essence, there is no visible persuasion or exchange involved, no switched votes that can be easily traced to the interest group's action. Richard L. Hall and Frank W. Wayman, "Buying Time: Moneyed Interests and the Mobilization of Bias in Congressional Committees," *American Political Science Review*, 84:3 (September 1990): 797-820.

⁸⁴ Hansen's concern is not with PAC contributions, but with electoral activities broadly conceived. He views these as one of the ways in which interest groups achieve that access. See John Mark Hansen, *Gaining Access: Congress and the Farm Lobby, 1919-1981* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1991).

⁸⁵ The purchasing of "access" as a solution for understanding the influence of PAC contributions "only provokes a second query," Hall and Wayman note: "If money buys access, what does access buy?" Even with this conceptualization of purpose, "the effect of the group on the vote should still appear in systematic analysis" (800).

⁸⁶ Rozell, Wilcox, and Franz, 24.

⁸⁷ The question of whether a "precommitment" kind of electoral strategy could be conducted on a non-partisan basis is unclear, though I speculate in the Chapter 10 that the kinds of institutional tools available to legislative majority parties might encourage it in this direction.

⁸⁸ See Note 78, above.

⁸⁹ In their 2011 paper, Bawn et al. concede that some contemporary groups do not have a clear partisan identity, but they depict this as very much the exception rather than the norm. They acknowledge "that not all groups associate with parties and that parties are not always dominated by groups," suggesting that "[m]any conjectures are possible for the lack of partisan associations of groups such as AIPAC [The American-Israel Public Affairs Committee] or the elderly..." (17). Nonetheless, they claim, "non-partisanship is unusual among politically active groups" (17). Here they cite Grossman and Dominguez (2009) who "find that most behavior is partisan in the electoral realms of endorsements and campaign contributions, less so in support for specific pieces of legislation" (17, n5). That is, legislative coalitions still exhibit more of the bipartisanship we traditionally associate with that arena than electoral coalitions do. Incentives to work with a particular party coalition may come from within the coalition itself, as Francis and Benedict (1986) suggest with regard to environmentalist movement. Having adopted a stance of "strict party neutrality" when it came onto the scene in the late 1960s, it was drawn toward the Democratic Party, they suggest, by the framing of environmental concerns as "consumer" issues, and the constellation of forces already within the Democratic coalition that were oriented to a "consumerist" stance. John G. Francis

and Robert C. Benedict, "Issue Group Activists at the Conventions," 99-125 in Ronald Rapoport, Alan Abramowitz and John McGlennon (eds.), *The Life of the Parties: Activists in Presidential Politics* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1986).

⁹⁰ One point to consider is whether they might pursue such a strategy – one that focuses on installing reliable candidates in the first place – on any *other* basis. That is, would this kind of electioneering *have* to be partisan? In Cohen et al.'s account, the "pure" electoral strategy they describe (one that needs no support from lobbying) is necessarily a partisan one, in that it *creates* parties – and with only a single office in play (the policy dictator), the coalitions reduce to two sides [With only a single elected official in the policy dictator case, a "partisan" and "non-partisan" approach are observationally equivalent – even if the coalition of policy demanders were *not* itself regarded as a party, the internal dynamics driving alliance among groups and reducing to two coalitions would still be relevant]. But similar reasoning would seem to apply in a multiple-office example such as legislative elections, where a group must ensure the victory of 50% + 1 reliable legislators for their cause to be successful. While the partisan composition of that majority might appear irrelevant, so long as all are pre-committed to a particular group's goals, the need for coalition partners in order to *achieve* such electoral success would again produce dynamics of negotiation and concession that reduce to two rival coalitions, and two sets of supported candidates (A single group cannot select and install a candidate alone, but must be part of a *coalition* to ensure electoral success. The negotiations involved in constructing those coalitions will create two rival bodies, whether contesting one office or one hundred). Additional factors outside of the model itself might also encourage the partisan approach: the added costs of involvement in two different sets of primaries might be a consideration, and perhaps the additional disciplinary mechanisms that party delegations may have within the legislature might serve as a further incentive (though in a perfectly implemented electoral strategy, these should not be necessary). Brunell (2005) suggests that most interest groups acting in the electoral sphere through PACs will possess "at least a weak party preference" (683). Groups are not *indifferent* between the parties to begin with, he argues, but "naturally have an ideological affinity for one party or the other." The political parties too, seek out these ideological allies and encourage them to devote greater resources to their side for the purposes of winning elections. But these groups also "understand the importance of majority party status in Congress," Brunell claims, how this can help them to achieve their policy aims – which will encourage them to assist in electing those party candidates (683). Thomas L. Brunell, "The Relationship between Political Parties and Interest Groups: Explaining Patterns of PAC Contributions to Candidates for Congress," *Political Research Quarterly* 58 No. 4 (2005): 681-688.

⁹¹ Bawn et al. explain in their 2011 paper that the benefit of being part of the coalition is that you control government more often than you would as a group on your own: "Each coalition controls government about half the time, an outcome much better than the numerically small policy-demanders could achieve without parties" (7).

⁹² Dayton David McKean, *Party and Pressure Politics* (Cambridge, MA: The Riverside Press, 1949), 437.

⁹³ For McKean, the "best" of the realistic options was "a situation in which both major parties were of such nearly equal strength that the votes of the group would form a balance of power" – that is, exactly the kind of swing-vote idea that the Anti-Saloon League had exhibited, threatening to take their votes to either side, depending on the candidate's stance [Ibid., 437-438]. For partisan electioneering to remain the superior choice for each individual group, therefore, even in the one-office case, we must assume that the chance of electing the "dictator," combined with the *certainty* of benefits that would accrue from pursuing an electoral strategy, outweighs the chance of securing policy aims through other means. An effective threat-based electioneering strategy, however, if perfectly implemented, would both minimize the costs – in the sense of not needing to act upon a credible threat – and maximize the policy outcomes – in that, by inducing *both* candidates to approve their policy aims, they could achieve success 100% of the time. Of course, not every group was so positioned that they could pursue this non-partisan electioneering strategy (though the lack of clear party divisions among the parties themselves made it a possibility for some). Nor, indeed, was it clear that they *could* act upon the threat if ever called to do so – both Schattschneider and Key raised questions about the ability of such groups to mobilize their memberships as a cohesive voting bloc.

⁹⁴ Cohen et al., 32-33.

⁹⁵ Bawn et al. (2011), 1.

⁹⁶ Scholzman and Tierney (1986), for example, stress the importance of resources for interest group activity. As Skinner (2007) describes, they identify "money, membership, information, and expertise" as relevant resources in this regard (9). Since Salisbury (1969), in fact, the dominant framework for understanding interest group relations with other kinds of political actors has been in terms of resource *exchange*. Witko (2009), for example, is one of the few scholars to explicitly raise questions about the origins of party-interest group alliances – stressing the dangers of isolation and capture. "Considering the costs and lack of obvious benefits," he asks, "why do organized interests form exclusive links with one party?" (219). Yet the framework he offers actually provides no real account of those origins, taking resources as a given and presenting the emergence of closer relations between the two as a function of resource-exchange in the context of repeated interaction. Witko simply suggests that party-group relationships have become closer "in recent decades," because "party leaders and partisans have found it in their interest to more closely identify with particular interests, and many organized interests have found it useful to form relationships with one of the parties" (233). See Robert H. Salisbury, "An Exchange Theory of Interest Groups," *Midwest Journal of Political Science* 13:1 (February 1969): 1-32; Christopher Witko, "The Ecology of Party-Organized Interest Relationships," *Polity* 41:2 (2009): 211-234.

⁹⁷ Aldrich (1995); Fiorina (2006).

⁹⁸ Schattschneider (1948), 21. There appeared to be "categories of pressure groups... which thrive in Democratic administrations, while other constellations prosper in Republican administrations," he now proposed.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Committee on Political Parties of the American Political Science Association, "Toward a More Responsible Two-Party System," *American Political Science Review* 44 No. 3, Part 2 (September 1950): 19-20. *Emphasis mine*.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 20. The APSA committee stated: “Parties whose political commitments count are of particular significance to interest organizations with large membership such as exist among industrial workers and farmers, but to a lesser extent also among businessmen. Unlike the great majority of pressure groups, these organizations through their membership—and in proportion to their voting strength—are able to play a measurable role in elections. Interest groups of this kind are the equivalent of organizations of voters. For reasons of mutual interest, the relationship between them and the parties tends to become explicit and continuing.” In essence, their potential ability to deliver an electoral “good” (votes) would draw mass-membership groups into relationships with the parties in exchange for *policy* (so long as their “political commitments count”).

¹⁰⁴ In fact, Tichenor and Harris (2005) have recently suggested that Truman’s perspective, in contrast to that of Schattschneider (a vision of rivalry they characterize as “zero-sum”), actually emphasized the “interdependence” of parties and interest groups – but his views were crowded out by the dominance of the latter. Tichenor and Harris (2005), 265.

¹⁰⁵ Truman does define political parties as a sub-*type* of “political interest group,” and suggests that parties could be viewed as an “alliance of interests” (271), yet, he still saw parties and interest groups as largely operating in different spheres, and provided an extensive explanation of the *dangers* of explicit connection in terms of affiliation, as I explain below.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 304.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 296-297. The geographical divisions into states and districts made the prospect of a party winning *in every locality* unlikely. And the separation of powers made the prospect of one party securing all three branches of the federal government also unlikely. The prospect of unified party government – whether vertical or horizontal – was thus highly unlikely. National groups have numerous sub-national jurisdictions to be concerned with, which may or may not share the party affiliation of whoever is in power in Washington. Supporting one party nationally might put you at a disadvantage in all these localities (296). Similarly, the possibility of divided government (at national and subnational levels), makes it unwise for an interest group to support only one party and risk alienating those branches of government it does not control (297).

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 320. “At the national level...and in varying degrees in the State legislatures,” Truman noted, “party discipline is so nearly nonexistent that few legislative decisions are made strictly along party lines” (296-297). This lack of party discipline made unified government, even if achieved formally, of little relevance practically: the party might still be unable to *deliver* any policy results to a supportive interest group. “Even where one party nominally controls both legislature and executive, moreover, discipline is normally so weak that the group identified with the majority party may enjoy no special advantages from being so,” Truman said (297).

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 64.

¹¹⁰ See, for example, Schattschneider’s (1942) discussion of the “law of the imperfect mobilization of interests” (33), or Key’s (1942) suggestion that the more “heterogeneous” a pressure group in terms of its membership, the less likely it would be to try this approach (212).

¹¹¹ Campaign contributions and endorsements, for example, could threaten the internal cohesion of groups: (Truman, 310). “Strategic considerations not only discourage groups from openly identifying themselves with a particular party but also are responsible for keeping some groups entirely out of election campaigns, even in a non-partisan role,” he noted (304).

¹¹² Truman, 301. On pp. 297-98 he discusses the degree to which members were “psychologically disposed toward partisan activity by the group.”

¹¹³ Ibid. The quote continues, “Is it a “proper” means for asserting the claims of the group? The answers to questions such as these can indicate the degree to which members are psychologically ready for partisan activity.”

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 298. These internal norms stemmed from “a particular set of economic assumptions and...a particular wage theory that holds to the collective bargain backed by the threat of a strike as the best means of improving the position of wage earners.” “Until partisan political activity takes a major position in the implicit wage theories of labor unions,” Truman continued, “union discipline will dictate when the worker will strike, but not how he will vote.” So long as the basic theory remained intact, unions would continue to “keep out of politics.” (299). Truman also points to the work of Mills (1948), which suggested that, like the rank-and-file, “labor leaders do not consider party affiliation a means of achieving policy preferences” (Truman, 299. See C. Wright Mills, *The New Men of Power* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1948), 174). And he quotes David Dubinsky—head of the International Ladies’ Garment Workers’ Union—arguing that “[l]abor must be in social politics not in party politics” (296, *emphasis in original*). Even in 1964, Zeigler could observe that “there is an inclination of union members to look upon political activity as a secondary aspect of the union’s proper sphere of activities” while “[c]ollective bargaining is far more crucial and is supported by most of the members who are indifferent about more broadly gauged political activity.” Harmon Zeigler. *Interest Groups in American Society*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc. (1964), 245, 261.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 298. This was “circumstantial evidence,” he conceded. “Most suggestive is the rather deferential lip service that is paid to being an independent voter rather than a partisan.”

¹¹⁶ Clemens (1997) explains this term on p. 49.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 295.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 296.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 302.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Ibid., 320.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Ibid., 297.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ I.e. the states would remain important sites of activity, and thus the problems of divided sub-national governments would still ward against consistent and overt group partisanship.

¹²⁶ Ibid, 296.

¹²⁷ Truman described an array of electoral activities including candidate endorsements, compiling and publicizing candidate voting records and providing other information to members, undertaking wider publicity efforts aimed at non-members, making direct financial contributions to candidates, along with other types of in-kind contribution, and voter mobilization efforts (304-305).

¹²⁸ Ibid., 304.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 295. As Truman explained, “[i]t is far less risky to wager on the outcome of a race between two contestants than to try to pick the winner from a field of three or four or twenty. To have backed the winner before he was nominated is likely to pay high dividends in access, but to have backed one of his unsuccessful opponents is even more likely to result in lonely isolation.”

¹³⁰ Though Truman conceded that “some of them are not so cautious” (304). Primaries and the tax code were examples of “[o]ther legal arrangements of a less fundamental kind” than the “structure of the federal system”, that could still have an influence on the strategies interest groups adopted (319).

¹³¹ Ibid, 304.

¹³² Anthony Corrado, “Money and Politics: A History of Federal Campaign Finance Law,” 25-60 in Anthony Corrado, Thomas E. Mann, Daniel R. Ortiz, Trevor Potter, and Frank J. Sorauf (eds.), *Campaign Finance Reform: A Sourcebook* (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1997), 29-30.

¹³³ Truman, 304.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 312. Thus, like the APSA committee, Truman presented NAM’s unsuitability for electoral activity in terms of its lack of mass membership, an analysis echoed by other scholars such as Milbrath (1958), and Zeigler (1964), among others. See APSA Report (1950), 20; Lester W. Milbrath, “The Political Party Activity of Washington Lobbyists,” *The Journal of Politics* 20 No. 2 (1958): 340; Zeigler, 244.

¹³⁵ Ibid. As Zeigler (1964) would later note: “The very large organizations, such as the AFL-CIO, that like to think they have substantial strength at the polls, engage quite heavily in the publication of voting records and personal solicitation of votes among their own members. But the smaller organizations, such as business or professional groups, can make no claims of a deliverable body of voters and can only offer their services as proselytizers of a larger public” (244).

¹³⁶ Ibid., 319. Group electoral activity “is not by itself a sufficient guarantee of effective access,” Truman asserted, nor, indeed, was it even *necessary*: “[v]iewed as technique, group election activity is not essential to the effective assertion of claims upon or through the government,” he added (319).

¹³⁷ Ibid., 304.

¹³⁸ Mark J. Rozell, Clyde Wilcox, Michael M. Franz, *Interest Groups in American Campaigns: The New Face of Electioneering*, 3d ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 24.

¹³⁹ Truman, 296-297.

¹⁴⁰ E.E. Schattschneider, “United States: The Functional Approach to Party Government,” pp. 194-215 in Sigmund Neumann, ed., *Modern Political Parties: Approaches to Comparative Politics* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1956), 213.

¹⁴¹ Schattschneider, (1956), 213.

¹⁴² APSA Report (1950), 19-20.

¹⁴³ Schattschneider (1956), 213-214.

¹⁴⁴ Schattschneider (1956), 214.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 209. *Emphasis mine*. The full quotation reads: “Altogether, twenty years of Democratic government marked the emergence of the Democratic party as the political instrument of a new electorate committed to and supporting a revolution in a public policy. Not the least significant evidence of this transformation of the system has been the conversion of the labor movement to party politics” (209).

¹⁴⁶ Beyond those examples cited in the text, a the cyclical quality to interest group organization is apparent in Zeigler (1964), who discusses the a “defensive” mobilization among business interests to promote the “open shop,” against a labor movement seemingly growing in strength at the turn of the 20th Century (98-99). Truman also cites Herring (1929) in a similar vein: “Herring has pointed out that the systematic campaigns of woman suffrage organizations in the second decade of this century set the pattern of techniques for what he calls the “new lobby.” This phenomenon of organization in waves, together with the influences discussed previously that have stimulated the proliferation of groups, undoubtedly account in part for the dilution and subsequent partial eclipse of the corrupting “lobby barons” and “corporation lobbies” typical of State and national legislative halls seventy-five years ago.” See Pendleton Herring, *Group Representation Before Congress* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1929), pp. 34-8, 41-6, 195.

¹⁴⁷ Key (1942). pp. 86-87.

¹⁴⁸ Truman, 59-60.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 59.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 60.

¹⁵¹ Ibid. In her examination of early interest group formation in late 18th Century London, Olson (1992) points to a similar phenomenon – where the rise of the “Public Opinion Lobby” around radical MP John Wilkes forced existing lobbies to consider whether they would be better off abandoning traditional methods and developing new ones, using the movement as a model.” Alison Gilbert Olson, *Making The Empire Work: London and American Interest Groups, 1690-1790* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 146.

¹⁵² Key (1942), 144.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Schattschneider (1956), 213-214.

¹⁵⁵ Schattschneider (1960), 55.

¹⁵⁶ Key (1964), 156.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.* Key also pointed to the American Farm Bureau Federation, the American Iron and Steel Institute, and the National Association of Electric Companies on the Republican side, with the Farmers' Union, importers' associations, the American Public Power Association, and the National Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives on the Democratic side. At the same time, he did not suggest such affiliations were determinative: he makes no claim that they get all they want, that their *members* are all Republican, or that they can't do business under Democrats, but that they basically rest easier when Republicans are in control and "enjoy easier access to points of authority" (157).

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 156.

¹⁵⁹ Tichenor and Harris (2005) cite Key (1942) twice (251, 264) and Key (1964) once (265), though their bibliography only lists the 1964 edition. Yet Key's "interdependence" arguments only seem to be apparent in the fifth (1964) edition (of the editions they cite, that is). The first edition, from 1942, does not use the term "interdependence" and primarily stresses the differing natures and responsibilities of parties and pressure groups, rather than linkages between them (see esp. pp. 209-213).

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 154.

¹⁶¹ Heaney (2010), for example, has suggested that Schattschneider's work itself was more amenable to cooperative relations than the subsequent interpretation of his views has suggested. But, like Tichenor and Harris in their discussion of Key, Heaney draws upon Schattschneider's *later* work to make this case – particularly *The Semisovereign People* (1960) – rather than *Party Government* (1942) or the 1948 article, in which a more antagonistic relationship is ventured. See Heaney (2010), esp. 586.

¹⁶² Key (1964), 158. See also 154, 156.

¹⁶³ Key described "several types of campaign activity" in which interest groups might engage, including the circulation of voting records, issuing endorsements, and active electoral support – which seems to embrace both campaign contribution and mobilization activities. He also noted that the "general propaganda campaign of a pressure organization many incidentally promote the candidates of the party most in tune with its cause" – citing the Chamber of Commerce in this regard (161). Labor unions were his primary example of groups both endorsing and providing "active support" to a party's candidates – in this case, Democrats. In some states, he suggests, unions had come to dominate the formal party organization itself (160).

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 158-159. Key described the traditional view that pressure group lobbying was "destructive of party discipline and subversive of party leadership" (158). Though it may still cut across party lines in certain situations, party affiliation had changed the general equation: "[w]ith the major economically based pressure groups clustered around the Republican and Democratic parties, the broad tendency is that lobbying on many issues re-enforces the leadership of the party with which the group is allied" (158-159).

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 156. *Emphasis mine.*

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.* *Emphasis mine.*

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁸ Schattschneider (1960), 55-56. *Emphasis mine.* The loss of fluidity contrasts with Schattschneider's earlier assertion of the very loose and impermanent coalitions that might form among interests, and the internal variation of their member's views. "Party politics is not a matter of mobilizing one great homogenous group against another homogeneous group," he had explained in 1942. "Even more important, it is not a matter of mobilizing one aggregate of solid blocks against another aggregate of equally solid blocks of voters. The collision of parties is cushioned by the fact that there are no solid blocks, not even in the world of interest groups." See Schattschneider (1942), 87-88.

¹⁶⁹ Schattschneider (1960), 55-56.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 53. *Emphasis in original.*

¹⁷¹ Truman, 297.

¹⁷² Key (1964), 157.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.* *Emphasis mine.*

¹⁷⁴ Key (1964), 159. *Emphasis mine.* Key had discussed the veterans example in 1942, linking their non-partisanship to their cultural status and lack of organized opponents (1942, 144).

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 160. *Emphasis mine.*

¹⁷⁶ APSA Report (1950), 19-20.

¹⁷⁷ Schattschneider (1956), 206-209, esp. 208; and (1960), 87.

¹⁷⁸ Schattschneider (1960), 89. On the tendency for sectionalism to depress party organization, see p. 92. Nationalization was evident in terms of the universality of political trends, he noted. For example, the GOP gained ground in *every* state in 1952, lost ground throughout the nation in 1954, gained again in 1956 and lost in 1958 – these were trends *throughout* the country rather than in one section (91). Thus, while the 1952 and 1956 elections brought party turnover, they did not shift the nationalizing tendency of American politics – there was no return to the old sectional alignment (88). A similar discussion is offered in the 1956 chapter, pp. 211-214.

¹⁷⁹ Schattschneider (1960), 90; an almost identical phrase appears in (1956), 211.

¹⁸⁰ Schattschneider (1960), 93. The same phrase appears in (1956), 214.

¹⁸¹ As he explained in 1956, "new structures may arise without being recognized as parts of the party system." Schattschneider (1956), 213.

¹⁸² Thus for Truman (1951), groups would hang back from elections generally, and particularly from taking sides in the presidential contest, "unless it is fairly certain that access to one of the candidates is likely to be denied anyhow and nothing is to be lost by backing his opponent" (302); for Schattschneider (1960), pressure groups are pulled "into the vortex of party conflict" by a national

party alignment that also enhances the importance of electioneering (93); and for Key (1964), the “interests of some groups are so completely identified with those of a party that they might as well join the [electoral] fray and risk the consequences” (159-160).

¹⁸³ Strong national parties, Schattschneider had asserted in 1942, “*would shut out the pressure groups*” (192. *Emphasis in original*). In 1960, he would suggest a revised formulation in which pressure groups would be forced to ally with a party and subjugated to its management (55-56).

¹⁸⁴ Schattschneider (1960), 55. On the previous page, however, Schattschneider criticizes the idea of negotiation and concession as an account of presidential majority-formation – raising questions as to whether such a process accurately depicts how allied interest groups must operate (54).

¹⁸⁵ The non-neutrality of pressure groups advantages the party, because the group cannot turn to the other party for support – “the party has what amounts to a political monopoly” on the particular interest, and the pressure group is a “captive” (56). Frymer has recently discussed capture in terms of African-American groups, suggesting their needs have often been neglected by the Democratic Party since the New Deal, due to the reliability of their electoral support. See Paul Frymer, *Black and Blue: African-Americans, the Labor Movement, and the Decline of the Democratic Party* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008); *Uneasy Alliances: Race and Party Competition in America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010). Witko (2009) describes this kind of relation as “parasitism,” where the party, even if sympathetic, might not feel the need to actively and consistently promote the interest group’s goals at all (See pp. 218, 230, 232).

¹⁸⁶ Schattschneider discusses the business-GOP relationship only briefly, but at two different points in *The Semisovereign People* (1960). The first is at the conclusion of Chapter 2, where he explains how the need for coordination across the business community propels them toward the GOP (42). Business *needs* the GOP, Schattschneider argues, to help it maintain internal cohesion and thereby prevent the “socialization of conflict” – a political dynamic in which the losers of private conflicts seek a new and larger field of battle, and ultimately turn to the government for help. Assuming a general desire among business to *avoid* government intervention in their affairs, preventing the socialization of conflict is important. But even sector-wide business associations cannot fully keep a lid on burgeoning conflict within the heterogeneous business community (41-43). It is the Republican party, Schattschneider argues, which plays an “over-all mediating role” (42). This analysis of partisanship as a solution to the need for cohesion is a sharp contrast to Truman’s ideas that partisanship would *damage* such unity within particular groups. Schattschneider returns to this topic in Chapter 3, where his emphasis is more on the advantages enjoyed by the GOP in its relations with business, due to the inability for business groups to throw their support elsewhere (55-56).

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 55. *Emphasis in original*.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 56. “The facts of political life are that neither business nor labor is able to win elections by itself,” he explains, and thus it must turn to a party.

¹⁸⁹ Schattschneider’s analysis was a theoretical rejoinder, offered as a plausible defense against blanket claims that allied pressure groups were controlling the parties, thus exerting a pernicious influence in which their particular interests would prevail over the public good (thus jeopardizing the benefits of party government). “It is at least as likely that pressure groups are prisoners of the parties as it is the other way around,” he said, “because [such] pressure groups cannot easily negotiate with both sides in the party conflict” (1960, 55). The special role of political parties, of which Schattschneider was the great champion, was thereby saved.

¹⁹⁰ Heaney (2010), for example, notes that the very label “extended party networks” “presupposes a dominant role for parties in these interactions and draws artificial boundaries along the lines of party affiliation.” He recommends “treating network dominance and network boundaries as empirical questions” instead, asking: “Under what conditions are these networks dominated by parties or by groups?” (581-582). This is an important line of inquiry for future network scholarship to pursue. Heaney’s theoretical proposal, at least, serves to challenge a monolithic vision of party dominance: conceiving *both* parties and interest groups as “key brokers within one another’s networks and between other actors in the policy process” – each with opportunities to exert power and influence depending on circumstances (569).

¹⁹¹ Key (1964) suggested that affiliated pressure groups do have some influence, and Hennessy (1968) concluded that the overarching power dynamics were unclear, varying according to issue area and context. See Key (1964), 158-159; Bernard Hennessy, “On the Study of Party Organization,” 1-44 in William J. Crotty (ed.), *Approaches to the Study of Party Organization*, ed. (Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 1968), 24-25. Hennessy also offered a corrective to the notion that pressure groups simply dominated the parties, pointing to studies that provided some support to the notion party advantage in these relations – though not of a universal or permanent sort – or simply suggested more complicated relations. These included Masters (1957), who found ideas of pressure group control of parties inadequate, or Greenstone (1966), who had outlined ways in which the party sometimes “pressured” the group. See Nicholas A. Masters, “The Politics of Union Endorsement of Candidates in the Detroit Area,” *Midwest Journal of Political Science* 1:2 (1957): 136-150; J. David Greenstone, “Party Pressure on Organized Labor in Three Cities,” 55-80 in M. Kent Jennings and L. Harmon Zeigler (eds.), *The Electoral Process* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1966).

¹⁹² In Hansen’s account, pressure groups lose influence when they ally with parties, because the information they provide offers no distinctive advantages over what the party can provide, and in such cases, the Congressman will defer to the party. Hansen provides empirical examples to support this claim – suggesting that the American Farm Bureau Federation lost legislative influence in the 1950s when it appeared too closely invested in the Eisenhower administration’s agricultural policy, for example. In the late 1920s, moreover, Hansen suggests that the Anti-Saloon League’s orientation became more overtly Republican, and essentially led to the group’s precipitous downfall (217-219). In Schattschneider’s (1960) account, pressure groups lose influence when they ally with parties because they can no longer threaten to withhold or transfer support to the party’s opponents (however imperfectly they were able to do this in practice – a critique he had offered in 1942). The group loses influence because it *cannot credibly threaten to deploy its members as a voting bloc against the party’s candidates*. Their overt partisan bias renders any such threat moot.

¹⁹³ Indeed, the general thrust of *The Semisovereign People* was its concern with “[t]he business or upper-class bias of the pressure system” – suggesting that in reality, the theoretical dominance of the Republican party over business groups did not serve as a substantial constraint in empirical terms. Schattschneider (1960), 31.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.* *Emphasis mine.*

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 268.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 240.

¹⁹⁸ David R. Mayhew, *Electoral Realignments: A Critique of an American Genre* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002).

¹⁹⁹ On the formation of the conservative coalition, see Zeigler, 261-263; “In both houses of Congress, the Democratic party divides into two clearly discernible factions whose common denominator is sectional,” Zeigler observes (262). See also Julian Zelizer, *On Capitol Hill: The Struggle to Reform Congress and its Consequences, 1948-2000* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), especially Chapters 2 and 3 on the emergence, and first wave of attack upon, the conservative coalition.

²⁰⁰ See, for example, Keith T. Poole and Howard Rosenthal’s party polarization scores, using their NOMINATE scaling method. Much of the variation in legislator’s scores can be explained in terms of differences along a single dimension – economic issues. According to their data, available at http://voteview.com/polarized_america.htm, party divisions on this dimension actually begin to decline and then drop precipitously during the period in which labor groups, in particular, come to take a more partisan approach to the political realm.

²⁰¹ Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Vital Center: The Politics of Freedom* (New York: Transaction, 1949); Downs (1957). In 1942, Schattschneider had offered a variant of this idea that parties would hew to the center, describing heterogeneous parties that tried “more or less successfully to spread over the whole political rainbow from one extreme to the other,” in order to ensure their swift adaptation to changes in public opinion (88). The implication, however, was that in embracing the entire spectrum of opinion, the party’s center of gravity would match that of the electorate as a whole.

²⁰² Its absence would also be indicated by the apparent gradualism in the development of party-group alliances themselves: a generalized divergence should have prompted *all* interest groups to ally with a party and mobilize electorally at the same time, in this view.

²⁰³ Important contributions in this literature on the “rise of the right” include: John A. Andrew III, *The Other Side of the Sixties: Young Americans for Freedom and the Rise of Conservative Politics* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1997); Mary C. Brennan, *Turning Right in the Sixties: The Conservative Capture of the GOP* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1995); Donald T. Critchlow, *The Conservative Ascendancy: How the GOP Right Made Political History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007); Sara Diamond, *Roads to Dominion: Right-Wing Movements and Political Power in the United States* (New York: The Guildford Press, 1995); Elizabeth A. Fones-Wolf, *Selling Free Enterprise: The Business Assault on Labor and Liberalism, 1945-60* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994); Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001); Kim Phillips-Fein, *Invisible Hands: The Making of the Conservative Movement from the New Deal to Reagan*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc. (2009); Jonathan M. Schoenwald, *A Time for Choosing: The Rise of Modern American Conservatism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

²⁰⁴ Green, Palmquist and Schickler (2002), for example, review Gallup polls conducted in early November, 1953, which asked a national sample of adults to describe the “type of person” that came to mind when the respondent thought of “people who are Democrats” or “people who are Republicans.” Respondents could offer multiple responses to the question (though few did so), and their answers were assembled into broad categories reflecting the different “types” they had suggested. When thinking about Democrats, descriptions like “working class,” “common people,” and “poor” tended to come to the respondents’ minds – with these categories accounting for 34% of the responses (“union person” and “middle class” accounted for a further 4%). In contrast, Republicans tended to be described in terms like “rich, wealthy, people of means,” “business executive,” “capitalist,” and “high class” (with the aforementioned accounting for 31% of the responses). Donald Green, Bradley Palmquist, and Eric Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds: Political Parties and the Social Identities of Voters*. New Haven: Yale University Press. (2002), 9. These particular social identities, however, were not always associated with the same parties – Gerring (1998) and Bense (2000), for example, describe how the Republicans were the party of the “working man” in the post-Civil War 19th Century, with the tariff serving to underwrite the prosperity of northern manufacturing interests and, by extension, their workers. John Gerring, *Party Ideologies in America: 1828-1996* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Richard Franklin Bense, *The Political Economy of American Industrialization, 1877-1900* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000). See also Robert H. Zieger, *Republicans and Labor: 1919-1929* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 1969).

²⁰⁵ Stephen K. Bailey, *The Condition of Our National Political Parties: An Occasional Paper on the Role of the Political Process in the Free Society* (New York: Fund for the Republic, 1959) 22, n5. *Emphasis mine.* Bailey explains that the Roper Public Opinion Center at Williams College furnished him with “a complete tabulation of public-opinion polls since 1946, addressed to questions of public images of the two parties.” The parties had “quite distinct” centers of gravity, Bailey concluded – with Democrats associated more with innovation and a pro-government orientation, while Republicans preferred consolidation and a limited government stance. Even the “peculiar condition which has smudged party images for so long” – that is, “the extreme economic and social conservatism of one-party areas in the South – was “on its way out” he reported (4).

²⁰⁶ Green, Palmquist, and Schickler (2002), 9.

²⁰⁷ Theodore J. Lowi, *The End of Liberalism: Ideology, Policy, and the Crisis of Public Authority* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1969), 72. *Emphasis reversed from original.*

²⁰⁸ In 1964, for example, Zeigler could still observe that “[b]oth parties are made up of legislators whose ideological commitments range widely across a continuum from “liberal” to “conservative,” no matter how these terms are defined; neither party is wholly committed to a specific set of values” – though he acknowledged that the “ideological center of gravity” of each party did diverge

(260). “Neither party comes very close to the ideal of some political scientists that they should be “responsible,” that is, formulate opposing programs and vote strictly according to the dictates of the party leadership,” Zeigler concluded (260). Such “responsibility,” it is important to note, did not require “strongly ideological or even strongly programmatic” parties, as Bailey points out – simply that they had some set of positions that generally differed, and that the national party would formulate and enforce them (4).

²⁰⁹ Richard Schlatter, “Some Comments on Senator Goldwater,” *Partisan Review* 31 (1964): 599-602. Quoted in Rick Perlstein, *Before the Storm: Barry Goldwater and the Unmaking of the American Consensus* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2001), 451-452.

²¹⁰ As the influx of northern liberal Democrats in the House in 1958 and 1964 helped stimulate the push for procedural reform in the House. See David W. Rohde, *Parties and Leaders in the Post-Reform House* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

²¹¹ For a start, the expectations surrounding these connections seem to point in different directions in the scholarship reviewed above. On the one hand, the APSA Committee suggested the absence of manpower would make a group *less* likely to build a relationship with a party – implicating business associations. Yet in 1960, Schattschneider points to an important relationship between business interests (and its representative groups) and the GOP – a relationship grounded in the need for coordination, irrespective of membership status. Schattschneider (1960), 39-43. Resources are not themselves *determinative* of action either – their mere possession does not determine their use. In terms of electioneering, for example, manpower might be a necessary condition for activity, but not a sufficient one. Milbrath (1958), for example, suggested that groups might possess appropriate resources, but choose not to engage in political activity (340).

²¹² Truman, 295.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, 298.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 301.

²¹⁵ For more on the medical profession and politics, see William A. Glaser, “Doctors and Politics,” *American Journal of Sociology* 66:3 (November 1960): 230-245; Donald R. Hall, *Cooperative Lobbying – The Power of Pressure* (Tucson, AZ: The University of Arizona Press, 1969/1970), 207-208.

²¹⁶ Even Tichenor and Harris (2005) concede that neither Truman nor Key offers “a careful analysis of that relationship or its historical development,” for all they may have been more amenable to the “interdependence” of the two kinds of political actor than Schattschneider (265). As noted above, Heaney (2010) suggested that Schattschneider himself offered a less rigid viewpoint than often attributed to him. Nonetheless, he too can be tagged as failing to offer a careful study of party-group relationships or their development: he called for further studies of the party “constellations” he had identified in 1948, but did not provide them himself. And if the extreme version of Schattschneider’s rivalry thesis was a misinterpretation, he did have some opportunity into the 1960s to correct it, and failed to do so.

²¹⁷ The subjective quality involved here makes archival research a critical tool (as I explain in the next chapter) – for reconstructing the internal perspectives and interpretations of interest groups as accurately as possible.

²¹⁸ A search for the beginning of “organized opposition,” for example, is subject to an infinite regress that can always be taken a step further back. Changes in the distribution of support across the parties can also be difficult to pinpoint, in the sense that it can be measured in different ways, it develops over time, and its not clear *how* lopsided it would have to be to inspire a reaction. These features are also interwoven, we might add, because without some sort of organized societal opposition it is unclear why parties would take distinctive positions in the first place, and party division might exacerbate societal division.

²¹⁹ Truman, 60.

²²⁰ Clemens, 49. Norms are a central component of organizational sociology, playing a role in institutional maintenance and serving to affix particular behaviors and expectations to differing roles within an institution – to define particular “logics of appropriateness” for particular organizations and actors within them. The key to this account lies in the diverse organizational environment and the experiences of the members themselves: Organizations provide “scripts” for behaviors that are appropriate to different positions within them, and standard operating procedures to deal with common situations (Clemens, 59). In the broader organizational environment there exists a vast array of differing forms and tactics, some of which may appear more “successful” in the political realm (like those of corporations) and thus provide examples other actors may wish to emulate. Moreover, each individual has a varying repertoire of action, depending on their experience and exposure to different institutions, providing the potential for recombination and innovation. In this sense, where Truman saw overlapping memberships as an important *constraint* on interest group political activities, Clemens sees the involvement of members in multiple groups and organizations as providing the potential for organizational innovation. Deploying familiar organizational forms or scripts for collective action in novel settings, or with new members, reconstitutes the identities and preferences of those involved, and generates new political identities and strategies. Unlike “new institutionalist” approaches in economics and political science – where the actions of rational individuals are *constrained* and directed by rules and institutions – organizational sociology sees action as *constituted* by organizations and institutions, Clemens explains, in addition to being a constraining or directing influence. Thus individuals act in accordance with a conception of “self-interest” that is *constructed* within an institutional setting. (See esp. 48-55).

²²¹ *Ibid.*, 13. The modern interest group, she therefore argues, emerged from the organizational innovations of popular associations – such as women’s groups, labor unions, and agricultural associations, primarily at the state level – which were able to cross such cultural divides. One of the critical ways in which they did this was by claiming an *educational* rather than a *partisan* role – casting themselves in opposition to party politics in general, and drawing on the normative approbation associated with educational and non-partisan claims. They developed tactics of legislative lobbying that stressed “issues” over partisanship as their animating impulse (in keeping with a broadly “educational” approach), and to a limited extent, translated this claim into non-partisan electoral activity. Through their recombination of new and old forms, Clemens argues, popular associations forged a new cultural consensus in which bipartisan lobbying became “appropriate” – though not wholly *approved* of.

²²² This kind of diffusion dynamic was apparent in the scholarship reviewed earlier, such as the APSA Report (1950), 19-20; or Truman, 59-60.

²²³ Clemens, 72.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, 49, 277. As such, the benefits of innovation do not necessarily accrue to the originator (44).

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, 325.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, 44, 324.

²²⁷ Key (1964), 158.

²²⁸ Greenstone, in fact, prefaced his book with Schattschneider's 1956 musings on the changing party system: "... a shift in the locus of power or a revision of party functions may leave the formal structure untouched, or new structures may arise without being recognized as parts of the party system. Thus pressure groups may become so partisan that they might properly be described as ancillary organizations of one or the other of the major parties." J. David Greenstone, *Labor in American Politics* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), inside flyleaf and p. 10, quoting from Schattschneider (1956), 213. Rather than look at labor's electoral mobilization as *evidence* of systemic change (as Schattschneider appeared to), Greenstone used this quote to highlight the role of labor unions in forging a new kind of politics, in *shaping* the party system itself. Schattschneider himself conceded something of this reverse process, though at odds with the rest of his analysis, when he acknowledged in 1956 that partisan pressure groups (as "ancillary political organizations") could have some impact *on* the parties, in that their "very existence" had "modified greatly the behavior of the regular party organizations" at least (214).

²²⁹ On the imperfect early relations between FDR and the labor movement, see Marc Landy, "FDR and John L. Lewis," 105-112 in Marc Landy (ed.), *Modern Presidents and the Presidency* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books/DC Heath, 1985).

²³⁰ The institutional opportunities afforded by primaries are, of course, important for understanding interest group activity, but they existed long before interest groups started to utilize them as a means of reshaping a political party along specific programmatic lines.

²³¹ As I explore particularly in Chapter 5, the organizational structure and general approach developed by P.A.C. had to be actively constructed and justified, even where legal necessity encouraged financial innovations such as the use of voluntary funding.

²³² Cultural hostility to the role of "special interests" in the political process, for example, was often palpable – both from the public at large and from a group's own members. To engage in political action, therefore, cultural attitudes had to be recognized and somehow negotiated – an area in which rhetoric came to the fore. This produced a growing disjuncture between the rhetoric of major interest groups, which professed non-partisanship, and the reality of an increasingly partisan orientation. Thus the rhetorical innovators of this approach still tried to claim that it was nonpartisan! There are constraints and complications involved, which can affect the scope and timing of the diffusion process in significant ways.

²³³ The way that interest groups behave in the electoral realm tends to *alter* the structure of party competition rather than simply respond to it, making it difficult for other groups to act in a neutral manner or resist becoming more partisan in their activities. This is a similar dynamic to the "contagion" effect that Cohen et al. suggest will bring other groups of policy demanders into party coalitions, once one group has decided to try and secure a reliable policy "dictator" through electoral action rather than post-hoc persuasion. The process I describe is slower, and more sensitive to the structure of the interest group environment, the context of party competition, and individual group capacity.

²³⁴ That is, partisan political action might become desirable (even rational) for one actor – labor, for example – due to changes in context or internal considerations, but not be desirable to other actors at that point. In being adopted *by* labor, however, partisan political action will increasingly come to *seem* necessary for others within the competitive context of U.S. elections. Each group does not take an independent decision to become electorally active or affiliate with a party based simply on an objective risk assessment, but will look especially to what other groups are doing. This account is not intended to convey an automatic or deterministic process, however, because groups have to develop capacity and overcome constraints on partisan political action – which may not be identical across actors – and their choice to do so should be conceived in probabilistic rather than deterministic terms. Other interest groups engaging in political action, especially direct interest group opponents, makes it *much more likely* that a group will adopt similar tactics but backing the opposing party.

Chapter 2. "Pressure" as Prologue

¹ See Chapter 1, Note 146, on the tendency for interest groups to form in waves of creation and reaction.

² See, for example, Christopher M. Loomis, "The Politics of Uncertainty: Lobbyists and Propaganda in Early Twentieth-Century America," *Journal of Policy History* 21 No. 2 (2009): 187-213.

³ "Charges Against Members of the House and Lobby Activities," Report of the Select Committee to Investigate Alleged Lobbying by the National Association of Manufacturers [Garrett Committee], U.S. House. 63d Cong. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, December 9, 1913), 14. "The word at one period carried with it a certain idea of acts, sinister and corrupt," this report continued, "and the first impression now made upon the mind of the average man *when this word is used in connection with legislative bodies* is probably in line with this conception" (14-15, *Emphasis mine*).

⁴ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁵ James Bryce, *The American Commonwealth*, with an Introduction by Gary L. McDowell, 2 vols. (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1995), Note (b) to Chapter 16: The Lobby." Accessed from <http://oll.libertyfund.org/title/809> on 2013-01-24.

⁶ Though Bryce informed his readers that the term "lobbyist" "does not necessarily impute any improper motive or conduct," he conceded, somewhat delicately, that it was "commonly used in what Bentham calls a dyslogistic sense" – a disapproving one. *Ibid.*

⁷ *Local* associations linking business interests had been a feature of the American economic and political scene since the Founding – and even before. But powerful *national*-level trade associations, however, only really began to emerge during and especially in the

wake of the Civil War – another reflection of the very nationalization, or, at least, *regionalization*, of economic interests that the war brought on. As Zeigler (1964) argues, “[a]s the economy shifted to mass production, the informal problem-solving techniques of the past were no longer adequate.” Harmon Zeigler, *Interest Groups in American Society* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964), 96. For accounts of earlier economic associational activity in British North America and the Early Republic, see Alison Gilbert Olson, *Making the Empire Work: London and American Interest Groups, 1690-1790* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992).

⁸ On the creation of major business interest groups, see Cathie Jo Martin and Duane Swank, *The Political Construction of Business Interests: Coordination, Growth, and Equality* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

⁹ As a contemporary described the lobbyists’ art: “By casual interviews, by informal conversation, by formal presentation of facts and arguments, by printed appeals in pamphlet form, by newspaper communications and leading articles, by personal introductions from or through men of supposed influence, by dinners, receptions, and other entertainments, by the arts of social life and the charms of feminine attraction, the public man is beset to look favourably upon the measure which interested parties seek to have enacted.” The source is Ainsworth Rand Spofford, Librarian of Congress from 1864 to 1897, quoted in Bryce, Note (b)

¹⁰ Zeigler, 111-112. As Zeigler observes, the NAM “did not flourish” organizationally with the tariff as its sole *raison d’être*, while the AFL’s membership had increased five-fold between 1895 and 1903 (“from less than 350,000 in 1895 to nearly 1,750,000 in 1903”). Refocusing on the labor “threat” involved “coordinating the open shop activities of the previously unconnected associations into a consolidated open shop campaign,” Zeigler explains, and it proved much more successful for the NAM (112). As a result of its new posture, it was the NAM’s finances that saw a five-fold increase. From an intake of just under \$31,000 in 1896 (a sum “hardly indicative of a dynamic organization” in Zeigler’s estimation), the NAM’s receipts expanded to over \$150,000 by 1904, and its expenditures increased accordingly. So dramatic was the shift in purpose and activity around 1903 that it essentially “marked the beginning of a new organization,” in Truman’s (1951) estimation. See David B. Truman, *The Governmental Process: Political Interests and Public Opinion* (Berkeley, CA: Institute of Governmental Studies, University of California, Berkeley, 1951/1993), 81.

¹¹ In this latter respect, the legislation took advantage of the 16th Amendment, permitting Congress to impose a federal income tax, which was ratified on February 3rd, 1913.

¹² Noted in Edgar Lane, “Some Lessons from Past Congressional Investigations of Lobbying,” *Public Opinion Quarterly* 14 No. 1 (1950): 16-17.

¹³ “The Tribune Turns Searchlight On the ‘Invisible Government,’” *Chicago Tribune*, June 29th 1913, 2. The strike-breaking aspect suggested the extent to which labor issues as much as tariff concerns had come to animate the NAM’s affairs, with Mulhall having been sent into several contentious situations between 1905 and 1909, tasked with finding the weak spot in the union organization and trying to undermine the protest from within. Mulhall had been involved in the effort to break the job printers’ strike in 1905-1906, the St. Louis shoemakers in 1907, and the Danbury, CT hatmakers in 1909, among others. “In its strike breaking undertakings the N.A.M. had the cooperation of many men high in the councils of the Republican party and a few in the Democratic party, either by reason of political affiliation, friendly sentiment, business prejudice, or personal gain,” the *Tribune* reported. “The Tribune Turns Searchlight On,” 2.

¹⁴ The NCID was a national umbrella organization for local employer and manufacturing groups. It was created at the behest of the NAM, and was little more than a “paper organization” according to the *Tribune* exposé (p. 1). Its key officers were NAM senior officials, and there was no apparent separation between the two organizations. NAM president James Van Cleave designed it, in part, “to watch legislation affecting manufacturing interests,” on behalf of its 228 member associations, and 50,000 individual members. “Van Cleave is Dead; Was Foe of Gompers,” *New York Times*, May 16, 1910, p. 9. And according to Zeigler, the NCID would later be renamed the “National Industrial Council,” which “became the lobbying arm of the NAM.” (112). Sources differ as to the exact date of its founding, but most point to 1907.

¹⁵ See “The Tribune Turns Searchlight On,” p. 1, for an overview of these allegations. Pages 2-3 of the article describe how Mulhall was never really an official NAM employee (he had actually been fired by the first NAM associate he had worked for and only maintained any sort of position by appealing directly to Van Cleave), and after 1908 he “saw that my services were gradually narrowing down” (3). As the Garrett Committee concluded in its report: “That Mr. Mulhall was extravagant in many of his claims, that he purposely or through self-deception overestimated, and, consequently in his reports overstated his potency and influence with Members of Congress and public men generally, your committee thinks admits of no question; that he entertained an animus toward many of those against whom he made allegations is indisputable; that he used the names of some public men in connections and with a freedom not justified by any fact developed or existing is undeniably true. Nevertheless, however gratifying this may be to those citizens who like to have faith in public men, it does not, if his acts, actual and alleged, were improper, exculpate the responsible authorities of those associations who employed him. They believed he was doing the things he reported himself to be doing and employed him because they did believe it. Their mental attitude is thus most forcibly disclosed.” H. Rpt. 63-113, p. 18.

¹⁶ “The Tribune Turns Searchlight On,” 2-3. The NAM “conducted a relentless warfare against public officials and labor leaders who opposed its legislative and industrial plans,” the *Tribune* reported, “financed the campaigns of candidates against them and sought to retire them from Congress.” The “system of campaigning” involved circulars regarding candidates sent to members in particular districts (informing them of “the ones they mark for slaughter”), and appeals for money for those marked for support (2). They kept a “blacklist” for these purposes, it was alleged, based on secret information from their friends in Congress about who was working against them (2). Mulhall claimed that he had funneled money into several congressional campaigns in 1906 and 1908, and particularly into Indiana’s gubernatorial campaign in the latter year – relaying checks from prominent NAM officials and Indiana manufacturers. As reported in the *Tribune* article, money had been directed to, among others, former Congressman John J. Jenkins (R-WI-11) during his unsuccessful primary campaign in 1908, and the general election campaign of Rep. Ralph B. Cole (R-OH-8). Rep. Harry M. Coudrey (R-MO) acted as the NAM’s “secret agent” in the House, Mulhall claimed, “and accepted aid in campaign for re-election,” while Rep. Charles Littlefield of Maine apparently “accepted aid through his campaign managers.” (1). In late 1907, Mulhall also

noted, the Chairman of the RNC had asked him to go to Indiana to aid in the election of James Ely Watson as governor. Van Cleave supported Mulhall's going and basically put the NAM's organization there at his disposal (3). There he had fostered a secret scheme among manufacturers to organize support for Watson – a close NAM associate – with trusted employees serving as captains who reported to a NAM-financed office. “I had positive orders...to work under cover and never give out any information at all of what we were doing,” Mulhall claimed (3). In return, Watson kept the NAM informed of developments at the 1908 Republican National Convention, and subsequently served as an informal liaison with the nominee – William Howard Taft – whom the NAM sought to influence on tariff policy. When Watson ran low on money, prominent NAM officials sent personal checks, and urged Indiana manufacturers to do the same – with Mulhall serving as the message-bearer, of course. Van Cleave and Schwedtman sent letters soliciting funds for Mulhall to forward on to specific manufacturers. The result was “about \$22,000 to help Watson's state campaign committee.” In this case, however, the NAM's candidate was defeated (largely due to his “extreme platform upon temperance,” in Mulhall's assessment). “The Tribune Turns Searchlight On,” 2-3.

¹⁷ Ibid., 4.

¹⁸ Richard L. McCormick, “The Discovery That Business Corrupts Politics,” *American Historical Review* 86 No. 3 (1981): 247-74.

¹⁹ Urofsky (2008) mentions both of these scandals in his overview of campaign finance reform in the early to mid-20th Century. See Melvin I. Urofsky, “Campaign Finance Reform Before 1971,” *Albany Government Law Review* 1:1 (2008): 8. On the *Crédit Mobilier* scandal, see also Fletcher M. Green, “Origins of the Credit Mobilier of America,” *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 46 No. 2 (1959): 238-251.

²⁰ Jackson's Annual Message to Congress of 1833 mentioned “unquestionable proof” that the Bank had been liberally distributing its financial favors on Capitol Hill, for “electioneering purposes.” That is, the Bank had been spreading its largesse among Congressmen as part of its own “electoral” campaign to secure a new charter, converting itself “into a permanent electioneering engine.” Were “the people of the United States...to govern through representatives chosen by their unbiased suffrages,” Jackson asked, or was “the money and power of a great corporation...to be secretly exerted to influence their judgment and control their decisions”? Andrew Jackson: “Fifth Annual Message,” December 3, 1833. Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley (eds.), *The American Presidency Project*. Available at: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=29475>.

²¹ Quoted in Jon Meacham, *American Lion: Andrew Jackson in the White House* (New York: Random House, 2008), 209.

²² As Loomis notes: “Lobbyists, generally defined at the time as agents paid to influence legislation or elections, often played an instrumental role in forging these relationships by channeling campaign contributions, bribes, and other boodle to public officials” (191).

²³ Urofsky, 8; Paula Baker, “Campaigns and Potato Chips; or Some Causes and Consequences of Political Spending,” *Journal of Policy History* 14:1 (2002): 18.

²⁴ Urofsky, 9.

²⁵ Urofsky, 9.

²⁶ As Shannon (1959) remarked, “[i]t remained for another successful businessman turned politician, Mark Hanna, to perfect the process of bringing business corporations to the aid of political action.” Jasper B. Shannon, *Money and Politics* (New York: Random House, 1959), 30.

²⁷ Bryan's candidacy “alienated most businessmen” suggests Greene (1998), giving the Democrats “no choice but to build a program of reform that would appeal to enfranchised workers on the farms and in the factories.” Julie Greene, *Pure and Simple Politics: The American Federation of Labor and Political Activism, 1881-1917* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 1998), 148. Moreover, “[t]he fact that the depression that had begun in 1893 lifted soon after McKinley took office...helped to embed the idea in the minds of business leaders that the Republicans stood for prosperity and the interests of the banking and corporate community,” Urofsky (2008) explains (12).

²⁸ Urofsky, 11. Urofsky reports a sum of \$3,350,000 in total raised for McKinley's campaign, which was more than any presidential candidate had spent before (itself being “twice the amount spent by Harrison in 1892”) and “would not be exceeded until the Harding campaign of 1920.” The actual amount raised for McKinley may have been even higher, with some estimates suggesting “well over \$10 million” (11).

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ As Baker (2002) notes: “the real or apparent illicit connections between business and politics fueled Progressive Era regulations of both business and the political parties” (19).

³¹ This was the “Armstrong Committee” investigation. For more on the New York life insurance scandal and this investigation, see Adam Winkler, “Other People's Money: Corporations, Agency Costs, and Campaign Finance Law,” *Georgetown Law Review* 92 (2003-2004): 887-893.

³² Urofsky, 14-15. Roosevelt's corporate ban did not restrict the individuals who *owned* corporations. See Anthony Corrado. “Money and Politics: A History of Federal Campaign Finance Law.” In Anthony Corrado, Thomas E. Mann, Daniel R. Ortiz, Trevor Potter, and Frank J. Sorauf (eds.), *Campaign Finance Reform: A Sourcebook*. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1997. p. 27; Theodore Roosevelt, “Fifth Annual Message to Congress,” December 5, 1905. Available online through Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. Retrieved 9/7/2012 from <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=29546>.

³³ Public financing for presidential election campaigns was finally realized with the Federal Election Campaign Act Amendments of 1974. Earlier legislation had looked to set up such a system, including the Presidential Election Campaign Fund Act of 1966, and the Revenue Act of 1971, but had never been fully implemented. See Corrado, 50-53.

³⁴ Tillman Act of 1907, 34 Stat. 864 (January 26, 1907). The Act banned direct contributions forbade corporations from making “a money contribution in connection with any [federal] election.” It also banned national Banks and Congressionally-chartered corporations from making political contributions in *any* elections, federal and below. The Act included both corporate and individual

finances, and even potential imprisonment for the officers or directors of corporations that violated the law. A similar proposal had been offered by Senator William E. Chandler (R-NH) in 1900, but went nowhere. Chandler had retired from the Senate in 1901 when he failed to gain renomination, but when momentum seemed to gather behind some kind of campaign finance reform, he sought a sitting senator to revive his measure. Failing to find a Republican to do so, he turned to Ben Tillman (D-SC) who agreed to sponsor the measure (Urofsky, 16, citing Mutch 4-5). Tillman's measure was approved by the Senate in June 1906, but made no progress in the House in that session (Urofsky, 16). Following the 1906 midterm elections in which Republicans maintained control of both chambers of Congress, Urofsky reports that the House GOP leadership now felt it "could afford to appease public opinion" and passed the bill (16).

³⁵ The Publicity Act applied only to House elections, requiring "political committees" active in such contests to file financial reports with the Clerk of the House of Representatives (disclosing their contributions and expenditures). Only organizations that sought to influence such elections in two or more states would qualify as a "political committee" under the law – which, at that time, was primarily designed to cover the Democratic and Republican national committees and their respective congressional campaign committees (Corrado, 37-38). The Publicity Act amendments extended these contributions and disclosure provisions to Senate races, primary elections, and to *candidates* themselves – with Senate candidates instructed to file reports with the Secretary of the Senate (Corrado, 39-41). Both the Publicity Act of 1910 and its 1911 Amendments included fines and/or imprisonment for violators.

³⁶ The first clause of the Act specified this definition: "Be it enacted, That the term "political committee" under the provisions of this Act shall include the national committees of all political parties and the national congressional campaign committees of all political parties and all committees, associations, or organizations which shall in two or more States influence the result or attempt to influence the result of an election at which Representatives in Congress are to be elected." Publicity Act of 1910, 36 Stat. 822 (June 25, 1910). As Urofsky explains: "Congress doubted its constitutional power to regulate state and local committees, so the disclosure rules applied only to party committees operating in two or more states, or, in other words, only to the national committees, which at that time played a minor role in congressional elections" (Urofsky, 18).

³⁷ The Publicity Act Amendments set maximum expenditures at \$5000 for House candidates, and \$10,000 for Senate candidates, with this single limitation designed to embrace both the nomination and general election campaigns. 1911 Amendments to the Publicity Act, 37 Stat. 26 (August 19, 1911).

³⁸ Other than *Newberry*, there was very little in the way of definitive court rulings during this period. *United States v. U.S. Brewers' Association* (1916) was probably the most significant, a District Court decision that upheld the constitutionality of the Tillman Act's corporate contribution ban. *U.S. v. United States Brewers Association* 239 Fed. 163 (1916). See Louise Overacker, *Money in Elections* (New York: Macmillan, 1932), 240. In dealing with a U.S. Senate election, the *Newberry* case had also raised questions about the application of existing legislation following ratification of the 17th Amendment in 1913 – making Senators directly elected. According to Urofsky, the *Newberry* decision did not explicitly deny Congress the right to regulate Senate elections, but it intimated that the Congress may have to pass new legislation that explicitly stated that claim rather than simply apply their earlier laws by extension (19). When consulted by several congressmen for guidance, the Attorney General (Harry Daugherty) offered his opinion that the decision had invalidated the entire disclosure framework. There was little action, however, until the Teapot Dome scandal revived popular interest in "corruption" (though in this case, the scandal had not originated in campaign finance issues). The ensuing investigation had revealed large contributions from oil interests to the RNC, which being made in non-election years, went unreported – a major loophole in the current law (19). In 1924, in fact, "G.O.P. Corruption" stood atop the Democratic Party platform (noted Shannon, 48).

³⁹ Federal Corrupt Practices Act, 1925, 43. Stat. 1070 (February 28, 1925).

⁴⁰ Further legislation of relevance to campaign finance would follow in 1940, 1943, and 1947, as I discuss throughout the dissertation, all of which sought to constrain, regulate, and publicize aspects of electoral financing and participation

⁴¹ "Campaign Contributions," Vols. I-II of Hearings before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Privileges and Elections [Clapp Committee], U.S. Senate, 62d Cong. 2d-3d. Sess. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1912-1913). Hereafter "Clapp Committee Hearings." A total of 112 witnesses appeared across the hearings.

⁴² Schwedtman was from St. Louis, Missouri, and served as Vice-President of the National Association of Manufacturers' Missouri branch, at the time he was called to testify. He had previously been the personal secretary to the national NAM's late president – J.W. Van Cleave. Van Cleave had served as the NAM's president from 1906 to early 1909 [replaced by John Kirby, Jr.], but passed away in 1910. He was also head of Buck's Stove and Range Co. of St. Louis, in which capacity he pursued a major legal case against the American Federation of Labor, and Samuel Gompers in particular. See Testimony of Ferdinand C. Schwedtman, October 11th, 1912, Clapp Committee Hearings, Vol. 1., 858-864; "Van Cleave is Dead; Was Foe of Gompers," *New York Times*, May 16, 1910, p. 9).

⁴³ Schwedtman admitted, for example, that he gave "a few dollars" to the Taft campaign in 1908, and stated: "I know indirectly that most of my associates in the National Association of Manufacturers were strongly in favor of Mr. Taft's candidacy [in 1908] and that all of them personally contributed" to his campaign, though he denied knowledge of any specific amounts. He also acknowledged that both he and Van Cleave had "contributed personally to the Republican congressional candidates in St. Louis," and added that "in fact, it has [had?] been my policy, and I am sure Mr. Van Cleave's, to contribute a mite to every Republican congressional candidate in 1906." Schwedtman Testimony, Clapp Committee Hearings, Vol. 1., 859, 861.

⁴⁴ As Senator George T. Oliver (R-PA) asked Schwedtman – "in order to put it in explicit terms in the record" – if "any action was ever taken by your association, as an association, looking toward the raising of funds for any political campaign?" Schwedtman replied succinctly: "No such action was taken." Nor was there an informal effort to coordinate fundraising or contributions by individuals, he added after further questioning. Schwedtman Testimony, Clapp Committee Hearings, Vol. 1., 861. Schwedtman was more willing to concede that Van Cleave may have urged members to support particular candidates, though he did not recall any specific letter expressing this. "Mr. Van Cleave was very outspoken in advocating the principles for which the association stood," Schwedtman

recalled, “and he time and again advocated that candidates supporting certain principles should be given the moral and other support of the members who felt so inclined.” (862).

⁴⁵ Clapp Committee Hearings, Volume II, 861. *Emphasis mine*.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 862. *Emphasis mine*.

⁴⁷ Testimony of Ferdinand C. Schwedtman, August 29th, 1913, “Maintenance of a Lobby To Influence Legislation.” Part 54 of Hearings before the Subcommittee on S. Res. 92, of the Committee on the Judiciary [**Overman Committee**], U.S. Senate, 63d. Cong. (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1913), 4383. *Emphasis mine*. Hereafter “Overman Committee Hearings.”

⁴⁸ Taking Schwedtman to have said, “in substance and effect that the National Association of Manufacturers was not engaged in spending money in politics,” Senator Reed pressed Schwedtman during the Overman hearings. “[Is it] not a fact that you simply worked out a plan for evading the statute?” Reed asked. “There was no such intention,” Schwedtman replied. Schwedtman Testimony, Overman Committee Hearings, Part 55, 4433.

⁴⁹ Testimony of John Kirby Jr., chairman of the National Council for Industrial Defense, and former president of the National Association of Manufacturers. Overman Committee Hearings, Part 56, 4502. The question posed to Kirby, by Mr. McCarter, was as follows: “Have you personally, or as an officer of either the National Association of Manufacturers or the National Council for Industrial Defense, sought to secure the election of any men running for public office, or sought to prevent the election of any men running for public office; and if so, when and why, and who?” (4502). “To the first part of your question I will answer yes,” Kirby replied, before making this quote: “We have endeavored both to elect and defeat candidates for office. We have tried to elect to Congressmen whom we have known to possess the courage of their convictions, and to get under the skin of the industrial question, and who fearlessly opposed the legislation we have been opposing” (4502). LaPalombara (1952) points to this testimony as evidence of the explicitly *political* intent of the NAM’s “educational” campaigns, though the context and individualist emphasis Kirby used suggests otherwise.

⁵⁰ “The Tribune Turns Searchlight On,” 4.

⁵¹ During the hearings on U.S. Steel’s lobbying in 1911, for example, questions were raised regarding the campaign contributions its corporate officers might make in federal elections – sparking an off-the-record debate as to the appropriateness of such questioning in the first place. Rep. Martin Littleton (D-NY) drew a sharp distinction between the actions of the corporate entity and the personal activities of its directors and employees – arguing that the latter were beyond the scope of the committee’s investigative authority. The committee’s chairman, however, Rep. Augustus O. Stanley (D-KY) deemed the matter pertinent for understanding U.S. Steel’s records and accounting practices, thus the questions proceeded. “United States Steel Corporation,” Part 21 of Hearings Before the Committee on Investigation of United States Steel Corporation, U.S. House, 62d. Cong., 1st sess. August 9, 1911 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1912), 1497-1498.

⁵² Schwedtman Testimony, Overman Committee Hearings, Part 55, 4437.

⁵³ In addition to acknowledging his and Van Cleave’s support for Republican congressional and presidential candidates in 1906 and 1908, Schwedtman agreed with Senator Thomas H. Paynter’s (D-KY) general characterization that “[t]hose of the association who contributed...made contributions to aid the Republican candidates” – to his knowledge at least. Indeed, he admitted to knowing of no case in which Van Cleave had solicited support for a Democrat. Schwedtman Testimony, Clapp Committee Hearings, Vol. I, 861, 864.

⁵⁴ On the sectional properties of support for the tariff, see Richard Franklin Bense, *The Political Economy of American Industrialization 1877-1900* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

⁵⁵ Zeigler, 110. Cleveland’s status as “the first Democratic president since the Civil War” excludes Andrew Johnson’s serving out the rest of Lincoln’s second term. The previous Democratic president was James Buchanan, from 1857-1861.

⁵⁶ Classified as a “realigning” election by Schattschneider (1960), it ushered in decades of Republican dominance at the national level in what he labeled “the System of 1896” – a fact of party competition in this era whether the concept of a realigning election is accepted or not. E.E. Schattschneider. *The Semi-Sovereign People: A Realist’s View of Democracy in America* (Wadsworth Publishing, 1960/1988), 76, 79.

⁵⁷ Schwedtman Testimony, Clapp Committee Hearings, Vol. I, 864. “So you had certain principles that you advocated and that were supported generally by the Republican organization?” Senator Paynter asked, which Schwedtman affirmed was the case after 1896. “Mr. Bryan’s candidacy, I suppose, had nothing to do with the change of your political views?” Paynter joked. “Not that,” Schwedtman replied, “but the silver question did have something to do with it.” (864).

⁵⁸ Schwedtman Testimony, Clapp Committee Hearings, Vol. II, 864. Schwedtman even noted the regret that his Democratic colleagues might feel when “they could not support the Democratic platform” (862-863). The presence of Democrats among its leaders suggested that the NAM, like any other group, was not perfectly homogeneous – neither the association or its officials, nor the Democratic Party for that matter, had the same orientation at all levels of government, or across all electoral contests generally.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 862. *Emphasis mine*. Senator Thomas H. Paynter (D-KY) asked the question. As Senator Paynter responded: “Yes: I see the distinction,” though he observed it was, of course, “usually Republican candidates upon the platforms which you supported...” (862).

⁶⁰ Schwedtman Testimony, Clapp Committee Hearings, Vol. I, 863. The tariff was only “a very small part” of the reason for widespread GOP support among NAM officials, Schwedtman said. “It was the anti-injunction: it was the repeal of the Sherman law, and matters of that kind, as well as judicial recall,” that played a more important role in shaping the perspective of NAM officials (863).

⁶¹ “Campaign Expenditures May Well Be Scrutinized,” *Wall Street Journal*, November 20, 1916, p. 1. “Wall Street is denounced openly by the Democratic party; and the Republican party is so “skeered” over the Democratic denunciations that it rejects certain Wall Street contributions and dodges on certain issues which should be squarely faced,” the paper pronounced.

⁶² “To Prevent Corrupt Practices in Congressional Elections,” Report No. 721, U.S. House, 68th Cong., 1st sess. (May 13, 1924), 4. This report accompanied the legislative proposal [H.R. 8956] of Rep. John L. Cable (R-OH). Cable repeated this statement on the

House floor the following year, offering a detailed overview of the state of campaign finance legislation at that point, and his concerted efforts to achieve reform. *Congressional Record - House*, February 13, 1925, quote is on p. 3664, overview from 3662-3664.

⁶³ H. Rpt. 68:721, 4. “If proper publicity is given,” Cable said, “the contributor will hesitate to carry water on both shoulders by giving to both parties.”

⁶⁴ Quoted in Samuel P. Huntington, “The Election Tactics of the Nonpartisan League,” *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 36 No. 4 (1950): 619.

⁶⁵ Schattschneider (1942), 163. In a diagram of the party structure, moreover, Schattschneider labels the national level with “A ghost party” (see p. 164, figure 8).

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 161.

⁶⁷ Schattschneider describes the national convention as an ineffective central institution, and the other central institutions of the party as “if possible, even more insignificant” (158). The national committee “is not a functioning central head of the party” (159) – it is composed basically of local appointees and “it rarely meets” (159) (The national committee is basically appointed by state and local bosses (though officially by the national convention) while the chairman is basically appointed by the presidential nominee (though officially by the national committee)). It only recently gained permanent headquarters (160). “The Congressional Campaign Committee and the Senatorial Campaign Committee hardly need to be mentioned in this connection” (160). “Theoretically the national convention is the supreme governing body of the party” (157) “In the tremendously long recesses of the convention the party has no national governing body” (158). “The fact is that the central institutions of the party are amazingly feeble and discontinuous. They are part-time service agencies which may foster, advise, and encourage the local party machines but have rarely been used to implement central party control of policy in public affairs” (161).

⁶⁸ In the 1868 election, Baker (2002) observes, the campaign was handled by “[t]wo groups, the Republican National Committee (RNC) and the Union Republican Congressional Committee (URCC),” though a non-party group, the National Union League, “was also in the field working on voter registration and organization” (12). The RNC was created in 1856, at the first Republican National Convention. The URCC, Baker explains, was formed in the 1860s “to aid congressional candidates and support national campaigns,” and would later be relabeled the “Republican National Congressional Committee” (8). See Paula Baker, “Campaigns and Potato Chips; or Some Causes and Consequences of Political Spending,” *Journal of Policy History* 14:1 (2002): 8, 12.

⁶⁹ See, for example, Daniel P. Klinghard, “Grover Cleveland, William McKinley, and the Emergence of the President as Party Leader,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 35 No. 4 (2005): 736–760. Klinghard’s article details many aspects of late 19th Century campaign organization, though it focuses on the ways the newly emerging national campaign structure afforded greater opportunity for presidential leadership of parties (754).

⁷⁰ As Baker (2002) observes, the parties in the early 20th Century bore little resemblance to the increasingly centralized and bureaucratic business world. “Coordinating fund-raising and workers was traditionally a haphazard business,” she observes, and the bulk of campaign work was conducted by state and local parties. The political parties might be “national in scope, but they lagged well behind the railroads in setting up centralized procedures” (7). Nor was a conception of hierarchical discipline particularly evident. Given secure streams of local funding, “state leaders knew that the national party needed them more than they needed national organization,” Baker notes (7).

⁷¹ For a discussion of the role of “spectacle” in early-mid 19th Century political campaigns, see Michael E. McGerr, *The Decline of Popular Politics: The American North, 1865-1928* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), Chapter 2.

⁷² Daniel J. Ryan, “Clubs in Politics,” *The North American Review* 146 No. 375 (February 1888): 175.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ The *Review* had posed the question to prominent politicians, should Republican clubs be organized on a permanent basis everywhere? “Permanent Republican Clubs,” *The North American Review* 146 No. 376 (March 1888): 241-265.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*,

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 265.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 249. *Emphasis mine.*

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 250. In LaFollette’s vision, these clubs could inject “a matured judgment of principles and parties,” into campaigns, “create sentiment for the right measures and the best men, train local speakers, and prepare the way for a profounder discussion of real issues” (250). Since “[c]liques and rings thrive upon the citizens’ indifference to the plain duties of representative government,” moreover, “[t]hey cannot co-exist with the persistent, continuous, intelligent interest of the individual voter” (249). Thus “[s]uch clubs cannot be used as machines for individuals or factions” (249). This analysis presents an idea of “faction” in an elite sense, forged around particular leaders. As Goldman (1990) specifies: “A faction is a temporary system of cooperation among a number of recognized leaders of a political party for the purpose of influencing the decisions and conduct of the party organization as a whole.” Ralph M. Goldman, *The National Party Chairmen and Committees: Factionalism at the Top* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 1990), viii.

⁸⁰ “Permanent Republican Clubs,” 250.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 251. As A.B. Guptill, who had represented the Dakota territory at the Republican club convention, observed: “That political parties are strengthened, improved, and made progressive through the agency of permanently organized, active clubs, in the same way that the standard of great armies is raised by well-drilled, disciplined soldiers, has long been recognized in the larger centres of population, but never in the history of American politics has such a gigantic plan of widespread organization been attempted, as that mapped out by the recent New York Convention of Republican clubs” (251).

⁸² *National Association of Democratic Clubs: Constitution and History* (New York: Journal Job Print, 1900), 22. It was “more necessary now than at any other period,” they argued. The party’s elected officials at the national level were simply unable to fulfill its platform

pledges “unless supported by a complete and active organization of their political friends.” This was the Association’s role, providing support that “can be supplied from no other source and in no other way” (22).

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ 1912 Election Results in *Presidential Elections Since 1789* 2d. ed. (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press, 1979), 86. The Socialist Labor Party was older, with origins in the 1870s and more formally constituted after 1890, under the leadership of Daniel DeLeon, along Marxist lines. The Socialist Party was established in 1901 under the leadership of Eugene Debs, as a successor to the Socialist Democratic Party he had helped form three years earlier. Its distinctive contribution was an “Americanization” of Socialism to some extent, lacking the basic commitment to revolution and the overthrow of capitalism that marked the SLP.

⁸⁵ On the 1912 election, and Roosevelt’s role in particular, see Sidney M. Milkis, *Theodore Roosevelt, the Progressive Party, and the Transformation of American Democracy* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2009).

⁸⁶ The first major third party effort at the national level was the “Anti-Masonic” party of 1832, fielding William Wirt as presidential candidate. Third parties became more prevalent in the run up to the Civil War – with the new Republican party ultimately coming to replace the Whigs as one of the two major parties. In 1848, former Democratic president Martin Van Buren ran on the “Free Soil” ticket for the presidency, while in 1856, another former president, this time a Whig – Millard Fillmore – was the standard-bearer for the American/Know-Nothing party. In 1860, there were the Southern Democrat and Constitutional Union candidates (John C. Breckinridge and John Bell respectively), and in 1872, the “Straight Out Democratic” party took a presidential whirl with Charles O’Conor.

⁸⁷ Parties more relevant from the perspective of societal interests (rather than being stimulated by sectional concerns and slavery) come into view after this point – in 1876 the “Greenback Labor” and Prohibition parties fielded candidates (Peter Cooper and Green Clay Smith, respectively), and both did so again in 1880 (this time running James B. Weaver and Neal Dow, respectively). By 1884 the Greenbacks had morphed into the Greenback/Anti-Monopoly party, running Benjamin F. Butler, while the Prohibition party fielded John P. St. John. Prohibition party candidates would appear in each presidential election up to and including 1920 (when the Prohibition amendment was passed), and reappeared in the 1932, 1936, and 1940 elections (when that amendment was under threat and ultimately repealed). From 1888, an array of labor and Socialist parties would take to the field: Union labor in 1888, Socialist Labor in each contest from 1892 through to 1916 and again from 1924; the Socialist Party from 1900 to 1920, and again from 1928 to 1948; the Farmer-Labor party in 1920; the Communist Party in 1928, 1932, 1936, and 1940; and, of course, the Populist party in 1892 (James B. Weaver), and also 1900 and 1904.

⁸⁸ The National Grange was formed in 1867, and the Knights of Labor in 1869.

⁸⁹ Elisabeth S. Clemens. *The People’s Lobby: Organizational Innovation and the Rise of Interest Group Politics in the United States, 1890-1925*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press (1997). She examines the activities of “popular associations” – including major fraternal groups associated with agricultural and labor interests (and subsequent types of group that emerged around each), and of groups associated with the women’s movements. Her study focuses upon the activities of these groups at the turn of the century in three states: Wisconsin, California, and Washington.

⁹⁰ The “Greenback” and Populist parties were associated primarily with agricultural interests and sections. With farmers always sensitive to fluctuations in monetary policy, given their seasonal reliance on credit, the retrenchment of paper money after the Civil War propelled formation of the “Greenback” party in protest. Monetary issues also propelled the Populist Party to prominence, with calls to back an expanded money supply with *silver*, not just gold. In its inflationary effect, this policy would have benefited indebted farmers by reducing their fixed debts in real terms, and increasing the prices reaped for their crops (Zeigler, 167).

⁹¹ As Zeigler summarizes: “Farmers’ organizations, much as the earlier labor unions, could only identify with a vaguely felt sense of deprivation and seek the fruitless avenues of third-party alliances to pursue their goals” (170).

⁹² On the GAR in general, see Stuart McConnell, *Glorious Contentment: The Grand Army of the Republic, 1865-1900* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1992). On their influence over legislator votes in particular, see Scott Ainsworth, “Electoral Strength and the Emergence of Group Influence in the Late 1800s: The Grand Army of the Republic,” *American Politics Research* 23 No. 3 (1995): 319-338.

⁹³ In the three states Clemens (1997) considers in detail (California, Washington, and Wisconsin), the political development of farmers’ organizations took divergent paths – though the major similarity is the failure of third-party politics in each (14, 77). As Hicks (1933) noted, the Populists were never able to win the full backing of labor (a problem that would also plague the Progressive effort of 1912). John D. Hicks, “The Third Party Tradition in American Politics,” *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 20 No. 1 (1933): 3-28.

⁹⁴ According to Clemens, the movement of the Grange into politics in the late 19th Century was disastrous – with internal conflict over a “pure” third party approach versus efforts to negotiate with the major parties at times. This comes to a head in the 1896 election, in which “fusion” fails spectacularly. Already declining in membership, the Grange stepped away from the political sphere, and while it did not entirely disappear as an organization, was but a shadow of its former self. Rising to prominence as the Grange declined, the Farmers’ Alliance had been an important force behind creation of the Populist Party – but both the Alliance and the Populist Party would be worn down and diluted “in the stubborn stream of the two-party pattern” (Zeigler, 171-172). The Farmers’ Union began to emerge in the South at the turn of the century, expanding to the Midwest by the ‘teens, where it became involved with a new kind of electoral effort, discussed in more detail below, the “Non-Partisan League” (Zeigler, 172). For the received wisdom of Grange decline after about 1880, see D. Sven Nordin, *Rich Harvest: A History of the Grange, 1867-1900* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 1974), vii. On the decline of the Knights of Labor, see John Rogers Commons, Helen Laura Sumner, David Joseph Saposs, John Bertram Andrews, Selig Perlman, Henry Elmer Hoagland, *History of Labour in the United States*, Volume

II (New York: Macmillan, 1918), 482. The Knights' membership fell from 700,000 in 1886 to 500,082 in 1887, 259,578 in 1888, 220,607 in 1889, and 100,000 in 1890," they note (482).

⁹⁵ Clemens' broader goal is to connect modern interest group politics to *state* development in the Progressive Era, challenging accounts that credit these changes to elite reformers. "Elite reformers may be credited with the expansion and rationalization of state capacities," she affirms, but "the source of shifts in popular political participation and the development of a political culture of "interests" lies in the widespread popular critique of parties and the organizational innovations inspired by this criticism" (38). She particularly targets the "organizational synthesis" in historical scholarship, which stresses the importance of organizational forms for understanding politics and governance, but had typically emphasized business organizations or bureaucratic actors within the government (38).

⁹⁶ I am indebted to Clemens's work for shaping my understanding of this early period of interest group development, and its legislative dimensions especially. In a sense, I extend her account, by applying some of her ideas of how interest group change came about to a later period and type of development.

⁹⁷ Clemens, 177.

⁹⁸ Spofford, quoted in Bryce, "Note (b) to Chapter 16: The Lobby."

⁹⁹ Clemens, 29.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 34.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 293. That is, they adopted a more hierarchical, corporate style of organization, stressing financial resources, and a nonpartisan orientation with an emphasis on lobbying (see p. 177).

¹⁰² The National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) was created in 1890 from the merger of the National Woman Suffrage Association – established in 1869 by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, and the American Woman Suffrage Association, founded in 1870 by Lucy Stone and others, repairing the rift that had opened in the women's movement after the Civil War, when the suffrage was extended to African-American men.

¹⁰³ Melanie Gustafson, "Partisan Women in the Progressive Era: The Struggle for Inclusion in American Political Parties," *Journal of Women's History* 9 No. 2 (1997): 11.

¹⁰⁴ Clemens, 34.

¹⁰⁵ David B. Truman, *The Governmental Process: Political Interests and Public Opinion* (Berkeley, CA: Institute of Governmental Studies, University of California, Berkeley, 1951/1993), 304, 310.

¹⁰⁶ Gustafson, 19; Clemens, 219. The underlying fault lines in the women's movement would ultimately break apart in the wake of the 19th Amendment, leading many historians to argue that women's influence actually *lessened* after they achieved the vote, as a cohesive electoral voice could not be found. "[I]ncreasingly these divisions fractured alliances among women," Clemens notes (232). "Once admitted to electoral competition," she explains, "women found that the distinctive identities and methods they had cultivated were undermined. Having mobilized around identities and organizational forms defined in opposition to party politics," she notes, "women activists found it difficult to mobilize as a bloc within the electoral system" (232). The irony was that achieving the suffrage actually "threatened the autonomy of women's associations by denying the existence of a distinctly feminine political interest" (232). For an alternative to this narrative, claiming that Southern women, at least, were able to effectively utilize the suffrage, much as they had earlier forms of action, see Lorraine Gates Schuyler, *The Weight of Their Votes: Southern Women and Political Leverage in the 1920s* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2006).

¹⁰⁷ Quoted in Gustafson, 19. Not all women's groups were as reticent about partisan affiliation – the Congressional Union for Women Suffrage, for example, may have been more admittedly Republican in its leanings. See Jo Freeman, *A Room at a Time: How Women Entered Party Politics* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000), 60.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.* Thus "partisan activists would not be punished for their party work."

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 17. On the internal impact of Adams position within the NAWSA, see Freeman, 60. According to Gustafson, Addams also launched an effort to make women's partisanship more generally acceptable, but with little success.

¹¹⁰ Letter from Susan B. Anthony to Jessie Anthony, August 1st, 1896, quoted in Gustafson, 22, n11.

¹¹¹ Clemens clarifies this when discussing agricultural groups, explaining that "[t]he "vicious habit" of partisan politics could be replaced by either extra-partisan direct democracy or nonpartisan lobbying (whether of parties, legislatures, or agencies)" (172).

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 173.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 39. "In their efforts to change or circumvent the political parties," Clemens summarizes earlier, "popular associations copied the practice of lobbying from corporations and gave it new legitimacy, trained voters to hold their representatives responsible for specific decisions, pioneered ways of shaping public opinion, and helped articulate demands for new social policies and new state agencies" (39).

¹¹⁴ "The Tribune Turns Searchlight On," 1.

¹¹⁵ On the AFL's "friends and enemies" strategy, see Clemens, 124-125.

¹¹⁶ In this view, the AFL's position was "nonpolitical" in its limited demands on the state to ensure an ostensibly "private" solution for the problems of the working man, and its avoidance of the electoral process mostly clearly identified with the "political."

¹¹⁷ Julie Greene, *Pure and Simple Politics: The American Federation of Labor and Political Activision, 1881-1917* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 1998), 2.

¹¹⁸ "Business unionism" emphasized collective bargaining rights and a limited legislative agenda designed to secure them, rather than promote broader social reform. See Zeigler, 139. On antistatism in particular, see Greene, 3, n3. On the unwillingness of American labor leaders to create "a class party through which the laborers would contest with their employers for the control of the government," see Hicks, 23.

¹¹⁹ Stephen J. Scheinberg, "Theodore Roosevelt and the A.F. of L.'s Entry into Politics, 1906-1908." *Labor History* 3 No. 2 (1962): 137. According to Scheinberg, Gompers had "had singled out a number of Congressmen as deserving defeat" in the pages of the *American Federationist*. Following a disastrous meeting with Cannon to discuss the AFL's legislative aims, however, "Gompers decided to center his campaign against his two arch foes in the House of Representatives, Cannon and Charles E. Littlefield of Maine" (134). Both were accused of frustrating labor legislation – Cannon, in particular, using his vast powers as Speaker to do so. Littlefield was regarded as a "NAM favorite" and an ardent foe of labor (133).

¹²⁰ Greene, 111; Zeigler, 142. "[T]he AFL's campaign program," after 1906, Greene argues, "represented a dramatic escalation of politics within the labor movement" (111). At this time, she argues, the AFL "developed a distinctive and influential approach to political action" that did not employ the device of an independent labor party, one she labels "pure and simple politics" (1). An AFL pamphlet written in 1915 also describes "[t]he advent of organized labor in politics" at the 1906 AFL annual convention, held November 12-24, in Minneapolis. See William Trant, *Trade Unions: Their Origin and Objects, Influence and Efficacy* (American Federation of Labor, 1915), 52. On roots in the 1904 midterms, see Greene, 103-104; also Scheinberg (1962), who cites the decision of the Printers' and Letter Carriers' conventions to endorse William Randolph Hearst in 1904, as signaling "a new trend in labor's political development" – though Gompers refused Hearst's entreaties for his personal support (132, 138).

¹²¹ Zeigler, 142.

¹²² Scheinberg, 132.

¹²³ Gompers, writing in the *American Federationist* in March 1894, quoted in Greene, 62 (*Emphasis mine*).

¹²⁴ Greene, 66-67. "It is party slavery which has done more to prevent political advancement than all other things combined," Gompers declared in the *American Federationist* (Samuel Gompers, "The AF of L and Political Action," *American Federationist* 5:4 (June 1898), 73-74, quoted in Greene, 67). Because of political bosses and parties, Greene explains Gompers' viewpoint, "Americans could not freely register their opinion on issues." Thus he felt that "successful political action must be linked solidly to a revolt against the party system" (Greene, 66).

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 67. "A distrust of parties and partisanship had been an integral element in American republicanism since the late eighteenth century. Civic virtue and partisan conflict in this view were incompatible," she explains. Thus in the 1890s, "the AFL leaders simply tapped this hostility toward the parties that workers shared with other Americans in order to consolidate their political control over the labor movement and to forestall any number of alliances between workers and political parties that they considered disastrous" (69). As Greene summarizes, AFL leaders at this point "developed arguments regarding the proper relationships between labor and politics," centered upon "two tightly linked concepts: first, pure and simple unionism, which placed the trade unions at the center of the labor movement; and, second, anti-partyism, a theory that accepted the need for political activity while rejecting partisanship as the road to success" (66). Gompers' "pure and simple" speech had linked the two by "enlist[ing] antipartyism in an innovative way," Greene explains – as a basis for opposing the *major* parties, but also for undermining efforts toward a *socialist* organization (61, 70).

¹²⁶ As Gompers observed in 1899: "We want legislation in the interests of labor; we want legislation executed by labor men; we want trade unionists in the State legislatures...[etc.]...and those convinced of the justice of our cause, with the courage of their convictions, in the highest officers of our land. We shall secure them, too, by acting as trade unionists rather than turning our trade unions into partisan ward clubs." Gompers, "Trade Unions—Their Philosophy," 1899, manuscript in the Samuel Gompers papers at the Wisconsin State Historical Society, quoted in Scheinberg, n4.

¹²⁷ V.O. Key, Lecture #7, "Political Tactics and Aims of Organized Labor." Updated 2/18/1957. V.O. Key Papers, Box 9, "Writings: Politics, Parties, and Pressure Groups," Folder "Chap. III. Workers." Mss. Notes and revisions." John F. Kennedy Presidential Library.

¹²⁸ The AFL's subsidiaries allied with either Democratic or Republican machines as local circumstances dictated, Rogin notes. Michael Paul Rogin, "Nonpartisanship and the Group Interest." Chapter IV in *Ronald Reagan, the Movie and Other Episodes in Political Demonology*, pp. 115-133 (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1988).

¹²⁹ Andrew Strouthous, *U.S. Labor and Political Action, 1918-24: A Comparison of Independent Political Action in New York, Chicago and Seattle* (London: Macmillan, 2000). As noted earlier, Clemens also points to some experiments with third-party action in California, Washington, and Wisconsin.

¹³⁰ Scheinberg, 134-135. This was an "unprecedented" presidential intervention in a Congressional election, Scheinberg observes (135). Rather than support the AFL and split the GOP, or "sit out the campaign," Roosevelt instead "chose to intervene actively on behalf of the Republican Congressional candidates, a move that placed him squarely in the path of the political efforts of organized labor" (134). In August, for example, Roosevelt publicly released a letter to James Eli Watson, the GOP Whip in the House, where he pointed to his administration's positive record on labor issues, endorsed the principles of trade unionism, and "made a strong appeal for a Republican Congress to support his legislative program" (135). "It is obvious that the President was attempting to appeal over Gompers' head to the workers themselves," Scheinberg states (135). But it is interesting to consider the nature of that appeal – one that appears more linked to Roosevelt's personal leadership and presidential authority than to partisan commitment. Still, armed with Roosevelt's call for a Republican congress, prominent party figures streamed into Maine to bolster Littlefield's campaign (136).

¹³¹ Quoted in Greene, 178. This was essentially identical to the position the NAM had considered, and rejected.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 161.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 165. From a normative perspective, such a financial relationship hardly seems superior to that where the group is contributing to the party or candidate – the concern over who is influencing whom is simply reversed.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 160.

¹³⁵ Scheinberg, 140.

¹³⁶ Indeed, the AFL's 1906 campaign produced "limited" success in terms of shaping the composition of Congress, Greene concedes. It failed to unseat its main targets, though they were able to take comfort in "the election of four trade unionists to Congress," she

claims. Still, she suggests it “achieved significant success” as “an effort to mobilize trade unionists on behalf of class-conscious political behavior...” (Greene, 140). Scheinberg, for his part, depicts the 1906 election outcomes as a personal victory for Roosevelt (Scheinberg, 140).

¹³⁷ Zeigler, 142. As Zeigler concluded, “[n]o immediate results of this more aggressive policy are discernible.”

¹³⁸ Scheinberg, 136.

¹³⁹ Active again the 1908 campaign, outgoing president Roosevelt pushed this “anti-democratic” message in public letters, he “urged workingmen not to allow themselves to be used as chattels to be delivered by the president of the AFL to Bryan” (Scheinberg, 148). On rank-and-file discontent with such voting instructions, see Greene, 175-176. The president of the Longshoremens, and a member of AFL executive council, even endorsed Taft in defiance (187). Letters to the AFL also suggest “the Republican charge of “delivering the labor vote” resonated deeply with rank-and-file workers” (192).

¹⁴⁰ Greene, 175.

¹⁴¹ Schattschneider had warned that “neither of the parties can afford to be identified exclusively with one interest or with a few interests...” E.E. Schattschneider, *Party Government* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1942/2004), 86. As Greene summarizes the major quandary of national partisan politics for the AFL: “Their political enemies made it more necessary for AFL leaders to discipline their troops in the name of Democratic victory, even as their criticism made that strategy more politically dangerous” (179).

¹⁴² The AFL’s traditional hostility to third parties, however, seemed renewed by the 1924 debacle. “A resolution favoring the organization of an independent labor party was introduced at the 1933 convention of the American Federation of Labor by a delegate of the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers, but the convention by unanimous vote adopted the report of the Committee on Resolutions reaffirming the Federation’s traditional non-partisan policy.” Richard J. Brown, “John Dewey and the League for Independent Political Action.” *Social Studies* 59 No. 4 (1968): 160. “Old third-party warriors in the labor movement had also abandoned independent political action,” Kessler explains. The president of the Chicago Federation of Labor, John Fitzpatrick, told a LIPA official “that he had learned his lesson in the early nineteen-twenties, and like “a burned child who dreads the fire,” he was not ready to re-embark on the quest for political realignment.” Robert Elliott Kessler, “The League For Independent Political Action, 1929 – 1933” (MA Thesis, University of Wisconsin – Madison, 1967), 63.

¹⁴³ Testimony of Samuel Gompers, September 10th-11th, 1913 (pp. 2395-2534) and Testimony of Rep. Charles Littlefield, September 19th, 1913 (pp. 2687-2779), in “Charges Against Members of the House and Lobby Activities of the National Association of Manufacturers of the United States and Others.” Volume 4 of Hearings before the Select Committee of the House of Representatives Appointed under House Resolution 198 [Garrett Committee], U.S. House, 63d Cong, 1st sess. September 9-September 19, 1913 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1913). Hereafter, “Garrett Committee Hearings.” The AFL’s legislative representative also appeared before the Senate’s more general investigation into lobbying at that time. See testimony of Arthur E. Holder, March 20th, 1914, Overman Committee Hearings, Part 64, 4884-4890.

¹⁴⁴ As Clemens noted in her discussion of the AFL, characterizing legislators as “friends” or “enemies” increasingly rested on analyses of incumbents actual voting records, rather than placing trust in the pledges of support they might offer come election time (124-125). Similarly, Clemens describes the Washington State Grange submitting questionnaires to candidates and trying to gain “preelection pledges” from them, an approach which was “not initially supplemented with reports of roll-call votes” (175).

¹⁴⁵ On “black-listing,” see Clemens, 124-125. When groups in California began to *publicize* these issue-based vote tabulations around 1912, she observes later, they faced a major backlash: “Although this practice is now a commonplace element of a political system in which narrowly defined interests are presumed to drive policy decision, at the time Californians found the legitimacy of this technique *extremely* questionable,” she explains (174). But by 1916, “labor unions in many states widely publicized the voting records of representatives in order to mobilize voters in direct response to their legislative interests” (174). Discussing legislative “scorecards,” Rozell, Wilcox, and Franz (2011) observe that the National Farmers Union was the first to produce a national-level one, in 1919. See Mark J. Rozell, Clyde Wilcox, Michael M. Franz, *Interest Groups in American Campaigns: The New Face of Electioneering*, 3d ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 114.

¹⁴⁶ Clemens, 172.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 34.

¹⁴⁸ On the “extra-partisan” approach, see Clemens, 172.

¹⁴⁹ Ansolabehere, Hirano, and Snyder (2007) report a claim made by Galderisi and Ginsberg (1986), that “[t]he primary can be seen as an antiparty reform on three separate counts. First, by weakening party leaders’ capacity to control nominating processes, primary elections undermine the organizational coherence of established parties. Second, primaries tend to direct the attention of voters and political activists toward the nominating contests of the party most likely to win the general election, and away from the interparty race. Over time, primary elections have probably helped to erode two-party competition in at least some states. Last, and most interesting, primary elections have the effect of inhibiting the formation of new parties.” Quoted in Stephen Ansolabehere, Shigeo Hirano, James M. Snyder, Jr., “What Did the Direct Primary do to Party Loyalty in Congress?” in David Brady and Mathew McCubbins (eds.), *Party, Process, and Political Change in Congress, Volume 2: Further New Perspectives on the History of Congress* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007), 23. They quote Peter F. Galderisi and Benjamin Ginsberg, “Primary Elections and the Evanescent of Third Party Activity in the United States,” in Benjamin Ginsberg and Alan Stone (eds.), *Do Elections Matter?* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 1986), p. 116.

¹⁵⁰ David B. Truman, “Party Reform, Party Atrophy, and Constitutional Change: Some Reflections,” *Political Science Quarterly* 99:4 (Winter 1984-85): 637-655. Pages 647-648.

¹⁵¹ Theodore Roosevelt, “The Right of the People to Rule,” March 20th, 1912. Transcription available at: <http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=1125>.

¹⁵² As Loomis (2009) neatly summarizes this reform effort: “Since the turn of the century, progressive reformers had enacted primary elections, secret ballots, the initiative, referendum, and recall, and the direct election of senators. Their principal objective was to supplant the partisan voter with the “informed citizen.” Under this model, progressives expected individuals to keep up on public affairs and to make political decisions based on the common good, rather than partisan or selfish interests” (200).

¹⁵³ Charles E. Merriam and Louise Overacker, *Primary Elections* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1928), 61.

¹⁵⁴ Information drawn from Table A1, “Dates of Direct Primary Use in U.S. House Elections by Non-Southern States,” in Ansolabehere, Hirano, and Snyder, 31. After 1915, no other states passed primary legislation for selecting congressional nominees until 1937. At that point, Utah adopted primaries for congressional nominations, followed by New Mexico in 1939, Rhode Island in 1947, Connecticut in 1955, and Delaware in 1978. Idaho repealed its Congressional primary in 1919, not reinstating this selection method until 1931. According to Ansolabehere, Hirado, and Snyder, then, 38 states have congressional primary legislation today.

¹⁵⁵ Merriam and Overacker, 142. Wisconsin’s 1905 law allowed for the election of *delegates*, but presumably the candidate to which they were pledged was not indicated. The Pennsylvania (1905) and South Dakota (1909) laws also had some variant of this.

¹⁵⁶ As Merriam and Overacker describe: “The Oregon idea was adopted by Wisconsin, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Dakota, South Dakota, and California in 1911 and by Maryland, Massachusetts, and Illinois early in 1912.” Pennsylvania and Ohio “had provisions for the direct election of district delegates,” while New York had a law that made this an option. Georgia and Florida also had optional primary laws that “made Democratic preference primaries possible” (142).

¹⁵⁷ Hicks, 23-24. Townley’s demands included, “among other things, ownership by the state of terminal elevators, flour mills, packing-houses, cold-storage plants, and operation by the state at cost of rural credit banks, hail insurance companies, and the like — in short, a gigantic experiment in state socialism,” Hicks explains.

¹⁵⁸ Kessler, 18.

¹⁵⁹ Hugh A. Bone, “Political Parties and Pressure Group Politics,” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences* 319 (1958): 81. Hugh Bone (1958): “It is unusual...for wholesale infiltration to take place,” Bone observes, but the Non-Partisan League was an important exception. “League nominees were placed in the Republican primaries and were successful in capturing the Republican State Committee,” he explains. By 1918, Bone notes, “the Republican party, platform, and state government were taken over completely by the League and much of its legislative program was enacted” (81).

¹⁶⁰ Huntington, 613-614. See also Robert L. Morlan, *Political Prairie Fire: The Nonpartisan League, 1915-1922* (Minneapolis, MN: The University of Minnesota Press, 1955); and Hicks, 24.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 618.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, 614. Huntington noted that such “nonpartisan tactics” had been used “in North Dakota in 1916, 1918, 1920, and 1924, in Wisconsin in 1920 and 1922, and in Oklahoma and Iowa in 1922” (614).

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 623. “The Nonpartisan League was always a minority,” Huntington notes, claiming it “extremely doubtful that its members ever cast a majority of the votes in any election.” (631). It is thus “an outstanding example of the power which an organized minority can wield in American politics if it uses the proper tactics.” (632).

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 615, 619. This was an approach the League used only when it was weak, Huntington explains: in Kansas and Nebraska in 1918, for example, where it had not yet fully established itself, and more generally after 1922, “when the League organization had crumbled but the ideas of the League had begun to influence the major parties” (615, see also 629). Townley, in fact, proposed a general “balance of power plan” in 1922, under which “the League would not attempt, as it had been doing, to nominate its own candidates in the primaries, to write their platforms, and to finance and conduct their campaigns” (619).

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 615. His label “sorehead tactics” stemmed from the term used for legislation in some states preventing primary losers from running as an independent for the same office. They were employed in Minnesota in 1918 and 1920, Montana in 1918, Nebraska in 1920, and North Dakota in 1922 (615).

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.* “Farmer-labor party tactics” were evident in South Dakota from 1918 onwards, Washington from 1920 (where it joined with liberal and labor groups to form a Farmer-Labor party), Idaho from 1920 onwards, and Minnesota after 1922 (following two sorehead campaigns in which they had set up some of the machinery) (615). In all these cases except Washington, Huntington points to some difficulty with the primary law (or lack of success in primaries) as factors encouraging them to adopt this approach.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 632. Huntington concludes, therefore: “If it had adopted third-party tactics at the outset, it could not have won its first electoral battle and, deprived of the motive power which comes from success, would probably have had a short and inglorious existence” (632).

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 619.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.* The phrase “a party in spite of itself” comes from Nathan Fine, *Labor and Farmer Parties in the United States, 1828-1928* (New York, 1928), 372. See also Hicks (1933), who asserts: “The League really was a separate and independent party, whether its leaders admitted the fact or not...” (24).

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁷¹ “always emphasized”: Huntington, 619; “always careful”: 617.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 617. Even in North Dakota, the League “denied that it could be identified with the Republican party,” Huntington notes. He quotes from a *Nation* article describing how the League would formulate a platform and pledge *its* support to all candidates “of any or every party who are willing to embrace it” (Huntington, 617, quoting William MacDonald, “North Dakota’s Experiment,” *Nation* 108 (March 22, 1919), 421).

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 619. “Sorehead candidacies were in complete harmony with the general League theory of tactics and the idea that political parties were mere instruments through which control of the state could be obtained,” Huntington explained, since it felt where its other tactics failed, “it reserved to itself the right to get on the ballot by any other method available” (619).

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 617, referring to Louis Levine, "Will Agrarian Movement Affect Our Politics?" *New York Times Magazine* Section, March 18, 1917, p. 10.

¹⁷⁶ Clemens, 35.

¹⁷⁷ Huntington, 618.

¹⁷⁸ Merriam and Overacker, 142. "Between 1912 and 1916," Merriam and Overacker report, "the nine states of Michigan, Montana, Iowa, Minnesota, New Hampshire, Vermont, West Virginia, North Carolina, and Maryland adopted the presidential primary in some form, and New York, Ohio, Massachusetts, California, and Illinois amended their laws. In addition, Texas passed a law which was declared unconstitutional." Since that point, they observed, only Alabama had "adopted any form of presidential primary" – one that had been subsequently held unconstitutional – while two other states, Minnesota and Iowa, had actually "abandoned their laws" after 1916 (142). In total, Merriam and Overacker suggested 26 states had taken some sort of action "to control their delegates in the national convention," 22 of which had involved "compulsory laws actually in operation." "[T]wo others have had such laws declared unconstitutional," he added, "and two have had experience with optional laws" (142-143). Many of these presidential primary laws were passed in anticipation of the cleavage which was to split the Republican convention in 1912, or as a result of that year," they add, "and are necessarily colored by the exigencies of a particular situation" (143). See also Louise Overacker, *The Presidential Primary* (New York: Macmillan, 1926), especially "Appendix B – A Digest of Presidential Primary Laws," (pp. 211-231) and "Table 1 – Vote Cast in the Presidential Primaries by Candidates and States, 1912-1924" (pp. 235-240). According to Overacker's Table 1, eleven states held presidential primaries for both parties across all the presidential election years she considers (1912, 1916, 1920, and 1924). These were: California, Illinois, Massachusetts, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

¹⁷⁹ Data compiled from *Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections*, 5th ed. (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2005), 318. According to the CQ data, the proportion of national convention delegates selected in primaries would hover around the 40% mark for much of this early period, but with the exception of the 1920 Republican contest, it would not break the 50% mark again until 1972, when in the wake of their disastrous 1968 nominating convention, the Democratic Party undertook reforms that would strengthen the primary as a method of presidential selection (ultimately influencing *both* parties in this regard). There are, however, slight differences between CQ's data on the number of primaries held and percentage of delegates selected, and those indicated in other sources. According to Peel and Donnelly (1931), in their account of the 1928 campaign, "[m]andatory presidential primary laws were in operation in seventeen states" – which accords with Overacker's information in 1924 – and these states chose "in all, 456 Democratic and 502 Republican delegates" (13). The total number of Democratic delegates appears to have been 1100, compared to 1089 Republican delegates, meaning the primary-selected delegates comprised 41% and 46% of each party's convention respectively. CQ suggests primaries were held that year in only *sixteen* states and provided 42.2% of the Democratic delegates and 44.9% of the Republican delegates. It is unclear *which* state they do not include. See Roy V. Peel and Thomas C. Donnelly, *The 1928 Campaign: An Analysis* (New York, Richard R. Smith, Inc. 1931), 13.

¹⁸⁰ Peel and Donnelly, 13-14. As they observe of the 1928 presidential primary contests: "[a] number of these states, notably Ohio, Indiana, West Virginia, Illinois, and Nebraska, had favorite sons and in every one of these states, Hoover, especially, encountered the strongest kind of opposition" (13). Smith, they suggest, was advantaged in his nomination campaign by facing fewer favorite son candidacies in the Democratic primaries. But, they acknowledge, "when he did face one, the result was the same" (14).

¹⁸¹ There is no single reliable source on this point, but information compiled from various sources in no case suggests more than 50% of states with mandatory laws. In 1924, for example, 19 states had mandatory presidential primary laws on the books, while a further two had optional laws (in five other states, they had either been repealed or declared unconstitutional). By 1928, the number with mandatory presidential primary laws had fallen to 17 (compiled from Overacker (1926), Appendix B, 211-231). The *Congressional Quarterly* information on the number of primaries *held* never comes close to 50% of states, moreover.

¹⁸² On this short-lived prosperity, and its role in exacerbating the subsequent economic woes of farmers, see Zeigler, 173 and Grace R. Conant, "An Analysis of the Campaign of 1928." (Master's Thesis, Loyola University Chicago, 1946), 30-31. In essence, farmers had gone on a spending spree in the immediate post-war period – purchasing new equipment to work the land and expand production, for example, installing electricity in their homes, maybe even a telephone, and investing in the newly affordable automobile that would connect them to both. As Conant notes, while "became accustomed to living on a better scale than he had ever experienced before," these investments also served to raise their tax rates (31).

¹⁸³ See Kessler, 19, 21. Kessler discusses the Non-Partisan League as a kind of forerunner to the League For Independent Political Action, a later left-leaning group on which he focuses.

¹⁸⁴ "Hierarchically structured, the Nonpartisan League failed both to produce, at its upper levels, a totally competent leadership, and to hold the loyalty of those officials it helped to elect," Kessler observes (20).

¹⁸⁵ Huntington, 618.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., 626-627.

¹⁸⁷ Merriam and Overacker, for example, pointed to at least two states – Minnesota and Iowa – that had "abandoned their laws" after 1916 (142).

¹⁸⁸ From an economic standpoint, as Hicks (1933) put it, "prosperity somehow never perched for long on the farmer's roof-tree" (23-24). The postwar "boom" that had so advantaged farmers had quickly turned into a bust: European farmlands that had been ravaged by the war come back into production – leading to a rapid drop in commodity prices in 1921. While American production had increased to meet the European need, it was now too high for the domestic market alone. As prices declined, farmers were increasingly unable to handle the debts they had accumulated in better times, and the higher taxes those investments had usually attached to their lands. Zeigler cites a stark statistic that clarifies the farmer's difficult position: "the purchasing power of farm products in terms of nonagricultural products was down to 63 per cent as compared to the prewar base" (173). "Stated in simplest terms," Conant explains, "farm prices had been deflated, while farm costs – operating expenses for home and field, mortgage debt,

taxes – were still highly inflated. Manufacturers, when confronted with a similar situation, either reduced their output, came to an agreement with other manufacturers as to prices or, with the help of the protective tariff, sold their excess product abroad at a loss, while keeping the American price high.” (30-33). Thus “[b]y 1921, Zeigler concludes, “agriculture found itself in a more unfavorable position than it had been at any prior time” (173). This economic decline “furnished the final blow to the North Dakota radicals,” Kessler reports. “Faced with a drastic decrease in income, the poorer farmers could no longer afford to pay the Nonpartisan League’s relatively high dues” (21). But the League had already been waning. “[T]he combined hostility of the major parties forced the League into the posture of a third party,” Zeigler explains, “and by 1920 had eliminated it as a threat” in terms of their primary contests (172). It was therefore “past its peak by 1922,” and declined precipitously thereafter (Zeigler, 179).

¹⁸⁹ For more on the agricultural background to this national Farmer-Labor effort, see Richard M. Vallyly, *Radicalism in the States: The Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party and the American Political Economy* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1989).

¹⁹⁰ Local Farm Bureaus had grown out of the “extension program” legislated by the Smith-Lever Act of 1914, and administered by the Department of Agriculture. The program placed “extension agents” in rural counties to help disseminate new scientific farming techniques, and they were charged with fostering local farm bureaus as a means of doing so. The number of such organizations grew rapidly, and at the 1919 meeting of the National Association of County Agricultural Agents, resolutions were passed to federate at the state and national levels. The national Farm Bureau was designed to combine the advisory activities stemming out of the extension efforts with a new role: to aid farmers “in economic conflicts with other interests” (Zeigler, 175). Thus it was conceived as a *political* rather than “purely educational” organization (though there had been some conflict over this issue at the convention – see Zeigler, 175-176). Its methods, however, would be oriented to seeking unity across all agricultural groups, and building a legislative coalition in Washington across parties.

¹⁹¹ The 19th Amendment to the Constitution, guaranteeing women the right to vote, was approved by Congress in the summer of 1919, and ratified the following year. Although a desire for more aggressive electoral action never entirely disappeared from the agricultural scene, the American Farm Bureau Federation, at least, focused upon other approaches, basing “its legislative techniques upon the hopes of a fusion of the agricultural sections” (Zeigler, 180).

¹⁹² Zeigler, 176. Clemens observes that a bureaucratic orientation is evident across agricultural groups more generally, who in comparison to labor groups, appear more attuned to bureaucratic state-building as a means of securing the long-term success of their favored policies – on both the state and national levels (146). Indeed, in early 1921, the House Committee on Banking and Currency held hearings on the influence of “Farm Organizations” in government – its chairman observing that “a certain conflict seems to have arisen as to the proper function of each one of these organizations and how the Department of Agriculture views that.” As its Chairman, Louis T. McFadden (R-PA), explained at one of the hearings, they sought simply to find out “what they are, and what they are doing here...” “[W]e got into it rather innocently,” he continued, but “a certain conflict seems to have arisen as to the proper function of each one of these organizations and how the Department of Agriculture views that.” “Farm Organizations.” Hearing before the Committee on Banking and Currency, U.S. House, held February 15, 1921, 66th Cong., 3d. sess. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1921), 3.

¹⁹³ Conant (1946) reports that in 1928, “the Farm Bureau claimed a membership of nearly a million farmers” (36).

¹⁹⁴ Zeigler, 177.

¹⁹⁵ The “Farm Bloc” was officially constituted on May 9, 1921, at the Washington office of the American Farm Bureau Federation. Representatives of the Farm Bureau Federation, the National Grange, the Farmers Union, and some lesser organizations had been meeting since April 11 with a group of government officials to discuss a possible legislative program to alleviate agrarian economic distress. The high priority of this meeting can be ascertained from the prominence of the officials in attendance: Henry Wallace (Secretary of Agriculture), Herbert Hoover (Secretary of Commerce), among others.” “The purpose of the May 9 meeting was to establish ways of initiating and passing a legislative program desired by the agricultural organization,” Zeigler states (177). According to Conant, the Farm Bloc consisted of fourteen Republican and twelve Democratic senators, “all from the West or the south,” with a significant though “less clearly defined” membership in the House (36-37). The Farm Bloc idea was not universally admired among agricultural interests, as Zeigler observes (opposition came from “Progressive State Granges” and some state Farmers’ Unions, for example, which formed the “Farmers’ National Council”) (179). Still “[o]ne great strength of the group was its ability to maintain an organizational structure which cut across party lines,” he adds (178). And it had some early successes, such as the Emergency Agricultural Credits Act and the Intermediate Credits Act (1923), along with “a dozen or so acts on cooperative marketing, agricultural tariffs, supervision of the packing industry, and grain futures regulation.” (178). After 1926, Zeigler explains, “the influence of the bloc slumped badly. The next few years were characterized by internal squabbles, clumsy attempts at lobbying, and legislative defeats” (178). Since it had been “a hastily assembled marriage of convenience among diverse elements” – one that “had accomplished many of its original goals” during its initial phase of mobilization – stability and initiative was difficult to maintain (178-179). Moreover, while the bloc’s leadership began to work more closely with the Republican leadership in Congress, it faced hostility from the Republican administration, who “continued to oppose the farm bloc as a threat to party discipline” (178-179). As Zeigler reports: “[n]o formal effort to organize the bloc was made after 1923, and, although there continued to be a bipartisan group in both the House and Senate which supported agricultural legislation, the farm organizations gradually went their separate ways” (179).

¹⁹⁶ Zeigler, 176-177.

¹⁹⁷ Huntington, 615.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 615.

¹⁹⁹ Key, Lecture #7, “Political Tactics and Aims of Organized Labor.” Updated 2/18/1957 (V.O. Key Papers). This observation on the Anti-Saloon League is added as a pencil notation to the typed text discussing the AFL’s doctrine.

²⁰⁰ Peter H. Odegard, *Pressure Politics: The Story of the Anti-Saloon League* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1928), p. 5. “Its central idea of utilizing the organizing churches as a political battering ram has been the secret of its success,” Odegard noted. It was certainly

critical to its financing – with small donations elicited in church-based appeals providing the bulk of its receipts, as the state editor for one of its newspapers explained in 1924. See Harry M. Chalfant. “The Anti-Saloon League-Why and What?” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 109 (1923): 280.

²⁰¹ As J.C. Jackson, editor of the League’s national newspaper, *The American Issue*, described its methods in 1908: complete organization of the League in a particular state involved “three departments of activity-agitation, legislation, and law enforcement,” Jackson explained. J. C. Jackson. “The Work of the Anti-Saloon League,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 32 (1908): 12.

²⁰² K. Austin Kerr, “Organizing for Reform: The Anti-Saloon League and Innovation in Politics,” *American Quarterly* 32:1 (Spring, 1980): 51. Anti-Saloon League founder Howard Hyde Russell’s initial plan for building his new organization, “was to arouse dry enthusiasm with a legislative campaign,” Kerr reports (51). Thus in 1894, the Ohio Anti-Saloon League introduced a bill that would require localities to hold a vote on passing temperance orders every two years. The League’s leadership did not expect it to pass, but introduced it as a rallying point for organizational activity.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁵ W. M. Burke, “The Anti-Saloon League as a Political Force,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 32 (1908): 27.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 33.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 34.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 28. As Burke explained, the initial agitation of temperance reformers in the 19th Century had led the liquor trade to protect itself – effectively “entrenching itself behind state laws.”

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.* They “were well acquainted with the attitude of every candidate of both parties on the question of the continuance of the business,” and “[t]he one most friendly got the votes of all” – and, presumably, enough votes purchased by the liquor interests to ensure election.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.* “It rarely or never happened that all candidates were hostile,” he also noted, “for the control of caucus and convention was a part of the game” (Burke, 28-29).

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, 28-29.

²¹² Kerr, esp. 43, 53. Kerr’s main focus is on the League’s internal structure, its bureaucratic organization which allowed it to retain an efficient focus on its single issue: “the advantages of a business-like system of bureaucratic management for political purposes” (53). Much like the emerging business firms of the time, Russell had sought “to adapt business practices and bureaucratic principles to the temperance agitation,” Kerr explained, creating an organization which would “provid[e] for specialized and departmentalized functions, a central office, and a full-time professional staff in charge of developing strategy, coordinating activities, and fostering organizational growth” (43). It was hierarchical in structure, and would remain narrow in focus and disciplined in execution – rather than getting involved in tangential or even unrelated matters: it would stay “on message” in today’s parlance (53). As Chalfant, one of the state editors of the *American Issue* noted in 1923, “[t]he Anti-Saloon League is as thoroughly organized and as scientifically managed as any institution in America, whose purpose it is to influence public sentiment and establish the principles for which it stands” (279). See also K. Austin Kerr, *Organized for Prohibition: A New History of the Anti-Saloon League* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985).

²¹³ Burke, 33.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 35 (that the League sought written pledges but preferred to base its recommendation on a candidate’s record). “The league never goes back on its friends who are seeking a re-nomination or re-election,” Burke explained: “its first duty is to protect those friends and re-elect them, understanding that in this way only, can it keep its strength and gain new adherents among legislators” (35).

²¹⁵ Kerr, 37.

²¹⁶ Burke, 31. This principle, Burke asserted, was a “[a]nother source of strength” for the League.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.* “[F]or if enough of them in any one district will vote for a candidate upon the opposite party ticket, the next time that candidates are nominated for that office they will find that there will be a man on their own ticket whom they can support,” as Burke put it.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, 33.

²²¹ *Ibid.*

²²² In this regard, as Huntington noted, some saw the Non-Partisan League as modeling its tactics on those of the Anti-Saloon League (620).

²²³ Jackson, 12.

²²⁴ Truman, 295.

²²⁵ For 1916, at least, Odegard (1928) suggests that the League was not concerned with the presidential contest, but focused on the congressional sphere (163). “The reelection of Wilson was expected and it was feared that the Democrats would be against the [Prohibition] amendment,” he notes. “No effort was made to commit the presidential candidates. The main desideratum was a dry Congress” (163).

²²⁶ Burke, 33. The League would “go to the party which stands next in numerical strength and endeavor to make terms with them for a candidate who will stand right,” Burke explained. “Generally, it is successful,” he concluded (33). Cherrington (1913) also suggests general League success in persuading at least one major party to nominate a sympathetic candidate: “The leaders of political parties in practically every state had come to know by experience that to nominate men favorable to the liquor interests in communities where the majority of the people were favorable to the no license policy was suicidal from the party standpoint,” he asserts. Party leaders

“[i]n many sections” therefore recognized, he continued, that before they launched any particular candidate, “they must needs first make sure that his candidacy would not arouse the active opposition of the Anti Saloon League.” Ernest Hurst Cherrington, *History of the Anti-Saloon League* (Westerville, OH: American Issue Publishing Company, 1913), 91-92.

²²⁷ Burke, 33. In the rare situations where neither major party fielded an acceptable candidate, “there is a third party,” Burke explained, “and in many cases the Anti-Saloon League has taken up a prohibition candidate and has elected him as against both political parties.”

²²⁸ Ibid. Cherrington also noted proudly that the League had “come to hold the balance of power wherever temperance issues were involved in political campaigns” (Cherrington, 91-92).

²²⁹ Ibid., 35. “[W]here there are two candidates who are favorable,” Burke explained, “the league never makes a choice, even though sometimes this leads to the charge of forsaking candidates who are friends, and sometimes even leads to the defeat of friendly candidates because of the division of votes, while the liquor vote is solid for a single opponent.”

²³⁰ Jackson, 24.

²³¹ Ibid. Governor Myron T. Herrick (R-OH) had been “previously elected by 13,000” in 1904, Jackson reported, but was defeated “by upward of 42,000” in 1906, “for having weakened the residence county-option law...”

²³² Cherrington, 88. The League threw its support behind incumbent governor William T. Cobb (R-ME), against an “effort then being made to resubmit the Prohibition question to a vote of the people.” “The National League placed twelve of its strongest men in Maine for the campaign,” Cherrington reports, where, “[a]fter a hard fought battle,” they were successful (88).

²³³ Jackson, 24.

²³⁴ Conant, 26.

²³⁵ Kerr, 52. Ironically, an article published just before the November 1916 contests suggested the League’s electoral effort was about to fail. See L. Ames Brown, “Prohibition’s Legislative Efforts,” *North American Review* 204:731 (October 1916): 589-593.

²³⁶ Burke, 35.

²³⁷ “Anti-Saloon League Politics,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, October 17, 1926, p. 10.

²³⁸ Ibid. In Ohio, moreover, its commitment to temperance was leading it to support a candidate opposed to a waterway project deemed important to the state: “This is but one instance of the unscrupulous entanglements of the “practical politics” which the Anti-Saloon league practices wherever it is at work,” the *Tribune* noted with disdain.

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ Chalfant offered such an argument when responding to accusations of the League being “a machine-an intolerant political machine.” “Verily, the accusation is true,” he admitted: “The church is a machine and the League is a machine within a machine.” But it was not an “ordinary political machine” though, one which was “built and maintained for the personal advantage of the biggest cogs in that machine.” Rather, it was a machine built for *good*, he argued (Chalfant, 282). In this sense, the Anti-Saloon League claimed a status that would later be described as a “public interest group.”

²⁴¹ “Anti-Saloon League Politics,” 10. As the *Tribune* article added: “The Anti-Saloon league has no respect for temperance in any respectable meaning of the word. Its bosses are after political power, and they don’t care how they get it.”

²⁴² *Congressional Record*, Senate. April 30th, 1928, 7430.

²⁴³ Chalfant, 282 (Chalfant was a state editor of the *American Issue*). Moreover, given the vicious nature of the liquor traffic, it was understandably “intolerant of any candidate who is lined up as a defender of the traffic,” Chalfant explained (282).

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

²⁴⁵ In that election year, 1920, the Clerk of the House of Representatives (William Tyler Page), had asked the Library of Congress to compile a list of organizations who appeared to be engaging in political activity, and took it upon himself to “inform” them about the law. The Anti-Saloon League was among those identified and contacted by Page, though he maintained that his role was purely “ministerial,” and that by informing these groups of the law he did not take a position on whether they did indeed constitute political committees required to file – this was something they must determine for themselves. Nonetheless, he noted in testimony before a House committee in 1924 that he had seen an increase in filings as a result. Among those groups choosing to file that year was the Anti-Saloon League, though it protested that its activities were “educational, scientific, and charitable rather than political as intended by the law.” Statement of William Tyler Page before the House Committee on Election of President, Vice President, and Representatives in Congress. *Hearings on Additional Publicity of Campaign Contributions* (68th Congress, 1st session, February 21, 1924), p. 22; for Anti-Saloon League protest, see *Congressional Record – House*, April 4, 1922, 5015. See also Overacker, *Money in Elections*, 258. As Holman and Claybrook (2004) note in an assessment of more recent litigation in the area of campaign finance notes the Anti-Saloon’s protest as an important early example of the difficulties in “distinguishing which type of political activity is electioneering and which type is merely meant to promote issues” – one that reappeared with new energy in the wake of the 1976 *Buckley* decision, which determined “political” content by the presence of key words of “express advocacy,” thereby excluding from the most stringent regulations those messages which did not contain such words. “This distinction between educational and campaign advertising, established in practice since the Anti-Saloon League’s reluctance to disclose its financial activities in the 1920s,” they explain, “had now received the Court’s legal sanction.” Craig Holman and Joan Claybrook, “Outside Groups in the New Campaign Finance Environment: The Meaning of BCRA and the *McConnell* Decision,” *Yale Law and Policy Review*, 22 (2004): 239-240.

²⁴⁶ Mark J. Rozell, Clyde Wilcox, Michael M. Franz, *Interest Groups in American Campaigns: The New Face of Electioneering*, 3d ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 24.

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

²⁴⁸ It was, instead, the “gigantic outpouring” of publicity that flowed from its self-created publishing company and the presses of its national and sub-national affiliates. As Loomis reports, Odegard put James Arnold-style methods such as developing sentiment’ and ‘educational work’ “at the center of his 1928 analysis of the Anti-Saloon League...As Odegard showed, the league launched a “deluge” of publicity during the 1910s, and the organization even went so far as to establish its own publishing company in order to

get out its message. The league's eight presses pumped out more than thirty state newsletters and a host of other journals, all aimed at activating public opinion against the nation's saloons. In total, the organization produced more than 150 million books, pamphlets, leaflets, and other documents between 1909 and 1923, and at their peak the league's journals boasted a total circulation of more than 550,000." "Other pressure groups differed in scale from the Anti-Saloon League, but all relied on similar tactics," Loomis concludes (199).

²⁴⁹ Odegard, 105.

²⁵⁰ Quoted in Loomis (2009), 199.

²⁵¹ Testimony of Senator Robert La Follette (R-WI), June 3, 1913, Overman Committee Hearings, Part 1, 197.

²⁵² Ibid. La Follette is, in fact, somewhat imprecise on this "better way" – at times alluding to a publicity-based approach, but also speculating that the better way involved installing "their man" in office through electoral means rather than buying him off. "They elected directly to the Senate and House of Representatives men who looked after their interests more particularly from the inside, and the outside lobby was not in prominence" – a strategy that will become increasingly important in the 1940s and beyond, as I discuss in later chapters. Whether there was any real *normative* difference between the two was unclear to La Follette, after Senator James A. Reed (D-MO) raised the question of which was worse. In either case, he concluded: "I think I am entirely safe in saying that conditions are very, very materially improved within the last 25 years." The kind of lobbying that had been described by Bryce in the *American Commonwealth*, La Follette noted in particular, in which "the corridors of the Capitol and the hotels of Washington swarmed with lobbyists," had waned, La Follette observed.

²⁵³ Overman Committee Hearings, Part 1, 3. *Emphasis mine*. These "astute men" were spending huge sums of money to create opinion "antagonistic to some of the chief items of the tariff bill," Wilson charged. "It is of serious interest to the country that the people at large should have no lobby and be voiceless in these matters," he warned, "while great bodies of astute men seek to create an artificial opinion and to overcome the interests of the public for their private profit."

²⁵⁴ "Where Are Those Lobbyists?" *Washington Post*, March 22, 1912, 6. Quoted in Loomis (2009), 193.

²⁵⁵ See Hall (1969), who emphasizes that the small government, even anti-government stance that the national Chamber has often adopted should not blind us to the role of the federal government in its formation. Donald R. Hall, *Cooperative Lobbying: The Power of Pressure* (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 1969), 215.

²⁵⁶ Zeigler, 113-114. Though there had been earlier efforts along these lines – a "National Board of Trade" had emerged in the wake of the Civil War, for example – they had never managed to become the "representative of a broad base of business opinion."

²⁵⁷ Ibid., 114. The convention was held on April 22nd, 1912, with delegates from 2000 local Chambers attending. According to Gable (1953), the NAM resigned from the US Chamber in 1922.

See Richard W. Gable, "NAM: Influential Lobby or Kiss of Death?" *The Journal of Politics* 15 No. 2 (1953): 254-273.

²⁵⁸ Quoted in Conant, 85-86.

²⁵⁹ Ibid., 87.

²⁶⁰ Ibid., 88.

²⁶¹ Ibid.

²⁶² "The issue... was not simply whether Arnold was a legitimate petitioner or a corrupt lobbyist, or whether the opinions he activated were based on good or bad information," Loomis explains, "but that legislators and other elites had a hard time telling the difference." (189). These techniques became "standard operating procedure during the 1920s," blurring the lines between the representatives of a truly popular issue or interest, and one contrived to appear so, and making it "more difficult for politicians to judge the meaning of their constituents' opinions." (200). That lobbyists for groups like the Anti-Saloon League, the American Legion, or the American Farm Bureau Federation were accused of engaging in similar practices "served to reinforce the idea that bluffs, subterfuge, and misdirection were an integral part of interest-group politics," Loomis notes (200). "Judging propaganda to be effective," however, "lawmakers gradually adjusted to the new style of interest-group politics," Loomis concludes (189).

²⁶³ Baker, 19.

²⁶⁴ Mersh (1937) reported that the RNC Publicity Bureau, for example, had "practically ceased functioning" after the 1928 election. Loretto C. Mersh, "The Presidential Campaign of 1932" (Master's Thesis, Loyola University Chicago, 1937), 4. The Republican National Committee had already set up a Publicity Bureau earlier in the decade, though its operations after 1928, and the status of RNC operations more generally, are less clear.

²⁶⁵ He also "established a permanent Executive Committee to manage fundraising and staffing," as Savage (1991) details. Sean J. Savage, "Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Democratic National Committee," *Social Science Journal* 28:4 (1991): 451-465.

²⁶⁶ Through an emphasis on *education* and a less questionable claim of non-partisanship whether the specter of elections was less apparent. By the 1920s, Clemens argues, the pursuit of "special interests" had become "politics as usual." ["Culturally corrupt" appears in Clemens, 29. "[A] new language of political contention" had developed, she observes, in which "Your Interests" and "the Special Interests" were no longer different in kind" (314). In essence, "interests" went from being a pernicious phenomenon, an externalized target for the average American, denoting special privileges for a class and a bane on politics – to an internalized phenomenon where everyone had an "interest." "In the place of a contest between "the People" and "the Interests," she observes, "American politics was rearranged as a contest of ever-multiplying "partial interests" making demands on the state (325). In a sense, the pursuit of special interests had been universalized by allowing *everyone* to be selfish. Similarly, Loomis (2009) points to the erosion of automatically negative characterizations of lobbying, citing a 1915 *New Republic* article that embraced the basic acceptability of "businesses openly advocating for their political interests," while critiquing the possibility of duplicity or manipulation in the new publicity methods (192).

²⁶⁷ Rozell, et al., 24.

Chapter 3. The Rise of Political Action

¹ This describes the status of a “connected” PAC – one that has an interest group “parent” of some description. Other types of unconnected PAC do exist, where the PAC itself is the only organization.

² These basic prohibitions, it is important to note, were not affected by the Supreme Court’s 2010 ruling in *Citizens United*, which concerns money spent *independently* of a particular campaign, rather than contributed directly to it.

³ The PAC definition was incorporated into the 1974 legislation – codifying an important Supreme Court ruling on the matter. As Epstein (1980) notes: “The provision authorizing PACs was added to the bill on the House floor through an amendment drafted by the AFL-CIO.” The amendment was an “insurance” measure for organized labor, Epstein explains, given the pending *Pipefitters* case before the Supreme Court. Edwin M. Epstein, “Business and Labor Under the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971,” 107-151 in Michael Malbin (ed.), *Parties, Interest Groups and Campaign Finance Laws* (Washington, D.C.: The American Enterprise Institute, 1980), 112.

⁴ Voter mobilization, for example, is also undertaken by “civic” organizations like the League of Women Voters.

⁵ Such “educational” activity today often comes under the heading of “issue advertising. Truman described an array of electoral activities including candidate endorsements, compiling and publicizing candidate voting records and providing other information to members, undertaking wider publicity efforts aimed at non-members, making direct financial contributions to candidates, along with other types of in-kind contribution, and voter mobilization efforts (304-305). Key (1964) also described “several types of campaign activity” in which interest groups might engage, including the circulation of voting records, issuing endorsements, and active electoral support – which seems to embrace both campaign contribution and mobilization activities (160). Direct campaign contributions and endorsements are the province of PACs, while the wider kinds of issue-publicity and voter mobilization activities in which they typically engage may also be undertaken by other kinds of actor. Advertising that advocates for or against a candidate also used to be a PAC province (subject to certain financial limits specified in campaign finance law), but the rise of SuperPACs has muddied the waters somewhat – they can engage in (unlimited) candidate advocacy – so long as it is not coordinated with a campaign. Herrnson (2005) also adds *candidate recruitment* to this standard list, claiming that “[f]or most of the twentieth century, interest groups made three kinds of contributions to the election process: recruiting candidates, organizing campaign-related activities and voter drives, and financing campaigns.” In my assessment, this aspect of interest group activity would become more important in the 1940s and beyond. Paul S. Herrnson. “Interest Groups and Campaigns: The Electoral Connection.” Paul S. Herrnson, Ronald G. Shaiko, and Clyde Wilcox (eds.) *The Interest Group Connection: Electioneering, Lobbying, and Policymaking in Washington* 2nd ed. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press (2005). 25.

⁶ E.E. Schattschneider, *Party Government* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1942/2004), 21.

⁷ The Commerce Department produced an annual directory of trade associations, including local and state, regional, national, and international organizations. The 1919 and 1929 data is cited in Ellis W. Hawley, “Herbert Hoover, the Commerce Secretariat, and the Vision of an “Associative State,” 1921-1928,” *The Journal of American History* 61 No. 1 (1974): 139. In 1923, this directory identified “slightly more than 11,000” trade associations at all levels, and over 19,000 by 1931. 1500 of those identified in 1923 were “interstate, national, and international,” 2,000 were state-based, and 7700 local. See Department of Commerce, Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, *Commercial and Industrial Organizations of the United States* Rev. ed. March 1 1923 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1923), III; 1931 data cited in Clarence Bonnett, “The Evolution of Business Groupings,” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 179 (1935): 5.

⁸ U.S. Department of Commerce, *National Associations of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1949). Cited in Truman, 58. Schattschneider (1942) cited Commerce Department statistics for the most comprehensive listing of business organizations (20). For non-business associations and societies, Schattschneider found the *World Almanac* more useful (25). He also mentions the *Social Work Year Book*; the *Municipal Year Book*; the *Directory of Organizations Engaged in Governmental Research*, and the *Directory of Organizations in the Field of Public Administration*). Another source commonly used to identify interest groups from the mid-20th Century, at least, is the *Encyclopedia of Associations*, published since 1956.

⁹ Presumably utilizing a slightly different methodology from the Commerce Department since it found just over 1500. U.S.

Temporary National Economic Committee: *Trade Association Survey*, pp. 2, 26 - cited in David B. Truman, *The Governmental Process: Political Interests and Public Opinion* (Berkeley, CA: Institute of Governmental Studies, University of California, Berkeley, 1951/1993), 57.

¹⁰ Schattschneider (1942) cited Commerce Department statistics for the most comprehensive listing of business organizations (20). For non-business associations and societies, Schattschneider found the *World Almanac* more useful (25). He also mentions the *Social Work Year Book*; the *Municipal Year Book*; the *Directory of Organizations Engaged in Governmental Research*, and the *Directory of Organizations in the Field of Public Administration*). Another source commonly used to identify interest groups from the mid-20th Century, at least, is the *Encyclopedia of Associations*, published since 1956.

¹¹ The *Encyclopedia of Associations* has been published continuously by Gale Research since 1956. The first and second editions of the *Encyclopedia of Associations* appeared as the *Encyclopedia of American Associations*. *Washington Representatives* is also known as the *Directory of Washington Representatives of American Associations & Industry*.

¹² Notably, Walker (1983) actually drew a sample from the 1980 *Washington Information Directory*, from whom he collected information including formation date, concluding “that relatively few groups were formed before midcentury and that the origins of modern interest group politics lie in the postwar decades,” as Tichenor and Harris (2002) summarize. Daniel J. Tichenor and Richard A. Harris, “Organized Interests and American Political Development,” *Political Science Quarterly* 117:4 (Winter 2002): 587-612. Page 594. “Jack Walker’s pioneering work on interest group origins is one of the notable exceptions. Determined to gather comprehensive data on group formation and maintenance in the United States, Walker settled on the Congressional Quarterly’s Washington Information

Directory (1980) as the best source from which to draw a reliable sample of organized interests engaged in national politics from the nineteenth century to the present. As he explained, "After checking the several sources against each other and evaluating their strengths and weaknesses, the Directory was chosen as the source of group names most likely to provide a balanced picture of associations concerned with national affairs."²⁶ Eventually, he identified 913 groups that fit his purposes, 564 of which responded to the survey he administered. On the basis of survey reports of when these 564 groups were founded, Walker offered evidence that relatively few groups were formed before midcentury and that the origins of modern interest group politics lie in the postwar decades" (594). See Jack L. Walker, "The Origins and Maintenance of Interest Groups in America," *The American Political Science Review* 77 No. 2 (June 1983): 390-406.

¹³ Tichenor and Harris (2002), 594. In their article, Tichenor and Harris find much earlier, and more sizable growth in the number of such groups than suggested by working back from groups appearing in published indices such as the CQ's *Washington Information Directory*, *Washington Representatives*, or the *Encyclopedia of Associations* produced by Gale Research (see pp. 594-596 especially). Using founding dates for organizations appearing in the *Encyclopedia of Associations*, for example, their results suggested "that no more than a few hundred interest groups emerged in national politics before the 1920s, an outcome consistent with both standard accounts and Walker's findings" (594-595). When they looked to congressional appearances, however, the results were much different.

¹⁴ The Congressional Information Service's *U.S. Congressional Committee Hearings Index*, they explain, "catalogs congressional testimony from 1833 to the present by topic and organization testifying" (595). In the last decade of the 19th Century, they identify 256 interest groups appearing in congressional hearings. By the first decade of the 20th Century, the number had increased to 734. From 1909 to 1917, 1301 distinct groups would send representatives to participate in proceedings of the House and Senate. The greatest proportion in each period were trade associations, but "citizens groups" were a growing segment by the 'teens. Unions, in each case, were in least evidence at the congressional hearings – hovering around, and then under 10%. Tichenor and Harris (2002), Table 1, Page 599.

¹⁵ TENC data is a partial exception – since it notes that "the vast majority" of trade associations it identified listed "governmental relations" as one of their main activities. U.S. Temporary National Economic Committee: *Trade Association Survey*, pp. 2, 26 - cited in Truman, 57.

¹⁶ It was "compiled from Washington directories and the examination of the tenant lists of a number of the best-known office buildings in the city," a basic approach that would be replicated elsewhere. *Congressional Record - Senate*, February 2nd, 1921, 2413-2414. Based on an article in the *Detroit News* by Jay G. Hayden, reprinted in the *Literary Digest*, October 30th, 1920.

¹⁷ This Herring concluded was "a very conservative estimate." He had himself located D.C. addresses for 530, with 300 appearing in the telephone book alone. Pendleton Herring, *Group Representation Before Congress* (Washington, D.C., Brookings Institution, 1929), 19. In his Appendix 2, "List of Organizations Represented at Washington," Herring specifies 463 of these. When Senator Caraway recommended lobbying legislation in early 1928, he also noted "between 300 and 400 alleged [lobbying] associations" in the Washington telephone directory. "To Require Registration of Lobbyists, and for Other Purposes." Senate Report 70:342, submitted by Mr. Caraway, from the Committee on the Judiciary. February 21st, 1928, p. 2. See also Loomis (2009), 195.

¹⁸ The reports cover the period from 1946-1950, and also list all individuals registered as lobbyists – whether for organizations or independently. "Lobby Index 1946-1949: An Index of Organizations and Individuals Registering and/or Filing Quarterly Financial Reports under the Federal Lobbying Act," Report of the House Select Committee on Lobbying Activities [**Buchanan Committee**], House of Representatives, 81st Cong., 2d. Sess. December 15, 1950. Report No. 3197 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1950); "Lobby Index 1950: An Index of Organizations and Individuals Registering and/or Filing Quarterly Financial Reports under the Federal Lobbying Act," Report of the House Select Committee on Lobbying Activities [**Buchanan Committee**], House of Representatives, 81st Cong., 2d. Sess. December 29, 1950. Report No. 3234 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1950. For *Congressional Quarterly* data, see "Lobby Spending Reports, 1946-1963," available through *CQ Political Reference Suite*.

¹⁹ As part of its investigation into lobbying in 1950, for example, the Buchanan Committee issued a comprehensive index of organizations and individuals filing between 1946 and 1950 – listing about 1500 such organizations.

²⁰ Corrado (1997), for example, points to the establishment of the CIO Political Action Committee in 1943, a development he and others attribute to passage of the Smith-Connolly Act that year, which banned the direct use of union treasury funds in federal elections. Skinner (2007) lists the CIO-P.A.C., the AFL's "Labor's League for Political Education," and their combined, post-merger organization – the Committee on Political Education – as important organizations pursuing electoral objectives prior to the campaign finance reforms of the 1970s. Rozell, Wilcox, and Franz (2011) mention "Labor's Non-Partisan League" of 1936, as being associated with the CIO and something of a precursor to the P.A.C. See Anthony Corrado, "Money and Politics: A History of Federal Campaign Finance Law." In Anthony Corrado, Thomas E. Mann, Daniel R. Ortiz, Trevor Potter, and Frank J. Sorauf (eds.), *Campaign Finance Reform: A Sourcebook* (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1997), 30; Richard M. Skinner, *More Than Money: Interest Group Action in Congressional Elections* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007), 6; Mark J. Rozell, Clyde Wilcox, and Michael M. Franz, *Interest Groups in American Campaigns: The New Face of Electioneering*, 3d ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 4.

²¹ As Zelizer notes, the Publicity Acts "required interstate party committees and congressional campaign committees to disclose campaign receipts only after the election, thereby diluting the effect of this reform. Nor did the laws apply to committees operating within a single state (designated "single-state committees")." Julian E. Zelizer, "Seeds of Cynicism: The Struggle over Campaign Finance, 1956–1974," *The Journal of Policy History*, 14:1 (2002): 76.

²² As Corrado (1997) explains, the Publicity Act of 1910 defined a "political committee" to include "the national committees of all political parties and the national congressional campaign committees of all political parties and all committees, associations, or organizations which shall in two or more States influence the result or attempt to influence the result of an election at which Representatives in Congress are to be elected" (37). In this particular bill, the definition applied only to House elections, but it would be expanded to other contexts by subsequent legislation. It required "[t]hat the treasurer of every such political committee shall, within thirty days after the election at which Representatives in Congress were chosen in two or more States, file with the Clerk of the

House of Representatives at Washington, District of Columbia, an itemized, detailed statement, sworn to by said treasurer and conforming to the requirements of the following section of this Act. The statement so filed with the Clerk of the House of Representatives shall be preserved by him for fifteen months, and shall be a part of the public records of his office, and shall be open to public inspection” (38).

²³ In 1920, the Clerk of the House of Representatives – William Tyler Page – took it upon himself to “inform” likely political committees of their status under the law, asking the Library of Congress to compile a list of organizations that appeared to be engaging in electoral activities. But even here, he was careful to explain his role as “purely ministerial” and that they must still determine for themselves whether they were required to file. Testimony of William Tyler Page, February 21st, 1924, “Additional Publicity of Campaign Contributions made to Political Parties, and Limiting Amount of Campaign Expenditures by Amending Corrupt Practices Act,” Hearings before the House Committee on Election of President, Vice President, and Representatives in Congress, 68th Cong., 1st sess., February 21, 28, and March 13, 1924 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1924), 2.

²⁴ That House Clerks often went beyond these official requirements for retaining records is evidenced by the large number of such “Political Committee Reports” (filed between 1912 and 1970) held at the Center for Legislative Archives at the National Archives. There are problems, however, with the organization and accessibility of these records. There is no systematic schema under which they are filed, or a comprehensive finding aid, making it impossible to find selected group-based reports without working one’s way through the entire collection – a major undertaking that would require significant resources and multiple researchers.

²⁵ There are a handful of other sources listing PACs prior to 1974. See, for example, “List of National Political Action Committees,” in David L. Rosenbloom (ed.), *The Political Marketplace* (New York: Quadrangle Books, 1972), pp. 376-383. Includes those “that have registered with the Clerk of the house or the Secretary of the Senate,” with an effort “to eliminate most of the Committees that serve solely as funding fronts for other committees” (xvi). Judith G. Smith’s (ed.) *Political Brokers: Money, Organizations, Power, & People* (New York: Liveright, 1972), compiles profiles of important PACs, party committees, and other interest group entities – first featured in *National Journal* in the run up to the 1972 presidential election. The groups featured are Americans for Democratic Action (ADA), Americans for Constitutional Action (ACA), the American Medical Political Action Committee (AMPAC), the AFL-CIO Committee on Political Education (COPE), the Business-Industry Political Action Committee (BIPAC), the National Committee for an Effective Congress (NCEC), the National Republican Congressional Committee, the Ripon Society, the Democratic National Committee, and Common Cause.

²⁶ *Congressional Quarterly* and *National Journal* also monitored Political Committee reports filed with the House Clerk, but on a less extensive and systematic basis than the CRF. Following the closure of CRF sometime in the late ‘80s/early ‘90s, the majority of its records would make a final journey from USC to the Institute of Governmental Studies at the University of California – Berkeley, though the records of this transfer are not entirely illuminating. Other records ended up in the possession of the Campaign Finance Institute in Washington, D.C. For a brief discussion of the Citizens Research Foundation, see Zelizer (2002), esp. p. 80.

²⁷ 1964 count: Herbert E. Alexander, *Financing the 1964 Election* (Princeton, NJ: Citizens Research Foundation, 1966), Tables 13 and 14, on “Labor National Committees” and “Miscellaneous National Committees,” pp. 64-65. 1970 count: “List of National Political Action Committees,” in Rosenbloom, 376-383.

²⁸ This development is typically considered in terms of the broader reaction to proposed federal health care legislation in the late 1950s. See, for example, Richard M. Skinner, *More Than Money: Interest Group Action in Congressional Elections*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007, 77.

²⁹ I have found only two chapters in edited volumes that deal explicitly with BIPAC: Candice J. Nelson, “The Business-Industry PAC: Trying to Lead in an Uncertain Election Climate,” 29-38 in Robert Biersack, Paul S. Herrnson, and Clyde Wilcox (eds.), *Risky Business? PAC Decisionmaking and Congressional Elections* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1994); Jonathan Cottin, “Business-Industry Political Action Committee,” 121-143 in Smith (ed.), *Political Brokers* (1972).

³⁰ As Zelizer (2004) explains: “Gore’s subcommittee conducted a study by sending out questionnaires to political committees, 500 television and radio stations, and 275 individual contributors,” providing “stunning data on the major contributors to elections.” “At this time, the only other source of information was *Congressional Quarterly*,” he adds (52). The Gore Investigation also focused on 11 key business and professional interest groups – including the Chamber and NAM – and compiled information on the political contributions of their senior leadership teams. (The groups consisted of two professional organizations – the American Bar Association and the American Medical Association; nine business organizations – the American Iron and Steel Institute, the American Petroleum Institute, Association of American Railroads, the Chamber of Commerce of the United States, the Manufacturing Chemists Association, the National Association of Electric Companies, the National Association of Manufacturers, the National Association of Real Estate Boards, and the National Coal Association). Heard included this analysis in his 1960 book, combining it with earlier analysis conducted by Louise Overacker, as I note in greater detail below. See Alexander Heard, *The Costs of Democracy* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1960). As Alexander (1962) summarized, “[s]ome groups were found to have many officials contributing large sums of money; other groups were found to have few or none.” Herbert E. Alexander, *Financing the 1960 Election* (Princeton, NJ: Citizens’ Research Foundation, 1962), 63. Alexander undertook the same analysis of the 1960 election, in fact, also examining two additional groups – the Business Advisory Council and the Chiefs of Foreign Missions and Special Missions.

³¹ Certain partial lists of campaign or lobbying hearings do exist, such as that included in a 1938 report to the National Resources Committee. Including ten congressional investigations between 1925 and 1935, the NRC listing only partially overlaps with mine due to its inclusion of sub-national level investigations. See “Research—A National Resource. I—Relation of the Federal Government to Research,” Report of the Science Committee to the National Resources Committee, November 1938 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1938), 142. Overacker (1932) also observes that “a long line of committees have delved into the financing of state and national campaigns” since 1912 – though she includes within her list the “Caraway Committee,” which I classify as a “lobbying” investigation: “The Reed Committee was of inestimable service in its investigation or the senatorial primaries of

1926,” she notes, “the Steiwer Committee which probed the financing of the 1928 campaign; the Caraway Committee, whose activities included investigation of the financing of non-party organizations in 1928; and finally the Nye, which perused the activities of certain organizations in 1928 and drafted a comprehensive bill to regulate election expenditures” (286). The Caraway Committee’s investigation of 1928 non-party organizations, however, was conducted at a later point and somewhat separately from its lobbying investigation.

³² The Institute for Governmental Studies at UC Berkeley holds the “Overacker-Heard Campaign Finance Data Archive” – this consists of “boxes of index cards with names of individual contributors to presidential campaigns and party committees from 1904 to 1954. The files were the source data for Louise Overacker’s *Money in Elections* (1932), her accounts of financing the 1936, 1940 and 1944 presidential elections, and Alexander Heard’s *The Costs of Democracy* (1960).”

³³ Louise Overacker, “American Government and Politics: Campaign Funds in a Depression Year,” *American Political Science Review* 27 No. 5 (1933): 769-783; “Campaign Funds in the Presidential Election of 1936,” *American Political Science Review* 31 No. 3 (1937): 473-498; “Campaign Finance in the Presidential Election of 1940,” *American Political Science Review* 35 No. 4 (1941): 701-727; and “American Government and Politics: Presidential Campaign Funds, 1944,” *American Political Science Review* 39 No. 5 (1945): 899-925. The *APSR* also included a similar article on the 1928 election, written by James K. Pollock: “Campaign Funds in 1928,” *American Political Science Review* 23:1 (February 1929): 59-69. Overacker’s book-length treatment, *Money in Elections* (New York: Macmillan, 1932) also covers the 1928 election. See also her *Presidential Campaign Funds* (Boston, MA: Boston University Press, 1946), and “Labor’s Political Contributions,” *Political Science Quarterly* 54 No. 1 (1939): 56-68.

³⁴ The Special Committee to Investigate Campaign Expenditures of Presidential, Vice Presidential, and Senatorial Candidates in 1936 (Loneragan, 74th-75th Congresses, 1936-37); Special Committee Investigating Campaign Expenditures (Gillette, 76th-77th Congresses, 1940-41); Special Committee to Investigate Campaign Expenditures of Presidential, Vice Presidential, and Senatorial Candidates (Green, 78th Congress, 1944); Committee to Investigate Campaign Expenditures (Anderson, 78th Congress, 1944).

³⁵ The House committee, chaired by Representative Finis J. Garrett (D-TN), reported in December 1913 on the Mulhall allegations (H. Rpt. 63-113). The “secret and disreputable practices” phrase was the characterization of Mulhall’s activities – and senior officials of the NAM (including J. Philip Byrd, John Kirby, Jr., and James A. Emory) – offered by a Judiciary subcommittee as a proposed censure resolution. The subcommittee had been directed to consider charges of contempt against Mulhall et al., stemming out of the Garrett committee’s investigation. They ultimately rejected a contempt charge, but proposed this resolution, strongly denouncing their activities in which the men had engaged. See “Lobby Charges.” Serial 14 – Part 1 of Hearings Before the Committee on the Judiciary, U.S. House, 63d. Cong., 2d. sess. March 17, 20, and 24, 1914 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1914), 14. See also H. Rpt. 63-570).

³⁶ The first 20th Century lobbying investigation of this type is held in 1908. I have not checked dates earlier than 1900.

³⁷ “Maintenance of a Lobby to Influence Legislation,” Hearings before a Subcommittee of the Committee on the Judiciary [Overman Committee], U.S. Senate, 63d. Cong., 1st-2d. sess. in 65 parts, June 2, 1913 – July 16, 1914 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1913-1914). See also Edgar Lane, “Some Lessons from Past Congressional Investigations of Lobbying,” *Public Opinion Quarterly* 14 No. 1 (1950): 16-17.

³⁸ “Indirect lobbying” on specific legislation involved appealing to the broader public with explicit appeals to put pressure on legislators. As I explore in subsequent chapter, this conception can be placed on a continuum toward “political education” in which the appeal to the broader public stresses issues and general ideas/principles without instructions to contact legislators or otherwise place “pressure” on them in pursuit of a particular legislative bill. Rather, it aims at shaping a *generally* positive legislative and *electoral* context, with any preferred action only *implicit* within the message. In this sense, the line between *political education* and outright *political action* was also increasingly fuzzy. As Key (1964), observed: the “general propaganda campaign of a pressure organization many incidentally promote the candidates of the party most in tune with its cause” – citing the Chamber of Commerce in this regard. V.O. Key, *Politics, Parties, and Pressure Groups* 5th ed. (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1964), 161.

³⁹ The Senator in question was Francis Case (R-SD), who called attention to the \$2500 donation during debates over amending the Natural Gas Act. Though in favor of the contents of the bill, President Eisenhower ultimately vetoed it due to the controversial actions that had surrounded its passage. On the Case scandal, see Zelizer, 78.

⁴⁰ Though the House did continue to establish its biannual campaign expenditures committees until 1973, they no longer held broadly investigative hearings concerned with *national* activity – confining themselves instead to charges of corrupt practices violations in specific contests. Throughout the 1960s numerous congressional hearings on possible *remedial* legislation would also be held, producing the Long Act of 1968 (which established a basic framework for public funding of presidential campaigns, though it was never implemented), and culminating in the FECA of 1971 and subsequent amendments. On these legislative developments, see Zelizer (2002).

⁴¹ This total only refers to witnesses appearing before the committees I have classified as “major” investigations of campaign finance or lobbying – it is not an exhaustive list of witnesses from every single hearing related to these topics in some form. Moreover, there is a slight difference between the total number of witness *appearances* before these major investigation hearings, and the total number of distinct *witnesses* making appearances, since some individuals testified more than once (usually before the same committee, but sometimes across different committees in different Congresses). For the nationally-oriented or general campaign investigating committees, then, there were 686 witness appearances in total. 38 witnesses gave repeat testimony, sometimes on several different occasions, thus the total number of distinct individuals appearing was 638. Before the major lobbying committees, there were 453 witness appearances – of which 43 witnesses were appearing for the second time or more, yielding 401 distinct individual witnesses. [Repeat witness have been checked within each hearing type, but not across them].

⁴² The figure of 102 represents the universe of national organizations from whom witnesses were called to testify on matters relating to election campaign activities. Organizations are not counted twice in this total, except where a successor organization appears in a

later set of hearings. Still, there is not a huge amount of repetition in organizations appearing across multiple committees – if the same organizations are counted again, the total only rises to 118.

⁴³ Making further quantitative claims of relative importance based on this data, is problematic, however. While it might appear that recording the *number* of witnesses called from a particular organization (compared to the total number appearing) could provide some indication of a group’s importance, the comparability within and across committees is difficult to ascertain. Committees vary dramatically in the number of witnesses they call, and a higher number does not necessarily indicate a more “important” committee in terms of the substantive issues investigated. (The Green committee, for example, held few hearings and only a handful of witnesses appeared, but it was concerned with significant national issues, and called witnesses from at least one important group – the CIO-PAC and American National Democratic Committee). General hearings sometimes incorporate a focus on specific issues that necessitate extensive testimony from particular quarters, inflating the number of witnesses called, but not necessarily in regard to national issues (oftentimes multiple witnesses from a particular organization might be called in response to a specific charge involving the group, and it is difficult to filter out national and local witnesses in these respects). Some committees called extensive numbers of easily “accessible” witnesses, moreover, such as individual politicians or congressional staffers – enlarging their denominator. In the aggregate, my emphasis in “major” investigations also yields a larger number of campaign investigations than lobbying investigations, and accordingly, a larger number of campaign-related witnesses overall. For all of these reasons, quantitative statements of relative importance may be misleading, and where utilized, are treated with caution.

⁴⁴ At this point, the Senate was under Democratic control, and a Democratic president occupied the White House (the Wilson administration had encouraged an inquiry). The committee was set to consider both allegations of fraudulent activity in several Senate contests, and the dynamics of the presidential race itself. [On November 14th, the *New York Times* had reported that “[d]efinite plans were laid by Administration leaders today for having the Senate begin an investigation as soon as Congress convenes of the use of money in the late Presidential campaign.” “Will Investigate Money in Campaign,” *The New York Times*, November 15, 1916, p. 1]. But there was a definitely partisan taint to the proposed proceedings: “Those in charge of the finances of the Republican campaign are to be summoned and put on the grill,” the *Washington Post* reported. [“Dual Election Probe,” *The Washington Post*, November 15, 1916, p. 2. RNC Chairman William R. Willcox responded on November 14th that the RNC would “welcome the fullest investigation of every penny spent by it.” A.P. Night Wire, “To Investigate Campaign Funds,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 15, 1916, p. 13]. In retaliation, Republicans threatened to push for federal regulation of elections themselves – bringing questions of civil rights and Southern elections to the forefront, and the exposing the irregularities in the Democratic vote-gathering operations there. [Senator Penrose (R-PA) made such a proposal in early December. “Penrose to Fight for a Force Bill at this Session,” *The New York Times*, December 4, 1916, p. 1]. The investigation subsequently became something of a political football, resolved by redirection when President Wilson’s called for new corrupt practices legislation (rather than raking over the past) in his annual address in December of 1916. (Wilson’s annual address was delivered on December 5th, 1916. Shortly thereafter, Senator Robert L. Owen (D-OK) “said he would withhold for the president, at least, his resolution to direct a special investigation into campaign expenditures of all political parties in the recent national election because of the assurances from Republican Senators they would act in good faith to effect the passage of a measure that would prevent lavish expenditures of money and remove opportunity for corruption in future campaigns.” A.P. Night Wire, “Day of Barrel Seems Doomed,” *Los Angeles Times*, December 7, 1916, p. 13. Still, on December 11th, Senator Kenyon (R-IA) “served notice on Democratic leaders of the senate to day he would introduce a resolution to investigate the expenditures at the recent election.” “I have heard much about how the Republicans spent money, but nothing concerning the Democratic methods,” Senator Kenyon stated. “Kenyon to Urge Inquiry on All Campaign Funds,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, December 12, 1916, p. 10. Despite all this posturing, however, it does not appear the investigation was ever held).

⁴⁵ See H. Rpt. 72:1508 (June 6, 1932) and H. Rpt. 72:1679 (June 21, 1932), concerning establishment and funds for the committee.

⁴⁶ “[T]he committee adopted forms on which candidates and organizations were required to submit periodic reports to the committee during the campaign and afterward, in addition to reports which they were by law required to file with the clerk of the House of Representatives, the Secretary of the Senate, and under their State laws.” [S. Rpt. 75:151, Page 9.]

⁴⁷ “Campaign Expenditures Committee,” H. Rpt. 80:2469. Report of the Special Committee on Campaign Expenditures [Rizley Committee], U.S. House of Representatives, 80th Cong. 2d sess. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, December 30, 1948), 13 (section on “Political Organizations”). An article on the 1948 campaign also appeared in the *Annals*. See Dean E. McHenry, “Present Party Organization and Finance,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 283 (1952): 122-126.

⁴⁸ Connally observed in the report: “The Committee forwarded questionnaires to all candidates for nomination for United States Senator in the States holding senatorial elections in 1932 and to the managers of Presidential and Vice Presidential candidates as to campaign expenditures. It received reports in answer thereto which are available to the Senate for any appropriate purpose.”

“Senatorial Campaign Expenditures, 1932 (Louisiana).” Report of the Special Committee on Investigation of Presidential and Senatorial Campaign Expenditures [Howell/Connally Committee], U.S. Senate, 73d Cong., 2d. sess. Report No. 191 (January 16, 1934), 2.

⁴⁹ Truman (1951) for example, suggested individual corporations could be treated as “political interest groups” under certain circumstances (an “interest group,” for Truman, was something forged on the basis of shared attitudes, which tried to make claims upon other societal groups “for the establishment, maintenance, or enhancement of forms of behavior that are implied by the shared attitudes,” through the institutions of government (33, 37). Where it sought to make those claims via government action, it operated as a “political interest group” (a political party would thereby count as such) (37-38). This meant that, to the extent corporations sought specific government actions, they were operating as political interest groups).

⁵⁰ Interest groups are typically treated as representative groups or associations in Schattschneider’s various accounts, and envisaged in similar terms by Cohen et al., though they are defined simply as groups of “intense policy demanders.” Truman offered the broadest definition of what constituted a “political interest group,” one that might *include* corporations in certain circumstances.

⁵¹ Gustafson (1997) observes how the establishment of women's party auxiliaries also provided an avenue for women to work within the political parties, though at the same time that it reinforced their "nonpartisan" character. Melanie Gustafson, "Partisan Women in the Progressive Era: The Struggle for Inclusion in American Political Parties," *Journal of Women's History* 9 No. 2 (1997): 11, 19.

⁵² "National Association of Democratic Clubs: Constitution and History" (New York: Journal Job Print, 1900), 26. *Emphasis mine*.

⁵³ Daniel J. Ryan, "Clubs in Politics," *The North American Review* 146: 375 (February 1888): 172-177.

⁵⁴ As Carney (1958) explained: "Party organizations in the nation, most states, and many localities try to give the impression of a wide base of popular support, engendered by the breadth of participation the party organization affords to voters from various walks of life. One of the principal means of creating this impression is the party auxiliary organization" (391). Thus, he continued: "There are Republican youth groups, Democratic old peoples' clubs, GOP veterans clubs and Democratic minority or ethnic group clubs and so on," not all of which were anything more than paper organizations. "Usually these auxiliary organizations are a letterhead and someone at a desk in a corner of the party's state or county headquarters office," he concluded. "Meetings, when they are held at all, tend to be dispirited, sparsely attended and futile" (391). See Francis M. Carney. "Auxiliary Party Organization in California," *The Western Political Quarterly* 11 No. 2 (1958): 391-392. Key (1964) simply observes that "[t]he organizational apparatus of both parties includes various auxiliary groups such as the Young Republican National Federation and the Young Democratic Clubs of America" (328, n17). The National Federation of Republican Women, founded in 1938, occupied something of a semi-autonomous status for an auxiliary – Key notes that the NFRW was "an autonomous organization," though it "maintains its headquarters with those of the national committee" (328, n17). For more on the Young Democrats, and on other party auxiliaries and divisions formed in this period, see Sean J. Savage, *Roosevelt: The Party Leader, 1932-1945* (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 1991), 90-98.

⁵⁵ The United Republican Finance Committee was formed in 1936 to coordinate and centralize fundraising for the Landon campaign, across the various geographic divisions of the Republican Party. It was dissolved after the campaign, but re-activated in 1938, and thereafter maintained on a permanent basis. It was originally known as the "United Republican Finance Committee for Metropolitan New York," and after 1952 (following an agreement with the State Committee), as the "United Republican Finance Committee for the State of New York." Information drawn from "History and Operation of the United Republican Finance Committee for the State of New York." Addresses by Chairman William A.M. Burden and Executive Secretary Katharine L. Beach at Republican National Finance Committee Meeting, Chicago, Ill., August 26-27, 1958." Papers of Hugh Meade Alcorn, Jr., 1957-1963. ML-85, Box 2, Folder 26. Rauner Special Collections, Dartmouth College.

⁵⁶ Such extra-legal party committees identify overtly with a particular party persuasion, but choose not to accept formal party status – usually because of primary laws. The permissive primary laws in both states had served to erode the influence of the formal party committees over nominations, thus in 1935 the Young Republicans in California created the "California Republican Assembly" – essentially a parallel party organization that would back desirable nominees and serve to re-establish "party" control. The Democrats took a similar step in 1953, creating the "California Democratic Council," and both groups came to be treated as the "real" party apparatus in the state. In Wisconsin, the "Republican Voluntary Committee" was formed somewhat earlier – in 1925 – with its counterpart, the "Democratic Organizing Committee," appearing in 1948. On California, see Alton DuRant, Jr., "The California Republican Assembly" (MA Thesis, Stanford University, 1953); Stanley D. Hopper, "Fragmentation of the California Republican Party in the One-Party Era, 1893-1932." *Western Political Quarterly* 28 No. 2 (1975): 372-386; Hugh A. Bone, "New Party Associations in the West," *American Political Science Review* 45 No. 4 (1951): 1115-1125; and Francis M. Carney, "Auxiliary Party Organization in California," *Western Political Quarterly* 11 No. 2 (1958): 391-392. On Wisconsin, see Leon D. Epstein, "American Parties: A Wisconsin Case-Study," *Political Studies* 4 (1956): 30-45; Frank J. Sorauf, "Extra-Legal Political Parties in Wisconsin," *The American Political Science Review* 48 No. 3 (1954): 692-704.

⁵⁷ The national secretary of the Socialist Labor Party would appear before the Clapp Committee, as would the western manager for the Progressive Party effort in 1912.

⁵⁸ When the philosopher John Dewey considered the prospect of third party action in the late 1920s, for example, he attributed the failure of the 1912 Progressive Party to endure, to its being tied to heavily to one personality. See Robert Elliott Kessler, "The League For Independent Political Action, 1929 – 1933" (MA Thesis, University of Wisconsin – Madison, 1967), 58.

⁵⁹ In 1900, Debs was the Social Democratic Party candidate – which had broken off from the Socialist Labor Party over disagreements on trade union policy. In 1904 and 1908, Debs competed as the Socialist Party candidate, and polled about 3% of the vote each time. In 1912, Debs polled 901,551 votes or about 6% of the popular vote. In his fifth and final presidential race, in 1920, Debs received a larger number of votes (913,664) though a smaller percentage of the popular vote (3.41%).

⁶⁰ The Socialist Labor Party was older, with origins in the 1870s and more formally constituted after 1890, under the leadership of Daniel DeLeon, along Marxist lines. The Socialist Party was established in 1901 under the leadership of Eugene Debs, as a successor to the Socialist Democratic Party he had helped form three years earlier. Its distinctive contribution was an "Americanization" of Socialism to some extent, lacking the basic commitment to revolution and the overthrow of capitalism that marked the SLP.

⁶¹ The Socialist Party would itself split in 1916 over the pacifist stance taken by Debs toward World War I, with the dissatisfied members breaking out to form the Social Democratic League of America (Conant, 62). There was also persistent division among Communist adherents over whether to form their own party or seek to capture the extant Socialist organization, resulting in the formation of two new and distinct parties in 1919 – the Communist Labor Party and the Communist Worker's Party. Conant, 63. "In time most of these elements came to the support of William Z. Foster, who, as presidential candidate of the Worker's Party, secured 33,360 votes in 1924 and 48,770 votes in 1928." (Conant, 63). By 1920, having alienated supporters on both the right and the left of the Socialist spectrum, the Socialist Party itself would focus on forming a Labor Party in the European mold (Conant, 63).

⁶² Christensen polled 265,411 (1%). Also on the ballot was a Prohibition Party candidate, polling 189,339 (0.7%).

⁶³ Erik Olssen, "The Making of a Political Machine: The Railroad Unions Enter Politics," *Labor History* 19 No. 3 (1978): 373-396.

⁶⁴ Olssen, 375-76

⁶⁵ As Kessler observes: “The Farmer-Labor party of 1920 was a new creation, separate and distinct from the major parties. In contrast to these two third-party groups, the Progressive party of 1924 was hastily built and designed to last only for one Presidential election” (17).

⁶⁶ Coolidge polled 54% in 1924. In terms of the most successful third party efforts, Theodore Roosevelt’s 1912 Progressive Party result ranks first. In 1856, Millard Fillmore polled 21.6% of the vote as the candidate of the “Know-Nothing” party. La Follette’s showing in 1924 was the next best, though in 1992, Ross Perot’s independency candidacy would knock La Follette down to fourth place. Perot polled 18.6% of the vote as an independent candidate in 1992. Some rankings include Abraham Lincoln in 1860 (since the Republican Party was not obviously a “major” party at that point), and William Jennings Bryan in 1896 (since he also ran as the Populist party candidate, in addition to being the Democratic nominee). If those two are included, La Follette drops to 5th/6th.

⁶⁷ Kessler, 12.

⁶⁸ 1928 election information from David Leip, *Dave Leip’s Atlas of U.S. Presidential Elections*. <http://www.uselectionatlas.org> (7/6/2013). None of the other third party candidates gained even 50,000 votes, compared to Thomas’s 267,478 (0.73% of the popular vote).

⁶⁹ 1932 election information from David Leip, *Dave Leip’s Atlas of U.S. Presidential Elections*. <http://www.uselectionatlas.org> (7/6/2013). Thomas was nominated at the Socialist Party’s convention in May, held in Milwaukee, WI. See *National Party Conventions, 1831-1992* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, 1995), 83.

⁷⁰ 1932 election information from David Leip, *Dave Leip’s Atlas of U.S. Presidential Elections*. <http://www.uselectionatlas.org> (7/6/2013). Of the other third party candidates, only Communist Party candidate William Foster gained more than 100,000 votes.

⁷¹ Overacker (1937), 477-478.

⁷² In 1940, Browder did not even poll higher than the Prohibition Party candidate – effectively a dead issue by this point. Browder had also been the Communist Party’s candidate in 1936, when he polled 0.17% of the popular vote. 1936 and 1940 election information from David Leip, *Dave Leip’s Atlas of U.S. Presidential Elections*. <http://www.uselectionatlas.org> (7/6/2013).

⁷³ The American Democratic National Committee (ADNC) was a conservative Democratic splinter group, hostile to Franklin Roosevelt’s re-nomination as the party standard-bearer. It was organized in February, 1944, and spent \$132,736 on electoral activities. See Testimony of Gleason L. Archer, Treasurer of the ADNC, October 6th, 1944. “Campaign Expenditures.” Part 8 of Hearings before the Committee to Investigate Campaign Expenditures [**Anderson Committee**], U.S. House of Representatives, 78th Cong., 2nd sess. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1944), 557. Hereafter “Anderson Committee Hearings.” The America First Party was formed in 1943 by Gerald K. Smith, and was distinct from the America First *Committee* that had existed from 1940-41 (opposing intervention in World War II). See Testimony of Gerald L. K. Smith, October 3, 1944, Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 6, 326.

⁷⁴ Thurmond polled 1,175,930 votes, 2.41% of the popular vote. Wallace polled 1,157,328 votes, 2.37% of the popular vote. 1948 election information from David Leip, *Dave Leip’s Atlas of U.S. Presidential Elections*. <http://www.uselectionatlas.org> (7/6/2013).

⁷⁵ “Campaign Expenditures Committee,” Report No. 2469 from the Special Committee on Campaign Expenditures [**Rizley Committee**], U.S. House, 80th Cong., 2d. sess. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, December 30, 1948), 3.

⁷⁶ In 1960, the Socialist Labor Party spent about \$66,200, and about \$65,100 in 1964. The National States Rights Party raised and spent about \$5000 in 1960, but nearly \$42,000 in 1964. The Socialist Workers Party spent \$2570 that year. Herbert E. Alexander, *Financing the 1960 Election* (Princeton, NJ: Citizens’ Research Foundation, 1962), 43 (Table 7), and *Financing the 1964 Election* (Princeton, NJ: Citizens’ Research Foundation, 1966), 65 (Table 14).

⁷⁷ That is, candidate committees were basically treated like any other PAC or 527 (party committee). While the national party committees had higher contribution/expenditure limits, and would gain the advantage of soft money later in the decade, the public financing system set up for presidential campaigns gave money to the *candidate’s* own committee, not the national party committee, as previous suggested legislation had held. On candidate-centered campaigning, see Robert Agranoff (ed.), *The New Style in Election Campaigns* (Boston, MA: Holbrook Press, Inc., 1972); Xandra Kayden, *Campaign Organization* (Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath and Company, 1978); Xandra Kayden, “The Nationalizing of the Party System,” 257-282 in Michael J. Malbin (ed.), *Parties, Interest Groups, and Campaign Finance Laws* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1980). The rise of candidate-centered campaigns has been associated with the McGovern-Fraser Commission, set up in the wake of the 1968 Democratic Convention, and its emphasis on primaries as the appropriate selection mechanism – a decision that would also affect Republicans through state control of the primary process itself. The Federal Election Campaign Act (1971) and subsequent amendments also encouraged the formation of personal campaign organizations and enhanced candidates at the expense of parties. Yet Agranoff notes that Frank Sorauf had already coined the term “candidate-centered campaign” in the early 1960s (6). See also Kathryn Dunn Tenpas and Matthew J. Dickinson, “Governing, Campaigning, and Organizing the Presidency: An Electoral Connection?” *Political Science Quarterly* 112 No. 1 (1997): 51-66; Richard S. Katz and Robin Kolodny, “Party Organization as an Empty Vessel: Parties in American Politics,” in Richard S. Katz and Peter Mair, eds., *How Parties Organize: Change and Adaptation in Party Organizations in Western Democracies* (London: Sage, 1994).

⁷⁸ This reflected an 18th Century republican ideal of the noble and somewhat reluctant candidate who “stands” rather than “runs” for office. Though this idea came under increasing strain in the later 19th and early 20th Centuries, not until the 1930s did the idea of the candidate taking to the stump himself – actively admitting to being an office-*seeker* – become more generally accepted, Troy argues. Gil Troy, *See How They Ran: The Changing Role of the Presidential Candidate* Rev. ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996).

⁷⁹ Ryan, 176. “The club to be successful, permanent, and of use to its party must not become a tool or an engine.” “This means destruction to the club and danger to its party. It means bossism. It means the introduction into every city of a Tammany and an Irving Hall faction,” he began.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.* *Emphasis mine.*

⁸¹ “National Association of Democratic Clubs: Constitution and History” (New York: Journal Job Print, 1900), 20-21. “It will not make platforms or nominees, but vigorously support both as they are made by the ordinary conventions of the party,” the pamphlet

later emphasized again (26). To further remove any danger in that regard, the Association held its national convention *after* the official party conclave in presidential election years (20-21).

⁸² Melvin I. Urofsky, "Campaign Finance Reform Before 1971," *Albany Government Law Review* 1 No. 1 (2008): 18.

⁸³ Quoted in Urofsky, 20. Cites p. 271 of Overacker.

⁸⁴ The Hoover Club was ostensibly a draft movement, formed by a fellow Stanford alumnus rather than the candidate, Herbert Hoover, himself. Similarly, Leonard Wood was not supposed to be directly involved with the League that bore his name. A military physician who had served as military governor of Cuba and Army Chief of Staff, Wood had already experienced a very persuasive "draft," being urged to run by his former comrade – fellow Rough Rider and ex-president Theodore Roosevelt. The founder of the Hoover Club, Ralph Arnold, was also a mining/oil engineer. His involvement in the Hoover for President Club is noted in his obituary. "Ralph Arnold (1875-1961)," *Bulletin of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists* 45:11 (November 1961): 1898. According to testimony from one of Wood's campaign managers before the Kenyon committee, the League was "a nation wide organization" comprised of "perhaps 50,000 or 60,000 members all over the country," which had "collected campaign funds chiefly by circularization." Testimony of Frank H. Hitchcock, May 24th, 1920. "Presidential Campaign Expenses," Volume I of Hearings before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Privileges and Elections [Kenyon Committee], U.S. Senate, 66th Cong., 2d. sess. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1921), 3-4.

⁸⁵ Wood managed to win the New Hampshire primary, while Hoover removed himself from consideration when he realized his own prospects had dimmed. At the convention in June, however, Wood lost the nomination to Warren G. Harding. According to Overacker (1932), Hoover (*and his "friends"*) had spent \$173,542 in their 1920 effort to secure the Republican nomination. In 1928, that figure would stand at \$395,254, compared to Al Smith's preconvention spending of \$152,622 to earn the Democratic nod (69). These Hoover and Wood representatives were joined at the hearings by those associated with more directly candidate-connected "campaign committees" or official campaign managers. The Wood National Campaign Committee was mentioned, for example. In addition, a number of individuals appeared who were described as representatives of a particular candidate's campaign or campaign committee. Candidates so referenced included Sen. Hiram Johnson (R-CA); Sen. Robert Owen (D-OK); Gov. Edward Edwards (D-NJ); Herbert Hoover (R.); Mitchell Palmer (D) (the Attorney General, who himself appeared); Maj. Gen. Leonard Wood (NH); James Gerard (D, NY); Nicholas Murray Butler (R, NY); Sen. Warren G. Harding (R-OH); and Gov. Calvin Coolidge (R-MA).

⁸⁶ The 'Hoover for President Association' was a network of volunteer campaign groups, independent of the regular Republican party structure, that Hoover had quietly encouraged. Ritchie suggests that in 1928, Herbert Hoover "had encouraged a network of independent, volunteer-run Hoover for President groups, to appeal to independent voters," and "kept the RNC out of his campaign as much as possible..." Donald A. Ritchie, *Electing FDR: The New Deal Campaign of 1932* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2007), 42.

⁸⁷ The Engineers Committee seems to have been related to the Hoover for President Association, however. The Engineers Committee spent about \$65,000, but raised almost twice that, so it is unclear exactly where the rest went. The Hoover for President Association raised and spent about \$9000. See "Table X - Committees and Organizations Receiving and Expending Money in Behalf of the Republican Party," "Presidential Campaign Expenditures," Report of the Special Committee Investigating Presidential Campaign Expenditures [Steiner Committee], U.S. Senate, 70th Cong. 2d. sess. Report No. 2024 (February 28th, 1929), 26.

⁸⁸ See, for example, James K. Pollock, *Party Campaign Funds* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1926), 56. Pollock took the information directly from the Clerk's reports, but it also appears in the records of the 1944 campaign expenditure investigation. In a document entitled "Independent Committees," investigators for the 1944 "Special Committee on Campaign Expenditures" listed as important groups from the 1916 contest: The Woodrow Wilson Independent League and Wilson Business Men's National League; the National Hughes Alliance, National Hughes Alliance—Women's Committee, Hughes Alliance Reserve, and Hughes National College League. A "Republican National Publicity Committee" was also listed. See Special Committee on Campaign Expenditures, 1944, "Independent Committees," Page 1. 8E2/7/19/5. United States Senate – 78th Congress. Special Committee on Campaign Expenditures, 1944 General File I-M. RG 46 Box No. 2. Miscellaneous Camp. Exp. '44 (Folder). National Archives.

⁸⁹ Nonetheless, writing in 1944, a congressional staffer observed that "[t]he amounts expended by these committees on behalf of the national ticket by both Republican and Democratic parties were comparatively modest when compared with the lush campaign chests of the present independent groups. Special Committee on Campaign Expenditures, 1944, "Independent Committees," Page 1.

⁹⁰ For more on Citizens for Eisenhower, see Daniel J. Galvin, *Presidential Party Building: Dwight D. Eisenhower to George W. Bush* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), esp. 50-57.

⁹¹ On White's Nixon-Lodge work, see Charles Mohr. "Goldwater's Nine." *New York Times*, September 13th, 1964. White's papers are held at Cornell University.

⁹² "The role of so-called "independent" committees" would be a recurring issue in subsequent waves of campaign finance reform, Urofsky observes. But their *nature* would soon be different (18, n142).

⁹³ Thomas T. Spencer, "Democratic Auxiliary and Non-Party Groups in the Election of 1936," PhD dissertation, University of Notre Dame, 1976), 28. In terms of previous contests, only 1916 and 1928 "came anywhere close," he adds. As Spencer (1976) observed, "Democratic auxiliary and non-party groups were more active and in greater number than any other previous election." Only the 1916 contest, he suggests, comes close. And yet neither of these important election years appears in the above table due to the lack of congressional witness data for either of those years.

⁹⁴ See Erik Olssen, "The Making of a Political Machine: The Railroad Unions Enter Politics." *Labor History* 19 No. 3 (1978): 373-396.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 375-76

⁹⁶ The American Farm Bureau Federation did appear once at a lobbying hearing – as part of the Caraway Committee's investigation in 1929. Several agriculture-related organizations also appeared before other lobbying committees (and, as noted earlier, there was entire investigation dedicated to "Farm Organizations"). But witnesses from such organizations did not appear before the *electoral*

committees, or explicitly in the supplemental data used for “missing” election years. This absence, in fact, lends support to the notion that agriculture largely pursued a strategy of legislative and administrative lobbying.

⁹⁷ The “Farm Bloc” had declined in influence in recent years, suffering internal divisions over the best solution to agriculture’s continued woes, and faced hostility from a Republican administration that saw its bipartisan composition as an affront to party regularity. According to Zeigler, “after 1926 the influence of the bloc slumped badly. The next few years were characterized by internal squabbles, clumsy attempts at lobbying, and legislative defeats. Senator Kenyon, who built the bipartisan alliance, was appointed to a federal judgeship in February 1922, and was replaced by Arthur Capper of Kansas. Capper worked more closely with the established party leadership but the Republican administration continued to oppose the farm bloc as a threat to party discipline. Also, during its rapid mobilization period, the farm bloc had accomplished many of its original goals” (178-179). It also began to suffer internal divisions, since it had been from the outset, “a hastily assembled marriage of convenience among diverse elements,” making stability hard to maintain (179). “No formal effort to organize the bloc was made after 1923,” Zeigler notes, “and, although there continued to be a bipartisan group in both the House and Senate which supported agricultural legislation, the farm organizations gradually went their separate ways” (179).

⁹⁸ Zeigler, 180. These bills basically proposed “that a government export corporation be established with the authority to buy up specified agricultural commodities at a rate sufficient to bring the domestic price up to the “ratio-price” (that price which would bear the same relation to the general price level as the price of the commodity had borne to the general price level in the period prior to the war).” Farmers were to be charged an “equalization fee” – a kind of tax, should the Federal Farm Board charged with marketing the surpluses have to sell them at a loss.

⁹⁹ In nominating Hoover, in fact, it had selected a candidate “who was more objectionable to the group than Coolidge himself” (Truman, 302).

¹⁰⁰ Zeigler, 182.

¹⁰¹ Orville Merton Kile. *The Farm Bureau Through Three Decades*. Baltimore, Md.: Waverly Press (1948), 148. Quoted in Truman, 302-303.

¹⁰² Truman, 303.

¹⁰³ Kile, 149, quoted in Truman, 303.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.* On these financial interactions, see the report of the Steiwer Committee, discussed in the next chapter.

¹⁰⁵ Truman, 303. While “this tactic threatened upheavals in some of the State Farm Bureaus,” Truman notes that the Farm Bureau’s cohesion was not seriously impaired.” (303). Hoover’s victory, however, suggested “that established party attachments were stronger than group demands.”)

¹⁰⁶ Zeigler observes that “it did not openly endorse Roosevelt” even though “there was little doubt about its sympathies” in the 1932 election (185).

¹⁰⁷ The National Committee for Agriculture, which appeared at the 1940 Senate campaign expenditure hearings, was not connected to the Farm Bureau, but appears to have been an independent committee manifestation of what had previously been a party-funded auxiliary in Roosevelt’s previous election campaigns.

¹⁰⁸ Overacker (1933), 770, 772-773, 775. The other non-party group she mentioned as being active in 1932 is the “Chicago Citizens Committee.”

¹⁰⁹ Mark J. Rozell, Clyde Wilcox, and Michael M. Franz, *Interest Groups in American Campaigns: The New Face of Electioneering*, 3d ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 4.

¹¹⁰ This organization was formed from a merger of the NCPAC with the “Independent Citizens Committee of the Arts, Sciences and Professions,” along with eight smaller liberal groups, in December, 1946. William R. Conklin, “Wallace Charts Policies for 1948 in Liberal Merger.” *New York Times*, December 30, 1946, pp. 1, 9.

¹¹¹ “Campaign Expenditures Committee,” Report No. 2469 from the Special Committee on Campaign Expenditures [Rizley Committee], U.S. House, 80th Cong., 2d. sess. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, December 30, 1948), 12-13. Hereafter “Rizley Committee Report (H. Rpt. 80-2469).”

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 12. Section 313 of the Corrupt Practices Act, the report continued, “defines a labor organization as any organization of any kind, or any agency or employee representation committee or plan, in which employees participate and which exists for the purpose, in whole or in part, of dealing with employers concerning grievances, labor disputes, wages, rates of pay, hours of employment, or conditions of work” (1).

¹¹³ Rizley Committee Report (H. Rpt. 80-2469), p. 13. It listed the CIO-Political Action Committee, Labor’s League for Political Education (AFL), Labor’s Non-Partisan League (UMW), Railway Labor’s Political League (unaffiliated railroad workers), Trainmen’s Political Education League (Broth. Railway Trainmen).

¹¹⁴ Representatives of the CIO appeared before the Buchanan Committee to discuss lobbying issues in 1950, for example, but only representatives of the P.A.C. ever appeared at campaign hearings – in 1944, 1946, and 1952. Similarly, the AFL would come to be represented by Labor’s League for Political Education before campaign expenditure investigations after 1947, and the merged AFL-CIO would be represented by the Committee on Political Education (COPE) after 1955.

¹¹⁵ The National Committee to Uphold Constitutional Government appears to have emerged around the same time as the Liberty League. Appearing alongside Gannett were Sumner Gerard, former Indiana Representative Samuel B. Pettengill, and Texas representative T.R. Ewart, plus Edward A. Rumely – the NCUCG’s executive secretary. Rumely and another Anderson Committee witness, Joseph P. Kamp of the “Constitutional Education League,” would later be held in contempt of Congress for their failure to cooperate with a subsequent congressional investigation. Kamp, in fact, appears to have been held in contempt following the Anderson Committee hearings, since an effort to overturn a citation against him was made in June 1948 (the success of which I am unable to determine at present. See H. Rpt. 80: 2367, June 15, 1948). (There is a suggestion that Rumely also testified before a *Senate*

committee in 1944 – presumably the Green committee – but I have not been able to confirm this in the hearings). Both were cited for their failure to cooperate with the Buchanan Committee investigation of 1950 – for the purposes of considering their *lobbying* activities – with Rumely now representing a successor organization to the NCUCG, the “Committee for Constitutional Government.” Both had denied their organizations were “political,” and thus refused to provide information on contributors. The CEL had refused to register under the new lobbying law of 1946, denying it was engaged in lobbying at all – an effort to expand the claims of “political education” still further. The CCG, in contrast, had registered as a lobbying organization, but it had utilized a method to minimize its reported financial activities (where only contributions of \$500 or more were reportable under the law).

¹¹⁶ The Union for Democratic Action appearing in 1944, for example, was an elite-based liberal group that offered campaign support to certain candidates that year. It was also the organizational foundation upon which the Americans for Democratic Action was built.

¹¹⁷ Intriguingly, representing the ADA before the Buchanan Committee in 1950 was none other than Francis Biddle – the Attorney General under Franklin Roosevelt who, in 1943, would declare the CIO P.A.C.’s financial structure to be legally sound. See Chapter 6, where I discuss Biddle’s opinion in more detail.

¹¹⁸ According to the “Historical Note” describing the papers of the League To Enforce Peace, held at Harvard, it “was formed in 1914 in New York City,” by “wealthy citizens alarmed at the outbreak of WWI,” and the group’s “purpose was to work in the U.S. to establish an international organization to ensure world peace...With the establishment of the League of Nations, the LEP took upon itself organizing political and grassroots support for the association of the U.S. with the League of Nations. The LEP was moribund after the elections of 1920 and ceased to exist in 1923.” See <http://oasis.lib.harvard.edu/oasis/deliver/~hou00014>.

¹¹⁹ The National Civic League was another temperance organization that had been organized in New York in 1910, and nationally in 1922. The New York State superintendent and national president, Rev. Olaf R. Miller testified before the Steiwer committee in June 1928. He noted that the organization had also been concerned with the cause of “clean government.” Asked by Steiwer whether his organization was “of any political trend, or nonpartisan?” Miller replied that it was certainly “nonpartisan,” and that their officers were of different party persuasions. Testimony of Rev. Olaf R. Miller, June 2nd, 1928. “Presidential Campaign Expenditures,” Part 3 of Hearings before the Special Committee Investigating Presidential Campaign Expenditures [Steiwer Committee], U.S. Senate, 70th Cong., 1st sess. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1928), 857.

¹²⁰ See Conant, 125, 128.

¹²¹ See Conant, 91, 122, 141.

¹²² The Democratic platform’s “Law Enforcement” plank contained a pledge “to enforce the eighteenth amendment and all other provisions of the federal Constitution and all laws enacted pursuant thereto.” The same plank in the Republican platform pledged “the observance and vigorous enforcement of this provision of the Constitution.” See “Democratic Party Platform of 1928” (June 26, 1928), and “Republican Party Platform of 1928” (June 12, 1928), available online through Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley (eds.), *The American Presidency Project* [<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=29594> and <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=29637>]. According to Conant, Smith had initially downplayed his position on Prohibition. Prior to nomination, he had promised to enforce the prohibition law” (114). And the Democrats themselves sought to offset their nomination of Smith by picking Senator Joseph T. Robinson of Arkansas as his running mate. As both a Southerner and a “dry,” Robinson was meant to bring both geographical and policy “balance” to the ticket (90). But Smith switched gears following his nomination. He “denounced prohibition and campaigned for two modifications of the Volstead law...first, an amendment giving a ‘scientific definition of the alcoholic content of an intoxicating beverage’, each state being allowed to fix its own standard if this did not exceed the standard fixed by Congress; and second, ‘an amendment in the Eighteenth Amendment which would give to each individual state itself the right wholly within its borders to import, manufacture, or cause to be manufactured, and sell alcoholic beverages, the sale to be made only by the state itself and not for consumption in any public place’” (114).

¹²³ Allies included the Methodist Church’s “Board of Temperance and Social Service,” among others.

¹²⁴ Ritchie, 36. As Ritchie observes: Hoover, in the 1928 election, “profited from intense campaigning by southern Prohibitionists, and riding on his coattails, a record number of Prohibitionists were elected to the next Congress” (36).

¹²⁵ Hoover’s victories included Florida, North Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia. Smith received 40.8% of the popular vote (15,004,336 votes) but only 87 electoral votes; Hoover received 58.2% of the popular vote (21,432,823) and 444 electoral votes [“Table 1-7 Popular and Electoral Votes for President, 1789–2008.” In Harold W. Stanley, and Richard G. Niemi (eds.), *Vital Statistics on American Politics 2009-2010* (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2009), 17-21. “This propaganda shattered the ‘Solid South’ for the first time since reconstruction,” Conant observes (141). Hoover carried the Southern states of Virginia, North Carolina, Florida, Tennessee and Texas, along with several border states.

¹²⁶ John Mark Hansen, *Gaining Access: Congress and the Farm Lobby, 1919-1981* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), 218-219. Hansen suggests that both the rise and decline of the Anti-Saloon League accords with his arguments about *access* to legislators – premised on competitive advantage in elections, and the recurrence of major issues with which a group is concerned. As he relates, the nomination of Al Smith in the 1928 election “pushed prohibition forces into the arms of Herbert Hoover and the Republican Party, staking their success to the performance of the GOP administration” (219). With the Republican Party now ostensibly a “dry” party, the Anti-Saloon League lost its comparative advantage as an information provider to Republican lawmakers (who were the majority in all chambers at this point) Hansen argues. With the party singing the same tune, there was no added benefit to granting them “access.” In backing Hoover, the ASL “stak[ed] their success to the performance of the GOP administration” – a performance that would deteriorate rapidly with economic conditions (219). “Accordingly,” he concludes, “the elections of 1930 and 1932 demonstrated conclusively that, relative to other advocates, the League had nothing special to offer,” and so “[i]t rapidly lost the attention of public officials” (219).

¹²⁷ As the Democratic platform stated in 1932: “We advocate the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment. To effect such repeal we demand that the Congress immediately propose a Constitutional Amendment to truly represent [sic] the conventions in the states

called to act solely on that proposal; we urge the enactment of such measures by the several states as will actually promote temperance, effectively prevent the return of the saloon, and bring the liquor traffic into the open under complete supervision and control by the states." Democratic Party Platforms: "Democratic Party Platform of 1932," June 27, 1932. In Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley (eds.), *The American Presidency Project*. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=29595>.

¹²⁸ "Members of the Republican Party hold different opinions with respect to it and no public official or member of the party should be pledged or forced to choose between his party affiliations and his honest convictions upon this question." Republican Party Platforms: "Republican Party Platform of 1932," June 14, 1932. Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley (eds.), *The American Presidency Project*. Available at <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=29638>.

¹²⁹ See "Presidential Campaign Expenditures," Part 3 of Hearings before the Special Committee Investigating Presidential Campaign Expenditures [**Steiwer Committee**], U.S. Senate, 70th Cong., 1st sess., May 28, 29, 31, June, 1, 2,4,5, and 6, 1928 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1928).

¹³⁰ For more on the AAPA, see David E. Kyvig, *Repealing National Prohibition* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1979) and John C. Gebhart, "Movement Against Prohibition." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 163 (September 1932): 176.

¹³¹ A growing number of business leaders were expressing opposition to Prohibition, including John D. Rockefeller, Jr. – who, like his father, was teetotal himself. "Before the two parties held their major conventions, important business men who had once been advocates of Prohibition, came out supporting the movement for repeal. Some of these leaders were: Harvey S. Firestone, Alfred P. Sloane Jr., John D. Rockefeller Jr., Charles Edison, son of the inventor, and J. N. Willys, retiring Ambassador to Poland." Loretto C. Mersh, "The Presidential Campaign of 1932" (Master's Thesis, Loyola University Chicago, 1937), 77. An anti-prohibition group formed by the Hotel, Restaurant, Club and Allied Industries Association illuminated this economic aspect. Its membership stood at 100,000 employers, though the group claimed "through its membership it has in its employ 1,400,000 voters and that it actually controls about 5,000,000 votes," according to the *New York Times*. And its national director, John McGlynn, made no bones about the need to support Roosevelt's candidacy in 1932 – which was reported in the *Times* in fully partisan terms – that "he agreed that the sole hope of the hotel and restaurant industry lies in the Democratic party." "We must vote for the party which supports the position toward which our bread and butter lies," the *Times* quoted another member. "Hotel Group Votes to Back Democrats," *New York Times*, July 13, 1932, p. 1.

¹³² Hansen is not alone neglecting this group – as much as the Anti-Saloon League captured Schattschneider and Key's imagination, the Association Against the Prohibition Amendment does not warrant a mention. Odegard's *Pressure Politics* mentions it a handful of times, but the book was published early in 1928 – prior to the Association's push in the presidential election.

¹³³ Conant, 105-106. Raskob had been listed as a Republican in *Who's Who* prior to this point (noted in Conant, 107). He contributed over \$100,000 to the party's campaign fund in 1928, and paid off its substantial debts after the election (105). "Raskob's total contribution of \$110,000 to the Democratic fund," she reports, "was given in three donations; \$50,000 on September 12, \$50,000 on October 3, and \$10,000 November 5, 1928" (106).

¹³⁴ The Anti-Saloon League raised \$172,468 and spent \$165,326. The AAPA raised \$478,038 and spent \$453,700, according to "Table X - Committees and Organizations Receiving and Expending Money in Behalf of the Republican Party," and "Table XI - Committees and Organizations Receiving and Expending Money in Behalf of the Democratic Party." "Presidential Campaign Expenditures." In "Presidential Campaign Expenditures," Report of the Special Committee Investigating Presidential Campaign Expenditures [**Steiwer Committee**], U.S. Senate, 70th Cong. 2d. sess. Report No. 2024 (February 28th, 1929), 26. See also Louise Overacker, *Money in Elections* (New York: Macmillan, 1932), 165.

¹³⁵ These two groups would also appear before the Caraway lobbying investigating committee the following year, and in further sub-national campaign expenditure investigations (a House committee chaired by Rep. Frederick R. Lehlbach (R-NJ) in 1928, and a Senate committee chaired by Gerald P. Nye (R-ND) in 1930). See "Campaign Expenditures," Report No. 2821 from the Select Committee to Investigate Campaign Expenditures [**Lehlbach Committee**], U.S. House, 70th Cong., 2d. sess. (March 2, 1929); "Senatorial Campaign Expenditures, 1930," Part 1 of Hearings before the Select Committee on Senatorial Campaign Expenditures [**Nye Committee**], U.S. Senate, 71st Cong., 2d. sess., December 2nd and 4th, 1930 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1930).

¹³⁶ Corrado, 30; "Note, Registration of Groups Tending to Influence Public Opinion," *Columbia Law Review* 48 (1948): 598. In addition to the Hatch Act Amendments, the 1925 Federal Corrupt Practices Act was also relevant for proliferation of committees, in allowing donors to spread their donations around and avoid the disclosure requirements imposed by that law.

¹³⁷ Sidney M. Milkis, *The President and the Parties: The Transformation of the American Party System Since the New Deal* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 155, quoting from Mathew Josephson, *Sidney Hillman: Statesman of American Labor* (1952), 598; Donald R. McCoy, "The Good Neighbor League and the Presidential Campaign of 1936," *The Western Political Quarterly* 13 No. 4 (1960): 1011.

¹³⁸ V.O. Key, in the 1942 edition of his textbook, would embrace both types under the general heading of "auxiliary" organizations in campaigns.

¹³⁹ "Investigation of Campaign Expenditures in 1936," Report of the Special Committee to investigate Campaign Expenditures of Presidential, Vice Presidential, and Senatorial Candidates in 1936 [**Lonergan Committee**], U.S. Senate, 75th Cong. 1st sess. Report No. 151, March 4, 1937 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1937), p. 25. *Emphasis mine*.

¹⁴⁰ If we conceive of interest groups as moving from a predominantly lobbying-based strategy in the early 20th Century, to a much more prominent electoral approach apparent in the wake of the campaign finance reforms of the 1970s, then comparing groups who are active in *both* fields, and assessing the points at which they become so, is of particular value.

¹⁴¹ Several other groups also appeared across multiple committees, but *within* the same type of investigation (lobbying or campaign expenditure), and thus do not appear in this table. These were: the American Democratic National Committee, Citizens for Eisenhower-Nixon, International Brotherhood of Teamsters, National Association of Radio and Television Broadcasters, National

Association of Wool Manufacturers, Progressive Party, Socialist Labor Party, US Beet Sugar Association, Volunteers for Stevenson, and the campaign committees of Herbert Hoover (in different elections).

¹⁴² Kenneth Finegold and Theda Skocpol, *State and Party in America's New Deal* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1995).

¹⁴³ While Hansen points to a more partisan Farm Bureau during the Eisenhower administration, it did not develop an enduring Republican orientation in the manner of groups such as the NAM.

Chapter 4. A Tale of Two Leagues

¹ Max Lerner, "Roosevelt and His Fellow-Travelers," *The Nation* 143 No. 17 (October 24, 1936): 471.

² Ibid.

³ E.E. Schattschneider. *The Semi-Sovereign People: A Realist's View of Democracy in America* (Wadsworth Publishing, 1960/1988), 87

⁴ J. I. Seidman, "Political Trends and New Party Movements," *Editorial Research Reports 1934* (Vol. I). Washington, DC: CQ Press. Retrieved from <http://library.cqpress.com/cqresearcher/cqresrre1934051800>.

⁵ Robert Elliott Kessler, "The League For Independent Political Action, 1929 – 1933" (MA Thesis, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1967), 100-106. The convention was held at the University of Chicago in September, 1933, but the call for another cross-sector party prompted the withdrawal of any remaining Socialists from the LIPA. An important figure at the convention – and in future political developments – was Thomas Amlie. Amlie was a former Republican Congressman from Wisconsin who had lost his seat in 1932 (in part, due to a split progressive vote). (103-105). Amlie shared the Socialists more radical agenda, but disagreed with their methods, noting that their "program of action...quite ignores the fact that American psychology is not proletarian" (quoted in Kessler, 105). Despite a rousing speech to the convention, Amlie could not convince them that a third party was currently viable. The Farmer Labor Political Federation, instead, was "to lay the groundwork for the launching of a new party by the election of 1934," and Amlie became its chairman (106). The LIPA itself was basically absorbed into the new FLPF structure – taking it further in a radical direction (106).

⁶ Thomas T. Spencer, "Democratic Auxiliary and Non-Party Groups in the Election of 1936" (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Notre Dame, 1976), 16; McCoy (1956) also notes that early in 1936, the Farmer-Labor Governor of Minnesota – Floyd B. Olson – called for a national convention to make third party action a possibility by November – though he would back away from that stance soon after. Donald R. McCoy, "The Progressive National Committee of 1936," *The Western Political Quarterly* 9 No. 2 (1956): 459.

⁷ Seidman observed that the Non-Partisan League of Minnesota had morphed into an independent Farmer-Labor Party there, while the Non-Partisan League of North Dakota continued to work within the Republican party framework. In Wisconsin, the La Follette brothers had formed the Progressive Party there following Philip's defeat in the 1932 Republican primary (thus preventing his re-election as Governor). McCoy (1957) notes that the brothers looked to the experience of their father's 1924 campaign, and believed that "independent state and local groups were, with few exceptions, too weak politically to establish a significant new national party" (78). To be successful, they felt, a national third party movement would have to emerge gradually, building state by state. Philip La Follette would become disillusioned in the wake of Roosevelt's 1936 re-election, however. Sensing hostility from state Democrats toward his Progressive Party, and fearing that supporting the national Democratic ticket might have an adverse effect on its fortunes at home, he launched the "National Progressives of America" – a fleeting and unsuccessful national third party effort (79). See Donald R. McCoy, "The National Progressives of America, 1938," *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 44 No. 1 (1957): 78-79.

⁸ See Alan Brinkley, *Voices of Protest: Huey Long, Father Coughlin, and the Great Depression* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1982), for detailed assessments of Townsend, and especially Long and Coughlin.

⁹ Quoted McCoy (1956), 457.

¹⁰ McCoy (1956) observes that "a few days after that conversation, Donald Richberg, the director of the old National Progressive League, wrote to Senator Norris discussing in very general terms progressive political action in support of the President." In February, McCoy reports, Harold Ickes recorded a request from Roosevelt in his diary, that he "contact Senators Norris and Johnson, among others, to plan the re-establishment of the Progressive League" (not a direct quote from the diary) (457).

¹¹ Officially the "National Progressive League to Support Franklin D. Roosevelt for President."

¹² According to McCoy (1956) The National Progressive League was officially founded on September 25, 1932 (456). Norris is quoted in Loretto C. Mersh, "The Presidential Campaign of 1932" (Master's Thesis, Loyola University Chicago, 1937), 90.

¹³ McCoy (1956) described the League's purpose as: "to marshal nonpartisan, Republican, and other liberal votes behind Roosevelt" (456).

¹⁴ Ibid. Headed by Norris and Donald R. Richberg, the League's national committee included Edward Costigan, Ray Stannard Baker, Bronson Cutting, Robert La Follette, Jr., Amos Pinchot, Claude Bowers, Bainbridge Colby, Josephus Daniels, Clarence Darrow, Felix Frankfurter, Henry A. Wallace, Frank Murphy, and Arthur M. Schlesinger. Harold L. Ickes headed the League's Western committee. Henry Wallace and George Peck were also members (456).

¹⁵ The NPL was one of only two non-party committees that Overacker (1933) mentions in her overview of the 1932 election, and the only such organization active nationally. Louise Overacker, "American Government and Politics: Campaign Funds in a Depression Year," *American Political Science Review* 27 No. 5 (1933): 770, 772-773, 775.

¹⁶ McCoy (1956), 456.

¹⁷ McCoy (1956) adds in a footnote that “of the \$11,263.47 the League's Western Committee Headquarters received between October 15 and December 29, 1932, the Democratic National Campaign Committee and its vice-chairman, Arthur Mullen of Nebraska, contributed \$8975 and \$1000, respectively.” Thus these party sources constituted almost 90% of the Western HQ's income (456, n7).

¹⁸ Mersh, 90.

¹⁹ And he added: “I warn those nominal Democrats who squint at the future with their faces turned toward the past, and who feel no responsibility to the demands of the new time, that they are out of step with their Party.” Franklin D. Roosevelt: “Address Accepting the Presidential Nomination at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago,” July 2, 1932. In Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley (eds.), *The American Presidency Project*. Available at: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=75174>.

²⁰ Kessler, 4. They “formally announced the creation of the League for Independent Political Action on September 8, 1929. John Dewey was elected the League Chairman; Paul Douglas and W. E. B. DuBois, the Vice-Chairmen; Oswald Garrison Villard, the Treasurer; and Kirby Page, Chairman of the twenty-five member Executive Committee.”

²¹ Ibid. “Douglas and his associates felt that it would be extremely difficult to get either the Republican or Democratic party to serve the cause of reform.” The LIPA was founded, after all, on the idea “that the two major parties were almost totally corrupt and dominated by selfish financial interests...” “In a time of far reaching industrial transformation, the lack of a “corresponding political realignment in [the] country” particularly troubled Dewey,” Kessler notes (8).

²² LIPA would be a *stepping-stone* to a third party, rather than a party itself: “Realizing their initial small following and their limited political experience, the founders of the League for Independent Political Action did not view the organization as the new third party” (Kessler, 37).

²³ Quoted in Richard J. Brown, “John Dewey and the League for Independent Political Action,” *Social Studies* 59 No. 4 (1968): 158.

²⁴ The Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party, for example – which had emerged out of the non-partisan league in that state – exhibited little interest in a national effort at this point, preferring to concentrate its energies on the state. Nor were progressive leaders in Wisconsin more amenable to expanding their sphere of action – though they would soon forge a state-level third party. On relations with the Socialist Party, see Kessler, 34-35, 70. On Minnesota, see Richard M. Valelly, *Radicalism in the States: The Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party and the American Political Economy* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1989). On Wisconsin, see Kessler, 62.

²⁵ Quoted in Kessler, 71.

²⁶ Quoted in Kessler, 53. The correspondent was Charles Edward Russell, writing to John Dewey, December 18, 1931. Russell had been involved with both the Nonpartisan League and the socialist cause at various times, and “concluded after devoting fifty-one years to politics and seeing eighteen attempts to form a new political party that such action was futile” (53).

²⁷ On membership: Kessler, 41, 45, 56. It thus failed to build a solid membership base – peaking at 10,000 in 1932, with a substantial number failing to pay their \$1 dues. Thus their finances were always in poor shape too (55-57). With over 100 local branches at one point, the hierarchical structure the LIPA established did little to sustain organizational vitality (73). Despite the prominence of W. E. B. DuBois on the LIPA's board, it also gained little traction among African-Americans, and DuBois himself resigned over its lack of real attention to racial issues (66).

²⁸ Brown, 157. While Dewey's 1930 series of articles for the *New Republic* on “Individualism, Old and New,” are well-known, his 1931 articles on “The Need for A New Party” are less so. In them, he pointed to the LIPA as a possible starting point for a new party, as Brown discusses.

²⁹ Kessler, 40. The LIPA thus recommended that its local chapters and members should support third party candidates – though they were not *bound* to do so (41-42). But neither the organization, nor its officers, was permitted to support a major party candidate (42).

³⁰ Ibid., 60.

³¹ Ibid. Reflecting his agrarian roots, Norris was less enamored of “independent” politics than a non-partisan approach more in the NPL mold. Officially a Republican, he paid little heed to the “party line” – seeming to use the label without becoming of the party. In a 1913 speech, Norris had even advocated something he labeled a “non-partisan party,” and expressed little faith in a new party throughout his career. Quoted in Shirley Ann Lindeen and James Walter Lindeen, “Bryan, Norris, and the Doctrine of Party Responsibility,” *Midcontinent American Studies Journal* 11 No. 1 (1970): 47.

³² LIPA Assistant Secretary Norman Studer to Genevieve O'Neill, July 30, 1930, quoted Kessler, 94.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ In March 1931, Senators George Norris (R-NE), Edward Costigan (D-CO), Bronson Cutting (R-NM), Robert La Follette, Jr. (R-WT), and Burton Wheeler (D-MT) had called a conference of the country's progressive leaders, in anticipation of the 1932 presidential election. “It was stressed throughout the conference that those calling the meeting “are not moved by ...any desire to advance the interests of any political party ...[or] by any intention or idea of organizing a Third or an Independent party,”” as McCoy (1956) reported (455). To back up this claim symbolically, the LIPA was excluded from the conference altogether, as McCoy acknowledges in a footnote (455, n4).

³⁵ On the small LIPA convention in July 1932 that backed Thomas, see Kessler, 98.

³⁶ “[B]oth Norris and Ickes showed a desire to keep the League in operation to aid in the coordination of progressive activities,” McCoy (1956) reports (457). “Norris, it seems, even went so far as to encourage press discussion in early 1933 of the idea of maintaining progressive Republican clubs throughout the nation.” These clubs were not to be officially affiliated with the Republican Party, however, nor with the Democratic apparatus either – but rather an effort to *prevent* any party from absorbing the progressive movement wholesale (457).

³⁷ When the election was over the NPL had closed its doors, it sent the list of 3000 individuals who had worked for it during the campaign “to the Democratic National Committee for safe-keeping.” McCoy (1956), 463-464.

³⁸ Ibid., 458. Norris was non-committal at first, when Interior Secretary Harold Ickes reached out to him for his help with organizing progressives. McCoy (1956) notes an entry in Ickes diary from August 6th, 1936, which describes how “Frank P. Walsh was delegated

by the President to establish the organization along with Senator La Follette” (457). Norris continued to demur for a time, claiming health issues that would make him unable to campaign for FDR as a reason he could not endorse the group, for example), but he eventually sends a message of support to the founding convention of the Progressive National Committee, and became an honorary chairman of it (458).

³⁹ Ibid. The PNC’s founding conference was held in Chicago on September 11th, 1936. McCoy notes that it “voted to give full support to the chief executive’s re-election campaign through the establishment of the Progressive National Committee supporting Franklin D. Roosevelt for President. Ten thousand dollars was pledged to the Committee by the conferees” (460).

⁴⁰ As McCoy (1956) reports: “In addition to Governor Olson and Senator Norris, Mayor La Guardia, Minnesota Farmer-Laborite Senator Elmer Benson, Senator Homer T. Bone of Washington, Adolf A. Berle, Frank P. Walsh, and Edward Keating, the editor of Labor, joined with Senator La Follette to call the conference” – the meeting was attended by over 100 progressive and independent political leaders, drawn from across the country.” (459). Those present included “Governors La Follette and Petersen; Senators Black, Benson, Schwollenbach and La Follette; twelve representatives in Congress; twenty-seven labor leaders, including John L. Lewis, Sidney Hillman, Philip Murray, and A. F. Whitney; farm leaders; and various other state and local officials.” (459-460).

⁴¹ Ibid., 459, 462, 465. Leading progressives, as McCoy (1956) observed, “regarded it as essential that Olson join in calling for a conference of progressives” that would assert their support for *Roosevelt’s* re-election (459. *Emphasis mine*).

⁴² Ibid., 460.

⁴³ Ibid., 464.

⁴⁴ Quoted in McCoy (1956), 465.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 466.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 465.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 462, 465.

⁴⁸ Spencer (1976) labels the “Roosevelt Agricultural Committee” as the ‘Roosevelt All-Party Agricultural Committee’ and suggests it was also a “re-launching” of kinds – it involved many of the individuals who had also participated in the Smith Independent Organization Committee in 1928 (27-28).

⁴⁹ Thomas T. Spencer, “Auxiliary and Non-Party Politics: The 1936 Democratic Presidential Campaign in Ohio,” *Ohio History* 90 (1981): 114. According to Spencer, auxiliaries were especially active in key mid-western states such as Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan (127).

⁵⁰ Spencer (1976), 28. “Only the Democratic campaigns of 1916 and 1928 come close to equaling the activity of the 1936 groups,” he notes (28). In a subsequent article (Spencer, 1981), he explores the heavy use of auxiliary committees in key mid-western states such as Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan.

⁵¹ McCoy (1960), 1011-1021. 1011. It developed out of a radio broadcast in February 1936, according to McCoy, where Roosevelt referenced the Good Neighbor foreign policy and claimed that it “should be applied at home to secure not only fellowship and understanding but to achieve “spiritual reawakening.” To this end, the formation of associations of Good Neighbors was urged.” (1012). The original suggestion for this group came from Louis Howe, so as “to use an idealistic concept rather than pragmatic ones to justify the New Deal’s record and offer promise of a better future” (1011).

⁵² Ibid., 1011.

⁵³ Ibid., 1013, 1015.

⁵⁴ Spencer (1981), 122.

⁵⁵ Sidney M. Milkis, *The President and the Parties: The Transformation of the American Party System since the New Deal* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 155. Indeed, Milkis suggests it was *Roosevelt* who encouraged their formation and use, due to his ambivalent attitude toward the regular party (76-77).

⁵⁶ As Weed describes the post-1936 political world, “the New Deal was not deploring “special interests” [but] attempting to utilize them in an effort to develop an effective political coalition” – an attempt that left some older Progressives disillusioned. Clyde P. Weed, *The Nemesis of Reform: The Republican Party During the New Deal* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 189.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 85. The sectional view incorporated economic interests to the extent that it identified them with a particular geographic area, and thus viewed competition between interests in *regional* terms.

⁵⁸ As Weed concludes, “by 1937 the New Deal was not deploring “special interests” – it was attempting to utilize them in an effort to develop an effective political coalition” (189).

⁵⁹ “Investigation of Campaign Expenditures in 1936,” Report of the Special Committee to investigate Campaign Expenditures of Presidential, Vice Presidential, and Senatorial Candidates in 1936” [**Loneragan Committee**], U.S. Senate, 75th Cong. 1st sess. Report No. 151, March 4, 1937 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1937), p. 25. Hereafter “Loneragan Committee Report.”

⁶⁰ Representatives of the LNPL, at least, would testify before several committees during the 75th, 76th, and 77th Congresses. It does not appear that Liberty League officials were ever appeared – though it was mentioned several times in the *Congressional Record* during the 74th Congress.

⁶¹ Excluding formal Republican or Democratic committees at the local through national level, the Loneragan report identified over 100 organizational recipients of contributions from these major donors. See especially the “Index to Names of Organizations in Last Column Receiving Contributions,” which accompanied an extensive list of contributions from donors giving \$500 or more to “political parties and organizations” in the 1936 campaign. Loneragan Committee Report, p. 41 (for index); pp. 42-126 for listing of large contributors. Overacker’s table is mostly drawn from the Loneragan Committee’s list of “Miscellaneous Political Organizations of National Scope,” though the Liberty League, curiously, does not appear there (it appears as a major recipient in the list of large contributors). Both Overacker (1937) and Key (1942), however, include it in their list of important independent groups active on the Republican side. See Key (1942), 446-447.

- ⁶² For more on the Young Democrats, and on other party auxiliaries and divisions formed in this period, see Sean J. Savage, *Roosevelt: The Party Leader, 1932-1945* (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 1991), 90-98.
- ⁶³ On the large donations, see McCoy (1960) who points out that “[i]t is of interest that almost 80 per cent of the private contributions to the League came from individuals giving \$500 or more” (1019).
- ⁶⁴ McCoy (1960), 1019.
- ⁶⁵ Louise Overacker, “Campaign Funds in the Presidential Election of 1936,” *American Political Science Review* 31 No. 3 (1937), 477. *Emphasis mine*. As noted in Chapter 2, V.O. Key would come to reserve the term “non-party groups” only for the financially independent ones, describing those with financial connections to the party as “auxiliaries.”
- ⁶⁶ In 1938, for example, the National Federation of Republican Women was formed, to provide a national umbrella for the array of Republican women’s clubs that had emerged since gaining the suffrage. The Women’s National Republican Club, it appears, was incorporated under this umbrella. The NFRW has greater autonomy than some auxiliaries, but its connection to the party is formal and explicit, it operated on a permanent basis, and even shared headquarters with the national committee – at least in 1964. Good (1963) notes that the NFRW was founded in 1938 following discussions among the Republican National Committeewomen, and with the encouragement of then-RNC chairman John Hamilton (p. 23). See Josephine L. Good, *The History of Women in Republican National Conventions and Women in the Republican National Committee* (Washington, D.C.: Republican National Committee, 1963).
- ⁶⁷ The \$60,000 figure is in McCoy (1960), 1019. Overacker (1937) suggests the PNC *spent* \$54,460. Noted in “Table II- Expenditures of Important Non-Party Organizations in 1936” (478). The PNC’s forerunner – the National Progressive League – had received funding from the DNC. McCoy (1956) points out that Democratic National Campaign Committee sources provided almost 90% of the League’s Western Committee Headquarters in the months immediately prior to the election (456n).
- ⁶⁸ From information in Table VI – “Contributions of Organized Labor the Democratic National Committee and Other Groups in the 1936 Campaign,” in Overacker (1937), 489.
- ⁶⁹ *Ibid.* McCoy (1960) notes that it raised almost \$195,000 also (p. 1019) while Overacker puts its spending closer to \$170,000
- ⁷⁰ See Lonergan Committee Report, 24, 26, 48; McCoy (1960), 1019, n30.
- ⁷¹ Indeed McCoy (1960) pointed to an asymmetry in the formation of such auxiliaries, with those supporting the Democratic candidate more prevalent (1020).
- ⁷² Elisabeth S. Clemens, *The People’s Lobby: Organizational Innovation and the Rise of Interest Group Politics in the United States, 1890-1925* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1997).
- ⁷³ James Truslow Adams, “A Business Man’s Civilization,” *Harper’s Monthly* (July 1929). Quoted in Grace R. Conant, “An Analysis of the Campaign of 1928” (MA Thesis, Loyola University Chicago, 1946), 2.
- ⁷⁴ James W. Prothro, *The Dollar Decade* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1954), viii. Quoted in Harmon Zeigler, *Interest Groups in American Society* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964), 113. The quote acknowledges that they were perceived as the source of “the” business opinion, “whether an accurate or distorted reflection of actual business opinion” or not (113). Zeigler points to the *intention* of NAM and the Chamber to be broadly representative of business (109), though they might not be perfectly so – if it is possible to be (63).
- ⁷⁵ The somewhat contradictory tendencies within the business community at large – to both embrace and oppose government regulation at different points – have been widely noted. Zeigler, for example, points out that “irrespective of frequent protests that a continued expansion of regulation will lead to the demise of private enterprise, businessmen frequently support certain types of government supervision” (117). Hall (1969) suggested that the Chamber saw government variably as “an ally or an enemy,” sometimes at the same time: “In either case, the Chamber is ready to work with it or against it.” Donald R. Hall, *Cooperative Lobbying: The Power of Pressure* (Tucson, AZ: The University of Arizona Press, 1969/1970), 221. The corporate liberal school of historical scholarship generalizes this kind of argument: that far from hostility to an enlarged state, it was business interests that pushed for an expanded federal welfare role, since it removed the burden upon themselves to provide benefits to their employees, and spread the costs around. See the discussion in Louis Galambos, “The Emerging Organizational Synthesis of Modern American History,” *Business History Review* 44 (1970): 280.
- ⁷⁶ On the “associative state,” see Ellis W. Hawley, “Herbert Hoover, the Commerce Secretariat, and the Vision of an “Associative State,” 1921-1928,” *The Journal of American History* 61 No. 1 (1974): 116-140. See also Zeigler, 100. Other representative business organizations were themselves founded through the intervention of the federal government. Zeigler remarks that a “striking” aspect of the development of trade association “is the active role played by the federal government” (101). Beyond the NRA, the Small Business Conference of 1938, for example, “resulted in numerous and ephemeral groups with sharply divergent goals, each claiming to be the “true” expression of the needs of small business” (108-109). The National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB), the National Small Businessmen’s Association (NSBMA), and the Conference of American Small Business Organizations (CASBO), for example, were formed out of this conference, as Wilson (1974) noted (162). As he explains, Roosevelt had hoped to enlist unified small business support against the hostility he was facing from some large corporations. Instead, the attendees were only able to unite around their own hostility to the New Deal (162). These newer organizations, he says, would exhibit and sustain a much more ideological quality than more established groups. James Q. Wilson, *Political Organizations* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1974).
- ⁷⁷ Frederick Lewis Allen, *Lords of Creation* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1935), 222, 223. Quoted in Conant, 80.
- ⁷⁸ Weed, 23, 27.
- ⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 27.
- ⁸⁰ The Chamber expressed its support for the NIRA, and thus “joined hands with the Federation of Labor,” as Congressman Clyde Kelly (R-PA) observed, “which most eloquently proves that neither wrote this bill but that its provisions are fair to both.” See *Congressional Record - House*, 73rd Cong., 1st Sess., May 25th, 1933, p. 4218 (quoted in Weed, 129). The NAM “guarded its endorsement”

at first, particularly given the clause guaranteeing unions the right to organize (130). When it became clear the NIRA would pass, Weed suggests, “the NAM joined the Chamber of Commerce in an appeal to American industry to give wholehearted support to NRA efforts to promote economic recovery” (131).

⁸¹ The National Recovery Administration established by that Act required every industry to have “a single representative association” that would “present a code of fair competition” to govern industry-wide activity and ensure better cooperation to aid the recovery (Zeigler, 106-107). Thus, Zeigler explains, “trade associations became the *sine qua non* for every industry” – advantaging those that already existed, and stimulating the creation of new ones (100). When the NRA was declared unconstitutional (in 1935) many of these groups dissolved (especially where internal industry divisions had been masked by the NRA’s single representative group requirement), but some did survive (108).

⁸² Weed, 57.

⁸³ Weed, 57-58 (on the importance of the federal deficit), 61, 62 (on concerns about *other* groups having input in the new system), 63, 156-157, 160. Romasco (1983) points to a “Joint Business Conference for Economic Recovery,” held in December 1934 and co-sponsored by the Chamber and NAM, which passed official resolutions amounting to “a severe critique of New Deal recovery policies.” See Albert U. Romasco, *The Politics of Recovery: Roosevelt’s New Deal* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 208. And Weed notes that the Chamber’s annual convention in 1935 delivered a similar verdict – opposing continuation of the NRA, the Social Security Act, and the Utility Holding Company Act and seeking the “withdrawal of government agencies from activities properly the function of trade associations” (65). Citing Alfred Cleveland’s research, Zeigler notes that the NAM opposed thirty-one of the thirty-eight major laws passed between 1933 and 1941 (116). See Alfred S. Cleveland, “NAM: Spokesman for Industry?” *Harvard Business Review* 26 No. 3 (1948), 357.

⁸⁴ See, for example, the debate between Thomas Ferguson (1984) and Michael J. Webber (1991) on support or opposition among different economic divisions. Thomas Ferguson, “From Normalcy to New Deal: Industrial Structure, Party Competition, and American Public Policy in the Great Depression,” *International Organization* 38 No. 1 (1984): 41-94; Michael J. Webber, “Business, the Democratic Party, and the New Deal: An Empirical Critique of Thomas Ferguson’s ‘Investment Theory of Politics,’” *Sociological Perspectives* 34 No. 4 (1991): 473-492; Michael J. Webber and G. William Domhoff, “Myth and Reality in Business Support for Democrats and Republicans in the 1936 Presidential Election,” *American Political Science Review* 90 No. 4 (1996): 824-833; Michael J. Webber, *New Deal Fat Cats: Business, Labor, and Campaign Finance in the 1936 Presidential Election* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2000).

⁸⁵ By December of 1934, NAM and Chamber officials held a joint conference to discuss economic recovery, in which they aired vocal criticisms of the administration (Weed, 62). By November the following year, the Chamber’s annual convention delivered a harsh judgment of the recovery program – adopting resolutions that opposed the NRA’s continuation and sought greater autonomy for trade associations, and objected to other measures such as the Social Security Act and the Utility Holding Company Act (Weed, 65).

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 65.

⁸⁷ See “Violations of Free Speech and Rights of Labor: Employer Associations and ‘Citizens’ Committees - National Association Of Manufacturers,” Part 17 of Hearings Before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Education and Labor. U.S. Senate, 75th Cong., 3d Session (Washington, D.C. Government Printing Office, 1938), 7375.

⁸⁸ Overacker (1937), 475-476.

⁸⁹ Frederick Rudolph, “The American Liberty League, 1934-1940,” *The American Historical Review* 56 No. 1 (1950): 21.

⁹⁰ Weed, 65.

⁹¹ Rudolph, 21.

⁹² Hamilton Basso, “The Liberty League Writes,” *The New Republic*, July 22, 1936, 320-321. This part of the “dialogue” is also reproduced in Rudolph, 32.

⁹³ The Liberty League was incorporated in the District of Columbia on August 15, 1934. George Wolfskill, *The Revolt of the Conservatives: A History of the American Liberty League, 1934-1940* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1962), 26. The timing suggests that the Securities and Exchange Act of March 1934 was a particularly important impetus.

⁹⁴ John J. Raskob to R.R.M. Carpenter, quoted in Rudolph, 19.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ Quoted in Weed, 58.

⁹⁷ Basso, 32.

⁹⁸ The 21st Amendment, repealing Prohibition, was ratified December 5, 1933.

⁹⁹ Intra-party rivalries may have also animated Raskob and Shouse’s break with FDR. Despite being chairman of the DNC Executive Committee, Shouse had been maneuvered out of the role of presiding officer at the 1932 convention, as Roosevelt placed his own stamp on the proceedings (Mersh, 49-50). Shouse, of course, was viewed as “a Smith-Raskob man, definitely connected with the party’s policies in 1928,” and he had, moreover, tried “to block Mr. Roosevelt’s nomination after the meeting of the Committee on Arrangements” (Mersh, 50). Despite support from prominent party leaders, including Al Smith, Senator Walsh was installed as convention chairman (Mersh, 50-51). Ironically, Roosevelt would choose to keep on another “Smith-Raskob man” – Charley Michelson, whom Shouse had hired as director of the DNC’s Publicity Division. Michelson had successfully skewered the Hoover administration in the ensuing years – but when Raskob and Shouse bolted the party, he would turn his firepower upon them instead (Mersh, 4, 70-71).

¹⁰⁰ See “Smith-Roosevelt Break Traces To Start of Presidential Rivalry,” *New York Times*, January 27, 1936, p. 3. Al Smith and FDR did not have the best relationship to begin with. As a popular longtime governor of New York, Smith had not exhibited the best adjustment to the new charismatic leader at Albany. When Roosevelt successfully attained the presidency – thereby exceeding Smith’s achievements – it is easy to attribute Smith’s subsequent hostility to personal motivations (that FDR carried New York in doing so,

which Smith had not in 1928, was mentioned as a particular bone of contention) (Mersh, 27). Smith had been reluctant to campaign on Roosevelt's behalf in 1932 – even though his support was desired, especially in New England – only doing so in the last weeks of October, just before the election itself (Mersh, 80, 101).

¹⁰¹ Walter Lippmann, *Men of Destiny* (New York: Macmillan, 1927), 6, quoted in Mersh, 27. Lippmann's essay had appeared in *Vanity Fair* in 1925.

¹⁰² Wolfskill, 37, 54. The quotation was taken from a resolution passed at the last meeting of the AAPA directors, on December 6, 1933, and appears also in George Soule, "Liberty League Liberty – II. Liberty in Politics (Continued)," *The New Republic*, September 2, 1936, 98.

¹⁰³ When Raskob placed the DNC on a permanent basis in the late 1920s, Shouse had become chairman of the Democratic Executive Committee. Sean J. Savage, "Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Democratic National Committee," *Social Science Journal* 28:4 (1991): 451-465. The actual "disbanding" of the AAPA is not entirely clear. A letter from J.S. Cullinan to Jouett Shouse at the end of 1935 suggests there was not really a full suspension – he explicitly states: "from my point of view the American Liberty League has never quite fulfilled the aims and ends at least some of us had in view when the program of maintaining an office in Washington was determined on at our meeting held at the Waldorf on December 6th, 1933." This is the same meeting to which Wolfskill refers. J.S. Cullinan to Jouett Shouse. December 27th, 1935. Records of the American Liberty League 1929-1948, Accession: LMSS, Box 1301, Folder 66. Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, Delaware. Hereafter "Liberty League Papers."

¹⁰⁴ Wolfskill points out that they did *not* want to be seen as trying to influence the 1934 election (26).

¹⁰⁵ According to Spencer (1976), the Liberty League "took on a bi-partisan look with the appointment of two Democrats, Al Smith and John W. Davis, and two Republicans, James Wadsworth, Jr. and Nathan Miller, as directors" (17). Wadsworth was a Republican member of Congress for New York, as Tichenor (2006) points out. He also notes that former GOP representative James Beck (PA) was also involved (324). Daniel J. Tichenor, "The Presidency and Interest Groups: Allies, Adversaries, and Policy Leadership," in Michael Nelson, ed. *The Presidency and the Political System*, 8th Ed (Washington D.C.: CQ Press, 2006), 324. Ritchie (2007) notes that "Al Smith, Newton Baker, and other Democratic exiles joined the Liberty League, feeling that the Roosevelt administration had abandoned the party's 1932 platform and was promoting class warfare against the rich...Herbert Hoover refused to join the Liberty League, recalling how much grief these Democrats had given him as president..." See Donald A. Ritchie. *Electing FDR: The New Deal Campaign of 1932* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2007), 187. Weed (1994) concurs that the presence of conservative Democrats in its funding and membership "enabled the organization to claim a kind of bipartisan stance" (58).

¹⁰⁶ Quoted in Rudolph, 29.

¹⁰⁷ Wolfskill, 27.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 65.

¹⁰⁹ Rudolph references Shouse being quoted in the *New York Times* in January, 1936, asserting that 1,363 weekly newspapers had signed up for the news service. He also notes the radio speech, made by the chairman of the League's Missouri division (Rudolph, 21, 25). On its publicity efforts generally, see Wolfskill, 65-67.

¹¹⁰ Membership statistics are included in "Memorandum for Mr. Knudsen from W. H. Stanton," March 6, 1936. Liberty League Papers, Box 1301, Folder 56. Rudolph cites these figures too and suggests "[t]heir efforts fell woefully short" – even of their own expectations. "In the 1930's," he suggests, "an organization with "sound" American principles might have been expected to attain a membership of more than 150,000 at its peak, without the assistance of a humanitarian impulse or the sanction of humor" (25).

¹¹¹ Rudolph, for example, does not think 75,000 was a particularly high figure in this period (26). During the 1930s, he suggests, "an organization with "sound" American principles might have been expected to attain a membership of more than 150,000 at its peak, without the assistance of a humanitarian impulse or the sanction of humor" (25). And the League's own expectations were much greater: interviewed by the *New York Times* in August 1934, Jouett Shouse "told reporters that he expected to enlist two to three million people in the crusade" (25, citing *New York Times*, August 23, 1934). "The next day the *Times* reported that his estimates had been revised upward to four million" (25).

¹¹² The first state division, unsurprisingly given the Du Pont connection, was Delaware. Other states included: Alabama, California, Georgia, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Wisconsin, and the District of Columbia." The DE and PA organizations "were separately incorporated but operated as affiliates of the national organization." "The staggering blow dealt the League by the re-election of Roosevelt in 1936 halted plans for expansion into nine other states." There were also regional field offices in New York City, Newark, Philadelphia, Wilmington, Baltimore, Chicago, Louisville and Atlanta, to coordinate the state divisions (Wolfskill, 61).

¹¹³ Wolfskill, 67-68. Rudolph points to the announcement by League officer James W. Wadsworth, that "the first step will be organization into several divisions, organizing farmers, laborers, the investing public and other groups that are all in the same boat" (25, n19).

¹¹⁴ Rudolph, 26.

¹¹⁵ Mentioned in Rudolph, 32. Rudolph notes that Virginius Dabney, the Richmond editor, reported that "the audiences were so openly hostile to the League and its spokesmen that the round table proved something of a boomerang" (32).

¹¹⁶ Rudolph, 25-26.

¹¹⁷ Tichenor (2006), 324.

¹¹⁸ Letter from William H. Stanton to William S. Knudsen, Esq. 1501 Balmoral Drive, Detroit, Michigan. March 9, 1936. Liberty League Papers, Box 1301, Folder 56.

¹¹⁹ "Speech of Jouett Shouse, President American Liberty League. Before the Bond Club of New York, November 20, 1934." P. 8. (Press Release, Nov 20). Liberty League Papers, Box 1301, Folder 26.

¹²⁰ Because it sought to “protect the Constitution,” a presumably universal and noble aim, some of its founders expected working class members would join. Letter from William H. Stanton to William S. Knudsen, Esq. 1501 Balmoral Drive, Detroit, Michigan. March 9, 1936. Liberty League Papers, Box 1301, Folder 56.

¹²¹ Wolfskill, 121.

¹²² Quoted in Wolfskill, 121.

¹²³ As well as prominent Democratic such as Raskob and Shouse, Republican members of Congress such as James Wadsworth (NY) and former representatives James Beck (PA) were also involved. According to Spencer (1976), the Liberty League “took on a bi-partisan look with the appointment of two Democrats, Al Smith and John W. Davis, and two Republicans, James Wadsworth, Jr. and Nathan Miller, as directors” (17).

¹²⁴ George Soule, “Liberty League Liberty – I. Liberty in Politics,” *The New Republic*, August 26, 1936, 64-65, *Emphasis mine*.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 63. Soule names other predecessors such as “the National Conference of Investors, the American Taxpayers' League, the Farmers' Independence Council, the Southern Committee to Uphold the Constitution, the Election Managers' Association,” and “the Order of American Patriots” as examples (63). In “Liberty League Liberty II,” Soule also describes the Crusaders and Sentinels as “precursors of the American Liberty League.” (95). Edward A. Rumely, was the executive secretary of the NCUCG and appeared before the Black Committee. A representative of the Southern Committee To Uphold the Constitution also appeared before the Black Committee, which Soule describes as a “predecessor” organization too. See George Soule. “Liberty League Liberty – II,” 95-98.

¹²⁶ Soule, “Liberty League Liberty II,” [“Liberty-saving” is from p. 98].

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 95, 97. As Soule explains, the Sentinels were a “charitable corporation” originally formed in 1922 to oppose women’s suffrage. It waged a largely successful war against the Sheppard-Towner Maternity Act and the Children’s Bureau, expanding its activities in the early 1930s to New Deal legislation. The Crusaders, in contrast, had their roots in the anti-Prohibition fight. For a general statement of the similarities in financial backers across “liberty-saving organizations,” see p. 98. Specific comments on the Sentinels are also noted there. The Crusaders are discussed in this regard on p. 95. A table of contributors is provided on 99.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 95.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 97. The Sentinels had waged a largely successful war against the Sheppard-Towner Maternity Act and the Children’s Bureau in the 1920s, expanding its activities in the early 1930s to New Deal legislation.

¹³⁰ The full list was: “the American Liberty League, American Federation of Utility Investors, American Taxpayers League, Crusaders, Economists National Committee on Monetary Policy, Farmers Independence Council, League for Industrial Rights, Minute Men and Women of Today, National Economy League, New York State Economic Council, Repeal Associates, Sentinels of the Republic, Southern Committee to Uphold the Constitution, and Women Investors in America, Inc.” *Congressional Record – Senate*, June 20, 1936, p. 10492.

¹³¹ *Congressional Record – Senate*, June 20, 1936, p. 10492. Soule discussed several of these groups in his articles – he suggested, for example, that the “American Taxpayers' League” had financial connections to the Liberty League (“Liberty League Liberty I,” 65). This group was associated with the lobbyist James Arnold, and investigated by the Black Committee, as Loomis (2009) notes. Christopher M. Loomis, “The Politics of Uncertainty: Lobbyists and Propaganda in Early Twentieth-Century America,” *Journal of Policy History* 21 No. 2 (2009): 203. Soule also references the “Farmers’ Independence Council,” which had been organized in opposition to the New Deal agricultural program. As Soule acidly observed, its secretary “could not name any farmers who were members of the Council,” making it closer to the kinds of “front” groups to which Loomis gives attention (“Liberty League Liberty II,” 96). If real farmers were absent, Liberty League connections were not – the Council’s vice-president, Samuel F. Morse, was a consulting agricultural engineer for the League, and there were major overlapping contributors such as Lammot du Pont, Alfred P. Sloan, and J. N. Pew (“Liberty League Liberty II,” 96). The “Southern Committee to Uphold the Constitution” was another group mentioned by Soule, one linked to Governor Eugene Talmadge of Georgia – a Southern Democrat and segregationist. The Committee’s convention, held in Macon, Georgia, Soule uncovered, had been bankrolled by John J. Raskob and Pierre du Pont, “who together gave \$10,000.” (“Liberty League Liberty II,” 96).

¹³² Rudolph, 32.

¹³³ *Ibid.* “There is a considerable overlapping between those who have contributed to the Sentinels and those who financed the Liberty League, after it was founded,” Soule noted (“Liberty League Liberty II,” 98).

¹³⁴ Soule, “Liberty League Liberty I,” 63.

¹³⁵ For example, Soule notes “[t]he blunt coal operator who said publicly years ago that God gave him the divine right to rule his mines was too pure a royalist to be anything but a butt of ridicule.” George Soule, “Liberty League Liberty III – Liberty In Industry.” *The New Republic*, September 9, 1936, 121.

¹³⁶ “[W]hen in 1921 and 1922 the “open” shop (closed against unions and union members) was defended as “the American plan” because it preserved the right of the individual to work for what wages and hours he pleased, the convincing answer was that the only right he really had was to work for what wages and hours the employer pleased, or not to work at all, since as an individual dealing with the superior economic power of an employer or association of employers he had virtually no influence over the wages and hours offered except in rare periods of labor shortage.” Soule, “Liberty League Liberty III,” 121-122.

¹³⁷ Soule, “Liberty League Liberty III,” 122. Section 7(a) required all codes of fair competition approved under NIRA to guarantee employees “the right to organize and bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing,” required that they be free from coercion in selecting said representatives, and forbade requiring employees to join a company union.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 121.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 125.

¹⁴⁰ Wolfskill, 210.

¹⁴¹ Soule, “Liberty League Liberty I,” 64.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ “Shows Du Pont Aid to Liberty League,” *New York Times*, January 11, 1935, p. 9. Exact figures: \$104,830.92 in receipts and \$95,062.21 in expenditures. The *Washington Post* also noted that these donations had come from 83 individuals. “Liberty League Paid \$104,830 by Supporters,” *The Washington Post*, January 11, 1935, p. 2.

¹⁴⁴ “Shows Du Pont Aid to Liberty League,” 9.

¹⁴⁵ “Liberty League Paid \$104,830 by Supporters,” 2.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ See H.R. 11223, introduced by Congressman Smith on February 17th, 1936, 74th Congress, 2nd Session.

¹⁴⁹ “Reporting of Contributions to and Expenditures by Political Organizations,” Unpublished Hearing before a Subcommittee of the House Committee on Judiciary, U.S. House of Representatives, 74th Congress, 2d. Session (February 21, 1936), 2-3. *Emphasis mine*. Hereafter “Judiciary Subcommittee Hearing.” The subcommittee was chaired by Congressman William V. Gregory (D-KY).

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 5-6. The letter – included as an exhibit in the hearing documents – was received February 20, 1936. The ‘People’s Lobby’ proclaimed its purpose as: “To Fight for the People – We Get and Give the Facts.” The legislation in question was the Bankhead-Jones bill (passed in 1937), which proposed federal financing to assist tenant farmers in purchasing land. Addressed to all House members, the letter criticized the Bankhead-Jones bill as “a typically New Deal swindle to bribe farmers” into supporting the Administration, which would hurt consumers and small or tenant farmers – and support instead the Frazier-Lemke bill. This legislative entreaty came with an explicit electoral threat: “Organization of consumers may not be effected in time to kill this vicious evasion of the Government’s duty – it will be effected in time to defeat those who vote for it now” (quoted on p. 6). “We get similar letters almost every day,” Smith bemoaned. “What I want to do is to reach those birds. I don’t care who they are or what party they belong to or what legislation they are trying to advocate or defeat. And this does not take away any of their constitutional rights. All it says is to lay your cards on the table and state who is putting up this money” (6-7).

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 7-8. No one was sure if they were *required* to do so under the Corrupt Practices Act or not.

¹⁵² Ibid., 3. Smith’s legislative response (H.R. 11223) sought “to strengthen the Corrupt Practices Act by requiring any person, firm, organization or corporation that solicits money for the purpose of influencing legislation, influencing appropriations, influencing an election, or defeat an election of a Member of Congress, to do what we have to do; namely, just file with the Clerk of the House of Representatives an accounting.”

¹⁵³ Ibid., 6.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 4.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 5 (*emphasis mine*). Congressman Walter was referring to fellow representative Patrick J. Boland (D-PA). The Frazier-Lemke bill (passed in 1934) restricted the ability of banks to repossess farms in agricultural bankruptcy cases.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 8.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 5. Smith’s legislation did indeed attempted to regulate them all within the Corrupt Practices Act, requiring “any person, firm, organization or corporation that solicits money for the purpose of influencing legislation, influencing appropriations, influencing an election, or defeat an election of a Member of Congress” to file their accounts with the Clerk of the House.

¹⁵⁸ The information here is drawn from a 2002 IRS document on 501(c)(3) compliance by Judith E. Kindell and John Francis Reilly. They note that “[p]rior to 1954, there was no statutory provision absolutely prohibiting organizations described in the antecedents of IRC 501(c)(3) from engaging in political campaign activities. The political campaign prohibition does have a vague and unenacted antecedent, however. What eventually became the Revenue Act of 1934, under which the lobbying restriction of IRC 501(c)(3) was first enacted, at one time contained a provision extending the prohibition to “participation in partisan politics... The provision, however, was deleted in conference, so that only the lobbying restriction remained. In explaining its deletion, Representative Samuel B. Hill stated: “We were afraid this provision was too broad.”” Judith E. Kindell and John Francis Reilly, “Election Year Issues,” 2002 Exempt Organizations Continuing Professional Education (CPE) Text, p. 336. Accessed online 3/10/2012 at www.irs.gov/pub/irs-tege/eotopic02.pdf See S. Rpt. 73-558, H.R. Conf. Rpt. 73-1385, and 78 Cong. Rec. 7,831 (1934).

¹⁵⁹ Kindell and Reilly, 336-337. While the House bill maintained the “lobbying prohibition” – i.e. “denying tax-exempt status to not only those people who influence legislation,” as Johnson explained, his amendment would extend those provisions “to those who intervene in any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.” His amendment thus specified that 501(c)(3) organizations could not “participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distributing of statements), any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.” This amendment was accepted without “debate or discussion,” Kindell and Reilly observe, leaving the motivations for this action unclear. They point to an “obvious disconnect” between move from a lobbying to a campaigning prohibition – “a knot no one has been able, or even attempted, to untangle,” they suggest (336-337). They later discuss several possible reasons for Johnson’s floor amendment that have been raised, mentioning concern with the Committee for Constitutional Government’s activities in his home state as one of these (448-450). They do not, however, mention the “Special Committee to Investigate Tax-Exempt Foundations and Comparable Organizations” – a congressional investigation during the 82nd and 83rd Congresses, chaired consecutively by Reps. Eugene E. Cox (D-GA) and B. Carroll Reece (R-TN), which examined the tax-exempt status of foundations and other charitable organizations as relating to their activities in the political sphere.

¹⁶⁰ The source is former Representative James Beck (R-PA), quoted in Weed, 59.

¹⁶¹ As Wolfskill quotes Earl F. Reed, chairman of the subcommittee that drafted the report: “When a lawyer tells a client that a law is unconstitutional... it is then a nullity and he need no longer obey that law.” (72). This case is also noted in Rudolph, 31; Soule, “Liberty League Liberty – II,” 98; and “Liberty League Liberty – III,” 122. The Committee also deemed the N.R.A. and the A.A.A. unconstitutional. Soule suggests this kind of lawbreaking was not the only type in which business interests were involved: discussing industrial espionage and the hiring of disreputable strike breakers: “Of course the Liberty League and its lawyers’ committee do not in

public pronouncements advocate violence and espionage, even though they advocate disobedience of the Wagner Act” (“Liberty League Liberty III,” 124)

¹⁶² Soule, “Liberty League Liberty III,” 122.

¹⁶³ Clement E. Vose, “Litigation as a Form of Pressure Group Activity,” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 319 No.1 (1958): 20, 24-25. Vose also notes the ‘National Consumers’ League’ as pursuing similar tactics.

¹⁶⁴ Reed quoted in Wolfskill, 72.

¹⁶⁵ Rudolph, 31; Soule, “Liberty League Liberty III,” 122.

¹⁶⁶ Evidence that the NAM’s approach was less aggressive comes from the testimony of the NAM’s counsel – John C. Gall – before a Senate Subcommittee in 1938. He claimed that the NAM legal staff had not considered the Wagner Act to be “unconstitutional in its entirety,” and that while they had advised members that it did not appear “applicable to local employment relations,” they had always felt that its general principles would be upheld. Testimony of John C. Gall. March 2nd, 1938. “Violations of Free Speech and Rights of Labor: Employer Associations and ‘Citizens’ Committees – National Association Of Manufacturers,” Part 17 of Hearings Before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Education and Labor. U.S. Senate, 75th Cong., 3d. Session (Washington, D.C. Government Printing Office, 1938), 7394.

¹⁶⁷ James A. Emery quoted in Weed, 66. Phillips-Fein also points to legal opposition to the Wagner Act by the NAM. See Kim Phillips-Fein. *Invisible Hands: The Making of the Conservative Movement from the New Deal to Reagan* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2009), 14-15.

¹⁶⁸ J.S. Cullinan to Jouett Shouse. December 27th, 1935. Despite his reservations, Mr. Cullinan still sent a contribution.

¹⁶⁹ Farley wrote that “there was never any doubt...that the League would eventually support whatever Republican candidate was nominated” (quoted in Wolfskill, 198).

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Rudolph, 31.

¹⁷³ Wolfskill, 198. Fletcher’s statement came in response to an “unnamed member” of the League’s Executive Committee who, following their meeting the afternoon of the Liberty League dinner, said: “If the Republicans behave well at Cleveland and give us somewhere to go as to a candidate and platform, we will solidly support the Republicans as the only hope of restoring the government to sound methods” (199). The League had decided, at that meeting “to wait until July, after the national conventions, before deciding on a policy for the campaign” (199).

¹⁷⁴ Wolfskill, 205.

¹⁷⁵ Both quoted in Wolfskill: Coughlin on p. 30, and Harrison on p. 210.

¹⁷⁶ Schattschneider (1942), 88.

¹⁷⁷ Quoted in Rudolph, 29.

¹⁷⁸ The League’s earlier statement is described in “Nonpartisan’ Fight on Roosevelt Is Opened by the Liberty League,” *The New York Times*, 1, 17.

¹⁷⁹ Wolfskill, 206. Wolfskill comments upon “the amazing similarity” between the GOP platform and the Liberty League’s *Program for Congress*, which it had published earlier. This was “something more than coincidence,” he concluded. He quotes later RNC chairman John Hamilton, who noted four of the 53 platform committee members were Liberty Leaguers, and said that he had not “the slightest doubt, that these men who formed the Liberty League had tremendous influence on the platform” (206).

¹⁸⁰ Rudolph implies that the League did not endorse Landon on request of the Republican party (31). Yet Wolfskill reports Shouse claiming “that strong pressure was brought to have the League endorse the Republican ticket even before the convention met or a candidate was nominated, pressure brought, among others, by Henry Fletcher, chairman of the Republican National Committee, and this despite Fletcher’s statements that there would be no combination with the League” (205).

¹⁸¹ The position is announced in “Nonpartisan’ Fight on Roosevelt,” but the quote is from Wolfskill, 198. *Emphasis mine*.

¹⁸² Wolfskill, 198. *Emphasis in original*.

¹⁸³ T.R.B. “Washington Notes: Can Big Business Buy This Election Too?” *The New Republic*, September 9, 1936. p. 128.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ “Spent \$518,123 in 1936,” 4.

¹⁸⁶ The \$1 million figure is for spending between January 1935 and March 1938, which Rudolph calculated on the basis of reports the League made to Congress. Since the League was much less active after November 1936, it is fair to say that the majority of this spending occurred in 1935 and 1936. Though Rudolph notes the various *New York Times* articles from which he culled information on the Liberty League’s financial reports, it has not yet been possible to locate all of these and therefore confirm the concentration of spending prior to 1937. Nonetheless, Ritchie (2007) also notes that the Liberty League “wielded a bigger staff than the Republican National Committee, and it outspent it on anti-New Deal publicity” (187).

¹⁸⁷ Lerner, 471. “Only the farm vote and that of the lower middle class are seriously split,” Lerner added.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Wolfskill, 35.

¹⁹⁰ “Obvious fiction”: Rudolph, 33. “Gross hypocrisy”: Rudolph, 30. “It had maintained the obvious fiction of nonpartisanship long after it was apparent to everyone that its aims were political,” Rudolph said (33). He makes similar remarks elsewhere, referring to “the fiction of nonpartisanship, maintained and nurtured from its origins until its dying day” (29), and “the position of virtuous nonpartisanship which the League pretended to maintain” (29). “In its active years it agreed with Franklin Roosevelt exactly twice: in his opposition to the soldier’s bonus and to the thirty-hour week,” he added (27).

¹⁹¹ Rudolph, 29.

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- ¹⁹² Ibid.
- ¹⁹³ Wolfskill, 198. *Emphasis in original*.
- ¹⁹⁴ T.R.B. “Washington Notes,” 129.
- ¹⁹⁵ Lerner, 471.
- ¹⁹⁶ The CIO was originally formed in November 1935 at the AFL convention (and would have ten affiliated unions by September 1936 – the point at which the AFL suspended them). On the formation of the CIO, see Zeigler, 149.
- ¹⁹⁷ Zeigler, 149.
- ¹⁹⁸ V.O. Key, *Politics, Parties, and Pressure Groups* (New York: Crowell, 1942), 86.
- ¹⁹⁹ “Labor’s Non-Partisan League: Its Origin and Growth” (Washington, D.C.: Labor’s Non-Partisan League, 1938), p. 4. The Len and Caroline Abrams Decaux Collection (Accession #332, Series IV, Box 15, “LNPL and PAC Related Reference Materials,” Folder 5, “Plan for 1940 Congressional Campaign”). Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan. Hereafter, “LNPL: Its Origin and Growth.”
- ²⁰⁰ Raymond Moley, quoted in Kenneth Finegold and Theda Skocpol, *State and Party in America’s New Deal* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1995), 72. This agrarian strategy in 1932 replicated the approach that had won him the governorship of New York.
- ²⁰¹ Finegold and Skocpol, 72. As Finegold and Skocpol note, Lewis was joined in his support for Hoover by William Hutcheson of the Carpenters, and Matthew Woll of the Photo Engravers (73).
- ²⁰² Philip Taft, “Labor’s Changing Political Line,” *Journal of Political Economy* 45 No. 5 (1937): 634.
- ²⁰³ Ibid. On interregional competition, see 638-639. On employer coercion and the injunction see 640.
- ²⁰⁴ Ibid., 643.
- ²⁰⁵ Ibid.
- ²⁰⁶ Ibid.
- ²⁰⁷ Ibid., 642. Key (1942) also described the League as “a new departure in the political role of labor” operating on a much more active basis and a wider scale than previous labor efforts (86).
- ²⁰⁸ Key (1942), for example, mentions Labor’s Non-Partisan League along with the Good Neighbor League and the Roosevelt Agricultural Committee as “nonparty organizations favoring Roosevelt” in 1936, and also mentions the Young Democratic Clubs of America (446). Hugh Bone (1946)—discussing the political parties in New York City—described Labor’s Nonpartisan League as “a Democratic auxiliary,” and Thomas Tucker Spencer describes the League as one of the “auxiliary committees” that Democrats relied on heavily in 1936 – particularly in key mid-western states such as Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan. Hugh A. Bone, “Political Parties in New York City,” *American Political Science Review* 40 No. 2 (1946): 277. See also Spencer (1981), 127.
- ²⁰⁹ Truman, 296.
- ²¹⁰ Taft, 641.
- ²¹¹ Joseph E. Hower. “Our Conception of Non-Partisanship Means a Partisan Non-Partisanship!: The Search for Political Identity in the American Federation of Labor, 1947-1955,” *Labor History* 51 No. 3 (2010), 458.
- ²¹² Bone (1946), 277.
- ²¹³ The \$195,000 figure is from McCoy (1960), 1019. The line-item in the Lonergan Committee report appears to be \$195,393.13, being contributions from labor organizations’ to the national organization of LNPL. From “Investigation of Campaign Expenditures in 1936,” Report No. 151, from the Special Committee to Investigate Campaign Expenditures of Presidential Vice Presidential, and Senatorial Candidates in 1936” [Lonergan Committee], U.S. Senate, 75th Cong., 1st Sess. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, March 4, 1937), pp. 127-128. Hereafter “Lonergan Committee Report.”
- ²¹⁴ Melvin I. Urofsky, “Campaign Finance Reform Before 1971,” *Albany Government Law Review* 1 (2008), 23-24. Urofsky recounts the tale of John L. Lewis hand-delivering a \$250,000 check to Roosevelt, which he refused to accept for fear of appearing too close to the unions, while the DNC quietly accepted the check, and many more from the same source.
- ²¹⁵ Lonergan Committee Report, p. 26. In “Receipts and Expenditures by Miscellaneous Committees of National Scope.”
- ²¹⁶ Ibid., 127.
- ²¹⁷ Ibid., 127-128.
- ²¹⁸ Ibid., 128. Contributions of \$50,000 were recorded on October 8th and October 21st in Table 1(a), “Direct Cash Contributions to Democratic National Committee.”
- ²¹⁹ The report states: “The United Mine Workers alone, it will be remembered, contributed \$500,000 to the Democratic Party in the 1936 campaign.” Nathan E. Cowan, John Brophy, and J. Raymond Walsh, “Memorandum to President Philip Murray,” December 30, 1942, p. 20. Wayne County AFL-CIO Papers (Box 25, CIO Political Programs Folder), Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan.
- ²²⁰ Taft, 641.
- ²²¹ See Anthony Corrado, “Money and Politics: A History of Federal Campaign Finance Law,” in Anthony Corrado, Thomas E. Mann, Daniel R. Ortiz, Trevor Potter, and Frank J. Sorauf, eds., *Campaign Finance Reform: A Sourcebook* (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1997), 29.
- ²²² Of the nearly \$60,000 in contributions that the PNC received from sources other than the Democratic National Committee, \$35,000 had come from Lewis’s UMW – the financial powerhouse behind the LNPL, and all manner of Democratic auxiliary groups, it appeared. McCoy (1960), 1019 (for the \$60,000 figure). McCoy mentions the \$35,000 in his 1956 article on the PNC, in relation to the sum of \$55,878.94 it had received by October 28, 1936. “Other unions gave \$5500,” McCoy (1956) added, while A. F. Whitney donated \$100” (468).
- ²²³ McCoy (1956), 464.

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- ²²⁴ Ibid.
- ²²⁵ Ibid.
- ²²⁶ McCoy (1960), 1017.
- ²²⁷ Quoted in Wolfskill, 189, 210.
- ²²⁸ Soule, “Liberty League Liberty I,” 64.
- ²²⁹ Jouett Shouse to Pierre S. du Pont. June 4, 1936. Liberty League Papers, Box 1301, Folder 66.
- ²³⁰ As Wolfskill summarized, “[t]he plan promised about as much success as the chain-letter idea after which it was modeled.” (216) Charles S. Johnson, however, would still write to the League offices in late October: “Personally, I wish the American Liberty League, through Al Smith or someone else, would, a day or two before the election, request all citizens in sympathy with their efforts to pledge themselves as a committee of one to take part in an interlocking get-out-the-vote system. By this I mean that these loyal citizens will pledge themselves to personally attend to calling some five to ten of their friends whom they think might be a little careless, and see that they actually vote.” “I understand a similar effort was made in Los Angeles a year or two ago,” he adds “and probably had a material effect on defeating Upton Sinclair.” From Charles S. Johnson, October 22, 1936. Liberty League Papers, Box 1301, Folder 66.
- ²³¹ Wolfskill, 216.
- ²³² Ibid.
- ²³³ Indeed, a member even suggested that the Libert League make an appeal just before the election, and “request all citizens in sympathy with their efforts to pledge themselves as a committee of one to take part in an interlocking get-out-the-vote system” – pledging to vote themselves and commit to encouraging five or ten of their friends to do the same. Charles S. Johnsons, of the C.S. Johnson Co. in Champaign Illinois (Batchers and Bins), wrote to the League offices on October 22, 1936. Liberty League Papers, Box 1301, Folder 66.
- ²³⁴ In this regard, the Liberty League’s professed intentions differed little from the “civic” voter mobilization activities still undertaken by organizations like the League of Women Voters, and which might genuinely be regarded as “non-partisan.”
- ²³⁵ Pierre S. Du Pont to Jouett Shouse. June 6, 1936. Liberty League Papers, Box 1301. Folder 66 (“771-3 American Liberty League – Jouett Shouse 1936”).
- ²³⁶ In June, for example, Shouse gave a radio speech in which he said “Democrats...left without a party in present circumstances, must decide the course they will pursue. They owe no duty of loyalty to the New Deal...making under the name of the Democratic party, the machinery of which it has momentarily seized...” The New Deal would be defeated in November, Shouse said, because “some two million Democrats will take a walk to vote Republican” (quoted in Wolfskill, 200).
- ²³⁷ Ibid., 200. *Emphasis mine.*
- ²³⁸ “Spent \$518,123 in 1936,” 4. Ritchie (2007) notes that the Liberty League “wielded a bigger staff than the Republican National Committee, and it outspent it on anti-New Deal publicity” (187).
- ²³⁹ Calculated from data provided in Wolfskill, 207. The Du Ponts contributed \$530,370, and the Pews \$485,977. “This was by no means a complete list,” he adds, “not even of the largest contributors from Liberty League ranks.” The Republican national finance committee, moreover, was strewn with prominent Liberty Leaguers – at least a third of the finance committee’s 21 members (206-207). Wolfskill identifies as League members: William B. Bell, the finance committee’s chairman, Ernest T. Weir, and Silas Strawn; points to J. Howard Pew, Jr., Sewell L. Avery and Herbert L. Pratt as members of the League Executive Committee; notes Hal H. Smith as a member of the League’s Lawyers’ Committee; also Ralph Shaw, director of the League’s Illinois branch and law partner of Silas Strawn in Chicago; and finally, identifies Joseph M. Pew as connected to League members by blood, and hence the League by association (Joseph was brother of J. Howard).
- ²⁴⁰ Quoted in Wolfskill, 207.
- ²⁴¹ Wolfskill, 26. The Liberty League was incorporated in the District of Columbia on August 15, 1934.
- ²⁴² T.R.B. “Washington Notes,” 128.
- ²⁴³ Wolfskill, 214
- ²⁴⁴ Ibid., 254.
- ²⁴⁵ Ibid., 61-62, 254.
- ²⁴⁶ Arthur Krock, “In the Nation: Republican Headquarters is Cheered by Digest Poll,” *The New York Times*, October 8, 1936, p. 22.
- ²⁴⁷ Paul W. Ward, “Washington Weekly: Farley Captures Labor.” *The Nation* 143:18 (October 31, 1936): 512.
- ²⁴⁸ Ibid. As Ward observed, “[t]hese writers come back to Washington from forays into the sticks jabbering, as if they had seen miracles, of evidence of the league machinery reaching down into wards and precincts in workman-like fashion and shouldering out the Democratic or Republican machines there. They also report that the league is fulfilling its promise to spend between \$500,000 and \$1,000,000 in its campaign” (512).
- ²⁴⁹ William Leuchtenberg, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal, 1932-1940* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), 189.
- ²⁵⁰ Rudolph, 21 n5.
- ²⁵¹ Wolfskill, 216.
- ²⁵² In a letter from J. Thomas Butler of the Eggemoggin Republican Club in Brooklin, Maine, dated October 12th, 1936, to Mr. Shouse: “The American Liberty League is entitled to much credit for the Republican victory in Maine for and by the liberal supply of printing and the circulation and showing up of the present administration.” League president Jouett Shouse sent copies of this letter to the Executive Committee. Liberty League Papers, Box 1301. Folder 66 (“771-3 American Liberty League – Jouett Shouse 1936”). Wolfskill mentions Farley, who noted their “generous contributions” were interesting considering their recent statement of neutrality (219-220).

²⁵³ As for the “independent” parties that made it onto the ballot, only Lemke’s Union candidacy made it out of the decimals, securing 2% of the popular vote.

²⁵⁴ Wolfskill, 214, Rudolph, 31. Tichenor (2006) suggests that the RNC and Landon “did their best to strike moderate-to-liberal postures” in 1936, and that “Landon hoped to distance his party from the Liberty League by running on progressive issues, and he pointedly asked the organization not to publicly endorse his candidacy.” Nonetheless, “the Liberty League provided Roosevelt a perfect foil,” and its high profile spending “helped New Dealers to brand the Republican Party the tool of wealthy, antigovernment elites” (325).

²⁵⁵ For example, Wolfskill concludes that the League failed because of “what it seemed to represent” (260).

²⁵⁶ Rudolph, 30.

²⁵⁷ Quoted in Wolfskill, 211. Rep. John J. O’Connor even claimed that Landon’s (nomination) acceptance speech was written by the NAM and edited by Shouse! (214).

²⁵⁸ Rudolph, 26-27. The Liberty League situated itself in opposition to what it saw as a New Deal effort to *create* classes and conflict in the United States [Wolfskill, 121].

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 27.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*

²⁶² *Ibid.* “[T]he Liberty League, nonetheless, could have built a larger popular following had it adopted the techniques of the demagogues who were amassing a more impressive membership in such groups as the Townsend clubs, Share-the-Wealth clubs, and in the Union for Social Justice. Its appeal, however, was pitched on a level which placed its emphasis upon the defense of something which most Americans had very little of- property” (Rudolph, 27).

²⁶³ Wolfskill, 121. The League declared its efforts “to offset the influence of any and all groups working for selfish purposes,” Rudolph observed, but it was still viewed as an elite organization (25-26).

²⁶⁴ Though Clark also failed inform the committee of the sizable contributions it had received from prominent businessmen. Quoted in Soule, “Liberty League Liberty II,” 95.

²⁶⁵ Soule, “Liberty League Liberty II,” 95. *Emphasis mine.*

²⁶⁶ Rudolph, 27.

²⁶⁷ Soule, “Liberty League Liberty III,” 125.

²⁶⁸ Basso, 321.

²⁶⁹ Pierre S. Du Pont to Jouett Shouse, September 21, 1936. Liberty League Papers, Box 1301. Folder 66,

²⁷⁰ Buist to Shouse, October 17th, 1936. “First, I think that for a number of months after the election the League should devote itself to repairing the damage done by New Deal propaganda, to convincing the public that it is not a rich man’s club, but is a large group of patriotic citizens who are seriously and sincerely concerned over the future welfare of our people, of all of our people in all walks of life.” “Then, but not until this repair shall have been done, the League should pick up the problem of definitely organizing into a political entity that part of the people who oppose the introduction into this country of experiments in government now so popular in Europe.”

²⁷¹ Buist was an attorney in Charleston, South Carolina. George L. Buist to Jouett Shouse. October 17, 1936. Liberty League Papers, Box 1301, Folder 66.

²⁷² Indeed, the very formation of the League and its move toward electoral involvement suggests a political vacuum that was not being filled by the Republican Party. The Republican organizational machinery had been “practically dormant between the campaigns” of 1932 and 1936, according to Overacker (475-476). “[I]n the absence of organized Republicanism,” Rudolph continues, “the press looked to it for opposition sentiment on New Deal legislative proposals” (21).

²⁷³ Rudolph, 20-21.

²⁷⁴ “LNPL: Its Origin and Growth,” 4.

²⁷⁵ Quoted in “LNPL: Its Origin and Growth,” 5.

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

Chapter 5. Electoral Afterlives

¹ Paul W. Ward, “Washington Weekly: Farley Captures Labor.” *The Nation* 143:18 (October 31, 1936): 512.

² *Ibid.* *Emphasis mine.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Raymond Gram Swing, “The White House Breaks with Labor.” *The Nation* 140 No. 3632 (February 13, 1935), 181.

⁷ *Ibid.* Roosevelt, as Swing had observed, seemed to be “in that dangerous position also occupied by Frances Perkins, of considering himself a benefactor of labor, hence above cooperation with it and certainly above criticism.” These events, Swing noted, had “put labor into a needed mood of self-service. It has given up the sneaking hope that the Santa in the White House might go on bringing gifts after Christmas” and predicted a strike. In *The Nation’s* pages the following month came condemnation of the first six months of the National Labor Relations Board as “a picture of impotence and futility,” and described Roosevelt’s message on the crucial provision of the NIRA’s Section 7(a), guaranteeing collective bargaining rights, as “vague piety, and hopelessly ambiguous besides.” See “Labor Notes: Two Boards, Two Reports,” *The Nation* 140 No. 3635 (March 6, 1935), 280.

⁸ Ward, 512. *Emphasis mine*. In New York, Ward observed, the American Labor Party had not even run its own local and Congressional candidates, as it had promised – offering “a ticket bearing the names of only Roosevelt and Lehman.”

⁹ Lerner, 472.

¹⁰ George Gallup founded the American Institute of Public Opinion (AIPO) in 1935. Gallup Poll, December 16 - December 21, 1936, 1936. Retrieved Feb-10-2012 from the iPOLL Databank, The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, University of Connecticut. http://www.ropercenter.uconn.edu/data_access/ipoll/ipoll.html

¹¹ McCoy (1957), for example, notes “the President’s seeming impartiality in the bitter struggles between labor and industrial management” in 1937, and the dissension this caused between labor leaders and the administration (76). He also points to a “tendency to ignore labor’s advice on public policy,” a reduction in the public works rolls after 1936, and general economic problems associated with the recession of 1937-38 as sources of tension (77). Donald R. McCoy, “The National Progressives of America, 1938,” *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 44 No. 1 (1957): 76-77.

¹² John Bricker, for example, in the Ohio gubernatorial campaign, linked “the CIO to the New Deal administration,” and Congressman Martin Dies’ (D-TX) offered a resolution to investigate the sit-down strikes and their connection to the administration, which though defeated, indicated substantial congressional belief in such a link. See Clyde P. Weed, *The Nemesis of Reform: The Republican Party During the New Deal* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 196, 198.

¹³ Quoted in Daniel J. Tichenor, “The Presidency, Social Movements, and Contentious Change: Lessons from the Woman’s Suffrage and Labor Movements,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 29 No. 1 (1999): 22.

¹⁴ “Labor’s Non-Partisan League: Its Origin and Growth” (Washington, D.C.: Labor’s Non-Partisan League, 1938), p. 7. The Len and Caroline Abrams Deaux Collection (Accession #332, Series IV, Box 15, “LNPL and PAC Related Reference Materials,” Folder 5, “Plan for 1940 Congressional Campaign”). Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan. Hereafter, “LNPL: Its Origin and Growth.”

¹⁵ These various factors are discussed in McCoy (1957), 76-77. McCoy also points to labor disillusionment amid strong congressional opposition to New Deal measures, and FDR’s calls for increased military expenditures as a concern (77).

¹⁶ Harmon Zeigler, *Interest Groups in American Society* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964), 149-150.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 149.

¹⁸ Roper/Fortune Survey, May, 1938. Retrieved Feb-10-2012 from the iPOLL Databank, The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, University of Connecticut. http://www.ropercenter.uconn.edu/data_access/ipoll/ipoll.html. [Respondents were asked, “Which of the following statements do you believe will be true ten years from now, and which untrue?” and “Which of the following statements do you hope will be true ten years from now, and which untrue?” The relevant statement in this case was “There will be a powerful new labor party.” Respondents were asked both of these questions separately. “Don’t care” was a response option on the “hope will be true” question, while “Don’t know” was an option on the “believe will be true” option]. Since my analysis is concerned with the data available to actors at this time, and how it may have shaped perceptions, I utilize the original descriptive data drawn from these polls. Nonetheless, Adam J. Berinsky, Eric Schickler, and various colleagues have undertaken a major project to recalibrate early polls such as these, according to contemporary sampling standards. Their dataset includes over 400 national surveys conducted in the period from 1936 to 1945. The four active polling organizations they cover are George Gallup’s the American Institute of Public Opinion – George Gallup’s organization, the Office of Public Opinion Research (Hadley Cantril), the National Opinion Research Council, and Elmo Roper’s polling firm. See Adam J. Berinsky, Eleanor Neff Powell, Eric Schickler and Ian Brett Yohai, “Revisiting Public Opinion in the 1930s and 1940s,” *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 44 No. 3 (2011): 515-520.

¹⁹ Gallup Poll, December, 1936; Gallup Poll, July 1937; and Gallup Poll (AIPO), January, 1938, all retrieved Feb-10-2012 from the iPOLL Databank, The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, University of Connecticut. http://www.ropercenter.uconn.edu/data_access/ipoll/ipoll.html.

²⁰ “LNPL: Its Origin and Growth,” 7.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*, 11-12.

²³ Philip Taft, “Labor’s Changing Political Line,” *Journal of Political Economy* 45 No. 5 (1937): 641.

²⁴ Taft explicitly makes this connection, saying the LNPL was “following the techniques originally used by the Farmers’ Non-partisan League, which not only indorsed candidates but entered its own in the primaries” (641).

²⁵ “LNPL: Its Origin and Growth,” 24.

²⁶ Taft, 644.

²⁷ “LNPL: Its Origin and Growth,” 7.

²⁸ Key (1942), 86.

²⁹ “LNPL: Its Origin and Growth,” 16.

³⁰ The LNPL had in 1936, Paul Ward observed, not only failed to extract promises of continued support from Roosevelt, but also “not had the courage to test its strength by entering the Congressional jousts in *truly non-partisan* support of labor candidates, Republican, Democratic, Progressive, Independent, Socialist, Farmer-Labor, or Communist” (512. *Emphasis mine*).

³¹ “LNPL: Its Origin and Growth,” 22.

³² *Ibid.*, 24.

³³ V.O. Key, *Politics, Parties, and Pressure Groups* (New York: Crowell, 1942), 87.

³⁴ Quoted in Susan Dunn, *Roosevelt’s Purge: How FDR Fought to Change the Democratic Party* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010), 29, *emphasis mine*.

³⁵ While there had been some prior presidential engagement in congressional elections, Milkis and Nelson (2008) point out that this intervention was “conducted on an unprecedented scale and, unlike the previous efforts [of Taft and Wilson, for example], bypassed

the regular party organization.” Sidney M. Milkis and Michael Nelson, *The American President: Origins and Development, 1776-2007* (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2008), 291.

³⁶ Frank R. Kent, “The Great Game of Politics,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 27, 1938. P. 10.

³⁷ *Ibid.* The president’s advisers “do not like Mr. Farley,” Kent reported. He also noted that Pennsylvania’s 29th District had tended to prove Farley right – there, the incumbent House member, Charles M. Crosby, was handily defeated by an organization candidate despite his record of 100% support for the administration and promotion of his status as “the complete New Dealer.”

³⁸ James A. Farley, *Jim Farley’s Story* (New York: Whittlesey House, 1948), 147. Quoted in Dunn, 224-225.

³⁹ See Chapter 2, Note 68 on the formation of the congressional party committees.

⁴⁰ As Dunn details, the timing of WPA funding grants, the actions of individual WPA workers, and the role of its administrator—Harry Hopkins—were all subject to public and congressional scrutiny in relation to Roosevelt’s effort. In Iowa, for example, where Roosevelt sought the defeat of incumbent Senator Guy Gillette, Hopkins publicly declared his support for the challenger – Otha Wearin – provoking a firestorm of criticism that WPA funds were being used as “a political whip.” In Georgia, where Roosevelt opposed incumbent Senator Walter George, the WPA made a \$53 million allocation to the state in the days before the primary – an action widely viewed as an effort to sway the results (115-116, 173). On May 25th, 1938, Senator Burton K. Wheeler (D-MT) “declared on the Senate floor that the Roosevelt administration was responsible and could not deny responsibility for attempts made by W.P.A. Administrator Hopkins, P.W.A. Administrator Ickes, Postmaster-General Farley and other administration officials to dictate the choice of the voters in Democratic primaries.” “Senator Wheeler Assails Political Use of Aid Funds.” *The Los Angeles Times*, May 26, 1938. p. 1.

⁴¹ Chapin Hall. “What Goes On?” *Los Angeles Times*, May 23, 1938, p. 2. Investigations by the Pennsylvania Department of Justice and the W.P.A. itself were already underway before the primary itself. By May 20th, W.P.A. Administrator Hopkins had dismissed ten workers in Pennsylvania, and disciplined eight more, “for political activities during the recent State primary campaign.” [“Ten Ousted from W.P.A. for Pennsylvania Politics.” See “Pennsylvania Democratic Row Inspires Republicans.” *Los Angeles Times*, May 6, 1938. p. 3. AP Story]. *Los Angeles Times*, May 21, 1938, p. 1; “Ten Ousted from W.P.A. for Pennsylvania Politics.” *Los Angeles Times*, May 21, 1938, p. 1.

⁴² “Political Note: Spring Gardening,” *Time*, May 30, 1938. Pennsylvania’s incumbent senior Senator, James Davis, was a Republican up for reelection in 1938 (the junior Senator, Joe Guffey, was a Democrat). The incumbent Democratic governor of Pennsylvania, George Earle, was seeking the upcoming party nomination in the Senate contest. His serving Lieutenant Governor, Thomas Kennedy, hoped to get the party’s gubernatorial nomination. As a former miner and secretary of the United Mine Workers’ union, Kennedy had the support of UMW and CIO President John L. Lewis. But the Pennsylvania regular Democratic organization wanted someone else (Charles Alvin Jones, a lawyer from Pittsburgh). So Lewis formed an allied with Senator Joe Guffey against the regulars – backing Kennedy against Jones for governor, and while they were at it, backing an alternative candidate for the Senatorial nomination against Governor Earle. Following a “savagely” campaign, both the Guffey-Lewis backed candidates lost their primaries. Though the regular party’s favored candidates won the nominations, they were beaten in both cases by the Republican candidates in the general election. (Jones lost the gubernatorial election to Republican Arthur James, and Earle failed to unseat Davis in the Senate race).

⁴³ The AFL’s actions were described by one journalist as “another bitter pill for Lewis.” Hall, May 23, 2.

⁴⁴ Political journalist Frank Kent, for example, called the primary result “heavily deflationary” for Lewis. “To appreciate how heavily, it is necessary to understand what victory would have meant to him. Had his ticket won, Mr. Lewis would have been the undisputed boss of the Democratic Party in the State. He would have assumed its exclusive ownership and, with Mr. Guffey as his aide, been able to select the seventy-two delegates to the 1940 convention. His prestige would have been higher and his power greater than ever attained by a labor leader in America. It is no exaggeration to say that he would have become overnight the most important political figure in America.” Frank R. Kent. “The Great Game of Politics,” *The Los Angeles Times*, May 24, 1938, p. 4. Chapin Hall, also a *Los Angeles Times* columnist, agreed, saying it was an “abortive attempt” on Lewis’s part to become a “political dictator,” but the CIO-controlled vote had been “grossly overestimated.” Hall, May 23, 2.

⁴⁵ Kent, May 24, 4. And in demonstrating Guffey’s weakness, Kent suggests, it was a defeat for the administration too. “The fact is,” he says, “the administration was tightly linked to the Lewis-Guffey ticket, was behind it 100 per cent, all the time.” Why? “The bonds which bound the White House to the Lewis-Guffey ticket are well known,” he continues: “Mr. Lewis, with C.I.O. money, had poured more than \$500,000 into the Roosevelt campaign fund in 1936,” and “[i]t was to Mr. Guffey more than any other single man Mr. Roosevelt owed his 1932 nomination.”

⁴⁶ With political ties that “could hardly have been closer,” “the full administration weight, including the W.P.A., directed by Mr. Guffey’s appointees, was exerted on their behalf.” [Kent, May 24, p. 4]. Indeed, *Time* pointed to the role of both the W.P.A. and the CIO in providing campaign manpower, though it was not enough to secure victory: “Joe Guffey’s control of 6,000 Federal jobs plus his much mooted control over 230,000 WPA jobs is still no match for the regular organization controlling 27,000 State jobs,” they concluded, adding that “John L. Lewis’ 800,000 C. I. O. enrollment in Pennsylvania produced only 520,000 Kennedy votes.” [“Political Note, May 30]. Guffey “was supposed to whip the W.P.A. voters into line,” Chapin noted, and apparently was not able to. Hall also suggests that 50,000 state jobs were at issue in the election [Hall, May 23, 2].

⁴⁷ Kent, May 24, 4.

⁴⁸ Hall, May 23, 2.

⁴⁹ Kent, May 24, 4.

⁵⁰ Information from Table 1-17, “Losses by President’s Party in Midterm Elections, 1862–2006.” In Harold W. Stanley and Richard G. Niemi (eds.) *Vital Statistics on American Politics 2009-2010* (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2009), 42.

http://library.cqpress.com/vsap/vsap09_tab1-17.

⁵¹ Schickler and Caughey (2011), for example, find a “broadly based reaction against labor unions” from the late 1930s, in specially recalibrated polling data from the period. See Eric Schickler and Devin Caughey, “Public Opinion, Organized Labor, and the Limits of New Deal Liberalism, 1936–1945,” *Studies in American Political Development* 25 No. 2 (2011): 162-189. On the “Purge” campaign more generally, see Dunn, *Roosevelt’s Purge* (2010). On the safety of Southern seats, see Julian E. Zelizer, *On Capitol Hill: The Struggle to Reform Congress and Its Consequences, 1948-2000* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

⁵² Key (1942), 86.

⁵³ Sean J. Savage, “Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Democratic National Committee,” *Social Science Journal* 28:4 (1991): 451-465. Savage places his argument in opposition to J.M. Burns. In the 1920s, Savage argues: “Roosevelt believed that the DNC should become a vehicle for a more open, inclusive party. He assumed that if Democratic activists were more influential in the party’s decision-making processes they could pressure the DNC and Democrats in Congress into becoming more responsive to and reflective of the issue positions and policy preferences of the party’s rank and file.”

⁵⁴ Indeed, as Dunn (2010) suggests, there was a strong public backlash to Roosevelt’s 1938 actions in general – suggesting a tension between the non-partisan *presidential* role and the role of party leader. According to Milkis (1993), Roosevelt ultimately resolved this tension by abdicating the latter role, choosing instead to govern through non-partisan administration – advancing Democratic goals while simultaneously weakening the regular Democratic Party apparatus. Sidney M. Milkis, *The President and the Parties: The Transformation of the American Party System Since the New Deal* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

⁵⁵ After 1932, Savage suggests, Roosevelt “initially agreed with Farley’s policy of using the DNC to maintain intra-party harmony and unity while expanding its apparatus in order to consolidate the Democratic Party’s gains among pro-New Deal voting blocs and interest groups.” “Instead of the DNC, the formulation and pursuit of the New Deal policy agenda by the Roosevelt administration and Democrats in Congress as well as the emergence of interest groups and voting blocs favoring New Deal liberalism would become the chief means for the liberal transformation of the national Democratic Party,” Savage says. Yet he primarily looks entities created by the DNC – divisions and auxiliaries – as making these connections, not to “outside” interest groups. Sean J. Savage, “Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Democratic National Committee” (page numbers not available).

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* On the DNC’s continued financial support for the GNL, see Donald R. McCoy, “The Good Neighbor League and the Presidential Campaign of 1936,” *The Western Political Quarterly* 13 No. 4 (1960): 1018.

⁵⁷ Quoted in McCoy (1960), 1018.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 1011.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 1020. The League “sought from the Administration increased idealism and morality in politics and government,” McCoy observes (1020).

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 1018. “By using its financial control of the League, the Administration pressed the organization to take a more partisan tack” (1018). Stanley High had remained in charge until 1937, when he fell out of favor with FDR and Dr. Charles Stelzle took charge.

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ George Wolfskill, *The Revolt of the Conservatives: A History of the American Liberty League, 1934-1940* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1962), 189.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 189-190.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 190. “After the election he explored the possibility with a number of responsible persons including Harry Byrd of Virginia, North Carolina’s Max Gardiner and Senator Josiah Bailey, David Reed, former senator from Pennsylvania, and others,” adding that “[i]t was no secret that Alf Landon likewise favored creating a new party after his humiliation at the polls.” “Late in February 1937, Landon and Shouse were house guests of a mutual Republican friend at Howey-in-the-Hills in north-central Florida where they talked about third-party possibilities until dawn,” Wolfskill remarks (190).

⁶⁶ *Ibid.* Wolfskill discusses this incident, which I intend to examine further in future work, as it seems such an unusual suggestion. Sloan said he spoke (“carried the word,” according to Hamilton) for the du Ponts, General Motors people, and others “whose names were legion,” warning that if a new party were not undertaken before the next election they might withdraw their financial support from the Republicans. “Arguing that the Republican party was beyond saving,” Wolfskill reports, “Sloan insisted that Hamilton undertake the organization of a new party.” The idea was to create “a coalition constitutional party” (190).

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 255.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 247.

⁷⁰ William H. Stanton to Pierre S. Du Pont, May 12th, 1938. Liberty League Papers, Box 1301, Folder 4.

⁷¹ Wolfskill, 247.

⁷² Writing to Pierre du Pont in May 1938, Stanton ventured: “It seems to me that we went too far,” as essentially, “you and Mr. Irene were the only contributors last year” – giving \$15,500 and \$12,500 respectively. William H. Stanton to Pierre S. Du Pont, May 12, 1938. Liberty League Papers, Box 1301, Folder 4.

⁷³ According to a review of the League’s 1937 finances produced its secretary, William Stanton, major contributions and loans were provided by Irenée du Pont (\$12,500), Pierre du Pont (\$15,500), and J. Howard Pew (\$2,500) – who together contributed more than 80% of the League’s funding that year (William H. Stanton to Pierre S. DuPont, May 12th, 1938. Liberty League Papers, Box 1301. Folder 4, Hagley). The Liberty League’s financial report – filed with the House Clerk in March, 1938 – showed total receipts of \$15,332.35 for the first quarter of 1938, which included \$5,000 from Lammot du Pont, then-president of the du Pont Corporation, and \$2500 from J. Howard Pew of Sun Oil. Their balance on hand was \$1588.95, suggesting continued outlays (unless debt was still being retired). “The American Liberty League of Delaware” also made a report.” See “Farley Says Party is Clear of Debt,” *The New York Times*, March 11th, 1938. Another auxiliary group from the 1936 election continued to file reports, according to this article: the

Good Neighbor League. It had a balance of \$18.28, and had received a little over \$6000 in the first quarter of 1938, almost all from the Democratic National Committee.

⁷⁴ Figures reported in “Farley Says Party is Clear of Debt.”

⁷⁵ “Campaign Expenditures: Allied Democrats, Friends of Democracy, Official Democratic County Assembly Committee of San Francisco, and United Labor Legislative Committee, Committee for Constitutional Government,” Part 10 of Hearings before the Committee to Investigate Campaign Expenditures [**Anderson Committee**], U.S. House of Representatives, 78th Cong., 2d. Sess., October 12th, 19th, and 24th, 1944 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1944), 1183. Congressman Clinton Anderson was also from New Mexico, like Senator Hatch, and would actually succeed Hatch in the Senate.

⁷⁶ Anthony Corrado, “Money and Politics: A History of Federal Campaign Finance Law,” in Anthony Corrado, Thomas E. Mann, Daniel R. Ortiz, Trevor Potter, and Frank J. Sorauf, eds., *Campaign Finance Reform: A Sourcebook* (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1997), 30.

⁷⁷ See Dunn, 116 for a discussion of the background to the Hatch Act.

⁷⁸ Corrado, 30.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 47. The limits were “\$5,000 per year on individual contributions to federal candidates or national party committees and of \$3 million on the total amount that could be received or spent by a party committee operating in two or more states” (30).

⁸⁰ 1940 Hatch Act Amendments, 54 Stat. 767 (July 19, 1940), Section 6. Amending Section 20 of the Hatch Act. It capped the amount any political committee could *raise* in a calendar year at \$3,000,000, and capped political committee *expenditure* in a calendar year at \$3,000,000.

⁸¹ Allison R. Hayward, “Revisiting the Fable of Reform,” *Harvard Journal on Legislation* 45 (2008): 443. Hayward argues that this muddies a clear case for legislative *intent* – and largely dismisses the claim made in the government’s *CIO* brief that the various congressional committees investigating campaign expenditures had served as forums in which the “necessary debate” occurred (465).

⁸² *Ibid.*, 443.

⁸³ As Corrado (1997) observes: individual donors “could still donate large sums by giving to multiple committees or by making contributions through state and local party organizations, which were not subject to the \$5,000 limit.” Corrado (1997). p. 30.

⁸⁴ “Fletcher’s Opinion on the Application of Hatch Act,” *New York Times*, August 4, 1940, p. 2.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ From tables in “Investigation of Presidential, Vice Presidential, and Senatorial Campaign Expenditures, 1940,” Report No. 47, from the Special Committee to Investigate Presidential, Vice Presidential, and Senatorial Campaign Expenditures, 1940 [**Gillette Committee**], 77th Cong., 1st. Sess. (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, February 15, 1941), 10-11. Hereafter “Gillette Committee Report.”

⁸⁷ See Table: “Committees Supporting Democratic National Ticket,” Gillette Committee Report, 10.

⁸⁸ Louise Overacker, “Campaign Finance in the Presidential Election of 1940,” *American Political Science Review* 35 No. 4 (1941): 709. Overacker’s list was drawn from the Gillette Committee Report, and basically replicated in Key (1942), 447 n4.

⁸⁹ Quoted in Jennifer Burns, *Goddess of the Market: Ayn Rand and the American Right* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 53.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ *Ibid.* Burns suggests that “[t]he telegrams touted as spontaneous manifestations of his popularity turned out to be part of a carefully orchestrated corporate campaign” (53).

⁹² Henry O. Evjen, “The Willkie Campaign: An Unfortunate Chapter in Republican Leadership,” *The Journal of Politics* 14 No. 2 (1952): 247. Evjen notes that Willkie also authorized another group, “Democrats for Willkie” (247), while a number of unauthorized groups also emerged (253). Overacker (1941) also lists Democrats for Willkie (709).

⁹³ Evjen, 252.

⁹⁴ Evjen, 248. They were “to have autonomy in determining their activities” (247).

⁹⁵ Evjen suggests that Willkie has disregard for the RNC and often took action without consulting its members (241, 247). Willkie’s own advisors were accused of being hostile to the regular organization,” Evjen notes (249). More broadly, Willkie had assumed the party and his independent groups would divide their activities smoothly, Evjen suggests: assuming that “the National Committee and its related organizations, including the National Republican Women’s Clubs and the Young Republicans, would concentrate on the rank and file of the party; that the Willkie Clubs would line up the youth of the nation; and that the Democrats For Willkie would seek out the independent voters and the Democratic defectors” (247). In reality, the independent groups (especially the Willkie Clubs) clashed with the regular organization over activities and control (247, 253).

⁹⁶ See Burns, 58, for a discussion of the “Independent Clubs” as “a proposed successor organization” to the Willkie Clubs, and Willkie’s intervention. *Time* magazine, however, describes a 150-person meeting at which a new group was sketched out, so it is unclear whether the “Independent Club” idea was simply proposed, or came to full fruition for some amount of time. See “REPUBLICANS: New Force?” *Time*, December 23, 1940. In 1942 Key discussed the Associated Willkie Clubs of America under the general auspices of “nonparty organizations” associated with the party, but in 1964 classified it with the personal candidate vehicles. See Key (1942), 447 and 573, compared to (1964), 461-462.

⁹⁷ “Investigation of Presidential, Vice Presidential, and Senatorial Campaign Expenditures, 1944.” Report No. 101 from the Special Committee to Investigate Presidential, Vice Presidential, and Senatorial Campaign Expenditures in 1944 [**Green Committee**], U.S. Senate, 79th Cong., 1st. Sess. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, March 15th, 1945), 7. Hereafter “Green Committee Report.” *Emphasis mine.*

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Special Committee on Campaign Expenditures, 1944, "Independent Committees," Pp. 1-2. 8E2/7/19/5. United States Senate – 78th Congress. Special Committee on Campaign Expenditures, 1944 General File I-M. RG 46 Box No. 2. Miscellaneous Camp. Exp. '44 (Folder). National Archives and Records Administration, Legislative Archives Center, Washington, D.C.

¹⁰³ Information from "Table XII – Smith Independent Organizations Committee, George W. Peak, Chairman." "Presidential Campaign Expenditures," S. Rpt. 70: 2024, Report of the Special Committee Investigating Presidential Campaign Expenditures [Steiwer Committee], U.S. Senate, 70th Cong. (February 28, 1929), p. 26.

¹⁰⁴ "In 1932, George Peake was chairman of that committee and made his effort in the campaign, and then in 1936 we operated again, and now in 1940," explained its current chairman, William Settle, to the Gillette Committee. It not a permanent entity, therefore, functioning instead "just during political campaigns." In its later incarnations, it had done so on an increasingly independent basis. Though the RNC charged that it was tied in with the DNC, the National Committee for Agriculture raised its funds independently in 1940, moving from party auxiliary to non-party organization. [Volume 5 of Hearings before the Special Committee Investigating Campaign Expenditures, 1940 [Gillette Committee], U.S. Senate, 76th Cong., 3d. Sess., November 4th, 1940 (Washington, D.C.: Ward and Paul, 1940), 449].

¹⁰⁵ "Note: Registration of Groups Tending to Influence Public Opinion," *Columbia Law Review* 48 No. 4 (1948): 598. "The situation has been aggravated by the three-million-dollar limitation imposed by the Hatch Act, for independent committees have multiplied in an attempt to circumvent that limitation, and the number of reports received has proportionally increased. These factors plus an apparent unconcern over failure to file at all" leads to the conclusion that the acts have been unsuccessful" (598).

¹⁰⁶ See Corrado, 30.

¹⁰⁷ Volume 2 of Hearings before the Special Committee Investigating Campaign Expenditures, 1940 [Gillette Committee]. U.S. Senate, 76th Cong., 3d. Sess., October 4th, 1940 (Washington, D.C.: Ward and Paul, 1940), 113-114.

¹⁰⁸ On its legislative agenda in 1937, see Richard Polenberg, "The National Committee to Uphold Constitutional Government, 1937-1941," *The Journal of American History* 52 No. 3 (1965): 582. Gannett discussed its non-partisan basis in his "History of the Formation of the N.C.U.C.G. and the Supreme Court Fight," (August, 1937), 1937, quoted in Polenberg, 583. "We preferred to have the Committee made up of liberals and Democrats, so that we would not be charged with having partisan motives," he explained. Among those ostensible liberals was Amos Pinchot (brother of prominent progressive Gifford Pinchot). In 1932, Amos had served on the board of the National Progressive League – a group dedicated to electing FDR, but his political views were increasingly shaped by both anti-Communist and isolationist sentiments. On the Pinchot-NPL link, see Donald R. McCoy, "The Progressive National Committee of 1936." *The Western Political Quarterly* 9:2 (June, 1956): 456.

¹⁰⁹ "Developing sentiment" was the phrase used by the publicity agent James Arnold to describe the cultivation of essentially artificial grassroots opinion, noted in Loomis (2009) and discussed further in Chapter 2. See Christopher M. Loomis, "The Politics of Uncertainty: Lobbyists and Propaganda in Early Twentieth-Century America," *Journal of Policy History* 21:2 (2009): 187-213. See esp. pp. 189-200. On Rumely's background in this area, see Polenberg, 582.

¹¹⁰ Polenberg, 592-593.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 594.

¹¹² Ibid., 593. This project captivated Gannett's group as early as October 1937, Polenberg explains, when it decided upon a drive to mobilize voters in preparation for the coming campaign. The Committee set out to recruit "a bloc of 10,000,000 men and women to exert a deciding influence in the elections of 1938 and 1940." (593). "These "Constitutional Freemen" would pledge to support "men who are upholding our constitutional system," but need not change their own party affiliation."

¹¹³ Ibid. Gannett described his goal to those senators who had opposed the Court bill. "When we get a great enrollment of voters . . . we expect to go into your state to help you and into the other states where senators are up for re-election." Pressure would also be brought upon members of the House.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 594. "[T]he attempt to forge an anti-New Deal alliance failed in 1938," Polenberg adds, "Party realignment faced awesome obstacles: ideological lines, drawn so sharply over the Court plan, blurred on other issues; parties, which reflected state rather than national interests, resisted alteration; and politicians proved reluctant to sacrifice their stake in years of service to a party. Even Gannett grew discouraged at the "deep-seated partisanship" which he found" (594).

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 595.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Testimony of Samuel B. Pettengill, chairman of the National Committee to Uphold Constitutional Government, October 25th, 1940. Gillette Committee Hearings, Volume 3, 226-227.

¹²¹ "Campaign Expenditures: Committee for Constitutional Government," Part 7 of Hearings before the Committee to Investigate Campaign Expenditures [Anderson Committee], U.S. House of Representatives, 78th Cong., 2d. Sess., September 7th, 25th, October 4th, 8th, and 19th, 1944 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1944), 406.

¹²² Truman, 311-312. See Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 7, 388, 406. Under examination by a congressional committee, a witness from the group asserted that this campaign was not "political," since they "did not come out against any particular candidate." This remark was made by Gannett's colleague, Sumner Gerard.

¹²³ Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 7, 406.

¹²⁴ Truman, 311-312. See Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 7, 388, 406

¹²⁵ Polenberg, 596-597. "Gannett's crusade for the Republican nomination in 1940 seriously weakened the Committee he had founded," Polenberg observed (596). It "undermined the Committee by robbing it of its nonpartisan character and by draining the energies of Rumely's staff" (596). The NCUCG "disbanded in April 1941 and was replaced by a corporation called the Committee for Constitutional Government" he adds – a group I discuss further in Chapter 8 (597).

¹²⁶ Wolfskill, 247. As Wolfskill concluded: "The immediate reason for dissolving the American Liberty League in the fall of 1940 appeared to be the passage of the second Hatch Act limiting contributions to political campaigns....Desirous of giving Willkie the maximum financial support in the 1940 campaign, they thought it wise to disband the League" (247).

¹²⁷ As Rudolph describes its demise: "[o]n September 24, 1940, the New York Times, in a small item on page 20, announced that the American Liberty League, after four years of silence, had expired; it stated simply that "Recently . . . the offices in the National Press Club were closed."

Frederick Rudolph, "The American Liberty League, 1934-1940," *The American Historical Review* 56 No. 1 (1950): 32-33. The article he references is "New Deal Foe Folds Up: American Liberty League Joins Other Extinct Political Bodies." *The New York Times*, September 24th, 1940.

¹²⁸ "New Deal Foe Folds Up," 20.

¹²⁹ Overacker (1941): 715, n44.

¹³⁰ Tichenor (1999), 22. On the war, Lewis believed, Tichenor explains, that it "would derail a progressive labor agenda. Lewis predicted that war production would swallow labor up in an efficient military-industrial state."

¹³¹ Key (1942), 86-87.

¹³² Harris (1940) suggested that Lewis was "interested in cutting the C.I.O. off from the Democratic Party and in building up Labor's Non-Partisan League as the basis for a national third-party movement in 1944..." Herbert Harris, *Labor's Civil War* (New York: Knopf, 1940).

¹³³ Asked in April 1940 whether American labor unions "should form a national labor party" to compete with the existing major parties, whether they should "support one or the other of the major parties," or whether they should "keep out of politics altogether" the overwhelming response was the latter. 57% of respondents felt that labor unions should "keep out of politics," while 18% thought they should support the major parties. Only 11% thought they should form their own labor party. Roper/Fortune Survey, April 1940. Retrieved Nov-28-2011 from the iPOLL Databank, The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, University of Connecticut. http://www.ropercenter.uconn.edu/data_access/ipoll/ipoll.html

¹³⁴ According to Zieger, the UMW's split from the CIO was formalized in May, 1941, when the UMW stripped Murray of membership and status as a Vice-President. See Robert H. Zieger, *The CIO: 1935-1955* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 138. Lewis, it was said, kept the LNPL "in his vest pocket" after the split, and continued to speak in its name from time to time. "Strike or Insurrection?" *Chicago Daily Tribune*, May 19, 1946, p. 20. As a result, in May, 1942, Labor's Non-Partisan League of New Jersey decided to sever any remaining connection with Lewis and the so-called national organization. The New Jersey group had already dissociated itself "from Mr. Lewis's isolationist policy and his anti-Roosevelt stand" the previous July, but took formal action at its annual convention, and changed its name to the "American Labor League." "Jersey Labor Unit to End Lewis Link," *New York Times*, May 24, 1942, p. 38.

¹³⁵ Key (1942), 87.

¹³⁶ Tichenor (1999) also describes Lewis's vision for the League in these terms, as "an electoral marriage of convenience between the CIO and the Democratic party to reelect Roosevelt," but that in future elections "Lewis hoped that union votes could be marshaled...to support whichever party or candidate best served the interests of the CIO's membership." Tichenor (1999), 22.

¹³⁷ Tichenor (1999), 22. Tichenor concludes that, despite strains in the relationships "among Roosevelt, Lewis, and the union movement...their creative tensions [in the long term] ultimately produced significant reform and cemented ties between organized labor and the Democratic party."

¹³⁸ Roper/Fortune Survey, April 1941. Retrieved Feb-10-2012 from the iPOLL Databank, The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, University of Connecticut. http://www.ropercenter.uconn.edu/data_access/ipoll/ipoll.html. *Emphasis mine*. Respondents were asked: "Do you think it would be a good thing for the country if, in addition to the other parties, there were a national Labor Party to which labor could belong?" They answered: should be labor party (30%); should not be labor party (41%); Don't know (29%). In April 1941, however, 30% of those interviewed for a *Fortune* poll said that "it would be a good thing for the country" if there were a national labor party, in addition to the Democratic and Republican parties, "to which labor could belong."

¹³⁹ Key, (1942), 86.

¹⁴⁰ Joseph G. LaPalombara, "Pressure, Propaganda, and Political Action in the Elections of 1950," *The Journal of Politics* 14:2 (May 1952): 317.

¹⁴¹ "New Deal Foe Folds Up," 20.

Chapter 6. Introducing P.A.C.

¹ Samuel Grafton, *Chicago Sun*, November 11th, 1944, quoted in E.E. Schattschneider, "P.A.C. and Party Organization," c1953. E.E. Schattschneider Papers, 1901-1907 (Call Number 1000-9, Box 2, Folder 37, "Political Action Committees and Party Organization, Notes and Drafts, circa 1953"), Wesleyan University Special Collections and Archives, Middletown, Connecticut.

² Julian E. Zelizer, "Seeds of Cynicism: The Struggle over Campaign Finance, 1956-1974," *The Journal of Policy History* 14 No.1 (2002): 76.

³ Its sponsors were Representative Howard Smith (D-VA) and Senator Tom Connally (D-TX).

⁴ Section 9 of the Smith-Connally Act extended from corporations to unions the prohibition on making contributions “in connection with” federal elections, thus amending section 313 of the Federal Corrupt Practices Act. “Section nine of the bill prohibits for the period of the war political contributions by labor organizations,” Roosevelt noted in his veto message. “This provision obviously has no relevancy to a bill prohibiting strikes during the war in plants operated by the Government or to a “War Labor Disputes Act,” Roosevelt observed. “If there be merit in the prohibition,” he continued, “it should not be confined to wartime, and careful consideration should be given to the appropriateness of extending the prohibition to other non-profit organizations.” Franklin D. Roosevelt, “Veto of the Smith-Connally Bill,” June 25th, 1943. Available online at Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley (eds.), *The American Presidency Project*: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=16420>.

⁵ Accounts of the initial formation of the CIO-PAC are provided in Joseph Gaer, *The First Round: The Story of the CIO Political Action Committee* (New York: Duell, Sloan, and Pearce, 1944), 60; James Caldwell Foster, *The Union Politic: The CIO Political Action Committee* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1975), 3; and Robert A. Garson, *The Democratic Party and the Politics Of Sectionalism, 1941-1948* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1974), 57.

⁶ Melvin I. Urofsky, “Campaign Finance Reform Before 1971,” *Albany Government Law Review* 1 (2008): 26.

⁷ As I discuss further below, the P.A.C.’s legal claims evolved toward this emphasis on voluntary contributions. Upon formation, they made a variety of legal claims in regard to their status as a “labor organization,” and the particular circumstances of the 1944 presidential campaign – they denied that the law’s provisions applied until after the date of Roosevelt’s renomination – the point at which there would be a “candidate” whom they were supporting. As Foster (1975) explains, the PAC’s counsel – John Abt – argued that “the Smith-Connally Act forbade union contributions to an election campaign,” but “an election required a candidate, and any activity prior to the nomination of party candidates was not restricted” (24).

⁸ See Foster, 24, for a discussion of P.A.C.’s position in regard to direct contributions versus other activities. Within the same organization, therefore, both a “voluntary contributions account” and an “educational account” were established – with the latter theoretically off-limits for direct political action.

⁹ The following CIO “Standing Committees” were indicated on a 1945 organization chart, submitted to the House Select Committee on Lobbying Activities of the 81st Congress (the Buchanan Committee): Political Action Committee (plus regional offices), War Relief Committee (plus regional offices), Social Security Committee, Missouri Valley Committee, Housing Committee, Reconversion Committee, Latin-American Committee, Committee to Abolish Racial Discrimination, Veterans’ Committee, Health and Welfare Committee, Cost-of-Living Committee, Maritime Committee, and the Legislative Committee. See “CIO Organization, 1945,” in “Housing Lobby,” Part 2 of Hearings before the Select Committee on Lobbying Activities, U.S. House of Representatives [**Buchanan Committee**], 81st Cong., 2d sess., April 19, 20, 21, 25, 26, 27, 28, May 3, 5, and 17, 1950 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1950).

¹⁰ A 1954 P.A.C. document provides detailed information on its initial formation, personnel, and organization. “The CIO-PAC and How It Works,” December 1954, esp. p. 2. CIO Political Action Committee (PAC) Collection Papers, 1943-1960s (Accession # 647, Box 13, Folder 18. “CIO/PAC History”). Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan. Hereafter “CIO-PAC Papers.” Hillman also provided details on the PAC’s national office in New York, and its 14 regional offices, in testimony before the Anderson Committee. “Campaign Expenditures,” Part 1 of Hearings before the Committee to Investigate Campaign Expenditures [**Anderson Committee**], U.S. House of Representatives, 78th Cong., 2d. Sess., August 28th, 1944 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1944), 6.

¹¹ Gloria Resch Cook, “The Relationship Between Political Parties and Pressure Groups (MA Thesis, University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill, 1956), 206. Kroll’s testimony appears in “Campaign Expenditures – CIO Political Action Committee,” Part 2 of Hearings before the Committee to Investigate Campaign Expenditures [**Priest Committee**], U.S. House of Representatives, 79th Cong., 2d sess., October 14, 1946 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1946), 95-96. Hereafter “Priest Committee Hearings, Part 2.”

¹² Philip Taft, “Labor’s Changing Political Line.” *Journal of Political Economy* 45:5 (October 1937): 634-650.

¹³ On concerns with wartime agencies, see Garson, 56; Zieger, 179. Relevant agencies included the National War Labor Board (1942-1946) in particular, but also the Office of Production Management (1941-1942)/ War Production Board (1942-1945), the Office of Price Administration (1941-1946), and so forth.

¹⁴ Garson, 56. Roosevelt described the pledge in his Smith-Connally veto message: “After the attack at Pearl Harbor, the three great labor organizations – the American Federation of Labor, the Congress of Industrial Organizations, and the Railroad Brotherhoods – gave the positive assurance that there would be no strikes as long as the war lasted.” “And the President of the United Mine workers of America was a party to that assurance,” he added. Franklin D. Roosevelt, “Fireside Chat,” May 2, 1943 [Address of the President to the Coal Miners]. Available online at Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley (eds.), *The American Presidency Project*: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=16393>.

¹⁵ As Kroll explained to the Priest Committee in 1946: “We found that on the industrial field we could, by our collective bargaining strength, secure gains for the men and women who are members of the union and we found that in Congress there were bills introduced that would take away the gains we secured through our industrial strength. We felt that it was necessary to do something, to exercise our rights of citizenship politically as well as industrially... we ought to oppose those people who opposed our organizations, or the functioning of labor unions, on the industrial field—ought to oppose them on the political field.” Priest Committee Hearings, Part 2, p. 90.

¹⁶ Nathan E. Cowan, John Brophy, and J. Raymond Walsh, “Memorandum to President Philip Murray,” December 30, 1942, p. 15. Wayne County AFL-CIO Papers (Box 25, CIO Political Programs Folder), Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan. Hereafter “Cowan-Brophy-Walsh Report.”

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- ¹⁷ In terms of their union affiliations, Brophy was associated with the UMW (he was also from Lancashire, and had been involved with the Trade Union Education League).
- ¹⁸ Cowan-Brophy-Walsh Report, 15.
- ¹⁹ Indeed, with money being provided direct from union treasuries – mostly from the UMW – it had no need to engage in nuts and bolts organizing from the ground up.
- ²⁰ Cowan-Brophy-Walsh Report, 2. LNPL might be characterized, therefore, as more of a stylistic than substantive development: a top-down, essentially personalistic vehicle. LNPL's main organizational "residue" from the perspective of the CIO was the LNPL of New Jersey, which appears to have been an important and somewhat independent force within the LNPL from the start. It persisted beyond 1940 as a cohesive organization, though it disassociated itself from John L. Lewis's actions in that campaign. In May, 1942, Labor's Non-Partisan League of New Jersey decided to sever any remaining connection with Lewis and the so-called national organization, taking formal action at its annual convention, and changing its name to the "American Labor League." "Jersey Labor Unit to End Lewis Link," *New York Times*, May 24th, 1942, p. 38; see also Cowan-Brophy-Walsh Report, 9.
- ²¹ Cowan-Brophy-Walsh Report, 7, 15.
- ²² *Ibid.*, 1.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, 7.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, 7-8. "In most cases the state councils have established specialized agencies, usually political or legislative committees, to which political work is delegated," they noted.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*, 5.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, 6. The other was Virginia's 6th district – represented by Clifton A. Woodrum. "This participation was occasioned in part by proximity and in part by a desire to obtain first hand experience. Among other aid provided was a small amount of financial assistance from several CIO international unions" (6).
- ²⁷ *Ibid.* Specifically, "for sustained political organization and for more fully developed systems of gathering political data" (6).
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, 9.
- ²⁹ Quoted in Garson, 58. Phillip Murray also told the delegates that PAC should be "also looking beyond 1944 and planning for a permanent political organization for labor." Similarly, Hillman told the Anderson Committee: "While the decisive questions which confront labor and the Nation today provided the immediate occasion for the organization of our committee, we have not organized for 1944 alone." "On the contrary, the executive board of the CIO has established the committee on a permanent basis to serve as its continuing agency for the coordination and direction of its political activities." Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 1, p. 5.
- ³⁰ The *New Republic* editorial, for example, proclaimed that "[p]olitical action is year-round-every-year work," and the parties should learn from this example. Thus the Democrats must "reverse their usual policy of cutting national headquarters down to a skeleton staff between elections and instead strengthen their forces," it recommended, if they were to improve their fortunes in 1948. "We Were Licked!" *The New Republic*, November 18, 1946, p. 656.
- ³¹ Reference to LNPL's intended permanence was made at its first convention, held in Washington, D.C. on August 10, 1936: "There was unanimous agreement that Labor's Non-Partisan League should be built strongly and maintained permanently," an LNPL pamphlet reported of the proceedings. In "Labor's Non-Partisan League: Its Origin and Growth," 5. "The League has since been placed on a permanent basis, with an office and permanent staff functioning in Washington and in every state in the Union." Taft, "Labor's Changing Political Line," p. 640.
- ³² Although an Anti-Saloon League "campaign committee" was set up in the 1928 campaign, which seems to have been a purely accounting issue.
- ³³ Cowan-Brophy-Walsh Report, 15.
- ³⁴ As Galambos (1970) explained this emerging synthesis in historical scholarship, it was based on the assumption that "some of the most (if not the single most) important changes which have taken place in modern America have centered about a shift from small-scale, informal, locally or regionally oriented groups to large-scale, national, formal organizations," where "[t]he new organizations are characterized by a bureaucratic structure of authority." Louis Galambos, "The Emerging Organizational Synthesis in Modern American History," *The Business History Review* 44 No. 3 (1970): 280.
- ³⁵ Promoting a broad liberal-labor coalition was, Cowan et al. emphasized, "[t]he principal reason for the separation of the political agency from the state councils is to permit participation by AFL and RRB [Railroad Brotherhood] locals and liberal groups." Cowan-Brophy-Walsh Report, 10. See also p. 17 where "a national organization directed solely by the CIO" is ruled "out of the question."
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*
- ³⁷ *Ibid.* "The problem of collaboration with the AFL, the Brotherhoods, and farm and liberal groups on a national scale is much more difficult than it is on a state scale," they observe later in the memo: "Participation by AFL and Brotherhood unions can be expected on a state basis, but seems highly unlikely on a national basis, at least as far as the AFL is concerned at present" (16-17). Ultimately, though, the CIO should "look forward...to the ultimate establishment of a national organization with general labor, farm, and liberal participation," which would become likely "when enough state organizations with broad representation have been established" (19).
- ³⁸ Cowan-Brophy-Walsh Report, 11. Indeed, the congressional district PACs which eventually emerged in most large industrial cities had "no parallel in the industrial union structure" PAC staffers observed in 1954. "The CIO-PAC and How It Works," p. 5.
- ³⁹ *Ibid.* "It is not clear whether this requirement would be serious enough in itself to call for a separation of the political committees from the councils," they observed (11).
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 10.
- ⁴¹ This linkage was so strong that Cook even describes the NCPAC at one point as "the non-labor branch" of the CIO PAC, and as, "in effect, a subsidiary of the CIO PAC" (219, 221).

⁴² Cook, 212, 219, 221. As noted in the Green Committee Report, the NCPAC's "activities apparently were synchronized with the operations of the Congress of Industrial Organizations Political Action Committee, for Sidney Hillman was chairman of both groups and they used common offices." Green Committee Report [S. Rpt. 79:101], 23.

⁴³ Hillman explained that the CIO's work had "increasingly attracted the attention, the interests and the support of progressives outside of the ranks of labor," and thus it "appeared desirable to form a broader committee which would give these non-labor groups an opportunity for organized participation in political activity." Like the P.A.C., NCPAC was "organized for the purpose of helping to elect Roosevelt and Truman and a progressive Congress" in 1944, and would provide financial support to congressional candidates (though not, intriguingly, to the *presidential* candidate, Kroll asserted). Unlike the P.A.C., however, NCPAC was initially envisaged as a *temporary* entity that would operate through to Election Day, 1944. Its lifespan was subsequently extended, and it was also active in the 1946 congressional campaign. Anderson Committee hearings, Part 1, pp. 12, 21.

⁴⁴ The Green Committee report presented such a viewpoint: "As a possible means of broadening the source of individual contributions to the Political Action Committee fund, the National Citizens Political Action Committee was organized in July 1944," it stated. Green Committee Report [S. Rpt. 79:101], 23.

⁴⁵ Anderson Committee hearings, Part 1, 9-12.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁴⁹ Cowan-Brophy-Walsh Report, 19.

⁵⁰ This point is often neglected, though both Zelizer (2002, 76) and Hayward (2008, 455n) acknowledge that the CIO-PAC used treasury money almost exclusively at first. As Hayward observes: "in the 1944 primaries the PAC used union general treasury funds, believing that the scope of the Corrupt Practices Act included only general elections. Once the parties chose their nominees, the PAC began "A Buck for Roosevelt" and solicited CIO members for individual contributions. A related committee, the National Citizens Political Action Committee ("NC-PAC"), raised money from sympathetic non-union donors. Readers who recall the politics of the early 1980s may be amused to compare the 1940s NC-PAC with the more contemporary and conservative National Conservative Political Action Committee ("NCPAC)." Allison R. Hayward, "Revisiting the Fable of Reform," *Harvard Journal on Legislation* 45 (2008): 421-469. Page 455, n202.

⁵¹ Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 1, p. 16. "Originally the Political Action Committee received its funds from trade-unions affiliated with the Congress of Industrial Organizations," the Senate's 1944 campaign expenditure committee, chaired by Theodore F. Green (D-RI), also reported. "Investigation of Presidential, Vice Presidential, and Senatorial Campaign Expenditures, 1944," Report No. 101 from the Special Committee to Investigate Presidential, Vice Presidential, and Senatorial Campaign Expenditures in 1944 [**Green Committee**], U.S. Senate, 79th Cong., 1st Sess. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, March 15th, 1945), 21. "The money was transferred from the union treasuries after the general executive board of the union had approved the action," the report continued.

⁵² According to Hillman's own financial report, these union contributions came to \$671,214.11 in total. "Prior to the CIO convention in November each of the international unions made its pledge. Those pledges were publicly announced at the convention. In addition, a few local CIO unions have made unsolicited contributions" [Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 1, p. 16]. As Cook (1956) summarizes: "When the National PAC was established in 1943, thirty-one CIO affiliates transferred from their treasuries to the PAC sums ranging from \$15.00 to \$100,000.00...In all the National PAC had a total of approximately \$1,400,000 for use in elections and spent \$1,325,000; \$760,000 on behalf of federal candidates in the general election. The total included \$478,498 of treasury funds (educational fund); \$376,910 raised in an appeal for voluntary contributions; and \$380,000 resulting from an appeal to private citizens outside labor groups" Cook, 222. Garson reports that "[t]he CIO unions initially pledged nearly \$700,000 to the PAC. The money was to be used for the publication of materials and for the mobilization of voters" (57).

⁵³ Garson reports that "[t]he CIO unions initially pledged nearly \$700,000 to the PAC. The money was to be used for the publication of materials and for the mobilization of voters" (57). As Cook (1956) summarizes: "When the National PAC was established in 1943, thirty-one CIO affiliates transferred from their treasuries to the PAC sums ranging from \$15.00 to \$100,000.00 (Cook, 222).

⁵⁴ Foster, 24.

⁵⁵ Green Committee Report, 22-23. As a letter sent from the P.A.C.'s national headquarters to all regional directors in December, 1943, explained their legal position: "Counsel has advised the committee that the Smith-Connally Act is applicable only to elections for Presidential and Vice Presidential electors or a senator or congressional Representative. The act has no application to primary elections, elections of delegates to political conventions, or elections of State or local officials." [Letter to CIO-PAC Regional Directors, December 9, 1943, reproduced in Green Committee Report, 21-22].

⁵⁶ Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 1, 8. Before the Anderson Committee, Hillman explained that "[t]he only candidates who have been endorsed by our national committee are Roosevelt and Truman. In the case of President Roosevelt, that endorsement was not made until May 17, when substantially all of the CIO international unions and the great majority of its State councils had already acted, so that the action of our committee merely recorded the unanimity of their opinion."

⁵⁷ Green Committee Report, 22. "To finance the work of the committee" in the interim, Hillman explained, "we are requesting voluntary contributions in the sum of \$1 from the members of the CIO." 50 cents of this contribution went into the national fund, and the other half remained in the state or locality. Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 1, p. 16.

⁵⁸ Green Committee Report, 21. As the Green Committee report described Hillman's testimony on these points, he took the position "that these numerous local committees operated solely intrastate and were "not subordinate to the national organization," the report observes. In the Green Committee's report, they speculated upon this decision: "While it may be contended that local committees

were so organized as to avoid the publicity requirements of the Federal Corrupt Practices Act,” the Green Committee report suggested, “there is no evidence upon which to base a definite finding” (21).

⁵⁹ Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 1, 28.

⁶⁰ Hillman went over some of these financing issues with the Anderson Committee, providing statements for the PAC’s “Trade-Union Contributions Account” and “Individual Contributions Account.” See Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 1, 13.

⁶¹ Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 1, 16. As Hillman explained to the Anderson Committee, all of the P.A.C.’s expenses had been paid from the “trade-union contributions account” up to July 23rd, 1944 – just after the Democratic National Convention nominated Roosevelt for an unprecedented fourth term as president. At that point, the trade union account was frozen, Hillman explained, “in order to assure scrupulous compliance with the strictest possible interpretation of the Corrupt Practices Act as amended by the Smith-Connally Act” (16).

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ *Ibid.* Even the P.A.C.’s overhead was to be paid from individual contributions after the convention, Hillman told the Anderson Committee. Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 1, 13, 22-23. See also Green Committee Report, 22.

⁶⁴ Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 1, 17. Hillman offered an accounting of the “Individual Contributions Account” from July 23 to August 15, which showed \$17,172.50 in contributions received, but \$39,750 in “Loans.” Disbursements from this account were already \$36,983.50 by this point, exceeding the amount of individual contributions, thus loaned money was being utilized.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 22.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 20.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 22-23.

⁶⁸ Foster, 28-29; Garson, 77.

⁶⁹ Attorney General Francis Biddle to Congressman Howard W. Smith, April 6th, 1944. Released by the Department of Justice on April 7, 1944, and sent to, among others, NAM’s legal counsel – Lambert Miller. “OHP” to Lambert Miller, 6/26/47, NAM Records, Box 62a. Biddle’s letter begins: “On January 10, 1944, you wrote me complaining that a flagrant violation of the criminal provisions of the Federal Corrupt Practices Act, as amended by the War Labor Disputes Act, was revealed by an article by Philip Murray of the CIO, published in the February issue of the *American Magazine*. This article described the newly organized Political Action Committee of the CIO, and stated that various CIO unions had made an initial contribution of \$700,000 to the work of the Committee.”

⁷⁰ Congressmen Howard W. Smith, Martin Dies, and Senator E.H. Moore all made complaints to the Attorney General Francis Biddle about the PAC. Copies of these letters were obtained by NAM’s legal counsel – Lambert Miller – in 1947. Records at the National Archives also show that Senator Theodore F. Green (D-RI) – chairman of a Senate campaign expenditure investigation in 1944 – wrote to Biddle in May, 1944, to inquire as to whether the Department of Justice would be continuing its investigation – which Biddle affirms is the case. “OHP” to Lambert Miller, 6/26/47, National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) Records, 1895-2001 (Series V, Law Department Records, Call No. 1411, Box 62a), Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, Delaware. Hereafter “NAM Records”; Senator Theodore F. Green (D-RI) to Attorney General Francis Biddle, May 23rd, 1944. Records of the United States Senate (Record Group 46, Box No. 2, “United States Senate – 78th Congress, Special Committee on Campaign Expenditures, 1944 General File I-M,” Folder: “Justice, Department of. Camp. Exp. ’44”), National Archives and Records Administration, Legislative Archives Center, Washington, D.C.

⁷¹ Release from the Department of Justice, of Attorney General Francis Biddle’s letter to Congressman Howard W. Smith, April 7th, 1944, “reporting the results of the Department’s investigation of a complaint that the CIO Political Action Committee had violated criminal provisions of the Federal Corrupt Practices Act,” as amended by Smith-Connally. Copy found in NAM papers at Hagley, sent to NAM’s legal counsel – Lambert Miller. “OHP” to Lambert [Miller, NAM’s General Counsel], 6/26/47. NAM papers, Series V, Box 62a.

⁷² Attorney General Francis Biddle to Congressman Howard W. Smith, April 6th, 1944. Released by the Department of Justice on April 7, 1944, and sent to, among others, NAM’s legal counsel – Lambert Miller. “OHP” to Lambert Miller, 6/26/47, NAM Records, Box 62a. Attorney General Biddle to Congressman Smith, April 6th, 1944. Smith had submitted a complaint to the Attorney General on January 10th, 1944, and an FBI investigation was ordered. It found no violations of the Corrupt Practices Act, as amended by the War Labor Disputes Act, or the Hatch Act contribution limit. The FBI investigation had revealed general expenditures for personnel, along with the costs of “a “get out the vote” campaign...a campaign in favor of the soldiers vote bill, a full employment conference, and the preparation of a post-war program” – none of which were prohibited by the Smith-Connally Act. The investigation had also found a direct contribution going to a gubernatorial candidate in New Jersey – a state election not covered by the law either.

⁷³ Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 1, p. 8. A list of the candidates and amounts involved was inserted into the published Anderson Committee hearings – 17 individual candidates in eight states were listed, along with one political committee in New York: the “Committee for the Nomination of Win the War Candidates” (which supported a number of State candidates endorsed by the American Labor Party and Congressman Marcantonio). Calculating across these candidates and committees, the total amount distributed comes to \$32,058.44. Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 1 (August 28, 1944), Page 14.

⁷⁴ Green Committee Report, 22.

⁷⁵ Attorney General Biddle to Congressman Smith, April 6th, 1944. Indeed, when Senator Theodore F. Green (D-RI) – chairman of a Senate’s campaign expenditure investigation in 1944 – wrote Biddle in May, he confirmed the Department of Justice would be continuing its investigation [Senator Green to Attorney General Biddle, May 23rd, 1944].

⁷⁶ See Dies Committee Report on the CIO-PAC. The Dies Committee began its investigation of the PAC in July, 1943, according to the statement of its chief investigator Robert Stripling during hearings in September, 1944. See “Investigation of Un-American Propaganda Activities in the U.S.,” Volume 17 of Hearings before the Special Committee on Un-American Activities [**Dies Committee**], U.S. House of Representatives, 78th Cong., 2d sess. September 27-29, October 3-5, 1944 (Washington, D.C.:

Government Printing Office, 1944), 10211-10212.

⁷⁷ “Investigation of Un-American Propaganda Activities in the United States: Report on the CIO Political Action Committee.” Report No. 1311 from the Special Committee on Un-American Activities [**Dies Committee**], U.S. House of Representatives, 78th Cong., 2d. sess. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, March 29th, 1944).

⁷⁸ Release from the Department of Justice, of Attorney General Francis Biddle’s letter to Congressman Martin Dies, August 4, 1944, released August 7, 1944. Copy found in NAM papers at Hagley, sent to NAM’s legal counsel – Lambert Miller. “OHP” to Lambert [Miller, NAM’s General Counsel], 6/26/47. NAM papers, Series V, Box 62a.

⁷⁹ Truman (1951) discusses the widespread belief that special interests should “keep out of politics.” Even union members were often uncomfortable with “political” rather than “collective” action. As Truman observed, they tended to view “collective bargaining and the strike as the proper sphere of union activity” and “election activity, especially partisanship, as outside this sphere” (295, 298-299). Even in 1964, Zeigler still observed “an inclination of union members to look upon political activity as a secondary aspect of the union’s proper sphere of activities.” See Harmon Zeigler, *Interest Groups in American Society* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964), 245.

⁸⁰ When polled about labor union political activities by the Roper organization in April 1940, 57% of respondents said labor should “keep out of politics altogether,” rather than form a third party, or work with the major parties. In August 1946, 52% of respondents selected that response. Other polls suggested hostility to labor political action. An August 1944 Gallup poll found that 56% of respondents disapproved of P.A.C.’s activities (compared to 29% who approved), while an April 1944 *Fortune* survey (conducted by the Roper organization) suggested some ambivalence. Asking respondents about the acceptability of labor unions campaigning for candidates – leaving *out* considerations of campaign contributions – they found that 43% of respondents thought this was “not all right” while 40% thought it was. Roper Survey, April 1940; Roper/Fortune Survey, April 1944; Roper Survey, August 1946; Gallup poll, August 1944. All retrieved from the iPOLL Databank, The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, University of Connecticut. http://www.ropercenter.uconn.edu/data_access/ipoll/ipoll.html.

⁸¹ Roper/Fortune Survey, April 1944. Retrieved from the iPOLL Databank, The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, University of Connecticut. http://www.ropercenter.uconn.edu/data_access/ipoll/ipoll.html.

⁸² Attorney General Biddle to Senator Moore, September 23rd, 1944.

⁸³ Smith-Connally had utilized the definition of “labor organization” in the Wagner Act. As codified in Section 610 of the U.S. Code: “For the purposes of this section “labor organization” means any organization of any kind, or any agency or employee representation committee or plan, in which employees participate and which exist for the purpose, in whole or in part, of dealing with employers concerning grievances, labor disputes, wages, rates of pay, hours of employment, or condition of work.”

⁸⁴ Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 1, 27.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ Attorney General Biddle to Senator Moore, September 23rd, 1944.

⁸⁸ Biddle uses this quote from Moore’s initial letter of August 30th, 1944. See Attorney General Biddle to Senator Moore, September 23rd, 1944.

⁸⁹ Attorney General Francis Biddle to Senator E.H. Moore (R-OK), September 23, 1944. Copy released by the Department of Justice on September 25, 1944, and sent to, among others, NAM’s legal counsel – Lambert Miller. “OHP” to Lambert Miller, 6/26/47, NAM Records, Box 62a.

⁹⁰ Attorney General Biddle to Senator Moore, September 23rd, 1944. *Emphasis mine.*

⁹¹ Where Biddle denied the appropriateness of such a classification as applied even to the CIO-PAC, the congressional committee tasked with investigating the 1946 elections – the Priest Committee – concluded that the CIO-PAC *was*, in fact, a labor organization and thus was prohibited from making contributions – irrespective of the voluntary nature of its funds. “The CIO Political Action Committee is a committee of the Congress of Industrial Organizations and, as such, under the Corrupt Practices Act, is likewise as a labor union prohibited making any contribution in connection with any election at which a Representative to Congress is to be elected,” the Priest Committee report concluded. “Campaign Expenditures Committee,” Report No. 2739, from the Special Committee on Campaign Expenditures, 1946 [**Priest Committee**], U.S. House of Representatives, 79th Cong., 2d Sess. (Washington, D.C. Government Printing Office, December 31st, 1946), 43.

⁹² Attorney General Biddle to Senator Moore, September 23rd, 1944.

⁹³ Moore questioned whether the CIO was itself “engaged in furthering, advancing, or advocating the nomination or election of any candidate” through its literature.

⁹⁴ Biddle’s reference to Section 9 of the Smith-Connally Act prohibiting *contributions* only applied to Section 313 of the Corrupt Practices Act itself, and Section 13 of the Hatch Act. CIO legal counsel wrote to PAC Regional Directors in December, 1943, with a similar message. The Smith-Connally Act only applied to federal general election contests, the letter asserted, and had “no application to primary elections, elections of delegates to political conventions, or elections of State or local officials.” (21-22). Where it did apply, the Act prohibited only “*contributions* of money or any other thing of value by a labor organization...” Letter to CIO-PAC Regional Directors, December 9, 1943, reproduced in Green Committee Report, 22. *Emphasis mine.*

⁹⁵ Attorney General Biddle to Senator Moore, September 23rd, 1944.

⁹⁶ Quoted in Green Committee Report, 22. If using general funds to produce and distribute posters, pamphlets, or editorials promoting particular candidates were classified as contributions subject to the FCPA, Abt argued, then newspapers must be considered in violation too. As the Green Committee report summarized Abt’s argument: “He pointed out that if the expenditure of money for the production of a poster, or a pamphlet, or an editorial urging the election of a candidate, were a contribution within the meaning of the Corrupt Practices Act, it followed that every newspaper which published an editorial enclosing a political candidate for

Federal office would likewise be violating the law.” (22). “It was further contended that the issuance of a pamphlet, circular, or leaflet by a labor union or a corporation under its own name and financed out of its own funds, which literature openly expressed support of a candidate for Federal office, was an “expenditure” which Congress did not intend to prohibit by passage of the Smith-Connally amendment. What Congress proposed to outlaw, counsel asserted, was the transfer of corporate or labor union funds to a political candidate or political committee.” (22).

⁹⁷ Letter to CIO-PAC Regional Directors, December 9, 1943, reproduced in Green Committee Report, 22.

⁹⁸ Urofsky, 26. “Counsel further advises us that the law does not prohibit a labor organization, or the Congress of Industrial Organizations Political Action Committee as an Instrumentality of the Congress of Industrial Organizations, from spending moneys in connection with its own activities, undertaken for the purpose of advancing the cause of one or more candidates for Federal office, provided that this money is spent directly by the labor organization and not pursuant to an agreement or prearrangement with these candidates, their political parties or committees.” Letter to CIO-PAC Regional Directors, December 9, 1943, reproduced in Green Committee Report, 22.

⁹⁹ 1911 Amendments to the Publicity Act, 37 Stat. 25 (August 19, 1911). The amendments stated that candidates may not “give, contribute, *expend*, use, or promise, or *cause to be given*, contributed, *expended*, used, or promised,” amounts in excess of those sums (or lower if state law required

¹⁰⁰ As Overacker earlier explains: “The four judges who dissented on the question of constitutionality [Chief Justice White, Justices Pitney, Brandeis, and Clark] nevertheless agreed with their colleagues that the decision of the lower court should be set aside on the ground that in his instructions to the District Court, Judge Sessions had erred...” (242-243).

¹⁰¹ Overacker (1932), 271.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 271-272. The District Court judge had informed the jury that “the expenditure and use of excessive sums of money by the candidate directly and personally,” but also that spent “through his agency, or procurement, or assistance.” [256 United States 273, quoted in Overacker (1932), 272]. But it was not enough that a candidate simply *know* about such excessive expenditures being made on his behalf, or that he acquiesced in them. To constitute a violation of the statute, the candidate must *actively participate* “in doing the things which occasion such expenditures,” as well as have knowledge of their intended use [256 United States 273, quoted in Overacker (1932), 272]. As the District Court judge applied this reasoning in Newberry’s case, the jury must be satisfied that “by advice, by conduct, by his acts, by his direction, by his counsel, or by his procurement he actively participated and took part in the expenditure and use of an excessive sum of money,” then he had violated the statute [The full statement of this part of the instructions reads: “If you are satisfied from the evidence that the defendant... was informed and knew that his campaign for the nomination and election would require the expenditure and use of more money than is permitted by law and with such knowledge became a candidate, and thereafter by advice, by conduct, by his acts, by his direction, by his counsel, or by his procurement he actively participated and took part in the expenditure and use of an excessive sum of money, of an unlawful sum of money, you will be warranted in finding that he did violate this statute known as the Corrupt Practices Act.” 256 United States 273, quoted in Overacker (1932), 272].

¹⁰³ Overacker (1932), 273. *Emphasis in original.*

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 272. Chief Justice White saw the statute as concerned with limiting the *candidate’s own* spending only, and not intended to restrict the right of citizens to contribute to a candidate or spend money in an electoral contest as they saw fit. Justice Pitney authored an opinion in which the other dissenting justices concurred (Brandeis, and Clark) which did allow that the statute extended beyond the candidate’s own money, “to the expenditure or use of excessive sums of money by him, from whatever source and from whomsoever derived.” But they also felt Congress had not meant to limit “to limit *spontaneous* contributions of money by others than the candidate” [256 United States 293-294. Quoted in Overacker (1932), 273. *Emphasis mine*]. A definitive statement on this issue was rendered unnecessary by the majority decision on the statute’s unconstitutionality (273), but Overacker observes that “the opinions of the minority clearly indicated that in its view the limitation of the laws of 1910 and 1911 extended only to those expenditures participated in by the candidate” (273).

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 271. The majority decision in *Newberry* regarding primary elections would later be rejected in *United States v. Classic* (1941).

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 273. See Federal Corrupt Practices Act, 1925, 43 Stat. 1070 (February 28, 1925), esp. Sections 307(a) and 309.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 271.

¹⁰⁸ Thus tapping into a modern sense of one’s political *autonomy* and resistance to “blind” partisanship.

¹⁰⁹ Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 1, 5.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 6.

¹¹³ These were the basic contours as laid out at the CIO’s national convention in Philadelphia, in November, 1943. The convention adopted a resolution outlining a program of activities for P.A.C., and the “general issues” on which the public should be educated as part of their effort. The resolution included: “(1) “The support of our military effort,” (2) “the maintenance of our economic, social, and legislative standards, as a guarantee of wholesome living standards for our people, and the protection of the highest possible morale among our millions of war workers,” (3) “the mobilization of all of our resources for the vigorous prosecution of the war”; and (4) “a sound and progressive post-war program to ease the difficult transition to a peacetime economy, give full employment to our people, provide an adequate system of social security in time of unemployment, sickness, and old age, and lay the basis for a more secure and abundant life.” Reproduced in Attorney General Biddle to Congressman Smith, April 6th, 1944.

¹¹⁴ Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 1, 7.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.* *Emphasis mine.*

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 5.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 8.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 8.

¹²¹ Cowan, Brophy, and Walsh pointed to “widespread political apathy throughout the country” as a key problem in 1942. Cowan-Brophy-Walsh Report, p. 2. Garson also references “the apathy reflected in the low turnout in the industrial cities of the North in the 1942 elections,” ascribing to this low rate of participation responsibility “for the president's domestic reverses” (Garson, 56).

¹²² “At the end of World War II, labor unions represented 27% of the civilian labor force, up from 7% in 1934. This was primarily the result of government action. The Wagner Act passed in 1935 stimulated the growth of Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) unions, which through sitdown strikes (which were plainly illegal) and other tactics organized the major auto, steel, and tire manufacturers between 1937 and 1941. Wartime government regulations encouraged unionization in defense industries.” Michael Barone, “What 1946 Can Tell Us About 2010,” *The American: The Online Magazine of the American Enterprise Institute*, April 6, 2010. Retrieved 1/19/2013 from <http://www.american.com/archive/2010/april/what-1946-can-tell-us-about-2010>

¹²³ Foster, 25, 42-44.

¹²⁴ Foster, 25.

¹²⁵ In this sense, the “union voter” idea involved another attempt at the kind of voter reeducation that Clemens (1997) points to among earlier popular associations, only this time moving in an *expanded* direction. Clemens describes the early effort as teaching members to vote in accordance with their economic interest, not on the basis of partisanship. But the conception Foster describes suggests members to vote in accordance with a more general ideology, *expanding* their concerns beyond the purely economic to a range a largely “liberal” positions.

¹²⁶ Some of these activities were in line with the “educational” methods pioneered by early interest groups, designed to reach out to the population and get them engaged and active on issues of concern to an organization. In this respect, then, the P.A.C. engaged in some “indirect” lobbying – though not for specific legislative bills.

¹²⁷ “Political Primer for All Americans” (c. 1943). CIO Political Action Committee (PAC) Collection Papers, 1943-1960s, Accession # 647. Box 15, Folder 12. “PAMS – Politics & Voting, 1940s-1960s.” Reuther Library.

¹²⁸ Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 1, 8.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 7.

¹³¹ Ibid., 8.

¹³² “Thomas Amlie was the Political Action Committee's resident expert on congressional campaigns. Amlie had excellent credentials for the job, having distinguished himself as a political planner for over two decades. Starting as an organizer for the Non-Partisan League in Elkhorn, Wisconsin, during the 1920s, he had worked his way up to a congressional seat by 1931. His defeat for reelection in 1932 prompted him to turn to Philip LaFollette's cause, the Progressive party. With Amlie as campaign planner, LaFollette and the Progressives swept the Wisconsin gubernatorial race in 1934. After two more terms in Congress, Amlie was defeated in the Wisconsin senatorial primary in 1938” (Foster, 32).

¹³³ Amlie served in Congress from 1931-1932 as a Republican, and from 1935-1938 as a Progressive.

¹³⁴ Tom Amlie to Arnold Zander (President of S.C. & M. Employees), November 7th, 1952. CIO Political Action Committee (PAC) Collection Papers, 1943-1960s, Accession # 647. Box 11, Folder 19, “Dudley Correspondence – Democratic National Committee, 1947-56. 1 of 4.” Reuther Library.

¹³⁵ “This was because the owners of the “mass media” cooperated in covering up the nakedness of his record.” Tom Amlie to Arnold Zander, November 7th, 1952.

¹³⁶ Richard Fenno (1975), for example, observed the puzzling tendency to “love our congressmen so much more than our Congress” (286) stimulating an extensive line of research. See Richard F. Fenno, “If, as Ralph Nader Says, Congress is “The Broken Branch,” How Come We Love Our Congressmen So Much?” 277-287 in Norman J. Ornstein, ed., *Congress in Change: Evolution and Reform* (New York: Praeger, 1975). See also Glenn R. Parker and Roger H. Davidson, “Why Do Americans Love Their Congressmen so Much More than Their Congress?” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 4:1 (February 1979): 53-61.

¹³⁷ Tom Amlie to Arnold Zander, November 7th, 1952. Writing in the early 1950s, this discussion suggests that Amlie had abandoned his earlier hope for a third party (as expressed during his time with the Farmer-Labor Political Federation, for example), and his suspicions toward the Democratic Party too (as expressed during his involvement with the Progressive National Committee in 1936, where he warned against too close an association with the party). Now, it appeared, he had determined to change the Democratic Party's sensibilities from within, drawing perhaps on his earlier experience with the Nonpartisan League, and the utilization of primary interventions.

¹³⁸ See, for example, *New Republic*, November 14, 1949 issue, “A Progress Report” on the 81st Congress (15 issues). CIO Political Action Committee (PAC) Collection Papers, 1943-1960s, Accession # 647. Box 11, Folder 26, “Congressional Correspondence – 1944-51.” Reuther Library.

¹³⁹ Priest Committee Hearings, Part 2, p. 93.

¹⁴⁰ As an Executive Board meeting agenda from 1951 explained: “It is important to realize that National PAC does not itself make any endorsements for Senators, Congressmen, etc. It merely compiles information as to the endorsements made by the state PACs. For obvious reasons it is very wary about releasing even this data to the public. Thus, newspaper inquiries about endorsements are always shunted to the state PACs for answer.” The national P.A.C. did, however, provide information and guidance in the making of these endorsements, and could exert more active pressure if necessary. Confidential Agenda for CIO-PAC Executive Board Meeting,

March 12 and 13, 1951, p. 5. CIO Political Action Committee (PAC) Collection Papers, 1943-1960s, Accession # 647. Box 13, Folder 24, "CIO-PAC Meetings, 1946, 1951." Reuther Library.

¹⁴¹ Goddard, "Research for Political Action."

¹⁴² *Ibid.*

¹⁴³ CIO Political Action Committee (PAC) Collection Papers, 1943-1960s, Accession # 647. Box 12, Folder 4, "PAC Congressional Voting Record Newsletter, 1950-52." Reuther Library.

¹⁴⁴ CIO Political Action Committee (PAC) Collection Papers, 1943-1960s, Accession # 647. Box 11, Folder 26, "Congressional Correspondence – 1944-51." Reuther Library. I believe some voting records were printed as a special supplement to *CIO News*.

¹⁴⁵ The question was asked by Congressman Coe. Priest Committee Hearings, Part 2, p. 93.

¹⁴⁶ Priest Committee Hearings, Part 2, 99.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 93.

¹⁴⁸ They were more a tool for state and congressional district PACs to help with maintaining records on relevant congressmen in their areas, and then translating that information into a more manageable form. Voting records presented in PAC newsletters were sometimes split up by policy area – foreign policy votes, as in October 1950, or domestic issues, as in June 1951 CIO Political Action Committee (PAC) Collection Papers, 1943-1960s, Accession # 647. Box 12, Folder 4, "PAC Congressional Voting Record Newsletter, 1950-52." Reuther Library.

¹⁴⁹ Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 1, 5.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 30.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵² Quoted in Gaer, 61. *Emphasis mine*. This appears to be Murray essentially reading the text of the CIO's convention resolution on political action, which Hillman provided to a Senate Committee in 1944. The CIO's "Statement on Political Action" – Resolution No. 9 from its 1943 convention – read: "It will not be the policy of the Congress of Industrial Organizations in connection with the 1944 elections to build labor's political organization in the form of a third party, but to abstain from and discourage any move in that direction. For, apart from the insurmountable technical problems of placing such a party on the ballot for 1944, a third party at this time will only serve to divide labor and the progressive forces and assure the election of our political enemies." Testimony of Sidney Hillman, June 13th, 1944, in "Presidential, Vice Presidential, and Senatorial Campaign Expenditures, 1944," Part 1 of Hearings before the Special Committee to Investigate Presidential, Vice Presidential, and Senatorial Campaign Expenditures, 1944 [**Green Committee**], U.S. Senate, 78th Cong., 2d sess., June 13th, 1944 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1944), 8. Hereafter "Green Committee Hearings, Part 1."

¹⁵³ Quoted in Gaer, 61.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 1, 5. *Emphasis mine*.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁷ Hillman had helped found the American Labor Party in New York State in the 1930s, and had been involved with the Conference for Progressive Political Action in the 1920s. For a discussion of other sub-national third party efforts involving labor organizations, see Andrew Strouthous, *U.S. Labor and Political Action, 1918-24* (London: Macmillan, 2000) – considering the formation of labor parties in three cities (New York, Chicago, and Seattle). Like Greene (1998) and Rogin (1988), discussed in more detail below, Strouthous challenges the traditional view that the American labor movement was entirely committed to "voluntarism," or an essentially non-political strategy, and points to the internal disagreement over the AFL's "non-partisan" policy during this time. He suggests an international dynamic to the move toward independent political action: "Armed with the knowledge that state power could benefit workers and the example of the British Labour Party, a significant section of the AFL battled not only against the US electoral system but their own union leadership to build an independent party." (163). In fact, he suggests that the AFL's failure to give support to these nascent party movements at a critical juncture in the early twenties substantially hindered their progress: "The failure of the labor party movement was not 'inevitable', but rather it was the product of conflicts between supporters and opponents of the movement" (177).

¹⁵⁸ Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 1, p. 33. As Anderson Committee member Clarence J. Brown (R-OH) observed after listening to Hillman's statement, he was particularly struck by the time spent denying any third party intentions, and affirming commitment to the two-party system (Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 1, p. 33).

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 34.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 36.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 21. This came in response to Caddell's question: "You expect to make expenditures in support of the election of the Democratic nominees?"

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, 29.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 21.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 21 (on the DNC), p. 37 (on the RNC).

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 37.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 37.

¹⁶⁷ As a Chamber of Commerce pamphlet on "Labor In Politics" summarized in 1949: "Political experts have debated earnestly just how effective the P.A.C. part in the 1944 campaign actually was. It is certain in any event that some political critics attached importance to its part in the campaign." Chamber of Commerce Employer-Employee Relations Department, "Labor in Politics" pamphlet (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 1950), p. 13. Personal Papers of V. O. Key (Accession # 2000-078, Box 9,

“Writings: “Politics, Parties, and Pressure Groups,” Folder: “Chap III – “Workers” – Political Tactics”), John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, Boston, MA. Hereafter, “V.O. Key Papers.”

¹⁶⁸ Garson, 76; Foster, 28. Foster also points to Jack Kroll’s belief that Dies actually *overestimated* CIO strength in his district (28).

¹⁶⁹ Starnes was defeated by Albert Rains, “a state legislator who had been cultivated by the CIO as the result of his open sympathy for organized labor” (Garson, 76).

¹⁷⁰ Garson, 76. Missouri Senator Champ Clark (D-MO), for example, who also list his primary in August, pointed a finger at the “Communist-controlled CIO” to explain his defeat (Foster, 29). And a third member of HUAC, Rep. John Costello (D-CA) also went down to primary defeat, though the role of the P.A.C. is less clear here (see Garson, 76).

¹⁷¹ Foster, for example, casts some doubt on the PAC’s overall primary success rate. “Fortunately for the CIO-PAC,” he notes, “it never published a complete list of its primary endorsements. Thus, it was impossible for its detractors to gauge accurately the extent of PAC failure, or success, as the results came in” (28).

¹⁷² Truman (1951), discussing P.A.C.’s congressional endorsements in 1946, noted that they “constituted a sort of political “kiss of death”” for candidates if “unaccompanied by effective mobilization of the vote on election day” (306). Bone (1958) also pointed to the backlash that could accompany P.A.C. activity. As summarized in Scoble (1963), Bone noted “that California Republican uniformly centered their campaign attack on CIO-supported congressional candidates; that this attack on “CIO-PAC package” candidates became a campaign theme for Republicans almost everywhere in the nation; and that CIO-PAC endorsement of some congressional candidates proved to be a “kiss of death” under certain circumstances.” Harry T. Scoble, “Organized Labor in Electoral Politics: Some Questions for the Discipline,” *Western Political Quarterly* 16 (September 1963), 666-685. Page 679. Scoble was referring to Hugh A. Bone, “Political Parties and Pressure Group Politics” in *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 319 (1958): 73-83; and also Bone, *American Politics and the Party System* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1955), 146-149.

¹⁷³ Green Committee Report [S. Rpt. 79:101], 23. “The National Citizens Political Action Committee solicited contributions from the general public and filed a financial statement with the Clerk of the House of Representatives as the law required. The financial report of the National Citizens Political Action Committee showed total contributions of \$380,306.45 and total expenditures of \$378,424.78” (23).

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁵ As detailed in the Green Committee Report, the DNC spent \$2,056,121.58. (79).

¹⁷⁶ “Labor, militant, alert, and organized as never before, deserves credit for President Roosevelt’s reelection,” Thomas L. Stokes concluded in the *Daily Oklahoman*, but Schattschneider’s broader assessment in his unpublished manuscript points to the importance of foreign affairs and Roosevelt himself, in addition to labor’s role. Thus he references *New York Times* commentator Arthur Krock’s basic analysis that enough people did not want to change leadership at a time of war. The PAC’s 1944 congressional strategist, Tom Amlie, also commented on the Roosevelt factor. He concluded in 1952 that “the leaders of the labor movement as well as the lesser leaders of the Democrat Party have been misled by events regarding their own political effectiveness. Roosevelt was by all odds, the most effective campaigner in the history of the USA. People who helped him might well be excused for overestimating the importance of their own contribution.” Nonetheless, Truman (1951) pointed to the credit given to labor in some areas during the 1944 elections, and Arthur Krock conceded its effectiveness in that city. See Schattschneider, “P.A.C. and Party Organization” generally, and specific reference to Krock, *New York Times*, November 12, 1944; Truman, p. 313; Tom Amlie to Arnold Zander, November 7th, 1952.

¹⁷⁷ “The contrast between the regular Democratic organization and the PAC organization impressed newspapermen strongly,” Schattschneider summarized. Schattschneider, “P.A.C. and Party Organization.”

¹⁷⁸ Ernest Lindley, “FDR’s Party Also Should Study Vote,” *Washington Post*, November 19, 1944, p. B5. Schattschneider classifies Lindley as “friendly,” and makes reference to this quote, in “P.A.C. and Party Organization.”

¹⁷⁹ *New York Times*, November 17th, 1944, quoted in Schattschneider, “P.A.C. and Party Organization.” Nonetheless, Schattschneider noted that “[a]s far as the leading journalistic observers are concerned it is fair to say that they were of the opinion that the Republican party organization, generally, was in better condition than the regular Democratic organization.”

¹⁸⁰ Noted in Garson, 129.

¹⁸¹ E.E. Schattschneider, “P.A.C. and Party Organization,” c1953.

¹⁸² Radford E. Mobley, *Detroit Free Press*, November 12, 1944, quoted in Schattschneider, “P.A.C. and Party Organization.”

¹⁸³ Indeed, much of the early analysis of P.A.C. focused on the ways it took on party-like functions – candidate recruitment, for example, in addition to mobilization.

¹⁸⁴ Marquis Childs in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, November 13th, 1944, quoted in Schattschneider, “P.A.C. and Party Organization.”

¹⁸⁵ See Hannegan’s comments in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, Nov 17, 1944, quoted in Schattschneider, “P.A.C. and Party Organization.”

¹⁸⁶ Schattschneider, “P.A.C. and Party Organization” (*emphasis mine*).

¹⁸⁷ *Daily Oklahoman*, November 9, 1944, quoted in Schattschneider, “P.A.C. and Party Organization.”

¹⁸⁸ Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 1, 21.

¹⁸⁹ Green Committee Report, 23.

¹⁹⁰ “It was intended to function not later than November 7, 1944, in support of the candidacies of Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry Truman, and “progressive” candidates for the Senate and House of Representatives.” Green Committee Report [S. Rpt. 79:101], 23.

¹⁹¹ “The CIO-PAC and How It Works,” 1.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 1-2.

¹⁹³ Foster, 10-11.

¹⁹⁴ Gaer, 49 (*emphasis in original*).

¹⁹⁵ Joseph G. LaPalombara, "Pressure, Propaganda, and Political Action in the Elections of 1950," *The Journal of Politics* 14 No. 2 (1952): 313. More accurately, he argues, "it is not a wholly correct observation as applied to organized labor and the type of activities in which it has engaged, since both are primarily phenomena of the twentieth century."

¹⁹⁶ LaPalombara, 313. Furthermore – with reference to the AFL by that point – he noted that its "traditional dictum of "defeating its enemies and electing its friends" had been streamlined, and now involved "direct political action, in addition to the old method..." (313).

¹⁹⁷ "One of our most important responsibilities," the Cowan memo emphasized, "will be the discovery or development of progressive candidates to be supported in the primaries in 1944. Cowan-Brophy-Walsh Report, p. 23.

¹⁹⁸ "We Were Licked!" *The New Republic*, November 18, 1946, p. 656.

¹⁹⁹ See Samuel P. Huntington, "The Election Tactics of the Nonpartisan League," *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 36 No. 4 (1950): 613-632.

²⁰⁰ Hansen (1928) suggests that the Anti-Saloon League was a partisan vehicle in 1928, given its support of Republican nominee Herbert Hoover. I resist this characterization, however, as the League's presidential activities in that race were somewhat unique, and did not alter the strategies upon which they based their congressional activities. With the Democrats nominating Al Smith – a committed "wet" who was backed by a new anti-temperance organization (the Association Against the Prohibition Amendment), the contest presented a particularly graphic choice and led to the League's support for Hoover. Their single-issue focus did not imply support for other aspects of the Republican platform. See John Mark Hansen, *Gaining Access: Congress and the Farm Lobby, 1919-1981* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), pp. 217-219.

²⁰¹ Mark Sullivan, "Communist, CIO Acts to Have Deep Effect on Political Parties," *The Washington Post*, May 28th, 1944.

²⁰² Garson, 58. The AFL explicitly announced that they, unlike the P.A.C., would adhere to labor's traditional "nonpartisan" political policy of "rewarding our friends and punishing our enemies." Louis Stark, "Labor Leaders Active in Pre-Campaign Moves: While AFL Continues 'Nonpartisan,' CIO Works for Roosevelt," *The New York Times*, March 5th, 1944.

²⁰³ Key points out that the AFL held its annual convention in late November in presidential election years, so as to avoid hint of endorsement. Lecture #7, V.O. Key Papers. The AFL constitution also barred party politics from the annual convention (see Don Mark Chang, "Labor Political Action and the Taft-Hartley Act," *Nebraska Law Review* 33:4 (May 1954): 554-576. Page 555, n10).

²⁰⁴ Garson, 60. The endorsement suggested that "[t]he labor-Democratic alliance was now formalized," he states.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 117. A number of CIO members served as delegates or alternates at the convention too, with some holding positions of responsibility on important convention committees, Garson notes.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 116-122 for an extensive discussion of the CIO's 1944 convention efforts on behalf of Wallace.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 120, 123. The phrase was reported by Arthur Krock of the *New York Times*, though its veracity was questioned for some time.

²⁰⁸ Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 1, 7. "We presented this program to the conventions of the two major parties. We are also representing it to the American people for their thoughtful consideration and action."

²⁰⁹ Ben W. Gilbert, "GOP Snubs CIO Political Committee," *The Washington Post*, June 26, 1944, Page 1.

²¹⁰ This phrase appeared in a July 27, 1943 letter from Hillman to Roosevelt, quoted in Foster, 22.

²¹¹ Over time, such a pattern has been widely acknowledged, though exact ratios are difficult to determine (there are no comprehensive overviews of either feature – whether master lists of endorsements or comprehensive campaign contribution totals – from which to calculate the proportions accurately). Nonetheless, looking to labor political activity from 1946 to 1960 – with P.A.C. forming the main source of information up to 1954 – Scoble (1963) observed that "labor money is almost wholly concentrated within the Democratic party," and "probably more so," Scoble estimated, than the campaign finance analysis offered by Alexander Heard in *The Costs of Democracy* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1960). See Harry T. Scoble, "Organized Labor in Electoral Politics: Some Questions for the Discipline," *Western Political Quarterly* 16 (September 1963), 684. As Greenstone characterized Scoble's conclusions: "By the 1950s...the pattern of almost exclusive support for Democrats had been well established." J. David Greenstone, *Labor in American Politics* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), 322.

²¹² Cowan-Brophy-Walsh Report, 21.

²¹³ *Ibid.*

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 23. Because, in the primaries too, "there was often far too little difference between candidates to permit a rational choice, and frequently there was no opposition to reactionary incumbents" (23).

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 22.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 22.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 16. This phrase is utilized when discussing the potential for national-level collaboration with the AFL: it might prove difficult to establish because "[its] policy of rewarding its friends and punishing its enemies without regard to long-range considerations is more rigidly enforced nationally than it is locally."

Chapter 7. Labor Takes the Partisan Plunge

¹ Republicans gained 67 new office-holders (55 in the House and 12 in the Senate) – swept into office on a tide of anti-union sentiment.

² It is important to note that this expanded prohibition would apply to corporations also. Indeed, President Truman observed in his veto message that "[i]n undertaking to restrict political contributions and expenditures, the bill would prohibit many legitimate activities on the part of unions and corporations," and raised troubling questions in its application to media companies especially. "I regard this as a dangerous intrusion on free speech," he warned, and – much like Roosevelt's view of the provision added onto the

Smith-Connally bill – “foreign to the stated purposes of this bill.” Despite these objections, his veto was overridden on June 23, 1947. Harry S. Truman, “Veto of the Taft-Hartley Labor Bill,” June 20th, 1947. Available at Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley (eds.), *The American Presidency Project*: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=12675>.

³ Secondary boycotts were an expression of union solidarity, wherein a union unrelated to a particular labor-management dispute would boycott the employers’ products in some way. *Common situs* picketing most commonly affected the construction industry, wherein a union grievance with a particular sub-contractor would bring the entire construction site grinding to a halt. Jurisdictional strikes involved union claims to sole responsibility for particular types of work *within* a particular shop environment.

⁴ Wartime legislation like Smith-Connally was set to expire automatically, six months after the end of hostilities. See Anthony Corrado, “Money and Politics: A History of Federal Campaign Finance Law.” In Anthony Corrado, Thomas E. Manm, Daniel R. Ortiz, Trevor Potter, and Frank J. Sorauf (eds.), *Campaign Finance Reform: A Sourcebook*. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1997. p. 30.

⁵ Melvin I. Urofsky, “Campaign Finance Reform Before 1971,” *Albany Government Law Review* 1 (2008): 27.

⁶ See Section 313 of the FCPA of 1925, as amended by the Smith-Connally Act, reproduced in Green Committee Report [S. Rpt. 79:101], 89. As codified, an expenditure included “a payment, distribution, loan, advance, deposit, or gift, of money, or anything of value, and includes a contract, promise, or agreement, to make an expenditure, whether or not legally enforceable.”

⁷ I.e. using treasury funds for an array of other activities promoting a particular candidacy but not contributing directly to that candidate.

⁸ Paula Baker, “How Money Became Speech,” unpublished manuscript (7/1/2012).

⁹ In this case, their reasoning seemed to be that whether utilizing voluntary funds or not, a PAC still constituted a labor organization (the P.A.C.’s own legal argument in this regard was that it did not exist for the purpose of dealing with employers, and thus did not constitute a “labor organization” under this definition). The minority report accompanying the House bill heavily criticized this aspect of the bill, which, it felt placed a one-sided burden on unions. “Labor-Management Relations Act, 1947,” Report No. 245, from the Committee on Education and Labor, U.S. House, 80th Cong., 1st Sess. (April 11, 1947), 211.

¹⁰ See “Campaign Expenditures Committee,” Report No. 2739, from the Special Committee on Campaign Expenditures, 1946 [Priest Committee], U.S. House, 79th Cong., 2d Sess. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, December 31st, 1946), 40, 42-43, 46.

¹¹ For Sabbath comments, see *Congressional Record – House*, 80th Cong., 1st Sess. (June 4th, 1947), 6389.

¹² It would cut off the flow of treasury funds into elections, Ellender thought, preventing the unions themselves, *as labor organizations*, from essentially delegating to their associated PACs the ability to spend treasury monies with impunity. See *Congressional Record – Senate*, 80th Cong., 1st Sess. (June 6th, 1947), 6522; Joseph E. Kallenbach, “The Taft-Hartley Act and Union Political Contributions and Expenditures,” *Minnesota Law Review* 33 No. 1 (December 1948): 9, n29. Also see the opinion in *Pipefitters v. United States* 407 U.S. 385 (1972).

¹³ The source for this language was S. 1173, a bill sponsored by the members of the Senate Committee on Campaign Expenditures, 1946.

¹⁴ See *Congressional Record – Senate*, 80th Cong., 1st Sess. (June 5th, 1947), 6439. *Emphasis mine*.

¹⁵ *Thomas W. Bove v. Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts* 69 N. E. (2nd) 115 (1946). This position is explicated in some detail in Dudley to Rollin Everett, July 29, 1954. CIO Political Action Committee (PAC) Collection Papers, 1943-1960s, Accession # 647. Box 17, Folder 11, “Union Political Activity/Campaign Expenditures – Legal Opinions, 1940s-50s.” Reuther Library.

¹⁶ In this respect, Taft-Hartley “for the first time overtly tried to limit political speech by a particular group,” Urofsky claims (27).

¹⁷ *United States v. Congress of Industrial Organizations*, 335 U.S. 106 (1948).

¹⁸ The editorial in question had been penned by CIO President Philip Murray, and was also circulated at CIO expense outside of the membership, the government charged. The government thus obtained an indictment against the union, for the *expenditures* involved in publishing and circulating the newsletter, which had come from treasury funds. This was charged as unlawful spending “in connection with” an election. But the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia dismissed the case, claiming the statute was unconstitutional on First Amendment grounds. The United States appealed the decision to the Supreme Court, but the Court avoided the thorny questions of constitutionality in its ruling. The Court held instead that the CIO’s actions did not fall within the scope of the law, because the publication was primarily intended for the readership of *members*. I.e. the use of union funds to publish and distribute a regular union publication among the membership was not prohibited by the Federal Corrupt Practices Act (as amended by the Labor Management Relations Act of 1947), even if it included an editorial advocating for a particular federal candidate. “In a rather convoluted opinion,” Urofsky notes, “Justice Stanley Reed totally twisted the legislative history of the Act to hold that the ban did not apply to internal communications” (27). Evidence to support the further charge – that the union had used treasury funds to circulate the publication *beyond* the membership – was deemed inconclusive. The Court therefore chose not to rule on whether such external communications might be funded with dues money, as it was unclear whether union funds had indeed been used in such a way. A NAM legal memo on the *CIO News* and *Painters Local Union* cases suggests that these previous instances did not constitute “expenditures” under section 610 of the law because they were not made “on behalf of” political candidates, but rather as an exercise in free speech (the Union was expressing its position on those seeking federal offices – only if it was going outside the union would it start to be construed as an expenditure accruing more generally to a candidate’s campaign). N.A.M. Law Department Memo – “Political Action and the Corrupt Practices Act. U.S. v. United Automobile Workers, CIO). February 24, 1956. NAM Records (Accession No. 1411): Series I, Box B-5. Folder – “Political.” Hagley.

¹⁹ *United States v. United Automobile, Aircraft and Agricultural Workers* 352 U.S. 567 (1957). The UAW was indicted for using treasury funds to sponsor television broadcasts that allegedly urged support for certain Congressional and Senatorial candidates in Michigan, during the elections of 1954. The District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan dismissed the indictment, but the Supreme Court reversed the dismissal. In a majority opinion written by Justice Frankfurter, the Court found a Congressional intent to

proscribe *commercial* broadcasts – such as those the UAW had funded. In contrast to the communications involved in the *CIO* case – an editorial that “was neither directed nor delivered to the public at large” – the UAW television ads involved broad public dissemination. So advocacy in *public* communications, when paid for by treasury funds, it appeared, would not be considered acceptable under the Corrupt Practices Act. The evil at which Congress aimed, the Court observed, “is the use of corporation or union funds to influence the public at large to vote for a particular candidate or a particular party” (540). Hayward (2008) has argued that the Court incorrectly depicted congressional intent – or the lack thereof, as she suggests. Justice Kennedy drew on Hayward’s argument for his majority opinion in the *Citizens United* case. Allison R. Hayward, “Revisiting the Fable of Reform,” *Harvard Journal on Legislation* 45 (2008): 421-470; *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* No. 08-205 (2010). Majority Opinion, 48). But regardless of these constitutional hints, the *UAW* Court did not offer a definitive opinion in this regard. Instead, the case was remanded to the District Court for trial, where fuller information would be uncovered and might shed light on the presence or absence of constitutional questions. In the District Court trial, the jury was instructed to consider whether the broadcast was *intended to and did influence* the general public, and they found the UAW not guilty. See Urofsky, 27.

²⁰ David B. Truman, *The Governmental Process: Political Interests and Public Opinion* (Berkeley, CA: Institute of Governmental Studies, University of California, Berkeley, 1951/1993), 311.

²¹ Truman, 311: “Some of the propaganda of labor groups like the CIO-P.A.C. has been of this type.” See the pamphlet, “This is Your America,” reproduced in Joseph Gaer: *The First Round* (New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1944), pp. 17-44 (311); “The ‘What Helps Business Helps You’ campaign by the Chamber of Commerce of the United States in 1936 is an excellent illustration.” See John W. O’Leary: “The ‘What Helps Business’ Campaign,” *Public Opinion Quarterly* 2:3 (Fall 1938), pp. 645-50 (311); “Much of the propaganda of the National Association of Manufacturers and that of various State and local business groups fits into the same category” (311).

²² Truman, 311. *Emphasis mine*.

²³ Truman, 320.

²⁴ *Congressional Record – House*, April 4, 1922. P. 5015. See also Overacker, *Money in Elections*, p. 258

²⁵ “In the now-famous footnote 52 of the *Buckley* opinion, the Court named eight examples that constituted “express words of advocacy.” These were: “vote for,” “elect,” “support,” “cast your ballot for,” “Smith for Congress,” “vote against,” “defeat,” and “reject.” Without these words of express advocacy or something comparable, ads by parties and groups would be viewed as educational rather than electioneering in nature, and thus would not be subject to regulation.” “This distinction between educational and campaign advertising, established in practice since the Anti-Saloon League’s reluctance to disclose its financial activities in the 1920s, had now received the Court’s legal sanction,” they conclude. In a footnote, they observe: “The problem of distinguishing which type of political activity is electioneering and which type is merely meant to promote issues emerged early in the debate to reform campaign financing.” Craig Holman and Joan Claybrook, “Outside Groups in the New Campaign Finance Environment: The Meaning of BCRA and the *McConnell* Decision,” *Yale Law and Policy Review* 22 (2004): 239-240.

²⁶ See Chapter 4, Note 158.

²⁷ Emanuel Celler. “Pressure Groups in Congress,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 319 (September, 1958): 5-6. Celler (D-NY) was the Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee; Charles B. Nutting and W. Edward Sell, “Modern Lobbying and Its Control,” *Rocky Mountain Law Review* 26:4 (June 1954): 403.

²⁸ Gloria Resch Cook, “The Relationship Between Political Parties and Pressure Groups (MA Thesis, University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill, 1956), 227.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 19.

³⁰ Lecture #7, V.O. Key Papers.

³¹ Zeigler, 149-150.

³² Minutes of the National Committee of Labor’s League for Political Education, November 17, 1948, p. 1. V.O. Key Papers, Box 9, Folder: “Chapter III – 4th ed. Materials Used. Folder 2 of 2.” As explained at the AFL convention that year: “no matter how many favorable votes a Congressman had on other issues, an unfavorable vote on the Taft-Hartley Act disqualifies him from receiving L.L.P.E. support.” “AFL Proceedings, 1948,” V.O. Key Papers, Box 9, Folder. “Chap. III. “Workers.” Materials Used.”

³³ 169 of the 239 endorsed House candidates won their general election contests, while 17 of the 21 endorsed Senate candidates were successful. 186 out of the 535 newly-elected members were thus P.A.C. endorsees. This information is drawn from CIO-PAC Research Department, “Congressional Elections Results, 1948,” March 3, 1949, and “Members of Congress Supported by PAC,” March 11, 1949. CIO-PAC Papers, Box 17, Folder 19, “Elections; PAC Research, 1948-54.”

³⁴ Some insights into the overall general election pattern can be drawn from this data the information on the 186 successful candidates – suggesting that the general election pattern must still have been substantially lopsided. With 186 successful candidates, as shown in Table 1, this leaves 86 P.A.C. endorsees who lost their general election races. Even if *every single one* of these unsuccessful candidates had been a Republican, this would still yield overall support for only 98 Republicans out of 260 – approximately 38%. This is a not insubstantial (if highly unlikely) figure, but still reflects an uneven distribution.

³⁵ The 11 endorsed House Republicans were: Richard J. Walsh (CA); Richard W. Hoffman (IL); C.W. Bishop (IL); H.R. Gross (IA); James S. Golden (KY); Gerald R. Ford, Jr. (MI); Jacob Javits (NY); Homer D. Angell (OR); Dayton E. Phillips (TN); Gardner Withrow (WI); and Merlin Hill (WI). The sole successful Republican senator to earn P.A.C. support was Margaret Chase Smith of Maine. CIO-PAC Research Department, “Members of Congress Supported by PAC,” March 11, 1949. CIO Political Action Committee (PAC) Collection Papers, 1943-1960s, Accession # 647. Box 17, Folder 19, “Elections; PAC Research, 1948-54.” Reuther Library.

³⁶ Of these 105 Democrats, 66 were successful in their primary contests, while 4 of the 14 Republicans won their nominations. The full partisan breakdown of primary activity is not available, as there are a further five primary races listed in which the party affiliation

is not indicated – bringing the total number of primary races listed to 135. Moreover, while 33 states had held primary contests or conventions by the point at which this document was written, it is not clear that this reflects the entirety of possible primary activity that year. In terms of the Republicans receiving primary endorsements, they are presumably not identical with those supported in the general election, as only four of these Republican primary candidates won their nomination. Though, as the document may exclude other primary races in which P.A.C. participated, the question remains open. It does appear that at least one candidate did receive support from P.A.C. in both her primary and general contests – Margaret Chase Smith of Maine. Beyond the congressional level, P.A.C. also supported William Beardsley's bid for the Republican gubernatorial nomination in Iowa (who subsequently won the general election). "Summary of 1948 Primaries – August 27, 1948." CIO Political Action Committee (PAC) Collection Papers, 1943-1960s, Accession # 647. Box 17, Folder 12, "1948 Campaign & DNC." Reuther Library.

³⁷ Cook, 224-225, 237.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 224-225.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 237.

⁴⁰ Looking at COPE's 1958 "money endorsements" of House candidates, for example (i.e., those they contributed money to), Scoble (1963) notes that only 6 out of 199 were Republicans. At the senatorial level, only two candidates out of 34 supported were Republicans. One of these cases was Knight in California, where Scoble points out, COPE actually contributed to the candidate's *opponent* at the same time, and in a far larger amount – suggesting a very weak kind of "issue-based" support for both. The other case was Langer in North Dakota – a Senator who had voted against Taft-Hartley ten years earlier, and who considered by COPE to be a "domestic Democrat." In the 21 Senate races in 1960 where COPE made a financial endorsement, three of the recipients were Republicans – but again, Scoble points out, the contributions were on the smaller side (\$500 for two of the candidates), or small relative to the backing given their *opponent*. In the New Jersey Senate contest, COPE gave \$2500 to the incumbent, Clifford Case, but also \$1000 to his Democratic challenger. Case was re-elected. (The two Republican candidates receiving \$500 contributions were John Sherman Cooper in Kentucky, an incumbent who was successful in his reelection bid, and Boggs in Maryland, an unsuccessful challenger). Harry M. Scoble, "Organized Labor in Electoral Politics: Some Questions for the Discipline," *Western Political Quarterly* 16 No. 3 (1963): 684.

⁴¹ Joseph G. LaPalombara, "Pressure, Propaganda, and Political Action in the Elections of 1950," *The Journal of Politics* 14 No. 2 (1952): 317. The pamphlet was entitled "What Does CIO Do?"

⁴² Of the 11 Republicans in the 81st Congress and supported by PAC, six had been in the previous Congress and voted "no" on Taft-Hartley: Richard J. Welch (CA); C.W. Bishop (IL); Jacob Javits (NY); Homer D. Angell (OR); Dayton E. Phillips (TN) (Phillips only served two terms, 80th and 81st); and Merlin Hull (WI) (Hull had previously served as a Progressive congressman, from the 74th-79th Congresses and as a Republican from 80th to 83rd). PAC had given support to five other Republicans, first elected in 1948: Richard W. Hoffman (IL); H.R. Gross (IA); James S. Golden (KY); Gerald R. Ford, Jr. (MI); and Gardner Withrow (WI) (Withrow was elected to the 81st Congress as a Republican, but had served in the 72nd-75th Congresses as a Progressive).

⁴³ Five other Republicans in the 80th Congress had voted no, three of whom did not win reelection to the 81st Congress. These defeated Congressmen were Homer R. Jones (WA), John C. Brophy (representative from Wisconsin and *not* the CIO official), and John C. Butler (NY), who was subsequently elected to the 82nd Congress in 1950, but failed to win renomination two years later. Three Republican Senators also voted "no" on Taft-Hartley, but none were up for re-election in 1948, making PAC support irrelevant in that year. The three senators were: George W. Malone (NV) and William Langer (ND), both of whom were reelected in 1952, and Wayne L. Morse (OR), reelected in 1950.

⁴⁴ Lack of support for Lemke likely relates to his 1936 presidential candidacy for the Union Party ticket, and the intricacies of North Dakota progressive politics. The Tollefson situation appears to relate to tensions between the CIO and the AFL. Tollefson's former campaign manager (and SEIU union member), Norm Schut, noted "When the '48 campaign came up, Tollefson's campaign was in pretty good shape. He had voted right on the major labor issues and he had the support of organized labor. When the filings were closed there were nothing but unknowns on the Democratic side who filed against him." (p. 2). Mentioning former Governor Arthur B. Langlie, he adds that "Langlie was very clear on the record as being opposed to the Taft-Hartley bill, as had the Republicans in Congress from western Washington. The CIO type people were Democratic, period. But the more conservative AFL people—this was before the merger in 1956—were the ones who came to Langlie, and who were bitter enemies of Dave Beck because of what he had done when he tried to break the Aeromechanics strike and make a backdoor deal with Boeing. He did that with Sears-Roebuck against the retail clerks. I know example after example of where they just hated his guts" (p. 4). The Washington CIO-PAC may thus have provided no support to Tollefson given its partisan persuasion in the state and tension with the AFL, which presumably backed Tollefson. See Norm Schut interviewed by George Scott, Washington State Oral History Program Olympia, WA, 1989. Retrieved 8/4/2012 from www.apps.leg.wa.gov/oralhistory/view_resource.aspx?d=1009.

⁴⁵ Quoted in James Caldwell Foster, *The Union Politic: The CIO Political Action Committee* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1975), 197.

⁴⁶ Foster, 197-198. Foster also points to a subsequent incident involving Morse: "In 1953, as Morse was contemplating a switch to the Democratic party, the Senator suddenly found himself relieved of his responsibilities on the Senate Labor Committee. Because he had been an honored guest at the 1952 CIO convention, he addressed a letter to James Carey asking why the CIO had not even raised a whimper in his defense. Why, he wrote, should a senator with a fine labor record go undefended merely because he was not a "liberal Democrat?" More pointedly, he noted that the very senators who refused to help him, "that group of so-called liberal Democrats in the Senate, who in my book are spineless wonders," were men whom the PAC had elected and who should take advice from the C.I.O." (198).

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 198.

⁴⁸ This, of course, is something Schattschneider questioned anyway – with his “law of imperfect mobilization.” Pointing to this theoretical impossibility was meant to cast doubt on the credibility of threats that groups often made to lawmakers, but the mechanism underlying it was still the fundamental way in which influence was viewed. Plus an imperfectly mobilized group that is *large*, or concentrated in a critical area, could still be important. Unlike Cowan et al., Radford E. Mobley in the *Detroit Free Press* seemed to think that the P.A.C. “could throw its strength elsewhere if the Democratic leadership refused to make a deal,” but it would not go outside the bounds of the two-party system. “[E]ven PAC does not threaten to start a third party – at least not yet. Its shrewd leaders remember the history of American third parties. They prefer to work within a major party.” *Detroit Free Press*, November 12, 1944, in Schattschneider, “P.A.C. and Party Organization.”

⁴⁹ The NPL had shown that concentration on a single party’s primaries could allow influence to be built from the *inside*, but its scope of activity, and lack of partisan attachment, reflected a very different underlying approach – as I argue below.

⁵⁰ “Confidential - Report of NAM Representatives who attended National Citizens Political Action Committee School. Washington, D.C. June 26-29, 1946 - General Impressions of Miss McKane” (*emphasis mine*). NAM Records (Series 1, General Files, Box 307, “Folder – N.A.M. – Miscellaneous. National Citizens Action Political Action Committee School, 1946”).

⁵¹ “Confidential - Report of NAM Representatives who attended National Citizens Political Action Committee School. Washington, D.C. June 26-29, 1946 - General Impressions of Messrs. Swanson and Buergelein.” NAM Records, Box 307 “Folder – N.A.M. – Miscellaneous. National Citizens Action Political Action Committee School, 1946.”

⁵² *Springfield Republican*, November 12, 1944, in Schattschneider, “P.A.C. and Party Organization.”

⁵³ Kroll in *The New Republic*, October 21, 1946. Quoted in Chamber of Commerce Employer-Employee Relations Department, “Labor in Politics” pamphlet (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 1950), p. 13. In Personal Papers of V. O. Key (Accession # 2000-078, Box 9, “Writings: “Politics, Parties, and Pressure Groups,” Folder: “Chap III – “Workers” – Political Tactics”), John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, Boston, MA.

⁵⁴ “A Day to Day Account of the Activities of CIO-PAC at the Democratic Convention,” (1948), Page 7. CIO Political Action Committee (PAC) Collection Papers, 1943-1960s, Accession # 647. Box 17, Folder 12, “1948 Campaign & DNC.” Reuther Library.

⁵⁵ He continued, “unless we can accomplish this, or something reasonably close to it, there is little chance of putting through domestic and foreign programs of the kind which we have been urging as the proper objectives of the war.” Nathan E. Cowan, John Brophy, and J. Raymond Walsh, “Memorandum to President Philip Murray,” December 30, 1942, p. 24. Wayne County AFL-CIO Papers (Box 25, CIO Political Programs Folder), Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan. Hereafter “Cowan-Brophy-Walsh Report.”

⁵⁶ Opposition to Truman’s containment policy “came from Democratic liberals led by former vice president Henry Wallace” Sidney M. Milkis and Michael Nelson, *The American President: Origins and Development, 1776-2007* (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2008), 301. Wallace had been dismissed from the cabinet in September, 1946, after speaking out against the hostile stance the administration was taking toward the Soviet Union, reflected in the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan. “Wallace felt that the president had ruled out a *rapprochement* with the Russians by accepting the concept of an irreconcilable, bipolar world,” Garson (1974) explained (225). “He constantly castigated Truman for bypassing the United Nations in his containment policies and, during a well-publicized tour of Europe, called for reconciliation with the U.S.S.R.” (225-226). See Robert A. Garson, *The Democratic Party and the Politics Of Sectionalism, 1941-1948* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1974), 225-226.

⁵⁷ Cowan-Brophy-Walsh Report, p. 22. “To say that we must think of action at present within the existing parties, mainly the Democratic Party, is not to foreclose consideration of the possible need of a new party later on,” Cowan et al. had written. “It may prove true that the control of reactionary interests over the Democratic Party is too strong to be broken. The answer to this question will depend in part on what we do about it, for the elimination of the poll tax, among other things, would go a long way toward building up real popular participation in the Democratic Party.” Nor was promoting liberal candidates within the Democratic Party, and supporting some progressives elsewhere, diametrically opposed to a third party plan – it was “the best method of preparing for any possible need to establish a new party” in future, as it would create a nucleus of actors ready to be called upon. “[T]he best method of preparing for any possible need to establish a new party is to create within the existing parties a nucleus of Congressmen, public administrators, and party organization men, who are ready to support our policies and who can be called upon at the proper time, if that time ever comes to establish a new party. Such people could be drawn from among progressives in all parties” (22).

⁵⁸ Henry A. Wallace, “Why a Third Party in 1948?” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 259 (September 1948): 10, 15. The United States was, in effect, under “one-party rule,” he declared, since there was “no real difference between the Democratic and Republican parties on the important issues confronting the American people.” “Both serve the interests of big business,” he claimed. “Both operate against the interests of the people” (10). “The alliance between the southern Democrats and northern big business within the Democratic Party – broken by President Roosevelt – has been reformed by President Truman” Wallace asserted (15).

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁶⁰ Winston Churchill, “The Sinews of Peace,” Speech at Westminster College, Fulton, MO, March 5th, 1946.

⁶¹ Harry S. Truman, Address before a Joint Session of Congress, March 12th, 1947.

⁶² George C. Marshall, Remarks at Harvard University, June 5th, 1947.

⁶³ See http://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/common/generic/VP_Henry_Wallace.htm

⁶⁴ Robert H. Zieger, *The CIO: 1935-1955* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 267.

⁶⁵ On December 29th, 1947, he announced his presidential candidacy, launching a critique of the extant two-party system and the inability of liberal forces to achieve progress through either.

⁶⁶ Zieger, 268.

⁶⁷ See Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 7, 407.

⁶⁸ Zieger, 269.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Bridges was a hard-headed Australian who had settled in San Francisco, and moved up the ranks of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) to become its president.

⁷¹ Zieger, 269.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ In terms of reputational benefits, attacking Communism in such ways could provide normative cover for the CIO – with the later purging of the anti-Communist unions serving something of a legitimating function for labor PACs, an assertion of their “Americanism.” For highlighting this point, I would like to thank participants in a 2011 discussion panel for fellows at the Miller Center of Public Affairs, University of Virginia.

⁷⁴ Zieger, 269.

⁷⁵ Rather, it would impede those prospects, they believed. Resolution text, reported in Louis Stark, “CIO’s Board Votes Against 3d Party For Aid Plan, 33-11,” *The New York Times*, January 23, 1948.

⁷⁶ Speech text included in Kroll to Murray, 6/24/1948, 9.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid. Murray had charged in May “that the roots and aspirations of the third party this year are in the Communist Party and not in the American labor movement...”

⁷⁹ Wallace, 14.

⁸⁰ This lack of enthusiasm for a third party project was not necessarily reflective of public opinion, either. In August 1945, a Gallup poll had found that 38% of respondents thought a Labor Party would be able to win a presidential election in the U.S. – at least at some, undefined point in the future (37% thought not, and 25% had “no opinion”). Gallup Poll (AIPO), Aug, 1945. Retrieved Feb-10-2012 from the iPOLL Databank, The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, University of Connecticut.

http://www.ropercenter.uconn.edu/data_access/ipoll/ipoll.html

⁸¹ Zieger, 269. On liberal-labor concern with the Truman administration, see Sidney M. Milkis, *The President and the Parties: The Transformation of the American Party System since the New Deal* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 156-159. Though the CIO had approved Truman’s veto of the Taft-Hartley act, it went into 1948 having “allocated funds only to candidates for Congress,” according to Garson (268). On Truman’s efforts to win back their support, see Garson, pp. 227-230.

⁸² Garson, 268-269, and “A Day to Day Account of the Activities of CIO-PAC at the Democratic Convention,” (1948), 1. CIO-PAC Papers, Box 17, Folder 12, “1948 Campaign & DNC.” Reuther Library. The Americans for Democratic Action (ADA) was also heavily involved with this effort to draft Eisenhower, and to drop Truman from the ticket more generally. “The draft-Eisenhower movement received official endorsement in April from the executive board of the ADA,” Garson notes, “which called for an open convention (with no instructed delegates) and the nomination of Eisenhower and Justice William O. Douglas as his running mate” (269). The CIO was active in other ways at the convention, with approximately 55 members directly involved as delegates or alternates. See “CIO Members of State Delegations,” CIO-PAC Papers, Box 17, Folder 12, “1948 Campaign & DNC.”

⁸³ Milkis (1993), 156.

⁸⁴ As the NCPAC affirmed in early 1946: “We will be working as intensively as funds permit to mobilize millions of voters behind progressive candidates – regardless of party...your contribution will help election Congressmen who will support a people’s program – a Roosevelt program – and help defeat candidates who menace our welfare and security.” National Citizens PAC ad, in “Elections 1946.” *PAC Pamphlet-of-the-Month No. 7*. n.d. IGS Library, UC Berkeley. *Emphasis mine*.

⁸⁵ Garson (1974) attributes this shift to Truman’s moves to appease his critics on the left – by appealing to a broader “urban coalition” of labor, African-Americans, and intellectuals (226-230). In particular, Garson points to a memo by Truman advisor Clark Clifford, which recommended ignoring the South and constant need to conciliate Southern Democrats, and focus instead upon outreach to “the Negro and labor vote,” which he thought would hold the balance of power (230).

⁸⁶ The P.A.C. got on board Truman’s “election special” once the nomination was resolved. Following the Democratic convention, it issued a presidential endorsement, claiming an issue-based rationale for supporting the Democratic presidential candidate in 1948, and any congressmen who will support him. “The platform of the Republican Party condemns itself,” they said (5). “Recommendations of the Executive Officers to the meeting of the CIO Executive Board, Washington, D.C., August 30-31, 1948.” CIO-PAC Papers, 1943-1960s, Box 17, Folder 12, “1948 Campaign & DNC.” See also “A Day to Day Account of the Activities of CIO-PAC at the Democratic Convention,” in which Tilford Dudley reported Truman’s remarks to the convention delegates in his acceptance speech that “the farmers and organized labor would be “ungrateful” if they failed to support the Democrats and himself in the election.”

⁸⁷ It offered “nothing but division and defeat to *really* progressive Americans.” Recommendations of the Executive Officers to the meeting of the CIO Executive Board, Washington, D.C., August 30-31, 1948. Page 3. CIO-PAC Papers, Box 17, Folder 12, “1948 Campaign & DNC.” *Emphasis mine*.

⁸⁸ Ibid. *Emphasis mine*.

⁸⁹ The CIO Executive Board voted 35-12 to endorse Truman in August, 1948. On the CIO endorsement, see Truman, 301.

⁹⁰ Truman, 301.

⁹¹ Ibid. “The A.F. of L. did not endorse Truman; rather, some of its leaders formed the Committee of Labor Executives for the purpose,” Truman states. Gitlow (1950) also mentions this “Committee of Labor Executives.” “The practical endorsement of the Democratic ticket was achieved through the establishment of a special committee, called the Committee of Labor Executives for the re-election of Truman,” Gitlow observes. “Nearly all AF of L leaders joined the Committee,” he notes (467). I have found no further information as to its composition and activities. See A. L. Gitlow, “The Communist Threat to Labor,” *Southern Economic Journal* 16:4 (April 1950): 458-470.

⁹² Zieger, 267-268. “With regard to political action, to the mainstream leadership nonpartisanship was a coded reference, not a literal fact,” Zieger says.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Though the National PAC had “the authority to direct the work of the state PACs,” it had “generally relied on advice and persuasion, rather than orders” in circumstances where the state and national bodies disagreed. “The outstanding exception was in 1948 when advice and persuasion were not sufficient to get the California, New York City and Newark PACs to follow CIO policy instead of Wallace policy. In those cases the national PAC director formally disestablished the existing IUC-PACs, removed them of their authority to represent CIO in political matters, and established new PACs which followed CIO policy in the 1948 campaign.” Confidential Agenda for CIO-PAC Executive Board Meeting, March 12 and 13, 1951. Page 4. CIO Political Action Committee (PAC) Collection Papers, 1943-1960s, Accession # 647. Box 13, Folder 24, “CIO-PAC MEETINGS, 1946, 1951.” Reuther Library.

⁹⁵ This organization was formed from a merger of the NCPAC with the “Independent Citizens Committee of the Arts, Sciences and Professions,” along with eight smaller liberal groups, in December, 1946. William R. Conklin, “Wallace Charts Policies for 1948 in Liberal Merger.” *New York Times*, December 30, 1946, pp. 1, 9.

⁹⁶ The other co-chairman was Jo Davidson – the former ICCASP chair. William R. Conklin, “Wallace Charts Policies for 1948 in Liberal Merger.” *New York Times*, December 30, 1946, p. 1. Herman Shumlin, a producer, was elected secretary, and Michael Nisselson, a banker, became treasurer. Though Wallace himself did not take formal office within the PCA, “among those chosen vice chairmen were Fiorello La Guardia, former mayor of New York; Philip Murray, president of the CIO; Alexander F. Whitney, president of the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen; Paul Robeson, singer; Frederic March, actor; and former Gov. Elmer Benson of Minnesota.” “‘Liberal’ Bodies Merge and Hint at Third Party,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, December 30, 1946, p. 16.

⁹⁷ “Having adopted the name “Independent Citizens for Political Action,” the delegates reconsidered their vote after protests from Midwest and Far West delegations that prejudice existed in their communities against the words “Political Action.”” Several alternative names were rejected before “Progressive Citizens of America” was finally adopted. William R. Conklin, “Wallace Charts Policies for 1948 in Liberal Merger.” *New York Times*, December 30, 1946, p. 9.

⁹⁸ William R. Conklin, “Wallace Charts Policies for 1948 in Liberal Merger.” *New York Times*, December 30, 1946, p. 9.

⁹⁹ “The convention emphasized the third party possibilities of the new group by unanimous adoption of a statement that it “could not rule out the possibility of a new political party whose fidelity to our goals can be relied on.” “‘Liberal’ Bodies Merge and Hint at Third Party,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, December 30, 1946, p. 16.

¹⁰⁰ The legal status of the PCA is not entirely clear – it may have been closer to a PAC in structure. While a voluntary fund was not mentioned, local chapters were to pay \$1.50 of member’s \$3 dues to the national organization. William R. Conklin, “Wallace Charts Policies for 1948 in Liberal Merger.” *New York Times*, December 30, 1946, p. 9.

¹⁰¹ Wallace won 2.38% of the popular vote in 1948, compared to La Follette’s 16.56% in 1924. Thurmond won 2.4% of the popular vote in ’48. Information from *Presidential Elections Since 1789* 2d. ed. (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, 1979), 89, 95.

¹⁰² Nelson Lichtenstein, *Walter Reuther: The Most Dangerous Man in Detroit* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 305-306.

¹⁰³ R. Boeckel and L. Wheildon, “Third Party Movements,” July 16, 1947, in *Editorial Research Reports 1947* Vol. II (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 1947).

¹⁰⁴ Memo from Tilford E. Dudley to Clayton Fritchey [Deputy DNC Chairman and Adlai Stevenson’s press secretary], 12/12/1952. CIO-PAC Papers, Box 11, Folder 19, “Dudley Correspondence – Democratic National Committee, 1947-56. 1 of 4.”

¹⁰⁵ Tilford E. Dudley to William Millis, 12/19/1952. CIO-PAC Papers, Box 11, Folder 19, “Dudley Correspondence – Democratic National Committee, 1947-56. 1 of 4.”

¹⁰⁶ Noting opposition to this change, the *New York Times* reported, “delegations from five AFL locals silently protested this partisan action” at the convention. See A. H. Raskin, “Unanimous A.F.L. Backs Stevenson; But 5 Unions Silently Protest Group’s Ending Tradition of Not Taking Sides.” On the 1952 endorsement, see Kirk R. Petshek, “The Seventy-First Convention of the AFL,” *Monthly Labor Review* 75 (November 1952): 499-501.

¹⁰⁷ Tilford Dudley, “Relations With Democratic Party.” Copy included in Dudley’s correspondence, sent to Roy Reuther November 1, 1955. CIO-PAC Papers, Box 11, Folder 20, “Dudley Correspondence – Democratic National Committee, 1947-56. 2 of 4.” Reuther Library.

¹⁰⁸ Foster, 199. As explained in footnote 8, p. 199, Foster located two copies of this version of the memo: one in a different collection at the Reuther Library (the CIO Secretary-Treasurer Papers), and another in the Jack Kroll Papers at the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

¹⁰⁹ Most of the key points to which Foster refers are evident in the Dudley draft, but either are more strongly stated in Kroll’s version, or Foster characterizes them in a different manner than my interpretation. The several distinct “alternatives to the existing relationship” that Foster outlines, for example, are not so clearly delineated in my reading (see Foster, 200-201). “What were the alternatives to the existing political relationship?” According to Foster, “Kroll noted six alternate courses of action” – though, in fact, he only lists five (unless the first course of action was to do nothing) (200). My main concern here is with Foster’s reference to two possible alternative strategies, which are not explicitly stated as such in Dudley’s version: (1) Abandon politics: “Kroll’s first alternative was simply to abandon politics. Considering that the PAC spent almost a million dollars in every national campaign, the monetary savings alone would justify such a course. Moreover, the spending of a million dollars in a congressional campaign guaranteed neither electoral success nor the cooperation of candidates who were elected with PAC help.” (200). But Foster doesn’t think he means this seriously: “It is questionable, however, whether Kroll really felt that this suggestion was a viable alternative.” (200-201). (2) Strict voluntarism: “Kroll’s second course was a return to strict voluntarism. The CIO would endorse neither party, but rather would extend aid to only a few selected “friends.”” (201). Foster does not consider this a serious option either. “Although Kroll noted this alternative, it seemed clear that this course also went against his political inclinations.” (201). “[A]bstinence and strict

voluntarism seemed out of the question,” Foster concludes (201). The other alternative strategies that Foster outlines are more clearly apparent in the Dudley version: (3) intensified bargaining (“[t]he CIO could intensify its bargaining with the Democrats and the Republicans and raise the level of its demands,” 201); (4) infiltrating the party apparatus (“An even better means of influencing the two parties might be to encourage the membership to join the respective parties and run for party office,” 201); and (5) a British TUC/Labour Party model (“Finally, the CIO leadership could go directly to the Democratic party and demand an official place on the national committee. Thus, the CIO would be in much the same position as the British Trade Union Congress, an official partner in a major political party,” 201). These last three suggestions, Foster notes, all “seemed to have Kroll’s full backing” (201). Foster also concludes his discussion with a surprising claim – namely, that in the frenzy of activity surrounding the AFL-CIO merger, Kroll’s suggestions essentially slipped away. Kroll had called for a national meeting of national, state, and local CIO leaders to decide which of the various alternative strategies should be pursued, but before the meeting could take place, Foster claims, “the CIO became involved in merger negotiations with the AFL” (201). As such, “Kroll’s suggestions were lost in the excitement as the CIO rushed to rejoin its parent federation” (201). This is a surprising conclusion, given that the memo was produced in November 1955, and the merger convention occurred just a month later – December 5th, 1955. It is hard to imagine that the memo was not partly concerned with shaping the political strategy moving forward, especially since Kroll served as co-Director of the newly formed Committee on Political Education (COPE), until his retirement in 1957.

¹¹⁰ Memo from Jack Kroll to Tilford E. Dudley, 9/15/1955. CIO Political Action Committee (PAC) Collection Papers, 1943-1960s, Accession # 647. Box 12, Folder 16, “Democratic National Committee, 1954-55, 1 of 2.” Reuther Library.

¹¹¹ “The majority of the delegates are sufficiently friendly and the leading Democrats are sufficiently aware of the importance of the labor vote that they listen to our preferences,” Dudley observed. While they did not always produce exactly what labor wanted, they were generally responsive. Dudley, “Relations With Democratic Party,” 2.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 2-3.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 6-7.

¹¹⁶ APSA Committee on Political Parties, *Toward a More Responsible Two-Party System* (Washington, D.C.: American Political Science Association, 1950). See “Part II – Proposals for Party Responsibility.”

¹¹⁷ Bertram M. Gross to Dudley, 2/28/1950, CIO-PAC Papers, Box 11, Folder 26, “Congressional Correspondence – 1944-51.” Gross – a member of the APSA Committee and, at that point, Executive Secretary of the Council of Economic Advisors – asked Dudley for his reaction to Section II specifically, prior to publication of the report. Dudley’s lengthy reply encouraged the authors to be more specific in their recommendations, if they wanted to “produce results.” See Dudley to Bertram Gross, March 6, 1950, p. 1. CIO-PAC Papers, Box 11, Folder 26, “Congressional Correspondence – 1944-51.” In particular, he encouraged them to enlarge their discussion of the congressional caucus (p. 2).

¹¹⁸ Dudley to Democratic National Committee Members and State Chairmen, April 8, 1954. CIO-PAC Papers, Box 12, Folder 16, “Democratic National Committee, 1954-55, 1 of 2.” See also more copies of the same letter in Box 11, Folder 20, “Dudley Correspondence – Democratic National Committee, 1947-56. 4 of 4.”

¹¹⁹ Dudley’s letter to DNC members and state chairmen mentioned furnishing them a copy “free of charge.” Other correspondence suggests that the PAC actually bought these copies (e.g. Dudley writes as “Assistant Director” to the publishing company, and mentions billing the PAC for the costs of copies. Dudley to Randal Hobbs, Rinhardt & Company Inc, 3/17/1954, and Dudley to Frederick Cushing, Rinchard & Co., Inc, 4/26/1954. CIO-PAC Papers, Box 12, Folder 16, “Democratic National Committee, 1954-55, 1 of 2.”

¹²⁰ E. E. Schattschneider to Dudley, 4/15/1954. CIO-PAC Papers, Box 12, Folder 16, “Democratic National Committee, 1954-55, 1 of 2.” Dudley’s biography, a copy of which is filed in his papers, says he attended Wesleyan, graduating cum laude in 1928, and went on to get an LL.R. at Harvard in 1931. CIO-PAC Papers, Box 13, Folder 26. “I’m extremely grateful to you for your continued interest in the idea of responsible party government,” Schattschneider wrote to Dudley in April, 1954. “You are doing the right thing in banging away at labor and Democratic party groups. Democrats and organized labor have the most direct interest in the development of a strong party system – that’s the proper audience for the idea. There are always some fuzzy liberals in organizations like ADA who will refuse to get into a political party because no parties are perfect and there are a lot of political scientists who will never make up their minds about anything that commits them to responsible action likely to produce results. Their minds don’t work that way.” “Republicans who want to block action and preserve the status quo by inaction may possibly have an interest in the maintenance of “irresponsible, heterogeneous parties” but not liberal Democrats, new Dealers, labor leaders and other people who want to find an (adequate?) political base for modern public policy.” E. E. Schattschneider to Dudley, 4/15/1954. CIO-PAC Papers, Box 12, Folder 16, “Democratic National Committee, 1954-55, 1 of 2.”

¹²¹ Dudley, “Relations with the Democratic Party,” p. 8. Foster characterizes a statement in his version as “Kroll’s first complaint” about PAC-party relations – that the CIO was essentially an outside agent as far as the Democrats were concerned. In Jack Kroll’s words, the CIO was bargaining with the Democratic party “much as it would with an employer.” (199). Kroll’s other major complaints, according to Foster were: (2) the lack of congressional influence: i.e. that “though the Democratic convention officially condemned right-to-work laws in 1952, the Democratic congressional leadership represented twelve of the eighteen states that supported such laws”; (3) that “[t]he PAC alone could do nothing about such conservatives; they invariably lived in districts where the CIO had absolutely no electoral strength”; and (4) that “the CIO’s troubles [lay] even with liberal congressional leaders” (presumably a concern that liberal leaders were not doing enough to diminish the power of those Southern conservatives either). As such, “Kroll found the congressional situation completely intolerable” (200).

¹²² Hower (2010) points to the tension between this non-partisan heritage in the AFL, and the new realities of the political scene, as being the dominant tension affecting the LLPE's development, up to the merger with the CIO. Joseph E. Hower. "Our Conception of Non-Partisanship Means a Partisan Non-Partisanship: The Search for Political Identity in the American Federation of Labor, 1947-1955." *Labor History*. Volume 51, No. 3 (August 2010), 455-478.

¹²³ Dudley, "Relations With Democratic Party," Page 8.

¹²⁴ Ibid. "Every campaign follower, every hanger-on, every factional or group leader claims that he worked great miracles for the candidate. Such talk is as common as a March wind." Dudley, "Relations With Democratic Party" (8).

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 8-9. The threat, as Dudley explained, would be to "refuse to support the Party and its candidates in 1956" – not to go elsewhere – "unless the Democrats in Congress agreed to drop the seniority system and to appoint committee chairmen and members on the basis of ability, loyalty to the program, etc." (9).

¹²⁷ As Dudley summarized his draft when sending it to Roy Reuther, "[t]he general theme is that to get results out of the Democratic Party we need to make it more disciplined or tightly knit and more responsible for carrying out its platform mandates." "I am not sure what George Meany's attitude will be," he continues, "but I suspect that he will want us to remain even further from the Democratic Party than we now are. This would probably mean that we would do less work within the party and that our efforts to influence would be more and more the technique of negotiating at arm's length." Tilford Dudley to Roy Reuther, November 1, 1955. CIO-PAC Papers, Box 11, Folder 20, "Dudley Correspondence – Democratic National Committee, 1947-56. 2 of 4."

¹²⁸ Foster, 201.

¹²⁹ Dudley, "Relations With Democratic Party," Page 1.

¹³⁰ \$1000 contribution from CIO-PAC to DNC on 5/2/1951, in Box #35, "Democratic Committee Transfers, 1944-1955," and separate contributions of \$3700 and \$4700 (no date, but during 1952), in Box #42, "Democratic And Labor Party Committee Transfers, 1952." Also recorded in Box #42 are undated 1952 contributions from the national P.A.C. to the Stevenson-Sparkman Forum Committee (\$5000), the 1952 Campaign Headquarters Travel Committee (\$5000) and the National Volunteers for Stevenson (\$2500). All from Overacker-Heard Campaign Finance Data Archive. Institute of Governmental Studies, University of California, Berkeley. While these contributions may be comparatively small as against its aggregate contributions to candidates, there is no evidence of similar contributions to formal Republican committees. Such contributions to the party organization suggest investment in the party more broadly, and are thus significant.

¹³¹ As such, the CIO did not "have much strength within the party as far as counting officers and votes is concerned," Dudley added. Dudley, "Relations With Democratic Party," 1.

¹³² Working in conjunction with the AFL would particularly enhance CIO efforts to change this formal representation situation, it was noted, so as to "establish an unofficial representation in the Democratic Party - somewhat similar to that of the British, but without so much official, on-the-surface contributions and assumptions of responsibility." Dudley, "Relations With Democratic Party," 2.

¹³³ Indeed, the P.A.C. undertook an extensive analysis of the Dixiecrat bolt itself, which suggests their interest in enhancing a more unified party – they, after all, wished that the Dixiecrats had remained "bolted." The "loyalty oath" issue subsequently emerged from the efforts of some of the Dixiecrats to usurp the regular Democratic label in their states for the Thurmond-Wright ticket. Only where the "States Rights" ticket was listed under the regular Democratic label had it won, Dudley claimed in another memo – written in his capacity as alternate Democratic committeeman. A group of liberals at the 1952 convention thus sought to gain commitments from all delegates that they would do all in their power to ensure the convention's nominees would be listed under the Democratic ticket in their state. Dudley sent an account of these activities to the local D.C. unions in July 1952 – to illustrate his work "in behalf of a liberal and unified party." As he summarized the proceedings, following a credentials challenge in which Dixiecrat delegations were seated instead of the reformers in their states, liberal forces responded with "the Blair Moody rule" – "engineered by leaders of the liberal presidential candidates, Senator Humphrey and top ADA officers, and concurred in by all other liberal groups and representatives of other presidential candidates" – which was adopted by the convention and stated: "No delegate shall be seated unless he shall give assurance to the Credentials Committee that he will exert every honorable means available to him in any official capacity he may have, to provide that the nominees of this convention for President and Vice President, through their names or those of electors pledged to them, appear on the election ballot under the heading, name or designation of the Democratic Party." The Dixiecrats took the pledge, which was an important symbolic victory for the liberals, even though it did not require the delegates to support the nominees directly. The loyalty oath issue thus suggests an area where Dudley, in his party role, was out ahead of the P.A.C. As he observes in the party relations memo, labor had been somewhat "cloudy" on their position here: "At the 1952 convention CIO representatives thought it best to concentrate on the presidential nomination and leave the rules fight to others. Also, labor representatives are inclined to gag at a rule that binds all delegates to support the nominees and platform for fear it may be somebody we dislike." But, he added, "we cannot expect to bind others without binding ourselves, and if nobody is bound, then the Party is not tightened." The P.A.C. apparently took his advice, because they worked against efforts to weaken or abandon the pledge in the wake of the convention. Thus, when DNC chair Stephen Mitchell announced plans to appoint a committee which would to study the loyalty oath problem in 1954, which Dudley described (in a letter to Byron G. Allen) as "part of a general plan to weaken the loyalty pledge," the P.A.C. pushed back. As Jack Kroll wrote to Walter Reuther, referring to Mitchell: "we met with him several times in an attempt to dissuade him from this action." "You will be pleased to know we apparently won our point. Mr. Mitchell did not appoint the committee and there was no reference or discussion of the committee or of this aspect of the Committee's problems." See "Defections in the Democratic Party" - Report from the CIO Political Action Committee to CIO President Philip Murray, December 29, 1948. CIO-PAC Papers, Box 11, Folder 19, "Dudley Correspondence – Democratic National Committee, 1947-56. 1 of 4"; Ted Dudley, "The Loyalty Fight in Chicago," 7/29/1952 (sent "to unions in D.C." - pencil notation), CIO-PAC Papers, Box 12, Folder 18, "National Democratic Party, 1948-54"; Dudley, "Relations With Democratic Party," Page 3; Dudley, writing as Alt. Natl.

Committeeman, to Byron G. Allen, Democratic National Committeeman for Minnesota, 4/20/1954. CIO-PAC Papers, Box 12, Folder 16, "Democratic National Committee, 1954-55, 1 of 2." Jack Kroll to Walter Reuther, 5/10/1954, CIO-PAC Papers, Box 16, Folder 8. "National CIO Correspondence, 1953-54."

¹³⁴ Dudley pointed out in his party relations memo that "labor has not availed itself of this opportunity to build a Party" by pushing publications like the *Digest*, but DNC chairman Paul Butler and Jack Kroll had certainly discussed the matter, as noted in their correspondence (which also asks Kroll for help in promoting a testimonial dinner to bring in some much needed funds to the national committee). Dudley, "Relations With Democratic Party," Page 7; Paul Butler to Jack Kroll, 3/15/1955, CIO-PAC Papers, Box 12, Folder 16, "Democratic National Committee, 1954-55, 1 of 2."

¹³⁵ George F. Hinkle, Indiana Commissioner of Labor, "Union Bosses and Political Action Creates Second-Class Citizenship," Address before the Annual Meeting of the Council of State Chambers of Commerce, September 7, 1956. NAM Accession 1411, Series V, Box 62a. Hagley Library.

¹³⁶ "Congressional Voting Records, 1945-58," CIO-PAC Papers. Folder 12-6 starts with several LLPE voting records, which the annotation "R" or "W" for is used for "Right" or "Wrong." There are other LLPE records filed elsewhere in the CIO-PAC papers. For example, "Your Congressional Scorecard" (c1949), based on 10 major issues, is filed in "Congressional Correspondence – 1944-51," CIO-PAC Papers.

¹³⁷ Impressions gleaned from various P.A.C. voting records available in CIO-PAC Papers, Box 12, Folder 4, "PAC Congressional Voting Record Newsletter, 1950-52," and L.L.P.E. voting records in CIO-PAC Papers. Box 12, Folder 6, "Congressional Voting Records, 1945-58." As PAC's research director, Mary Goddard, observed in the early 50s: "Years of experimentation have brought general agreement that the most useful kind of voting record for political action are master records containing a maximum number of votes for each year together with a full but concise description of the meaning of the vote" – picking a small number of nationally important votes could exclude those with great importance locally, and providing insufficient descriptions led to errors by local P.A.C.s. "The process of trial and error over the years has resulted in the printing of records using several, different formats." Mary Goddard, "Research for Political Action," (n.d. but circa early 1950s?) CIO-PAC Papers, Box 17, Folder 22, "Political Research by Labor Unions."

¹³⁸ P.A.C. was making a few changes – by the early 1950s P.A.C. records were at least split into foreign or domestic policy votes. See, for example, Congressional Voting Record newsletter, October 1950 (foreign policy votes); June 1951 (foreign policy votes); June 1951 (domestic issues). CIO Political Action Committee (PAC) Collection Papers, 1943-1960s, Accession # 647. Box 12, Folder 6, "Congressional Voting Records, 1945-58." Reuther Library.

¹³⁹ Goddard, "Research for Political Action."

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Ibid. Each Fact Sheet "quickly supplies basic information and answers opposition charges on important national issues," she wrote.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Joseph E. Hower. "Our Conception of Non-Partisanship Means a Partisan Non-Partisanship: The Search for Political Identity in the American Federation of Labor, 1947-1955." *Labor History*. Volume 51, No. 3 (2010), 455. In contrast, Hower suggests, the standard histories of the labor-Democratic connection point to continued differences in political orientation between the AFL and CI at this point. Hower argues that these were actually much reduced by 1952, and were a major factor facilitating merger. Even the standard histories concede, however, that both were oriented to the Democratic Party by the 1950s. Chang (2001), for example, appears to offer a "standard narrative" along the lines Hower lays out, relating continued disagreements on political strategy, but she acknowledges that "both shared a commitment to the Democratic party" by this point. See Tracy F. Chang, "The Labour Vote in US National Elections, 1948–2000," *The Political Quarterly* 72 No. 3 (2001): 379-380.

¹⁴⁶ Zeigler, 155.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Ibid. "Reuther had received support in his election from some of the other unions only on condition that he would move quickly for merger," Zeigler notes.

¹⁵³ Ibid.-The pressure from within were, if anything, more intense than the external factors."

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 149-150. "[A]t the time of the merger in 1955," Zeigler explains, "it was more than twice the size of the CIO" (149-150). Moreover, "the CIO continued to be plagued by cleavages which threatened disintegration and made it a distinct possibility that a continued separate existence would diminish its strength" (155).

¹⁵⁵ The offer of \$2500 came from lobbyists of the Superior Oil Company. The legislation being debated was H.R. 6645, amending the Natural Gas Act (it would have removed federal price regulation). President Eisenhower, though he supported the measure, ultimately vetoed it due to the scandal surrounding Case. See Dwight D. Eisenhower, "Veto of Bill To Amend the Natural Gas Act," February 17, 1956. Available in Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley (eds.), *The American Presidency Project*. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=10736>.

¹⁵⁶ Julian E. Zelizer, "Seeds of Cynicism: The Struggle over Campaign Finance, 1956–1974," *The Journal of Policy History* 14 No. 1 (2002): 78.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ On Heard and Alexander: Zelizer, 78. On the CRF more generally: Zelizer, 80.

¹⁵⁹ Julian E. Zelizer, *On Capitol Hill: The Struggle to Reform Congress and Its Consequences, 1948-2000* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004). Zelizer points to Gore as an important player in this burgeoning movement for campaign finance reform – composed of liberal activists and allies – who saw greater regulation in this area as one way of reducing the electoral advantages enjoyed by conservative Democratic legislators from the South.

¹⁶⁰ Milkis (1993) attributes this scenario to Eisenhower’s embrace of bigger government and separation of presidency from party (164).

¹⁶¹ Zelizer (2002), 79.

¹⁶² Testimony of James L. McDevitt, Co-Director of the AFL-CIO Committee on Political Education. September 10th, 1956. “1956 Presidential and Senatorial Campaign Contributions and Practices,” Part 1 of Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Privileges and Elections of the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration [**Gore Committee**], U.S. Senate, 84th Cong. 2d. Sess., September 10th and 11th, 1956 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1956), 47. Hereafter “McDevitt Testimony, Gore Committee Hearings, Part 1.”

¹⁶³ Ibid., 57.

¹⁶⁴ CIO-PAC Papers, Box 14, Folder 31, “COPE Campaign Contributions, 1956.”

¹⁶⁵ “Political Program for 1956,” 8. CIO-PAC Papers, Box 11, Folder 23, “PAC Program, 1952-53.”

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 8-9.

¹⁶⁷ McDevitt Testimony, Gore Committee Hearings, Part 1, p. 49.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Folder 12-6, “Congressional Voting Records, 1945-58,” CIO-PAC Papers.

¹⁷⁰ COPE, How Your Senators and Representatives Voted 1947-1956.” “Congressional Voting Records, 1945-58,” CIO-PAC Papers.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² COPE, “How Your Senators and Representatives Voted 1957-1958.” “Congressional Voting Records, 1945-58,” CIO-PAC Papers. The 1957-58 compilation itself presented information on 13 House votes and 16 Senate votes, but also a recapitulation of the 1947-56 record. Here they provided a box score for each congressman – such as “5 right and 11 wrong” – how many times a congressman voted *right* on the issues with which the AFL-CIO had been concerned, and how many times wrong.

¹⁷³ Priest Committee Report [H. Rpt. 79:2739], 42.

¹⁷⁴ “Disaffected liberals formed the Americans for Democratic Action in early 1947,” Milkis (1993) notes, becoming “a haven for most of the Roosevelt New Dealers” (156). Its founding reflected a fear that, with Roosevelt’s death, the New Deal was in peril – they doubted the full commitment of the Truman administration, but opposed the Henry Wallace progressive movement, and sought, in general, to provide progressives with an outlet free from Communist influence. On the founding of ADA as an opposition forum to Henry Wallace, see Milkis (1993), 156-157; on the concern with the Truman administration and Communism, see Hal Libros, *Hard Core Liberals: A Sociological Analysis of the Philadelphia Americans for Democratic Action* (Cambridge, MA: Schenkman, 1975), 12-18. Where the PCA had countenanced third party possibilities at some future point, “[t]he ADA appeared to be headed toward working for New Deal aims within the Democratic Party.” See “Third Party Chances Slim in ’48,” *The Washington Post*, January 19, 1947, p. M12.

¹⁷⁵ Testimony of Robert R. Nathan, Chairman of the Executive Committee of Americans for Democratic Action. October 10th, 1956. “1956 Presidential and Senatorial Campaign Contributions and Practices,” Part 2 of Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Privileges and Elections of the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration [**Gore Committee**], U.S. Senate, 84th Cong. 2d. Sess., October 10th, 1956 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1956), 282. Hereafter “Nathan testimony, Gore Committee Hearings, Part 2.”

¹⁷⁶ ADA’s status as as PAC has drawn little, if any, attention in extant scholarship. Nathan described a decentralized endorsement structure in which the national ADA endorsed only for presidential and vice-presidential candidates (Nathan testimony, Gore Committee Hearings, Part 2, 282, 288-289). He pointed to the “political work of the local chapters” as being “concerned primarily in mobilizing independent voters on behalf of liberal candidates” – a task with which the national organization assisted through its publications and organizational support (283). The A.D.A. also had links with an earlier group, the Union for Democratic Action, founded in 1941. The exact nature of its organizational continuity and links to the A.D.A., however, are not entirely clear. It appears to have been more of an educational organization, and the linkage seems to be in terms of the prominent liberals and intellectuals who were involved with each. The A.D.A. sought more of a mass membership – though it never achieved an extensive one. See Cook, 211, and Campaign Expenditures – Union for Democratic Action,” Part 3 of Hearings before the Committee to Investigate Campaign Expenditures [**Anderson Committee**], U.S. House of Representatives, 78th Cong., 2d sess., September 18, 1944 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1944), p. 130.

¹⁷⁷ The ADA maintained both accounts, Nathan explained, “because we believe that ADA does engage in both political, direct political, activity, and a considerable amount of nonpolitical activity of an educational nature.” Nathan testimony, Gore Committee Hearings, Part 2, p. 291. *Emphasis mine*. Educational activity involved preparing “material on issues” or testifying before Congress on particular issues – activities “we regard as non-political in nature...” (291). Its “political” fund accepted only individual, voluntary donations.

¹⁷⁸ In 1952, for example, Overacker calculated that labor contributions to the ADA totaled \$47,000.09. Overacker-Heard Archive, Box #43, “Republican Party Committee Transfers; Minor Parties And Misc. Groups: Transfers.” In 1956, Nathan acknowledged that the UAW alone was contributing \$1000 per month to the ADA’s fund.

¹⁷⁹ “[O]ur support of minimum wages, our support of broadening the coverage of social security, our support of international economic-aid programs, and so forth,” all spoke to their mutual aims. Nathan testimony, Gore Committee Hearings, Part 2, 295.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid. *Emphasis mine*.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., 293.

¹⁸² Ibid., 283-284.

¹⁸³ Ibid., 284.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., 293.

¹⁸⁵ Questioned by Senator Carl T. Curtis (R-NE) – the Gore committee’s only Republican member – Nathan conceded that “we supported many, many more Democratic candidates than Republican candidates” in the 1948 election contest, and that the proportion of candidates supported since their founding was probably “over 90 percent Democrat.” The Subcommittee on Privileges and Elections was a three-person panel consisting of Senators Albert Gore (D-TN) as Chairman, Mike Mansfield (D-MT) as the other Democratic member, alongside Carl Curtis (R-NE). Nathan was conveniently without the specific figures at hand, but guessed that the proportions involved would be over 90% in each congressional contest since the ADA’s formation. Curtis specifically raises 1948, 1950, 1952, and 1954 in turn, each time Nathan confirming support over 90% in a Democratic direction. In 1954 his response is “I am quite certain it was at least 90 percent Democratic,” but he is basically saying 90% or over in each case. Though their information on 1956 endorsements was not fully compiled at the time of the hearing, Nathan “venture[d] to say it would certainly be that again we will support—over 90 percent of our congressional support will go to Democrats.” (289-290).

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., 288-289.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., *Emphasis mine*.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 284. As Nathan explained. “What bothers us is that the Republican candidate has, during his 3 ½ years in the White House, either vigorously opposed or failed to support legislation to implement the liberal proposals he now espouses” (284). A one-term governor of Illinois, out of office since January 1953, and lacking any national political experience other than his 1952 presidential bid, had a better record to run on, it seemed.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 290. When Curtis claimed that the ADA’s voting guides and other publications were designed “pretty much to show how an individual measures up to the Democratic position,” Nathan made a forceful objection. “I think there is a big difference,” he challenged: “As a matter of fact, if I may give an illustration of how I would characterize differences within the party, if we would look, for instance, at Mississippi, Senator Eastland, who would hardly warrant ADA support, although he is a Democrat, and I don’t see how we could ever support him, he only got 2 positives out of 14, whereas, as I indicated, Senator, I think, was it Duff, that had about two-thirds or three-fourths. So that within the Democratic Party, there are very great differences; just the same, I think, within the Republican Party.” Nathan does not, however, indicate whether the ADA *actually* provided Duff with support.

¹⁹⁰ It would ultimately support Truman, and thereafter exclusively supported Democratic candidates at the presidential level, dominantly at other levels, and was active in the party’s forums – spearheading the platform fight for a more liberal civil rights plank at the 1948 Democratic National Convention, for example, and dominating the “Research Division” within the DNC. Milkis (1993), 156; Jeffrey M. Berry, *The New Liberalism: The Rising Power of Citizen Groups* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1999), 10. Berry discusses the platform fight, while Milkis notes that the “Research Division” was authorized by Truman, and was “financed by and nominally part of the Democratic National Committee,” but actually under the supervision of White House counsel Clark Clifford. Nonetheless, he notes that it “was dominated by liberal activists who were prominent in progressive organizations” such as the ADA, the American Veteran’s Committee (AVC), and the NAACP.

¹⁹¹ Indeed, Daniel DiSalvo (2007) describes the ADA as part of a “liberal-labor faction” within the Democratic Party at midcentury, suggesting a more explicit recognition of its partisan orientation. Daniel DiSalvo, “Intra-Party Factions in American Political Development” (PhD diss., University of Virginia, 2007), 202. DiSalvo identifies the AFL, the CIO, the United Auto Workers (UAW), the NAACP, the American Jewish Congress, the ACLU, the leadership Conference on Civil Rights, the National Committee for an Effective Congress (NCEC), and the Americans for Democratic Action (ADA) as “key organizations” in this faction – with the NCEC and ADA classified as “liberal associations.”

¹⁹² Ratings such as those offered by the ADA made them important *electoral* actors – providing “objective” assessment on which to make endorsements, withhold endorsements, or base a primary challenge. Mayhew (1975) noted that individual roll call positions did not usually “cause much of a ripple at home” (unless on specific issues monitored by single issue interest groups), but pointed to the greater importance of “broad voting patterns,” such as the “member “ratings” calculated by the Americans for Democratic Action, Americans for Constitutional Action, and other outfits are used as guidelines in the deploying of electoral resources.” David R. Mayhew, *Congress: The Electoral Connection* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1975), 66. In Richard Fenno’s study of congressmen’s “home style” in their districts, an incumbent noted that interest group ratings, like those of the ADA, were reported by the local press and provided constituents with “a sense of a person’s voting record” Richard Fenno, *Home Style: House Members in their Districts* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1978), 144.

¹⁹³ As reported in Groseclose, Levitt, and Snyder (1999): “The ADA began reporting scores in 1960. From 1947 to 1959, however, the ADA reported “key votes” for each chamber, and by applying the same method used by the ADA after 1959, we calculate scores for this earlier period as well.” Tim Groseclose, Steven D. Levitt and James M. Snyder, Jr., “Comparing Interest Group Scores across Time and Chambers: Adjusted ADA Scores for the U.S. Congress,” *The American Political Science Review* 93:1 (1999): 35, n4. Similarly, Viguerie and Franke (2004) point to 1960 as the first year in which Americans for Constitutional Action – a conservative group founded two years earlier – released its “ACA Index.” They describe the Index as “the first scorecard rating members of Congress ever compiled by a conservative organization.” “Now conservatives had a precise way of knowing which Republicans to support or oppose, based on their voting record, and they used these ratings to help change the face of the GOP.” Richard A. Viguerie and David Franke, *America’s Right Turn: How Conservatives Used New And Alternative Media To Take Power* (Los Angeles, CA: Bonus Books, 2004), 68.

¹⁹⁴ Nathan denied, for example, that the ADA’s various voting guides were “political” documents within the meaning of the Corrupt Practices Act. That is, they were *educational* in purpose, he claimed – even where they included information on particular roll-call votes

and an indicator of where ADA preferences lay (287-288). At some level, all of the ADA's literature had "the election of or the defeat of candidates" as an aim, Nathan admitted under questioning – "in the *generic term* it is all political activity" Nathan conceded [*Emphasis mine*]. But that still did not constitute "political" activity under the law, he affirmed, and thus the money spent to produce and distribute such guides was outside the bounds of regulation. What "political" might mean to most people, and what political meant on the statute books, were entirely different things, Nathan implied.

¹⁹⁵ Nathan testimony, Gore Committee Hearings, Part 2, 290.

¹⁹⁶ McClellan Committee Hearings, 1042.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.* "To be honest and perfectly fair about it-I am not critical of you for it-what your group is organized for is to provide a liberal-minded Congress (1042)

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 1040. While the committee might "make a distinction between liberals and conservatives," it was still the case that "any radical, left or right, I would say, speaking broadly, would not have appeal for our group" (1040).

¹⁹⁹ McClellan Committee Hearings, 1040-1041.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 1040. "How do you determine a man's stand on issues that you are concerned with, if you do not check his voting record?" Goldwater asked, seeming surprised by Scheuer's initial response (1040). Scheuer clarified his position, indicating that voting records were relevant to their assessment, but not a guiding framework in and of themselves: "I mean without going deeper than a statistical record it is a very unfair evaluation of it, sir," he explained (1040).

²⁰¹ *Ibid.* Flanders was a Republican, and one Scheuer characterized as an "economic" conservative – trying to drive home the point that the NCEC was not opposed to *conservatives* per se (only radical ones), and that it was even prepared to support them actively, providing at least some of their issue positions lined up.

²⁰² See Anthony Leviero, "Final Vote Condemns McCarthy, 67-22, For Abusing Senate and Committee," *New York Times*, December 3rd, 1954, p.1. "Senator Ralph E. Flanders, Republican of Vermont, who had sponsored the original censure resolution, said he would stand by all the speeches he had made against Senator McCarthy except that he would like to apologize for a passage in a speech of last March, when he had likened Mr. McCarthy to Hitler." The censure idea did not originate with the NCEC, Scheuer noted, but acknowledged that Flanders had sought their help in formulating it. "We did not suggest the help. We were asked for it," he emphasized (1043-1044). And while they had not assisted its proponents in preparing floor speeches, the NCEC had sent research staff to aid the Senators pushing for its passage – again, on request, Scheuer assured (1044). McClellan Committee Hearings.

²⁰³ McClellan Committee Hearings, 1041. Here he referred to an NCEC letter from October 15, 1956, in which "you list Republican Senators from Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, and Idaho as being an important third of the hard-core group that fought the McCarthy censure."

²⁰⁴ The NCEC was attempting first "to effect the election of people who are friendly to your line of thought," Goldwater said, and then afterward try "to influence the Congress in its decisions" (1043). "Your group and others, too," he summarized, "go so far as to attempt to effect the election of people who are friendly to your line of thought and then after they are elected you have attempted to influence the Congress in its decisions" (1043). These "others" were "other groups, whether they be professional or social groups, who operate as you have operated." The NCEC certainly did "attempt to effect the election of people friendly to their line of thought," in Goldwater's formulation, Scheuer acknowledged. But in general, the NCEC did *not* actively seek to influence legislators once elected (1043). The McCarthy censure, Scheuer noted, had been an exception (1044). "We make the exception and explain the exception in connection with the censure." (1044).

²⁰⁵ McClellan Committee Hearings, 1043.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 1044. Scheuer's colleague, George Agree asserted: "I think you will find that not one of those men who have reached the Congress, or women, have been approached by us regarding any vote that they have cast" (1043). Goldwater, for his part, was less than convinced that the NCEC made no specific efforts to influence legislation – behind the scenes, at least. "You were fairly effective around here when they were trying to censure a Senator from Wisconsin," he noted, and pointed also to their activities on "the China lobby situation" and interest in the Nuremberg trials (1043). "In other words," he summarized, "you are trying to influence not only the selection of people to this congressional body, but you are then trying to influence their actions after they get here." (1043).

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 1042. Evidence of the ADA's party-changing orientations were apparent from a hypothetical scenario posed by Goldwater, focused on the 1956 Senate contest in Idaho. There, the NCEC had played an active role in supporting Democratic candidate Frank Church against incumbent Senator Herman Welker (R-ID). Welker was a close associate of McCarthy's, and had led the opposition to his censure in the Senate – he was sure to receive the "blessing" of the NCEC's bullets on that account. But what Goldwater wanted to know is whether the NCEC would have been so active irrespective of who Welker's Democratic opponent had been? Former Democratic Senator Glen Taylor had also sought the nomination, and Church had only narrowly defeated him. (Taylor was a Democrat – a former Senator who lost a primary challenge in 1950, having been vice-presidential candidate on the Progressive Party ticket in 1948. Although he did manage to obtain the Democratic nomination for Senate again in 1954, he lost the general election, and when he sought the nomination again in 1956, he lost to Church. Church went on to win the general election, and served in the Senate until 1980. "Would you have backed Glen Taylor?" Goldwater wanted to know (1042). "Certainly not," was Scheuer's unabashed response. Taylor, after all, had been the vice-presidential nominee on Henry Wallace's ticket in 1948 – a "radical" of the left – and the NCEC had opposed him at the primary stage (1042). If Taylor had been the Democratic nominee facing Welker in the general election, Scheuer was "inclined to think we would not have participated," or at the very least, "we would not have made an endorsement in that case" (1042).

²⁰⁸ In 1960, for example, the National Committee for an Effective Congress was among three committees that "accounted for about 80 per cent of gross disbursements of all miscellaneous committees" (the others were Americans for Constitutional Action and the Christian Nationalist Crusade, both conservative groups). Herbert E. Alexander, *Financing the 1960 Election* (Princeton, NJ: Citizens'

Research Foundation, 1962), 44. While the NCEC claimed to be nonpartisan and to distribute funds to candidates of both parties, it did so primarily on the basis of ideological considerations, promoting liberal candidates. According to William T. Poole, analyzing the efforts of the NCEC for the conservative Heritage Foundation in 1977, the group had had a “three-point test” for the distribution of funds: “Is he a self-starting, independent liberal? Does he need money? Can he get elected?” William T. Poole, “Institutional Analysis # 5: The National Committee for an Effective Congress,” (Washington D.C.: The Heritage Foundation, 1978), 2-3.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., 1041-1042. “I see in your organization, and other similar organizations,” Goldwater declared, “groups who are actually getting into State prerogatives, groups who operate completely outside of States.”

²¹⁰ Ibid., 1041.

²¹¹ Ibid., 1041-1043.

²¹² The source of Goldwater’s constitutional concerns were apparently the Article I provisions relating to the election of congressmen and senators. Article I, section II, states that members of the House of Representatives are to be “chosen every second Year by the People of the several States,” and specifies state residency requirements for those standing for the office. The 17th Amendment, which affected the process for selecting senators laid out in Article I, Section III, suggests that the two senators for each state must be “elected by the people thereof.” “[T]he intent of the Constitution relative to the Senate can be broadly interpreted,” Goldwater admitted, but there were legitimate questions, he felt, as to “the properness, under the concept of our Constitution, of outside organizations getting into the selection of Members of the House of Representatives,” at the very least (1042). Where the Constitution might be “rather inexplicit in what the Senator is selected to do and what they are expected to do,” it was “very clear cut” in regard to the House of Representatives.

²¹³ Since, whether outside groups were active or not, the constitutional requirements of *who was voting* in a particular state or district remained fulfilled. And even if national groups made appeals in specific locales, the candidates were still “selected by the machinery of the State,” and were “voted for by the citizens of the State,” as the Constitution required. McClellan Committee Hearings, 1042.

²¹⁴ James A. Farley, *Jim Farley’s Story* (New York: Whittlesey House, 1948), 147. Quoted in Susan Dunn, *Roosevelt’s Purge: How FDR Fought to Change the Democratic Party* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010), 224-225.

²¹⁵ David B. Truman, “Party Reform, Party Atrophy, and Constitutional Change: Some Reflections,” *Political Science Quarterly* 99:4 (Winter 1984-85): 639.

²¹⁶ The Committee had amended the bill so as to include this limitation, capped at \$10,000. Though the report recommends “its immediate passage,” further action on the bill is not apparent. “Publicity of Campaign Contributions.” Report No. 770 from the Committee on Privileges and Elections, United States Senate, 63d. Cong., 2d. sess. (August 25, 1914), 1. Accompanying H.R. 8428.

²¹⁷ McClellan Committee Hearings, 1042.

²¹⁸ Ibid., 1031.

²¹⁹ Ibid., 1043.

²²⁰ Ibid., 1042.

²²¹ Ibid., 1043. I.e. they redistributed to candidates according to a formula that both parties employed.

²²² Ibid., 1042.

²²³ Ibid., 1043. *Emphasis mine*

²²⁴ Ibid.

²²⁵ Nathan testimony, Gore Committee Hearings, Part 2, 294-295.

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ See the press conference called by Sen. Carl Curtis (R-NE), with Barry Goldwater present, on the “violation of political freedoms of individual union members.” December 15th, 1955. Accessed 7/17/2013 at

[HTTP://congressional.proquest.com/congressional/docview/t29.d30.hrg-1955-ras-0003?accountid=14678](http://congressional.proquest.com/congressional/docview/t29.d30.hrg-1955-ras-0003?accountid=14678).

²²⁸ George Soule, “Liberty League Liberty – III. Liberty In Industry,” *The New Republic*, September 9, 1936, 121.

²²⁹ Paula Baker, “How Money Became Speech,” unpublished manuscript (7/1/2012). At the turn of the century, money was considered “corrupting” within the political system in terms of buying *votes*, and buying *favours* – in both cases, it has the aura of a *bribe*. The rise of mass media provided new opportunities to communicate directly with voters through advertising and publicity, (and to do so on a national basis), partly replacing older, personal forms of communication through the party structures. With this shift, campaign money took on a different purpose – facilitating the purchase of *advertising* or publicity services and, thereby, the communication of ideas. In this way, Baker argues, money became “speech.” Money became speech because the *medium of communication* with the electorate became more impersonal and more costly. When campaign costs are mostly sunk into advertising, then contributions can largely be interpreted as assistance with *producing and distributing a message* – i.e. speech. To restrict my ability to help someone else put out a message – by contributing directly to their campaign – becomes a thornier issue. Restricting my ability to disseminate my *own* message as I see fit – even if it is a message about a particular political candidate – is even thornier. Hence restrictions on financial activities in campaigns become First Amendment issues.

²³⁰ John Van Doren, *Big Money in Little Sums: A Study of Small Contributions in Political Party Fund-Raising* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Institute for Research in Social Science, 1956).

²³¹ For more on these campaigns, which stressed contributing to the party “of your choice,” see Robert Griffith, “The Selling of America: The Advertising Council and American Politics, 1942-1960,” *The Business History Review* 57 No. 3 (1983): 388-412.

²³² Green Committee Report [S. Rpt. 79:101], 24.

²³³ Ibid.

²³⁴ “Your Union Asks You to Give One Dollar for the Political Action Program.” UAW-CIO Region 4, Message No. 3, 1954. NAM Series V, Box 62A, Hagley.

²³⁵ On the checkoff: Urofsky, 26.

- ²³⁶ “The right of unions to collect voluntary donations for campaign contributions remained contentious,” Zelizer acknowledges (76).
- ²³⁷ The Subcommittee on Privileges and Elections was a three-person panel consisting of Senators Albert Gore (D-TN) as Chairman, Mike Mansfield (D-MT) as the other Democratic member, alongside Carl Curtis (R-NE).
- ²³⁸ Nathan was the ADA’s Executive Committee Chairman.
- ²³⁹ Nathan testimony, Gore Committee Hearings, Part 2, pp. 294-295.
- ²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 295. “[T]he individual workman,” he notes, “living in a locality, possessing certain skills, where there are only a few places to work at, maybe only one, he is made a political prisoner in this process. I am shocked that an organization proclaiming liberalism would endorse it or defend it or share in the proceeds.”
- ²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 294-295. In full, Curtis said: “This may come, this money, from people who disagree with your every issue. And even if they are in the minority, regardless of what percent it is, it is still involuntary money extracted from people to hold a job. How it can be defended under our American system is just beyond me.”
- ²⁴² Nathan, for example, suggested that union leaders felt supporting the ADA was “consistent with the well-being of the union membership.” If the leaders were so wrong in this belief, so insufficiently representative of rank-and-file opinion, Nathan suggested, they would be replaced. Nathan testimony, Gore Committee Hearings, Part 2, p. 295.
- ²⁴³ The McClellan Committee held hearings in 1958-1959, issuing an Interim Report on March 24th, 1958 [S. Rpt. 85: 1417] and a Final Report on February 26th, 1960 [S. Rpt. 86: 1139]. JFK and Goldwater both served on this committee. RFK was chief counsel until Sept. 6, 1959. It covered bribery by the Teamsters in Kansas, violence in the UAW’s boycott of Kohler Co., for example, and perhaps most famously, the alleged connections between the Teamsters and organized crime
- ²⁴⁴ Zelizer, 78.
- ²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 78-79.
- ²⁴⁶ Quoted in Zelizer, 79-80. Though they might oppose PAC regulation, labor leaders were comfortable advocating some measures for reform – especially the restriction of large donations, since they had often justified the PAC model in terms of the small contributions on which it rested. Zelizer, 78.
- ²⁴⁷ Kroll to ADA Convention, p. 5.
- ²⁴⁸ *Ibid.* 5-7.
- ²⁴⁹ For a discussion of failed efforts to repeal Taft-Hartley, see Zeigler, 153-154. On Landrum-Griffin, see R. Alton Lee, *Eisenhower and Landrum-Griffin: A Study in Labor-Management Politics* (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 1990).
- ²⁵⁰ The “Treaty of Detroit” was a UAW contract with GM, signed in May 1950 and originally set to run five years – *Fortune* magazine gave it the label. See Nelson Lichtenstein, *Walter Reuther: The Most Dangerous Man in Detroit* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 280.
- ²⁵¹ (an intentional counterweight to the NCEC – the Committee for the Survival of a Free Congress – would also appear in the 1974).
- ²⁵² Chamber of Commerce, “Labor in Politics,” 19.
- ²⁵³ *Ibid.*, 3.

Chapter 8. When Business is Not “Business-Like”

- ¹ Chamber of Commerce Employer-Employee Relations Department, “Labor in Politics” pamphlet (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 1950), p. 19. In Personal Papers of V. O. Key (Accession # 2000-078, Box 9, “Writings: ‘Politics, Parties, and Pressure Groups,’” Folder: “Chap III – ‘Workers’ – Political Tactics”), John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, Boston, MA. Hereafter, “V.O. Key Papers.”
- ² Chamber of Commerce, “Labor in Politics,” p. 3.
- ³ “The particular danger of a designation like ‘business,’” Truman said, “is that it implies a certain solidity or cohesion within the group that may not exist.” David B. Truman. *The Governmental Process: Political Interests and Public Opinion* (Berkeley, CA: Institute of Governmental Studies, University of California, Berkeley, 1951/1993), 63. Zeigler (1964) expressed a similar sentiment: “If there is a lesson to be learned here, it is that the easy habit of referring to “businessmen” as though this word described a complex of homogeneous values and behavior patterns is misleading” (109). The heterogeneity of business was, in fact, a criticism deployed by pluralists against ideas of simple elite domination in government and society (such as those of C. Wright Mills and his “power elite”). Elites might be advantaged, Zeigler summarized the criticism, but they were far from unified enough on most issues to simply have their way (90). Harmon Zeigler, *Interest Groups in American Society* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964).
- ⁴ As Odegard and Helms would conclude in 1938: “With its twin, the National Association of Manufacturers, the Chamber of Commerce constitutes a powerful political force. More than any other organization it represents the political interests of business.” Peter H. Odegard and Allen E. Helms, *American Politics* (Harper & Bros., 1938), 269, 270. *Emphasis mine*. Quoted in Grace R. Conant, “An Analysis of the Campaign of 1928.” (Master’s Thesis, Loyola University Chicago, 1946), 85-86.
- ⁵ Chamber of Commerce, “Labor in Politics,” pp. 1-2, 5.
- ⁶ Political education was, perhaps, better suited to their resources, talents, and mentality.
- ⁷ The creation of predecessor organizations in the 1960s, in fact, have been largely neglected due to the lack of systematic data collection prior to the creation of the Federal Election Commission in 1974. Exceptions include Zelizer, who does acknowledge the formation of AMA and NAM PACs in 1961 and 1963 respectively, which started to shift mainstream Democratic support more in favor of campaign finance reform, he argues. Nonetheless, he does not explain why these groups decided to establish PACs at this

time. Julian E. Zelizer, "Seeds of Cynicism: The Struggle over Campaign Finance, 1956–1974," *The Journal of Policy History*, 14:1 (2002): 83.

⁸ Clyde P. Weed, *The Nemesis of Reform: The Republican Party During the New Deal* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 65.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 194.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 193-194. "April 1938 was an important turning point in the development of American political economy," Weed notes, since it "marked Roosevelt's decision to use fiscal policy as a mechanism for economic stabilization" (194). "Roosevelt's acceptance of that notion," Weed adds, "was hastened by the publication of John Maynard Keynes's *General Theory Employment, Interest and Money* in 1936" (194).

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 195.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Thomas Ferguson, *Golden Rule: The Investment Theory of Party Competition and the Logic of Money-Driven Political Systems* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 121, for a rank-ordering of industries in terms of labor sensitivity. On the dimension of labor sensitivity, see 120-122; on the international orientation, see 123-124. In the latter regard, Ferguson "divide[s] firms into "internationalists," whose strong position vis-a-vis international competitors leads them to champion an open world economy with minimal government interventions that would hinder the "free" market-determined flow of goods and capital; and "nationalists," whose weakness in the face of foreign rivals drives them to embrace high tariffs, quotas, and other forms of government intervention to protect themselves (see figure 2.2)." (123).

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 206-207 for a summary of the investment theory. Ferguson's insight is that the median voter does not have control of election outcomes – resembling in this sense the Cohen et al. (2008) idea that "the party" is little more than what its backers make it. The median voter is still a limiting factor, however. If we look more toward the Cohen et al. (2008) view, wherein the party is trying to get as much of what it wants within the constraints of what it thinks the public will accept (see 259 for Ferguson implying something along these lines). The difference would be that, for Ferguson, the content of those policies is supplied by the investment coalition underpinning the party, where for Cohen et al. the substance comes from the interest groups, party leaders, and other key actors that compose "the party." Also Ferguson's emphasis on money as the medium of transmission would be different. Ferguson summarizes his approach as the "Golden Rule" of political analysis, that "to discover who rules, follow the gold" – that is, "trace the origins and financing of the campaign" (8). See Marty Cohen, David Karol, Hans Noel, and John Zaller, *The Party Decides: Presidential Nominations Before and After Reform* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).

¹⁶ Zeigler, 116. Referring to Alfred S. Cleveland, "NAM: Spokesman for Industry?" *Harvard Business Review* 26 (May 1948): 357. See Milkis (1993) on multiple "New Deals."

¹⁷ *Ibid.* According to Phillips-Fein (2009), many of the programs established under the Roosevelt administration "were measures America's business class had resisted for a generation, and the government enacted them at a moment when the power and prestige of business was at its nadir." Kim Phillips-Fein. *Invisible Hands: The Making of the Conservative Movement from the New Deal to Reagan*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc. (2009), 9.

¹⁸ Elizabeth A. Fones-Wolf. *Selling Free Enterprise: The Business Assault on Labor and Liberalism, 1945-60* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1994); Kim Phillips-Fein. *Invisible Hands: The Making of the Conservative Movement from the New Deal to Reagan* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2009).

¹⁹ With economic growth smoothing over intra-industrial conflicts, and few political battles to fight, the need for membership in a peak association appeared far from pressing.

²⁰ Zeigler, 115. The NAM's membership, however, began to plummet at that point – falling from 5700 members in 1922, to just under 1500 a decade later. Zeigler puts the number at 1469 members in 1933 (115).

²¹ *Ibid.* "After increasing from 3,600 in 1913 to 5,700 in 1922," Zeigler notes, "NAM membership declined to a low of 1,469 by 1933." (115).

²² *Ibid.*, 116. In 1938, Odegard and Helms could describe U.S. Chamber of Commerce as "[t]he big brother of all business associations." "With a membership of more than a million corporations, firms and individuals, it reaches every sizable community in the country," they said. Quoted in Conant, 85-86.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ The CCG had links to a related Gannett entity – the National Farm Committee. ADNC had links with the CEL too, according to Stetson Kennedy, *Southern Exposure: Making the South Safe for Democracy* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2010), 144. The Constitutional Educational League was one of the first "patriotic" and anti-subversive groups according to Kamp – formed in 1919 by disaffected veterans, who returned from fighting in Europe to find subversive Socialists in their midst. "These veterans of World War I believed that if the American form of government was worth fighting and dying for in France it was worth defending at home," Kamp explained. It "was organized in 1919 by veterans of World War I, who returned to their home communities to find the Browderites and Hillmanites of that era on soap boxes denouncing the American Government and advocating its overthrow," Kamp explained. Testimony of Joseph P. Kamp, September 20, 1944. "Campaign Expenditures," Part 5 of Hearings before the Committee to Investigate Campaign Expenditures [Anderson Committee]. 78th Cong., 2d. sess. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1944), 248. Hereafter, "Testimony of Joseph P. Kamp, Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 5."

²⁶ *Ibid.* There was an anti-Semitic dimension to Kamp's hostility to labor at home, and his isolationist posture in the international sphere. His materials would not be popular among the "Jewish vote," he implies (269). This is in response to a claim that the RNC was distributing his literature in certain states in 1940, which Kamp claims was not true – the evidence he appears to employ is that both the RNC and Willkie Clubs were threatened with losing the "Jewish vote," and the implication is that distributing his literature would not have helped them to avoid that possibility (269). At another point claims that "[t]he central unit of the un-American

gestapo is the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, which works in close harmony with the Department of Justice" (272). And he condemns the Friends of Democracy – another organization investigated by the Anderson Committee, which was an organization with ties to the Jewish community that advocated intervention in World War II. The Friends of Democracy and other organizations like it, Kamp said, "boasts of the fact it is in political activity, that it carries on political activity, that it has caused the defeat of candidates for Congress" (273). Both the CEL and CCG witnesses would suggest this group was smearing them.

²⁷ Testimony of Frank Gannett, Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 7, September 7, 1944, testimony begins p. 377.

²⁸ Testimony of Joseph P. Kamp, Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 5, 258.

²⁹ Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 7, 425. The NCUCG had been refused tax-exempt status – on the grounds that its purported educational efforts skirted too close to the "political" realm for the tastes of the Internal Revenue Service. These tax issues were, in fact, the motivation behind the reformulation of the older National Committee to Uphold Constitutional Government as the CCG. While the NCUCG had been an unincorporated association, the *Committee for Constitutional Government* was an incorporated entity under D.C. law, and a parallel non-profit foundation had been established – the Constitution and Free Enterprise Foundation – for tax-deductible purposes. See also Gloria Resch Cook, "The Relationship Between Political Parties and Pressure Groups" (MA Thesis, University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill, 1956), 24.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 434. "Politics is supposed to be a study of government. Partisan politics is another thing. You should define what you have in mind," he schooled the committee (434). "Anything pertaining to citizens or to the state is politics... Everyone that talks about government is engaged in politics," he observed (434). Part 7 of Hearings before the Anderson Committee, September 7, 1944, p. 434. "Personally I do not think that politics should be a discreditable term, but it has become to be because there is another interpretation on the word "politics."" (434). "That is the point," he continued his disquisition on definition.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 435.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*, 436. Gannett acknowledged the committee investigator's assessment that CCG would "spend several hundred thousand dollars this year, and a large portion of it between now and election, on what you call education?" "We are going to do just as good a job as we can to educate the public," Gannett affirmed (436).

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 435.

³⁵ From the 1937 CEL pamphlet, "Vote for John L. Lewis, and Communism." Reproduced in Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 5, 251.

³⁶ See Joseph P. Kamp, *How to be an American, to Organize for America, to fight Un-Americanism. The ABC's and the Do's and Don'ts for Constructive Patriotic Action* (New York, Patriotic Action Committee, Constitutional Educational League, 1946). "By educating the American people, by letting them know what is going on, by giving them the facts," the CEL would attain its patriotic objectives, Kamp explained (255-256). The CEL was formed as an incorporated association (under the laws of Connecticut) (257).

³⁷ Testimony of Joseph P. Kamp, Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 5, 248.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 249-250.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 248. *Emphasis mine.*

⁴⁰ "The Communist Party has an un-American objective. It participates in election campaigns, on its own admission, for the sole purpose of spreading propaganda to undermine the American Government and American institutions, political and otherwise. The Constitutional Educational League therefore opposes any and all activities of this organization." The pamphlet was "Vote for John L. Lewis, and Communism." Reproduced in Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 5, 251.

⁴¹ Since irrespective of the legal status accorded the CPUSA and its minions, they "cannot be considered, in the true sense, as American political parties." "The Communist Party has an un-American objective. It participates in election campaigns, on its own admission, for the sole purpose of spreading propaganda to undermine the American Government and American institutions, political and otherwise. The Constitutional Educational League therefore opposes any and all activities of this organization." The pamphlet was "Vote for John L. Lewis, and Communism." Reproduced in Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 5, 251

⁴² *Ibid.*, 250. See also 261.

⁴³ *Ibid.* "Efforts in that direction are not partisan," Kamp emphasized: "It is a determination shared by millions of Americans of both major political parties."

⁴⁴ Yet beyond Gannett and his inner circle, the CCG *was* viewed in partisan terms. Key (1964), for example, claimed it "operated in effect as an unacknowledged auxiliary of the Republican party" in the 1940s (89).

⁴⁵ Quote from p. 11 of "Vote for John L. Lewis, and Communism." Reproduced in Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 5, 251.

⁴⁶ Testimony of Joseph P. Kamp, Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 5, 291.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 257. "I would imagine that might be the implication," Kamp said.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 275-276. The CEL was simply providing information in which to base their voting decision, Kamp argued, not explicitly directing that decision toward a particular choice. The CEL was not preventing "the people of the United States from voting C.I.O." in the counsel's words, but rather, giving them the full "facts" upon which to base their decision.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 276.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 257. The earlier pamphlet, *Vote for John L. Lewis, and Communism*, had similar electoral overtones (251).

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 259.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 294.

⁵³ See Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 5, p. 297, and Part 7, 442-443. Rumely refused on the grounds that the CCG was *not* a political committee – as far Rumeley's legal and *moral* judgment went – and that his duty was to protect the identities of his contributors (a factor Kamp also raised).

⁵⁴ Clemens, 185.

⁵⁵ Testimony of Joseph P. Kamp, Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 5, 262.

⁵⁶ See, for example, Fones-Wolf, 285.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 2. On the damage to the reputation of business, see also p. 9, 17. On its resurgence during the war, see 26-27.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁵⁹ Phillips-Fein, 19-20.

⁶⁰ As NAM president Robert Gaylord read from a statement before the Anderson Committee in 1944: “Those most familiar with the economic development of this country under a free economy—a development spectacularly dramatized by its performance during war—often find it difficult to see how such a question could stand the test of time. To anyone familiar with what business is, how it operates, what limits its opportunities, and what encourages its expansion, with all the human factors involved, the answer appears crystal clear.” Gaylord Testimony, Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 2, 99.

⁶¹ That this “miracle” of private enterprise was facilitated by massive wartime federal expenditures is not lost on those historians who find cozy business-state relations more typical than the hostility we tend to assume as existing between them.

⁶² Franklin D. Roosevelt, “A Rendezvous With Destiny.” Speech before the 1936 Democratic National Convention, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, June 27, 1936. “That very word *freedom*, in itself and of necessity, suggests freedom from some restraining power. In 1776 we sought freedom from the tyranny of a political autocracy - from the eighteenth-century royalists who held special privileges from the crown. It was to perpetuate their privilege that they governed without the consent of the governed; that they denied the right of free assembly and free speech; that they restricted the worship of God; that they put the average man's property and the average man's life in pawn to the mercenaries of dynastic power; that they regimented the people.” “For out of this modern civilization economic royalists carved new dynasties. New kingdoms were built upon concentration of control over material things. Through new uses of corporations, banks and securities, new machinery of industry and agriculture, of labor and capital - all undreamed of by the Fathers - the whole structure of modern life was impressed into this royal service. There was no place among this royalty for our many thousands of small-businessmen and merchants who sought to make a worthy use of the American system of initiative and profit. They were no more free than the worker or the farmer. Even honest and progressive-minded men of wealth, aware of their obligation to their generation, could never know just where they fitted into this dynastic scheme of things.”

⁶³ The “open shop” campaign of the early 1920s “was defended as “the American plan” because it preserved the right of the individual to work for what wages and hours he pleased,” Soule explains [“The reality, he argues, “was that the only right he really had was to work for what wages and hours the employer pleased, or not to work at all...” Soule, “Liberty League Liberty – III. Liberty In Industry,” 121-122. In the early 1930s, following passage of the NIRA and its guarantee of collective bargaining rights for workers, independent unions were attacked as interfering with the employees “right” to bargain through company unions. [Soule, “Liberty League Liberty – III. Liberty In Industry,” 122. Soule notes that the pursuit of this theme “was the main burden of a full-page advertisement inserted in hundreds of newspapers by the American Iron and Steel Institute to offset the steel organizing campaign of the trade-union Committee for Industrial Organization in 1936” (122). It gave business a line of attack on “independent unions and their organizers were denounced as persons who interfered with or intimidated the worker in the exercise of his liberty to bargain through the company union. The anti-union employers announced their firm resolution to protect their employees in this “right.”” Soule suggests such arguments clearly violated legislative intent: “[t]he intention of the legislation was not merely to secure the liberty of the worker to bargain collectively, but to bargain through representatives of his own choosing. This included, in any realistic application of the principle, the right to choose an independent union to represent him.”” Soule, “Liberty League Liberty – III. Liberty In Industry,” 122].

⁶⁴ On Roosevelt’s emphasis on “positive” freedoms, see Milkis (1993).

⁶⁵ Soule, “Liberty League Liberty – III. Liberty In Industry,” 125.

⁶⁶ On the “Free Enterprise” campaign generally, see Fones-Wolf.

⁶⁷ “You and the Public.” Records of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States of America, 1912-1980, Accession: 1960, Series IV, Box 2, Folder “Publicity Seminar.” Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, Delaware. Hereafter “Chamber of Commerce Records.”

⁶⁸ “[A]ll the major business organizations, including the Chamber of Commerce...and the NAM as well as industry-specific bodies... were heavily involved in the campaign to shape America's political culture,” Fones-Wolf observes (7). On the NAM’s “education” efforts, see also Fones-Wolf 24-25. Phillips-Fein observes that “[t]he NAM hired a public relations director, and by 1937 the organization was spending over half its income of nearly \$1.5 million on radio programs, motion pictures, billboards, direct mail, a speakers’ bureau, paid political advertisements, and other PR effort” (Phillips-Fein, 14). In terms of think tanks, Phillips-Fein notes that leaders of the American Enterprise Association’s were “acutely aware of the need to disguise the roots of this organization, to keep it from being dismissed as a businessman’s group” – particularly after Congress threatened to remove its tax-exempt status in 1950 – ultimately changing its name to the American Enterprise Institute so as to convey academic rather than lobbying pursuits (66).

⁶⁹ Testimony of Robert M. Gaylord, President of the National Association of Manufacturers. “Campaign Expenditures.” Part 2 of Hearings before the Committee to Investigate Campaign Expenditures [Anderson Committee], U.S. House of Representatives, 78th Cong., 2d. Sess (August 31, 1944), 99.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ Gaylord appears to be applying the “free enterprise” label to the NAM’s earlier publicity activities post-hoc, but further archival research is necessary to confirm this point.

⁷² Gaylord Testimony, Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 2, 98-99.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 117.

⁷⁴ For more on the constellation of especially libertarian organizations founded at this time, see Jennifer Burns. *Goddess of the Market: Ayn Rand and the American Right*. New York: Oxford University Press (2009), 204.

⁷⁵ NAM representatives had appeared before other kinds of congressional committee during this period, including Robert La Follette Jr.'s (I-WT) 1937 Senate investigation into the intimidation of labor organizers and activists. The labor-management struggle had become increasingly violent, with employers turning to private police forces and physical intimidation to suppress organizing in their plants, while strikes and protests became more destructive. The national NAM's encouragement of "Citizens' Committees" – formed by local employers to oppose labor protesters – came in for heavy criticism (though such committees were not strictly *political*, neither involving themselves in the political process directly, nor in elections specifically). Alongside established "management" organizations like the NAM and the National Industrial Council, some of the newer groups like the Constitutional Educational League also appeared. La Follette's investigation was conducted under the auspices of a Senate Committee on Education and Labor Subcommittee (Subcommittee on S. Res. 266), and held hearings from 1937 to 1939.

⁷⁶ Gaylord Testimony, Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 2, 101.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 117.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 122.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 102.

⁸¹ "We were delighted this year, after 10 years in this work, to find that the platforms of the Democratic Party and the Republican Party both pledged support of the free-enterprise system," Gaylord reported to the committee (102). He quoted the plank from the Democratic Party's platform in which they "reassert our faith in competitive private enterprise free from control by monopolies, cartels, or any arbitrary private or public authority" (102).

⁸² Gaylord Testimony, Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 2, 108.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 109.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 102.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 108.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 105. See also 125.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 106, 116.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 106.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 125-126. "help him or to hurt him": 125; "It never occurred to me in that light: 126. Gaylord directly challenged the chairman's characterization that such records were "a gentle way of suggesting to the Congressman that if he does not vote right, that fact will be carried to the members of the National Association of Manufacturers" (126).

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 125-126.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 126. *Emphasis mine.*

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 106. As he states earlier: "Our object of publishing those letters is, if a Congressman votes on a measure in which we are vitally interested in a way that indicates he does not understand the business viewpoint, we want the members in that district to talk with him and show him our reasons for it, but not to bring pressure either for the election or reelection, or oppose or be for a man."

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 126.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸ *Ibid.* "You do not think that businessmen do that, then?" Anderson probed. "I know the national association does not," Gaylord affirmed. "I would be delighted to hear any experience anyone knows different from that."

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 108. "In other words," one member summarized, "you are telling our committee that you and your organization have in no way taken part in political activities—at least as far as parties, or candidates, or political issues are concerned—in the past and that you do not expect to do so in this campaign, or in future campaigns?" which Gaylord affirmed.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 108-109. This is also noted in the Press Research Inc. report filed with the Green Committee's papers at the National Archives. "In a statement before the House Campaign Expenses Committee-Robert M. Gaylord, president of the National Association of Manufacturers, said that his organization had turned down a suggestion to set up a Political Action Committee, similar to the one organized by the CIO." See Press Research Inc., Vol. II, No. 11. Sept. 8, 1944. In United States Senate – 78th Congress. Special Committee on Campaign Expenditures, 1944 General File N-Z. RG 46 Box No. 3. Press Research, Camp. Exp. '44 (Folder). National Archives [8E2/7/19/6]. Hereafter "Press Research Inc., Report."

¹⁰¹ The sum apparently suggested was \$500,000. Gaylord's reply was sent on June 26th.

¹⁰² Gaylord Testimony, Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 2, 108. *Emphasis mine.*

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 110.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 111, 124-125.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 109.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 124.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 111. *Emphasis mine.*

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 116.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 103.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² It may have had connections with *sub-national* PACs, according to a Press Research Inc. report found in the Green Committee's files. "The House Committee did not inquire into NAM connections with a dozen political action committees which have spread a

network of political propaganda across the country,” that report noted. The NAM’s claim is described in this report as being that it “supported or fought legislative programs but not individual candidates.” “In other words money spent against the Roosevelt Administration is not spent directly for the Republican party.” (See note 100, above).

¹¹³ See Richard W. Gable, “NAM: Influential Lobby or Kiss of Death?” *The Journal of Politics* 15:2 (May 1953): 254. On the CIO-PAC, see Truman (1951), p. 306, who suggested that some of its endorsements in the 1946 congressional races, when “unaccompanied by effective mobilization of the vote on election day, constituted a sort of political “kiss of death.” Similarly, Zeigler (1964) notes that in the South, a labor or NAACP endorsement would have negative consequences for the endorsee (Zeigler, 239, n15). Schattschneider (1960) also suggests that special-interest groups “may actually have a *negative* effect in elections” due to their general unpopularity (51).

¹¹⁴ The Federal Regulation of Lobbying Act of 1946 (Title III of the Legislative Reorganization Act, 1946) applied only to contributions or activities designed to influence legislation through direct communications with Members of Congress. Indirect methods of influence, such as grassroots opinion formation, were thus unrestricted. See Emanuel Celler. “Pressure Groups in Congress,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 319 (September, 1958): 8. Celler (D-NY) was the Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee.

¹¹⁵ Stetson Kennedy, *Southern Exposure: Making the South Safe for Democracy* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2010), 143. For more on these groups, see Kennedy, 143-147.

¹¹⁶ That educational campaign, of course, would explain to the public why Roosevelt must be defeated – without explicitly saying so.

¹¹⁷ ADNC Assistant Treasurer Ralph Moore before the Green Committee, in Kennedy, 154.

¹¹⁸ Kennedy, 143. At first, the ADNC had tried to place independent electors on the Democratic ballot across Southern states. By late February, it claimed to have \$1.5 million in pledges for its campaign against Roosevelt – though this would prove to be a dramatic overstatement, and its efforts to prevent re-nomination would amount to very little. See Kennedy, 145, on problems with fundraising in the South, Woodring’s resignation, and accusations of timidity in their leadership posture. Their efforts to place independent electors on the Democratic ballots went nowhere, however, and just prior to the national convention they joined a coalition of “anti-Roosevelt forces” who would attempt to nominate Senator Harry F. Byrd – a conservative Democrat from Virginia. This group even discussed a possible “fusion” ticket, should Byrd be nominated, where he could be joined by John W. Bricker, the Republican Governor of Ohio – a realization of the “conservative coalition” in presidential form. Yet Roosevelt trounced Byrd in the delegate count, even among the Southern delegation. Thus the ADNC determined upon a new course of action for the general election. See Kennedy, 150, on the convention dynamics.

¹¹⁹ Kennedy, 150-151.

¹²⁰ Quoted in Kennedy, 158. Moore apparently appeared before the Green Committee too, but is only mentioned in the final report, not his testimony, hence I assume Anderson here.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² “Campaign Expenditures: American Action, Inc.” Part 5 of Hearings before the Committee to Investigate Campaign Expenditures [Priest Committee], U.S. House of Representatives, 79th Cong., 2nd sess. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1946), 33.

¹²³ *Ibid.* Formed as a nonprofit corporation in Delaware in 1946, its contributors included Liberty League veterans like J.J. Raskob, but also newer conservative voices such as William Volker, and William H. Regnery. On corporate status, see Cook (1956), 18, 28-29.

¹²⁴ The Priest Committee had systematically examined a range of groups as to their political activities in and around the 1946 House races. Witnesses from the NCPAC, CIO-PAC, AFL, Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, and the Teamsters all appeared, as did representatives of the NAM and a new group espousing fiscal conservatism and smaller government: American Action, Inc. Hearings before the Committee to Investigate Campaign Expenditures, U.S. House of Representatives, 79th Cong., 2nd sess. (1946). Part 1 of the hearings considered the National Citizens’ Political Action Committee (NCPAC); Part 2 looked at the CIO Political Action Committee (CIO-PAC); Part 3 at the American Federation of Labor (AFL); Part 4 at the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM); Part 5 at American Action, Inc.; Part 6 at the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen; and Part 7 at the International Brotherhood of Teamsters and several affiliates of the AFL, including the American Federation of Musicians and United Garment Workers.

¹²⁵ Cook (1956), 34. The NEC, Cook said, was only “indirectly concerned with the election phase of the political process.”

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 1. The NEC was primarily concerned with “influencing legislation,” Cook noted, “and it therefore focuses most of its activities upon the legislative phase of the political process” (61). Its main stock-in-trade was to keep up a supply of literature to its subscribers (8).

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 18. Though it did work quite actively with groups like the Committee for Constitutional Government in support of its economic aims. “[T]here is a wide area of agreement between the two organizations within which cooperative or supplementary functions are fulfilled on two levels of activity: action on specific issues and action in the broader, more generalized area of education and public opinion formation,” Cook said (19).

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 62.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 63 for reference to “standard lobbying techniques.”

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 64.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 28. The NEC itself would deny any efforts to influence nominations or elections when its representatives appeared before another congressional investigation in 1950 – the Buchanan lobbying committee. Testifying before the Buchanan lobbying committee in 1950, NEC representatives sought to “deny that the group has attempted to influence the nominations or elections of candidates for government office,” Cook observed (28). But it had done so indirectly – its creation of American Action reflecting a broader tendency to have its participation “handled through non-party groups which are subdivisions of the Council or groups whose functions supplement the Council’s, *though they are not part of its formal organization*” (28. *Emphasis mine*).

¹³³ Ibid., 36-37. On legal dimensions: 36. On backlash: 37. The legal dimensions here are not actually clear – Cook refers to the Federal Regulation of Lobbying Act of 1946, but its application as interpreted in *United States v. Harriss* (1954) was to direct lobbying only. The tax dimensions are also fuzzy, since “charitable” organizations were not constrained by a “political campaign prohibition” until 1954, though they were restricted in terms of *lobbying*. The NEC’s tax status itself is unclear. In addition, American Action was *incorporated*, so how it was meant to overcome prohibitions on direct political activity is a mystery. She also suggested there might be a “branding” issue in play: that the NEC had established its reputation as “an opinion-influencing organization,” and to bring in direct electoral action might confuse that message.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 37.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 69-70. The NEC was “not an objective, educational enterprise,” Cook concluded. It had “distinct political principles upon which its work and literature are based and its activities are geared to promote the philosophy embodying these principles” (69-70). When describing the NEC’s desire for “a realignment of the political parties in such a way that their aims and objectives would coincide with those of the NEC” (70), she appears at first to be suggesting a realignment in which both parties would move toward its goals, but qualifies “the sort of party alignment it wants” later as the incorporation of its principles into a party platform, “probably the Republican.” (70).

¹³⁶ Merwin K. Hart to retired Brigadier General Brice P. Disque, April 21, 1948. Reproduced in “Lobbying, Direct and Indirect: National Economic Council, Inc.” Part 4 of Hearings before the Select Committee on Lobbying Activities, U.S. House of Representatives [**Buchanan Committee**], 81st Congress, 2nd Sess., June 6, 20, 21 and 28, 1950 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1950), 330.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ “Confidential - Report of NAM Representatives who attended National Citizens Political Action Committee School. Washington, D.C. June 26-29, 1946 - General Impressions of Miss McKane.” NAM Records, Series 1, Box 307 “Folder – N.A.M. – Miscellaneous. National Citizens Action Political Action Committee School, 1946.” Hagley. *Emphasis mine*.

¹⁴¹ “Confidential - Report of NAM Representatives who attended National Citizens Political Action Committee School. Washington, D.C. June 26-29, 1946 - General Impressions of Messrs. Swanson and Buergelein.” NAM Records, Series 1, Box 307 “Folder – N.A.M. – Miscellaneous. National Citizens Action Political Action Committee School, 1946.” Hagley.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ See especially Fones-Wolf 50-51, on business expressing concern about the new political machinery established by labor, and responding with publicity efforts. Phillips-Fein does point to some direct activities, such as training executives to fight union drives and “businessmen-in-politics” programs (discussed later in this paper), but does not emphasize direct political action (106-107).

¹⁴⁴ On “ideological mobilization,” see Phillips-Fein, 18-19.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid, 56.

¹⁴⁶ *Congressional Record – Senate*, 80th Cong., 1st Sess. (June 5th, 1947), 6439. Taft’s opinion was even cited in the 1972 *Pipefitters* case and accorded strong weight as an indicator of legislative intent.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid. *Emphasis mine*.

¹⁴⁹ N.A.M. Law Department Memo – “Political Action and the Corrupt Practices Act. U.S. v. United Automobile Workers, CIO). February 24, 1956. NAM Records (Accession No. 1411): Series I, Box B-5. Folder – “Political.” Hagley. This memo was prepared in February, 1956, after the District Court had initially dismissed the indictment against the UAW, but before the Supreme Court had taken up the case. Indeed, it was unclear whether the Justice Department would appeal and, in even if they did so, whether the Supreme Court would reach a decision before the November, 1956 elections. Accordingly, the NAM was basing its assessment upon the idea that if the dismissal was upheld, then there was basically no effective limits on the kinds of political activities in which labor unions could engage. The decision “makes it far easier for the newly merged AFL-CIO to carry out its announced objective of engaging in more intensive political activity,” the memo reported. Subsequently, the Supreme Court would reverse this dismissal – suggesting congressional intent to proscribe *commercial* broadcasts in its opinion, but without issuing a definitive ruling in the case. Instead, it remanded the case back to the lower courts for trial, in which the UAW was acquitted. See *United States v. Painters Local Union No. 481* 172 F. 2d 854 (1949).

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ During the debate over the Smith-Connally Act in 1943, the possibility of adding “management organization” to the statutory language was raised – presumably to embrace those unincorporated business associations that would not otherwise be restricted – but it did not make into the final bill. Senator Hatch subsequently introduced a separate bill that would have done just that – but it went nowhere either. See Joseph E. Kallenbach, “The Taft-Hartley Act and Union Political Contributions and Expenditures,” *Minnesota Law Review* 33:1 (December 1948): 5.

¹⁵² Overacker (1932) noted in 1932 that there had been very few prosecutions under the corrupt practices laws – a rare example being *U.S. v. U.S. Brewers’ Association* (1916) – a District Court decision which upheld the constitutionality of the corporate contribution ban (240). The Brewers’ tried to argue that the statute (the Tillman Act of 1907, in this instance) was unconstitutional – suggesting its application to the selection of presidential electors, for example, went beyond the powers of Congress to regulate. More importantly, they argued that the act was an infringement of free speech. The Court made no statement as to the presidential electors point, but it seemed unimpressed with the free speech argument. As Overacker quotes from the Court’s holding, the statute “neither prevents, nor purports to prohibit, the freedom of speech or of the press. Its purpose is to guard elections from corruption, and the electorate from corrupting influences in arriving at their choice.” See also William B. Barton, “Corporations in Politics: How Far Can They Go Under

the Law?” *American Bar Association Journal* 50 (March, 1964): 228-231. (Barton was the General Counsel for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce). “Most decisions have arisen because of political activity of labor organizations,” Barton noted (228), while “[t]he experience of corporations under the act has been limited to the trial courts” (230). He pointed to the *Brewers* case in 1916, but also noted 23 actions filed against auto dealers between 1948 and 1950, in the Eastern District of Michigan. The dealers were charged “with contributing to a political committee in the 1946 federal election.” Two were found not guilty at trial, “but in the other twenty-one cases there were pleas of *nolo contendere*,” which the court treated, Barton notes, “as tantamount to pleas of guilty” (228).

¹⁵³ “Statistical Report of Complaints received by the Department of Justice concerning alleged violations of Section 610, Title 18, U.S.C. (Political contributions by National Banks, Corporations, and Labor Organizations)” [1950-56]. NAM Accession 1411, Series V, Box 62a. Hagley Library.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.* Looking through the complaint descriptions, I calculated that of the 14 complaints that, following DOJ investigation, were presented to a grand jury, 9 came from unions. All the other union cases either did not warrant investigation, or evidence of violation was not found during investigation – except for one case in 1951, there was a possible labor violation but the statute of limitations had been exceeded.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.* The relevant case was a 1952 complaint against three small companies accused of making small contributions to a Senatorial candidate – the grand jury refused to indict.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.* The relevant case involved a labor union: “Missouri complaint received July 20, 1950, alleges that International Hod Carriers Building and Construction Laborers Union had expended approximately \$20,000 of union funds in support of Congressional candidate. Grand jury returned indictment and case tried in November 1951. Acquitted.”

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.* “Michigan complaint received December 22, 1954 alleges that UAW-CIO expended money in behalf of Congressional candidates out of its general union funds. Presented to grand jury, Indictment returned. On appeal to Supreme Court from District Court for dismissal of indictment. Pending.” Other pending cases from 1954-55: Wisconsin, received Oct. 29, 1954. “Investigation pending outcome of Michigan case.” California, received 1954 – “Related tax investigation pending. Michigan, received July 7, 1955. “Held in abeyance pending decision in UAW-CIO telecast decision case by Supreme Court.”

¹⁵⁸ Barton observed that court decisions provided “little help” in answering the questions of businessmen regarding political activity (230).

¹⁵⁹ “What Corporations Can and Can’t Do.” NAM Records (Accession No. 1411): Series I, Box B-5. Folder – “Political.” Hagley. “AS INDIVIDUALS, businessmen have the same political rights and privileges as all citizens,” the memo noted. They could make contributions of up to \$5000 to candidates and political committees, but alas, “these contributions are not deductible from taxable income,” the memo added. Similarly, the Chamber’s General Counsel in 1964 was on safe ground when he stated: “The law allows the businessman as an individual to act politically like any other individual. If the businessman as an individual wants to endorse a candidate, give a political speech, run for office, or give money to a political party, committee or candidate, he is restricted only by some limitations in the Federal Corrupt Practices Act and state laws that apply to all individuals” (Barton, 228).

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.* So long as it was “done through regular communication media” – that is, not *public* media, in accordance with the *CIO News* decision.

¹⁶¹ Barton, 231. Though convictions for violations of the Corrupt Practices Act were practically nonexistent, U.S. Chamber Counsel Barton warned that “[t]hey do not show that the Federal Corrupt Practices Act as applied to such contributions or expenditures is a dead letter” (230). The belief that no one would be convicted was “without substantial foundation” and even “dangerous” – though he acknowledged that both “spokesmen for both business and labor” have expressed it.” From the perspective of the Corrupt Practices Act, Barton advised, “the corporation can play safe in its partisan political activity only if it limits its appeals, whether written or oral, so as to avoid the general public and communicate rather to its stockholders.” Still, “[o]n principle,” Barton added, “it seems a corporation should be allowed to appeal also to its employees, along with its stockholders, although there is no decision which settles this point” (there would not be until the FEC’s *Sun Oil* Advisory Opinion in 1975). So at this point in 1964, the main consideration in terms of campaign finance law is *who is the audience* – if it is your “members,” somewhat broadly conceived here, then advocacy is acceptable. But if you are using treasury or general funds to advocate in connection with an election *to the general public*, then this would be problematic [though, in the *UAW* case, the Supreme Court did not ultimately rule on that]. “Obviously, a corporation, like a labor organization or association, faces the same problem if it enunciates partisan political views at a meeting to which it invites members of the public who are not stockholders or members,” he warns (230).

¹⁶² Barton, 231. “In keeping with the temper of our times,” Barton observed, “states generally have restricted political activity of corporations more diligently than labor unions” (231). “Perhaps one day Congress or the courts will spell out added rights for corporations’ political activity,” Barton concludes, “but those who find them in the law to date seem to be stretching its interpretations to conform to wishful thinking rather than what the decisions are” (231).

¹⁶³ Truman, 312.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 56.

¹⁶⁵ Fones-Wolf, 287. She argues that the labor movement, seeking to counter business with its own vision of “the American way,” “could never match the resources available to the leaders of American business.” Thus, she argues, “the political and cultural landscape of the postwar era was increasingly dominated by the images and ideas produced by a mobilized business leadership” (Fones-Wolf, 287). On disparities between NAM and labor publicity spending, see Fones-Wolf 43-44, 47-49.

¹⁶⁶ As noted in previous chapters, the APSA Committee on Political Parties expressed this kind of opinion, as did Truman (312), Zeigler (235) and many others.

¹⁶⁷ Further, NAM and the Chamber had only indirect connections to manpower, as their immediate membership was composed of *other* organizations. In 1952, Harold Gosnell observed increased electoral activity in recent election cycles, but while he asserted that business groups were “heavy contributors to party campaign funds, and businessmen are among the most active voters,” the trade

union influence had revealed itself in a different way: “labor organizers have been active in getting out the vote.” Harold F. Gosnell, “Participation in the Forthcoming Election,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 283, (September 1952): 159.

¹⁶⁸ Truman, 312. It was unlikely that the NAM could even mount an electoral effort, “even if it wished to” (312. *Emphasis mine*).

¹⁶⁹ In terms of representative groups, such resource considerations were highlighted by the specific nature of their membership: labor unions are typically composed of *individual members*, while business associations are composed of other associations and *corporations*.

[There are of course exceptions – trade union federations are composed of other trade unions, while small business associations may possess individual members].

¹⁷⁰ Anthony Corrado, “Money and Politics: A History of Federal Campaign Finance Law.” In *Campaign Finance Reform: A Sourcebook*, edited by Anthony Corrado, Thomas E. Mann, Daniel R. Ortiz, Trevor Potter, and Frank J. Sorauf (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1997), 29-30. A 1936 *New Republic* editorial referenced big-business cash “delivered to political bosses in the last hours before the voting begins, and the threats and bribes to employees and trade associates.” T.R.B., “Washington Notes: Can Big Business Buy This Election Too?” *The New Republic* (September 9, 1936) 129. On the Senate floor in 1938, Senator Burton K.

Wheeler (D-MT) also observed that he had “frequently...denounced corporations which place a slip in the pay envelopes and say to the employees, ‘You should vote for such and such a candidate.’” See “Senator Wheeler Assails Political Use of Aid Funds,” *The Los Angeles Times*, May 26, 1938.

¹⁷¹ Zeigler, 244.

¹⁷² Zelizer, 78-79

¹⁷³ As Zelizer observes, for example: “Since corporations were barred from making direct donations to candidates, corporate officials and their families contributed as individuals.” (Zelizer, 78-79). Hacker and Aberbach (1962), make a similar claim about business financial advantage, asserting that “Executives of large corporations on the national level and small businessmen on the local level make substantial contributions to the campaign funds of conservative candidates.” Andrew Hacker and Joel D. Aberbach, “Businessmen in Politics,” *Law and Contemporary Problems* 27 No. 2 (1962), 276.

¹⁷⁴ Melvin I. Urofsky, “Campaign Finance Reform Before 1971,” *Albany Government Law Review* 1 (2008), 28-29. *Emphasis mine*. Prior to the 1970s, “very few corporations...set up PACs to evade the restrictions placed on them by the Corrupt Practices Act,” Urofsky notes.

¹⁷⁵ Gaylord Testimony, Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 2, 111. *Emphasis mine*.

¹⁷⁶ Corrado, 29. “Corporations often gave executives bonuses or inflated salaries with the implicit agreement that the money would be returned for campaign contributions,” Zelizer notes (78-79). See also Urofsky, 28-29.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid*.

¹⁷⁸ See, for example, Zeigler, 234.

¹⁷⁹ Hacker and Aberbach, 276.

¹⁸⁰ Net totals of known contributions came to \$1,014,909 in 1952, and \$1,936,847 in 1956. Of these totals, 92% went to Republicans in 1952, and 94% in 1956. Alexander Heard, *The Costs of Democracy* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1960), 115.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 180-181. National-level labor committee disbursements – including the AFL’s Labor’s League for Political Education, the CIO-PAC, and the Committee on Political Education after their merger – amounted to \$1,817,622 in 1952, \$1,929,655 in 1954, \$1,690,297 in 1956, and \$1,576,525 in 1958.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 101-102. For 1956, Heard only provides information for NAM directors – with 14% making a campaign contribution that year. In terms of methodology, it is not clear whether Heard was able to check all potential contributors – his column headings indicate “number of names checked,” and the number reported for the Chamber in 1952 looks low in comparison to subsequent years.

¹⁸³ Raymond A. Bauer, Ithiel de Sola Pool, and Lewis Anthony Dexter, *American Business and Public Policy: The Politics of Foreign Trade* (New York: Atherton Press, 1963).

¹⁸⁴ Calkins, 154.

¹⁸⁵ Gaylord Testimony, Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 2, 99.

¹⁸⁶ Zeigler, 234. “[T]he degree to which a group is subjected to unusually hostile publicity,” Zeigler thus concluded, would also be an important factor shaping its own public relations efforts.

¹⁸⁷ “Annual Report on NAM’s Public Relations Policies and Programs” (prepared for the February 11th, 1959 meeting of the Political Relations Advisory Committee). NAM Records, Series I, Box 306, “Folder – Board of Directors – Public Relations Advisory Committee, General 1959.”

¹⁸⁸ “Memorandum – An Executive Control Research System for NAM.” Opinion Research Corporation (1959?). NAM Records, Series I, Box 306. Folder “Board of Directors – Public Relations Advisory Committee, “Executive Control Research System.” 100-Q.” Hagley.

¹⁸⁹ The survey was based on 598 personal interviews with “NAM correspondents” in the main, at 503 NAM member companies (cross-sectional sample), conducted in April 1959 by the Opinion Research Corporation of Princeton, New Jersey. While 58% of the public viewed NAM “favorably,” only 20% of NAM members *thought* the public viewed NAM favorably. While 11% of the public did have an unfavorable view, NAM members thought this figure was 45%. “Executive Control Research, NAM Members Look at NAM.” Produced by the Opinion Research Corporation, Princeton, New Jersey, June 1959. NAM Records, Series I, Box 306, Folder “Board of Directors – Public Relations Advisory Committee, “Executive Control Research System.” 100-Q.” Hagley.

¹⁹⁰ Zelizer, 79. *Emphasis mine*.

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- ¹⁹¹ As Truman added, when recounting the various resource-based reasons why a business group like the NAM would not be able to mount an electoral effort, “the roles that such individuals play in their communities probably would not permit this kind of activity” either (312).
- ¹⁹² Congressmen Howard W. Smith, Martin Dies, and Senator E.H. Moore all made complaints to the Attorney General Francis Biddle about the PAC. Copies of these letters were obtained by NAM’s legal counsel – Lambert Miller – in 1947. “OHP” to Lambert Miller, 6/26/47. NAM Records, Series V, Box 62a.
- ¹⁹³ Gaylord Testimony, Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 2, 109.
- ¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 108. *Emphasis mine.*
- ¹⁹⁵ George F. Hinkle, Indiana Commissioner of Labor, “Union Bosses and Political Action Creates Second-Class Citizenship,” Address before the Annual Meeting of the Council of State Chambers of Commerce, September 7, 1956. NAM Accession 1411, Series V, Box 62a. Hagley Library.
- ¹⁹⁶ Moley, “A Capital PAC?”
- ¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁹⁸ Hinkle, 7.
- ¹⁹⁹ Minutes of the Public Relations Advisory Committee. New York, N.Y. April. 19 1956. NAM Records, Series I, Box 306. Folder “Board of Directors – Public Relations Advisory Committee, General 1956.” Hagley.
- ²⁰⁰ “The Political Future – An Address by Cola G. Parker. Chairman of the Board, National Association of Manufacturers, Director Kimberly-Clark Corporation, before the American Farm Bureau Federation, Miami, Florida, December 12, 1956.” NAM Records, Series I, Box 5, Folder “Political.” *In the original document, it reads “leader” instead of “leaders” - an apparent typo.*
- ²⁰¹ William H. Whyte, Jr. *Is Anybody Listening? How and Why U.S. Business Fumbles When It Talks With Human Beings.* New York: Simon & Schuster, 1952. Pp. 11-12.
- ²⁰² *Ibid.*, 12.
- ²⁰³ Key (1964), 161.
- ²⁰⁴ Whyte, 12.
- ²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*
- ²⁰⁶ “The Lessons of the Election – An Address by Paul M. Butler. Chairman of the Democratic National Committee, before the 63rd Congress of American Industry, sponsored by the National Association of Manufacturers, Hotel Waldorf-Astoria, New York, on Wednesday, December 3, 1958.” Press Release, December 3, 1958. NAM Records, Series I, Box 5, Folder “Political.”
- ²⁰⁷ See Donald R. Matthews, *The Social Background of Political Decision-Makers* (Garden City, NJ: Doubleday, 1954), 30. Zeigler (1964) also refers to “the dominance of business and professional occupational origins of legislators” (134).
- ²⁰⁸ Testimony of John Kirby Jr., chairman of the National Council for Industrial Defense, and former president of the National Association of Manufacturers. “Maintenance of a Lobby To Influence Legislation.” Part 56 of Hearings before the Subcommittee on S. Res. 92, of the Committee on the Judiciary. United States Senate, 63d. Cong., 1st Sess., September 2nd 1913 (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1913), 4501. Kirby was characterizing the legislative initiatives the NAM supported – including commenting on the NAM’s various legislative a tariff commission, a merchant marine, and legislation “affecting industrial education” – “in other words, legislation that is beneficial to the whole country and not to any particular class.” (4501).
- ²⁰⁹ Senator Lyndon Johnson (D-TX), for example, noted that, and asked Wilson whether he would be willing to pass GM over in awarding contracts (an issue of particular concern given that Wilson would still be receiving a profit-based bonus from GM, even though he had resigned). Wilson argued that he would not disqualify himself in such matters, and added praise for GM’s operations as a government contractor, never coming under question for wartime profiteering or the like (23). “General Motors is not trying to make a lot of money out of the defense program or the war, we did not out of World War II. I had a good bit to do with the policies. Actually our whole business was approved when received by the Government. We did not have any trouble over excessive profits or anything else on account of World War II-you may look up the record.” (23). Hearings before the Committee On Armed Services United States Senate, Eighty-Third Congress First Session On Nominee Designates: Charles E. Wilson, to be Secretary of Defense; Roger M. Kyes, to be Deputy Secretary of Defense; Robert T. Stevens, to be Secretary of the Army; Robert B. Anderson, to be Secretary of the Navy; Harold E. Talbott, to be Secretary of the Air Force. January 15 and 16, 1953. Hereafter “Wilson Nomination Hearings.” Wilson’s initial testimony came on January 15, 1953. The committee met in executive session, though Wilson was informed that his remarks would be part of the Senate record and publicly available.
- ²¹⁰ *Ibid.*
- ²¹¹ *Ibid.*, 25-26.
- ²¹² *Ibid.*, 21.
- ²¹³ George Wolfskill, *The Revolt of the Conservatives: A History of the American Liberty League, 1934-1940* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1962), 215.
- ²¹⁴ Gaylord Testimony, Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 2, 100. “It is clear that the field to be cultivated is an enormous one,” Gaylord said. “It is recognized that any such educational effort involves the element of time.”
- ²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 122.
- ²¹⁶ “A Political Philosophy for America (Some Suggestions by the National Association of Manufacturers).” No author/date. Records of the National Association of Manufacturers 1895-1990, Accession: 1411, Series I, Box 5, Folder “Political 100 1960-62.” Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, Delaware. Hereafter “NAM Records.”

9. A Tale of Two PACs

¹ Sligh was the NAM's Executive Vice-President, and was describing their new anti-labor public relations campaign. His comment comes from "Congress, Labor Unions, and the Public," July 31st, 1958, NAM Records, Series I, Box 530, File 58-2734, Hagley Library. Also quoted in Julian E. Zelizer, *On Capitol Hill: The Struggle to Reform Congress and Its Consequences, 1948-2000* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 52.

² "In Politics, Default Means Defeat. An Address by Charles R. Sligh, Jr. Executive Vice-President of the National Association of Manufacturers" (1959?). NAM Records, Series I, Box 5. Folder "Political," Hagley Library.

³ "Negligence": Sligh, "In Politics, Default Means Defeat"; "organize ourselves for a sales job": Charles Sligh, "Like It or Not, We're In Politics." NAM Records, Series I, Box 5. Folder "Political," Hagley.

⁴ Quote from "Lobbying, Direct and Indirect," Part 5 of Hearings before House Select Committee on Lobbying Activities [Buchanan Committee], U.S. House of Representatives, 81st Cong., 2nd Sess., H. Res. 298, June 27, 28, 29, and August 25, 1950. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1950), 436-437. Quoted in Gloria Resch Cook. "The Relationship Between Political Parties and Pressure Groups." Master's Thesis, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (1956), pp. 106-107.

⁵ Cook, 107.

⁶ Joseph G. LaPalombara, "Pressure, Propaganda, and Political Action in the Elections of 1950," *The Journal of Politics* 14 No. 2 (1952): 325.

⁷ Quoted in Raymond Moley, *The Political Responsibility of Businessmen* (1959), 28.

⁸ Harmon Zeigler. *Interest Groups in American Society*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc. (1964), 245-246.

⁹ LaPalombara, 311.

¹⁰ Memo from John T. Thacher to Mssrs. Bunting, Miller, Robey, and Gilson, November 8, 1951. NAM Records, Series I, Box 5. Folder "Get out the Vote." Hagley.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² "The Industrial Campaign For Competence And Honesty In Government" (n.d.). NAM Records, Series I, Box 5, Folder "Get out the Vote."

¹³ Moley (1959), 18-19.

¹⁴ Ibid., 19.

¹⁵ This plan is described in a 1958 speech. "Like It or Not, We're In Politics - Charles R. Sligh, Jr. Executive Vice-President of the National Association of Manufacturers." Received 10/31/58. NAM Records, Series I, Box 5. Folder - "Political."

¹⁶ Elizabeth Churchill Browns, "The Secret of Political Success - How to Convert the Unconverted." *Human Events* 15 No. 34 (August 25, 1958): 1-4. NAM Records, Series I, Box 5. Political - Misc. Booklets."

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Victor Riesel. "NAM Seeks to Develop Art of Practical Politics." *Marion Star* (no date, but published post-election in 1958). NAM Records, Series I, Box 5., Folder "Political." As described by Riesel, NAM leaders disclosed *after* the election that they had been "quietly active" in 13 regions during the campaign. "Because your association is a pragmatic one," Charles Sligh announced, "we made the physical business of direct political action the first phase of our program during the last campaign."

¹⁹ Ibid. Essentially, they held action courses in those regions, and sought to aid small plant owners in merging their efforts "just as small unions joined in one COPE drive."

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ In 1946, the Republicans took both the House and the Senate. In 1948, the Democrats regained majorities in both Chambers, and retained control in 1950. In 1952, the Republicans took back the House and the Senate.

²² United States Senate Historical Office, "September 8, 1958

Mid-Term Revolution." Retrieved 7/14/2013 from

http://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/minute/Mid_term_Revolution.htm.

²³ As the influx of northern liberal Democrats in the House in 1958 and 1964 helped stimulate the push for procedural reform in the House. See David W. Rohde, *Parties and Leaders in the Post-Reform House*; (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

²⁴ On the chamber composition, see "Mid-Term Revolution." On the efforts to break the conservative coalition, see Zelizer (2004).

²⁵ Sligh, "Like It or Not, We're In Politics."

²⁶ Raymond Moley, "A Capital PAC?" *Los Angeles Times*, December 14, 1954.

²⁷ Ibid. Moley suggested the formation of a "stockholders" PAC to promote the interests of capital as a direct counterpart to the "workers" PACs created by labor unions. "Corporations are restricted by law from direct contributions to political campaigns," he noted, "But there should be no reason in law or morals to prevent stockholders from making 'contributions to an organization which will contribute money to candidates who will be likely to protect their rights.'"

²⁸ James M. Brewbaker. "Men to Match my Mountains: A Blueprint for Business Political Action." *Human Events* 15 No. 14 (April 7, 1958): 1-4. NAM Records, Series I, Box 48, Folder "Public Affairs Dept. Business-Industry Political Action Committee (BIPAC) 1963 100-Q." Hagley.

²⁹ Andrew Hacker and Joel D. Aberbach, "Businessmen in Politics," 27 *Law and Contemporary Problems* (Spring 1962): 266.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ "Large corporations do not feel that their interests are comprehended by lawmakers," Zeigler (1964) observed, drawing on Hacker's work. "Despite the dominance of business and professional occupational origins of legislators," he added, "Hacker shows that, in the case of the Senate, the 'image of the business world is cast largely in provincial terms.'" (134).

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- ³² Zeigler, 134. See Andrew Hacker, “The Elected and the Anointed: Two American Elites,” *American Political Science Review* 55 No. 3 (1961): 547-548.
- ³³ Ibid.
- ³⁴ The Manufacturers Association of Syracuse began such courses in 1957 (Hacker and Aberbach, 269).
- ³⁵ These details are discussed in Moley (1959), 28.
- ³⁶ On Boulware and the free-market campaign, see Kim Phillips-Fein. *Invisible Hands: The Making of the Conservative Movement from the New Deal to Reagan*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc. (2009), 100. On Reagan and GE, see 112, 147-148. General Electric and Gulf Oil had similar programs to the Syracuse one, Zeigler notes (121).
- ³⁷ Hacker and Aberbach, 268.
- ³⁸ Ibid. In 1962, they promoted it at their first “Public Affairs Conference” in Washington, D.C. Chamber of Commerce Records, Series IV, Box 2, Folder “Public Affairs Conferences.”
- ³⁹ Sligh, “In Politics, Default Means Defeat.” See also “Politics and Progress - An Address by Charles R. Sligh, Jr. Executive Vice-President of the National Association of Manufacturers, before the Exchange Club, Grand Rapids, Mich., February 23, 1959.” AM Records, Series I, Box 5, Folder “Political.” Hagley.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid. It was, for example, “working hard at obtaining public understanding of the kind of candidates who should be elected, regardless of party label.”
- ⁴¹ Ibid. Individuals and organizations at the state and local level, who better knew local concerns and candidates, were needed to “find the right businessmen for the right job and to induce them to enter this strange and sometimes frightening world of politics,” “to actually reach the voters,” and, he concluded “to get the right voters to the polls on election day.”
- ⁴² Ibid.
- ⁴³ Unidentified Leaflet. NAM Records, Series I, Box 48. Folder “Public Affairs – General 1958-59 100-Q.” Hagley.
- ⁴⁴ Cola G. Parker, “The Political Future.”
- ⁴⁵ Hacker and Aberbach, 268, 271.
- ⁴⁶ Ibid., 269, 272-275.
- ⁴⁷ Moley (1959), 16.
- ⁴⁸ Ibid., 10.
- ⁴⁹ Ibid., 22.
- ⁵⁰ Ibid., 16.
- ⁵¹ Ibid., 13.
- ⁵² Ibid., 8.
- ⁵³ Ibid., 13.
- ⁵⁴ Ibid., 8.
- ⁵⁵ Ibid., 5-6.
- ⁵⁶ Ibid., 13.
- ⁵⁷ Ibid., 19.
- ⁵⁸ Ibid., 37.
- ⁵⁹ Gaylord Testimony, Anderson Committee Hearings, Part 2, 105.
- ⁶⁰ Ibid., 125-126. Gaylord directly challenged the chairman’s characterization that such records were “a gentle way of suggesting to the Congressman that if he does not vote right, that fact will be carried to the members of the National Association of Manufacturers” (126).
- ⁶¹ Stricker-Henning Report on the Composition of the 86th Congress – October 3, 1958. NAM Records, Series I, Box 5, Folder “Political.” This report used voting records of congressmen compiled during the Republican-controlled 83rd Congress.
- ⁶² Gulf Oil corporation distributed a congressional scorecard in 1958, though the basis for their assessment and breadth of distribution is unclear. See Lester Tanzer, “Business & Elections: More Companies Edge Into Politics, Draft Bigger 1960 Ventures,” *The Wall Street Journal*, October 14, 1958.
- ⁶³ The six principles were: the free market, limited government, economy in government, economic growth with stability, equality under the law and the elimination of physical coercion, national security. “The Free Citizens Voting Record,” NAM Records, Series I, Box 5. Folder “Political Misc. Booklets.”
- ⁶⁴ Raymond Moley, “A Look at the Record” (this article appears to have come from *Perspective* magazine). Back cover of “The Free Citizens Voting Record,” NAM Records, Series I, Box 5. Folder “Political Misc. Booklets.”
- ⁶⁵ Americans for Constitutional Action was founded in 1958 first released the “ACA Index” in 1960. Richard A. Viguier and David Franke, *America’s Right Turn: How Conservatives Used New and Alternative Media to Take Power* (Chicago, IL: Bonus Books, 2004).
- ⁶⁶ Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), 63. McGirr also mentions *Modern Age*, a scholarly quarterly founded by conservative intellectual Russell Kirk in 1955.
- ⁶⁷ Ibid.
- ⁶⁸ Mary C. Brennan. *Turning Right in the Sixties: The Conservative Capture of the GOP* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 61. In 1960, conservative activist and editor of the *National Review*, William F. Buckley, helped to forge the “Young Americans for Freedom” – a libertarian-leaning political action committee. See John A. Andrew, *The Other Side of the Sixties: Young Americans for Freedom and the Rise of Conservative Politics* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1997); and Gregory L. Schneider, *Cadres for Conservatism: Young Americans for Freedom and the Rise of the Contemporary Right* (New York: New York University Press, 1999). AEI was renamed in 1962. On these earlier organizations, see also Jennifer Burns. *Goddess of the Market: Ayn Rand and the American Right*. New York: Oxford University Press (2009), p. 204.

⁶⁹ See especially Fones-Wolf 50-51, on business expressing concern about the new political machinery established by labor, and responding with publicity efforts.

⁷⁰ Phillips-Fein, 56. Phillips-Fein does point to some direct activities, such as training executives to fight union drives and “businessmen-in-politics” programs (discussed later in this paper), but does not emphasize direct political action (106-107).

⁷¹ Testimony of Bonner Fellers, October 8, 1956. “1956 Presidential and Senatorial Campaign Contributions and Practices,” Part 2 of hearings before the Subcommittee on Privileges and Elections of the Committee on Rules and Administration [**Gore Committee**], U.S. Senate, 84th Cong., 2d. Session (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1956), 296-297. Hereafter “Fellers Testimony, Gore Committee Hearings, Part 2.” The group had five major objectives that included securing the Bricker Amendment; opposition to foreign aid, “lavish Government spending,” and the income tax; a strong military for defensive purposes; the preservation of “States rights under the Constitution”; and opposition to “the drift into socialism” that its leaders discerned in the contemporary United States.

⁷² Ibid. “For America” was established on May 28th, 1954, according to Fellers’ testimony (“as a patriotic, nonprofit corporation”) in Chicago. The founders included “Gen. Robert E. Wood, Colonel McCormick, of the *Chicago Tribune*, the late Colonel McCormick, and I believe the other incorporator was Robert Harris, of New York,” he added (296). Its application for tax exemption was denied on November 20th, 1955 (297).

⁷³ Ibid., 297. In August, 1956, it had endorsed the States’ Rights Party candidate for president, T. Coleman Andrews (a Virginian and former Commissioner of Internal Revenue) and his running-mate Thomas H. Werdel (a former Republican congressman from California) (297). The following month, they raised \$12,000 for their campaign (297).

⁷⁴ Judith Smith, *Political Brokers: Money, Organizations, Power, and People* (New York: Liveright, 1972), 18. Americans for Constitutional Action is one of several organizations featured in this volume—a compilation of organizational profiles that had previously appeared in *National Journal*. Mundt’s entry is quoted in Sara Diamond, *Roads to Dominion: Right-Wing Movements and Political Power in the United States* (New York: The Guildford Press, 1995), 61. See *Congressional Record*, August 4, 1958, p. 14558. See “Group to Defend Free Enterprise,” *New York Times*, August 5, 1958, and *Group Research Report*, special July 20, 1962 report on ACA.

⁷⁵ Diamond (61) notes Moreell’s association with Jones & Laughlin.

⁷⁶ Quoted in Diamond, 61. See *Congressional Record*, August 4, 1958, p. 14558. See “Group to Defend Free Enterprise,” *New York Times*, August 5, 1958, and *Group Research Report*, special July 20, 1962 report on ACA.

⁷⁷ Smith, 18.

⁷⁸ David M. Olson, “The Structure of Electoral Politics,” *The Journal of Politics* 29 No. 2, (1967): 359.

⁷⁹ Diamond, 61.

⁸⁰ Herbert E. Alexander, *Financing the 1960 Election*. Princeton, NJ: Citizens’ Research Foundation (1962), 44. In 1960, “Three committees, Americans for Constitutional Action, Christian Nationalist Crusade, and the National Committee for an Effective Congress, accounted for about 80 per cent of gross disbursements of all miscellaneous committees,” that year, Alexander (1962) reported (44). The “Christian Nationalist Crusade,” in fact, marked the return of Gerald K. Smith to the world of political action—the man who had taken over Huey Long’s organization back in the 1930s.

⁸¹ “Group of Conservatives Assigns Secret Aides to 46 Candidates,” *New York Times*, October 22, 1962. *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report* maintained records of interest group endorsements, including those of the ADA and ACA—though it is unclear at what point these begin. In 1984, David Nice used these CQ records to calculate that between 1972 and 1978 liberal interest groups (ADA-up to 1976, the United Automobile, Aerospace, and Agricultural Implement Workers, the National Committee for an Effective Congress, United Mine Workers-to 1974, and COPE—from 1974) and conservative interest groups (ACA, BIPAC, the Committee for the Survival of a Free Congress—from 1976, and NCPAC—from 1976) made 4,855 endorsements in U.S. House and Senate races. See David C. Nice, “Interest Groups and Policymaking in the American States,” *Political Behavior* 6 No. 2 (1984): 185, 194n.

⁸² See Diamond, 61. “Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, ACA published the “ACA Index” of Congressional members’ voting records,” she observes, and “through its local chapters, ACA representatives raised money and grassroots support for right-wing candidates.”

⁸³ This is, indeed, the assumption used in most contemporary analysis, which often employs ADA ratings.

⁸⁴ Richard Viguerie, a pioneering conservative fundraiser from the late ‘60s onwards, recalled that 1960 was the first year in which the “ACA Index,” what he described as “the first scorecard rating members of Congress ever compiled by a conservative organization.” Viguerie and Franke, 68.

⁸⁵ Of the handful of references to the ACA that appear in the extant scholarship, for example, they are almost universally references to the ACA’s legislative *scores*—typically included as a variable in regression models. There is basically nothing on the ACA as an *organization* in the political environment. A search in Google Scholar, for example, returns 213 results, of which only about ten contained any real substantive reference to the organization. Two articles mentioned the ACA when listing “radical right” groups of the 1960s—Abcarian and Stange (1965) and Koeppen (1969)—while by the 1970s, it had become associated with the “Old Right” rather than the “New Right” of Paul Weyrich and Richard Viguerie.

⁸⁶ David R. Mayhew, *Congress: The Electoral Connection* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1975), 66.

⁸⁷ Richard Fenno, *Home Style: House Members in their Districts* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1978), 144.

⁸⁸ Viguerie and Franke, 68.

⁸⁹ Diamond, 61.

⁹⁰ McGirr, 63.

⁹¹ The ACA was classified as a prominent organization within the “contemporary radical “rightist” movement” by Abcarian and Stange (1965), and as a “radical-right organization” by Koeppen (1969). See Sheilah R. Koeppen, “The Republican Radical Right,”

Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science 382 No. 1 (1969): 74 n1; Gilbert Abcarian and Sherman M. Stange, "Alienation and the Radical Right," *The Journal of Politics* 27 No. 4 (1965): 776.

⁹² Scoble's (1963) analysis of the NCEC also discusses the ADA and the ACA, which is described as an "ultra-conservative political organization" (243) and "not as well known as the other two organizations" (here referring to the ADA and the ACLU) (245). See Harry M. Scoble, "Political Money: A Study of Contributors to the National Committee for an Effective Congress," *Midwest Journal of Political Science* 7 No. 3 (1963): 243, 245.

⁹³ For more on the formation of the John Birch Society, see Rick Perlstein, *Before the Storm: Barry Goldwater and the Unmaking of the American Consensus* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2001), 116-119.

⁹⁴ Phillips-Fein, 59.

⁹⁵ These steps are noted in Andrew, 235. As Andrew relates, White House staffer Lee White began preparing confidential reports on a monthly basis, summarizing the activities of various right-wing groups. And Kennedy also asked White House deputy special counsel Myer Feldman to study right-wing organizations – including Americans for Constitutional Action – and assess their impact. By the summer of 1963, an FBI investigation into "rightist or extremist" groups was also underway. In all, Feldman's report considered 26 "major right-wing organizations" and assessed their overall financial support. Young Americans for Freedom was monitored, unclear if ACA was, but likely given its position within that cluster of organizations. See Andrew, 167.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 154. The memo was entitled "The Radical Right in America Today."

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 153-154.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 167. In the 1962 midterms, more than half of the candidates supported by the ACA were successful – according to the assessment of White House deputy special counsel Myer Feldman, who had been asked by the president to study right-wing organizations and assess their impact (167). He pointed to signs of growing support at the local level too, and observed that in California, this had translated into a critical party development: "the right wing had taken over the Young Republicans and were close to controlling the statewide Republican organization" (168). Still, Feldman made a distinction between the "conservative right" – in which he located the ACA – and the "radical right," composed of more extreme organizations such as the John Birch Society.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 157.

¹⁰¹ Nor is it entirely clear *who* was probed, though Andrew acknowledges that Young Americans for Freedom was not investigated as part of the Ideological Organizations Project – "probably because it was not tax-exempt, primarily sought to change the direction of the Republican Party, focused on more mainstream conservative issues, and lacked the resources for national propaganda used by other, more extreme groups," he says (164).

¹⁰² NAM Public Affairs Reporter – "Information on Congressional Races Now Available" – 8/17/60. NAM Records, Series I, Box 5, Folder "Political 100 1960-62."

¹⁰³ "Information on Congressional Races Now Available," and "Explanation of Voting Record. Information on Incumbent Congressmen." NAM Records (Accession No. 1411): Series I, Box B-5. Folder - Political 100 1960-62, Hagley.

¹⁰⁴ They also included how a Congressman voted on "18 Selected Key Issues," but it is not clear why they were selected or where NAM stands on those issues – at best, it is perhaps a score of *presidential* support, as the president's position is indicated. See "Explanation of Voting Record."

¹⁰⁵ A further \$3000 was contributed to Americans for Constitutional Action. For 1960 data, see Herbert E. Alexander, *Financing the 1960 Election* (Princeton, New Jersey: Citizens' Research Foundation), 65; 1964 data is drawn from "[1964?] Political Contributions [Contents uncertain]" (no box number), Overacker-Heard Campaign Finance Data Archive, Institute of Governmental Studies Library, University of California, Berkeley. Alexander continued this archive, begun by Louise Overacker and Alexander Heard.

¹⁰⁶ Zelizer (2002), 78-79. "Unknown to the public, many corporations also maintained PAC-like operations without public knowledge: Gulf Oil, Union Carbide, McDonnell Douglas, Ford Motors, and General Electric had solicited executives and distributed the money to candidates since the 1950s."

¹⁰⁷ Richard M. Skinner, *More Than Money: Interest Group Action in Congressional Elections* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007), 77. See also Zelizer (2002), 83.

¹⁰⁸ Truman, 301.

¹⁰⁹ Paul F. Healy, "The Senate's Gay Young Bachelor," *Saturday Evening Post* 225 No. 50 (June 13, 1953): 127.

¹¹⁰ On the Kennedy Tax Cut, see John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, "JFK on the Economy and Taxes." Retrieved 6/30/2013 from <http://www.jfklibrary.org/JFK/JFK-in-History/JFK-on-the-Economy-and-Taxes.aspx>.

¹¹¹ Sligh, "In Politics, Default Means Defeat."

¹¹² "NAM Public Affairs Program." Memo from Robert L. Humphrey to Messrs. Bieber, Grier, Hammond, Rathbun, and Steinbrugge. November 28, 1962. NAM Records, Series I, Box 48. Folder "Public Affairs Dept. 100-Q 1961-1962." Hagley.

¹¹³ Public Affairs Division. "NAM Reports - "Operation Saturation" A Challenge to Business and Industry." (1962?). NAM Records, Series I, Box 48. Folder "Public Affairs Dept. 100-Q 1961-1962." Hagley.

¹¹⁴ In late December 1962, W. P. Gullander informed the NAM Executive Committee that a proposed "direct political action organization under the sponsorship of NAM" would be on the agenda for discussion at the January 8th, 1963, meeting of the Executive Committee. W. P. Gullander to the NAM Executive Committee. December 27, 1962. NAM Records, Series I, Box 48. Folder "Public Affairs Dept. Business-Industry Political Action Committee (BIPAC) 1963 100-Q." Hagley.

¹¹⁵ Edward I. Maher, "At Last – A Political Organization for Businessmen," *NAM News*, August 16, 1963. NAM Records, Series I, Box 48, Folder "Public Affairs Dept. Business-Industry Political Action Committee (BIPAC) 1963 100-Q." Hagley.

¹¹⁶ Quoted in Donald R. Hall, *Cooperative Lobbying – The Power of Pressure* (Tucson, AZ: The University of Arizona Press, 1969/1970), 206. See also Resolution – undated. NAM Records, Series I, Box 48, Folder “Public Affairs Dept. Business-Industry Political Action Committee (BIPAC) 1963 100-Q.” Hagley.

¹¹⁷ “Nature and Activities of Business-Industry Political Action Committee.” Introduced by Senator Everett Dirksen (R-IL). *Congressional Record – Senate*, February 27th, 1964, 3858.

¹¹⁸ Joseph J. Fannelli. “Corporate and Union Political Activity.” In *Conference on Congressional Campaigns and Federal Law*, presented by the Political Campaign and Election Law Committee of the Federal Bar Association, Washington D.C., November 27-28, 1979, 122. See also Hall, 205.

¹¹⁹ “Do You Have a Question About BIPAC?” NAM Accession 1411, Series I, Box 48. Folder – Folder – Public Affairs Dept. Business-Industry Political Action Committee (BIPAC) 1963 100-Q. Hagley.

¹²⁰ Victor Riesel. “Big Biz Organizing to Cope with COPE.” *New York Mirror*, April 17, 1963. NAM Records, Series I, Box 48, Folder “Public Affairs Dept. Business-Industry Political Action Committee (BIPAC) 1963 100-Q.” Hagley. NAM lawyers had sought copies of COPE’s constitution and by-laws to consider, and took advice from the newly-formed AMPAC, discussed later in this section (in Folder – Public Affairs 1958-1963).

¹²¹ “Do You Have a Question About BIPAC?”

¹²² “Nature and Activities of Business-Industry Political Action Committee” (as inserted in the *Congressional Record*, February 27th, 1964, 3858).

¹²³ Quoted in Hall, 206.

¹²⁴ W. P. Gullander to the NAM Executive Committee. December 27, 1962.”

¹²⁵ Robert L. Humphrey, became Director of Public Affairs for the NAM in 1962 and then Executive Director of BIPAC in 1963. Interview with Humphreys. NAM Records, Series I, Box 48, Folder “Public Affairs Dept. Business-Industry Political Action Committee (BIPAC) 1963 100-Q.” Hagley.

¹²⁶ “The United States Chamber of Commerce and the American Medical Political Action Committee are among the organizations that probably will be invited to nominate a member of the BIPAC Board, the NAM spokesman said.” Quoted in Hall, 206.

¹²⁷ Booklet–“Bill Boynton goes into Politics.” Received 2/6/64; Leaflet – “The Bill Boyntons go into Politics.” (1964?); Leaflet – “Announcing Precinct Action Workshop – A Work Conference for Leaders in Public Affairs and Political Action.” Received 8/12/64. “Campaign Technique Manual” – Produced by NAM. Received 8/25/64; “Make Time for Politics” program – aimed at women. “Produced as a Public Service by the National Association of Manufacturers.” NAM Records. Series I, Box 5, Folder “Political Misc. Booklets,” Hagley.

¹²⁸ Memo 7/1/64, NAM Records, Series I, Box 49 – Political Education.

¹²⁹ “Business Report for April 4-September 18, 1963.” NAM Records, Series 1, Box 307, Folder “Board of Directors. Sample Folder – Meeting Sept. 17th 1963, Hot Springs, Va.” Hagley. Humphrey attended the “AMPAC Workshop, Chicago Illinois” on April 18, 1963, and the “AMPAC National Conference, Chicago, Illinois” on April 18.

¹³⁰ In March 1963, for example, a national opinion poll asked “Would you say there are any labor union monopolies in this country or any unions that are pretty much like monopolies?” 59% of respondents agreed.” Only 8% denied that unions were like monopolies, while 33% did not know. Poll conducted by Opinion Research Corporation, March 15 - April 15, 1963 and based on 1,000 personal interviews. Sample: National adult. [USORC.63AUG.R08]. ORC Public Opinion Index, Mar, 1963. Retrieved Nov-28-2011 from the iPOLL Databank, The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, University of Connecticut.

http://www.ropercenter.uconn.edu/data_access/ipoll/ipoll.html Though Fones-Wolf suggests that “[f]rom the origins of the labor movement, employers had attacked unions as monopolies” (259).

¹³¹ Quoted in Hall, 206.

¹³² *Ibid*, 208.

¹³³ “Nature and Activities of Business-Industry Political Action Committee” (as inserted in the *Congressional Record*, February 27th, 1964, 3858).

¹³⁴ “Do You Have a Question About BIPAC?” The leaflet includes the statements, “your BIPAC membership is aimed sharply to help specific candidates espousing a sound philosophy of government who have a genuine chance of victory,” and “candidates will be supported only in districts and States where a close vote is anticipated.”

¹³⁵ Candidates would be selected on the basis of their “platform, voting record and electability,” and *not* their party affiliation, the authors emphasized. “Nature and Activities of Business-Industry Political Action Committee” (as inserted in the *Congressional Record*, February 27th, 1964, 3858).

¹³⁶ George Melloan. “Playing Politics: More Companies Train Employees for Political Chores, Officeholding.” *The Wall Street Journal*, February 17, 1964. NAM Records, Series I, Box 48. Folder “Public Affairs Dept. Business-Industry Political Action Committee (BIPAC) 1963 100-Q.” Hagley.

¹³⁷ “The BIPAC Story.” NAM Records, Series I, Box 48. Folder “Public Affairs Dept. Business-Industry Political Action Committee (BIPAC) 1963 100-Q.” Hagley.

¹³⁸ “Do You Have a Question About BIPAC?”

¹³⁹ “BIPAC Support of Congressional Candidates.” Received 8/17/64. NAM Records, Series I, Box 48, “Folder – Public Affairs Dept. Business Industry Political Action Committee (BIPAC), 1964. 100-Q.” Hagley; Raymond Moley, *The Political Responsibility of Businessmen* (1959), 16.

¹⁴⁰ “Constitution and By-Laws.” NAM Records, Series I, Box 48, Folder “Public Affairs Dept. Business-Industry Political Action Committee (BIPAC) 1963 100-Q.” Hagley. *Emphasis added*.

¹⁴¹ “Do You Have a Question About BIPAC?”

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ “The BIPAC Story.”

¹⁴⁵ Robert Agranoff, “The New Style of Campaigning: The Decline of Party and the Rise of Candidate Centered Technology,” 3-50 in Robert Agranoff (ed.), *The New Style in Election Campaigns* (Boston, MA: Holbrook Press, Inc. 1972). Page 11.

¹⁴⁶ Paul Kleppner, “Politics without Parties: The Western States, 1900-1984,” in Gerald D. Nash and Richard W. Etulain (eds.) *The Twentieth-Century West: Historical Interpretations* (Albuquerque NM: The University of New Mexico Press, 1989), 325-328. The West, historically had something of an “antiparty, or at least nonpartisan” political culture, according to Kleppner – where political culture is considered to be “those internalized expectations that underlay and shaped westerners’ patterns of political behavior” (325). This outlook stemmed from a variety of sources including evangelicalism, “negative experiences with parties that operated as mechanisms of colonial control during the territorial period,” and, most important, the inability of parties to represent grassroots concerns (325-327). “Weakly institutionalized parties operating as instruments of private interest groups especially drew the fire of civic associations and reformers” (327). A “sense of regional self-interest” was another important component of this political culture, Kleppner noted (328). “[W]hatever their specific sources and referents,” he summarizes, “antiparty values were broadly diffused among the western electorate” (327).

¹⁴⁷ Charles Mohr, “Goldwater’s Nine,” *New York Times*, September 13th, 1964.

¹⁴⁸ According to conservative publisher Alfred S. Regnery, White’s Draft movement “was unprecedented, given that Goldwater adamantly proclaimed he would not run.” Alfred S. Regnery. *Upstream: The Ascendance of American Conservatism* New York: Simon & Schuster, 2008), 96.

¹⁴⁹ See F. Clifton White, *Suite 3505: The Story of the Draft Goldwater Movement* (New Rochelle, NY: Arlington House, 1967). As journalist Charles Mohr put it, White was “[s]omething of an outsider in the Goldwater circle and not personally close to the Senator,” but had “nevertheless, directed field operations prior to the San Francisco convention” and become “executive director of Citizens for Goldwater,” in which role he was “charged with building the volunteer groups that may prove the biggest single asset of the campaign.” See Mohr, “Goldwater’s Nine.” Phillips-Fein suggests this was “much to his frustration” as White had “hoped for a higher post” (142).

¹⁵⁰ Aaron Wildavsky. “The Goldwater Phenomenon: Purists, Politicians, and the Two-Party System.” *The Review of Politics* 27:3 (July, 1965): 411. As Wildavsky reports, 722 of the Republican county chairmen said they preferred Goldwater when polled in April, 1964, while 301 preferred Nixon.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 393. “The pragmatic spirit was completely lacking,” among the “purist” delegates, Wildavsky observed, and they exhibited “amazingly little interest in specific issues” (402). “In our interviews at the convention, we simply could not get them to talk about anything concrete, unless references to welfare-statism and too-much-government are considered specific replies. The purists did express strong belief in the importance of being interested in issues, but this is not equivalent to being interested in specific issues” (402).

¹⁵² Ibid., 393.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 398.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 398.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 411. According to standard voting behavior theory, “it was possible to predict long before the election that Goldwater would suffer a drastic defeat. Nor is there any reason to believe that the outcome will be different in 1968 or 1972 so long as the overwhelming purist component of the Goldwater conservatives prevents them from making more successful appeals to the voters” (406). “The possibility cannot be ruled out that the Republican Party will continue to nominate conservatives like Goldwater and will continue to lose badly” (411).

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 411-412.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 412.

¹⁵⁸ Philip A. Klinkner. *The Losing Parties: Out-Party National Committees 1956-1993*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press (1994), 73-77. Bliss was appointed RNC chairman in April 1965. As Klinkner (1994) describes, even before the election had taken place, former RNC chairman Thruston Morton and other Republican liberals and moderates launched efforts to broaden the party’s base and “return the RNC to a more neutral footing.” The moderate “also called for Burch’s removal.” Nonetheless, Goldwater was intractable on Burch’s resignation. “In December, he wrote to each of the 132 members of the RNC in an effort to shore up support for Burch, saying, “I feel the removal of Dean Burch would be a repudiation of a great segment of our party, and a repudiation of me.”” During this controversy, as noted in the main text, Goldwater “made rumblings that if he did not get his way he would consider a conservative third-party movement. He stated that there were approximately 10 million conservative activists in the country which he thought was “something like 12 times as much as any so-called third party or outside party ever started with.” Eventually, Goldwater relented – asking for Burch’s resignation, approved by the RNC in January 1965. Speaking to the Committee, both Burch and Goldwater encouraged unity: “Burch said that it was “absolutely vital” to unify the party and, “A party that is splintered is nothing but a sect.” Goldwater accepted full blame for the defeat and said he “would resist any third-party movement in this country and never allow my name to be associated with such a movement.” Klinkner points to this maneuvering to recover liberal or moderate control of the RNC in the wake of Goldwater’s loss as another example of an *organizational response* to defeat.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 75.

¹⁶⁰ Reports of the *size* of this surplus vary widely – anywhere from \$200,000 to \$1.8 million, though in the most detailed analysis Alexander (1966), placed it toward the lower end of that range – suggesting about \$500,000 at one point (108), but later closer to \$200,000 (109). Broder (1966) suggests that the surplus was more than \$200,000. David S. Broder. “Goldwater Fund Aids Right Wing,” *New York Times*, January 16, 1966, p. 47. Klinkner (1994) puts it at around \$700,000, noting that “[o]f the approximately \$1

million left over from the campaign, the RNC controlled only about \$300,000,” while “[t]he Citizens for Goldwater-Miller Committee controlled most of the remainder” (78).

¹⁶¹ It “refused repeated bids to turn the money over to the Republican National Committee,” as David Broder reported – even by early 1966. Broder, “Goldwater Fund Aids Right Wing.”

¹⁶² Alexander (1966), 109. Alexander notes that the Citizens committee continued to receive contributions beyond the election, and began to make some disbursements in 1965 – to various conservative *candidates* such as Senator John Tower (R-TX), who faced reelection in 1966. At the end of December, 1965, Alexander notes, “it was announced that more than \$200,000 in funds would be used to help conservative Republicans seeking reelection to Congress in 1966” (109). Broder noted that it “continued to subsidize conservative fringe groups” in 1965, including the Political Action Committee of Young Americans for Freedom, an important group within the growing conservative movement (“Goldwater Fund Aids Right Wing”).

¹⁶³ David S. Broder, “Election Funding Spurs G.O.P. Rifts,” *New York Times*, May 1, 1966, 56. On January 1, 1966, Broder notes, the Citizens for Goldwater-Miller Committee changed its name to the ‘Citizens Committee for Conservatives’ and proceeded to participate in the 1966 midterms.

¹⁶⁴ Andrew, 214. “Its founders believed that the ADA has successfully consolidated the leadership of the liberal establishment without “infringing on the rights or authority of any single part of the liberal organizational apparatus,”” Andrew explained, quoting from an early ACU report.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁶ Klinkner, 78.

¹⁶⁷ Chamber of Commerce, “Labor in Politics,” p. 3.

¹⁶⁸ Hearings before the Special Committee to Investigate Political Activities, Lobbying, and Campaign Contributions [McClellan Committee]. United States Senate. 84th Congress, 2d Session. Pursuant to S. Res. 219 of the 84th Cong. and S. Res. 47 of the 85th Cong. October 8, 10, November 26, 27, December 11, 12, 13, 1956; January 22, February 28, and March 14, 1957 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1957), 1042-1043. Hereafter “McClellan Committee Hearings.”

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 1043. *Emphasis mine.*

¹⁷⁰ Klinkner, 78. See Cabell Phillips, “Bliss Denounces Goldwater Unit as Peril to Party,” *New York Times*, June 19, 1965, 1. Schoenwald (2001) describes how “[a] number of citizen groups—vestiges of the Goldwater campaign—maintained the momentum from one decade to the next and solidified the bond between party and movement” (12). He highlights four “splinter groups in particular [which] helped to carry the conservative agenda into the next decade,” listing “Americans for Constitutional Action, the Free Society Association, the American Conservative Union, and Young Americans for Freedom,” which “all worked to refine an ideological and programmatic agenda, raise money for candidates, and mount issue-based campaigns” (12). The ACA and YAF, however, were founded *prior* to Goldwater’s campaign. Diamond notes a similar array of organizations. “After 1964,” she suggests, “Nixon began courting allies within the conservative movement as well as among the GOP establishment. In 1966 Nixon invited directors of the American Conservative Union, Young Americans for Freedom, Americans for Constitutional Action, and the Free Society Association (the latter, Goldwater’s own post-campaign group) to several discussion meetings, including one held at Barry Goldwater’s apartment” (112).

¹⁷¹ Newsletter Number 6, July 1965. NAM Records, Series I, Box 48, “Folder – Public Affairs Dept. Business Industry Political Action Committee (BIPAC), Newsletter 1964-67 100-Q.” Hagley.

¹⁷² In contrast to the permanence of the regular party apparatus, the Free Society Association was only active for a few years in the late 1960s, ceasing operations around the time of Goldwater’s reelection to the Senate from Arizona (1968 election).

Chapter 10. Political Action and the Party System

¹ J.M. Barrie, Peter Pan (Chapter 3).

² “We Were Licked!” *The New Republic*, November 18, 1946, p. 656.

³ NRA-PVF Endorsement Policy, retrieved from NRA-ILA website, 11/10/2010.

⁴ Richard M. Skinner, *More Than Money: Interest Group Action in Congressional Elections* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007), 148.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 149. *Emphasis mine.* Cunningham was discussing the 2000 elections, in particular.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 148-149.

⁷ *Ibid.* Because “a Republican would still vote for GOP control of the House, which means a progun Speaker and progun committee chairmen” (148-149).

⁸ Marc Cooper, “The N.R.A. takes cover in the G.O.P.” *The Nation* 877 (June 19, 1995): 877.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ These institutional advantages could combine with suggestion that electioneering is more efficient than lobbying – as Cohen et al. contend – to explain why electioneering would more likely be conducted on a partisan basis.

¹¹ Memorandum from Nancy Keenan, NARAL President, to Interested Parties, “Pro-Choice Victories in the 2008 Election,” November 5, 2008. Retrieved 9/15/2012 from <http://www.prochoiceamerica.org/assets/files/2008-election-victories.pdf>.

¹² NARAL 2012 Voter Guide. Retrieved 7/11/2013 from <http://www.prochoiceamerica.org/elections/2012/voter-guide/choice-position-explanations.html>

¹³ *Ibid.* Two of those votes were linked – one for a FY2011 Appropriations continuing resolution that, as part of a massive financial package, eliminated funding for some family planning programs. The related vote was on an amendment to specifically defund Planned Parenthood – which Brown voted against. The final vote was for cloture on an Appeals Court nominee, allowing an up-or-

down vote on the appointment. Brown voted against cloture, which was not the “pro-choice” position according to the Voter Guide, presumably as the nominee in question was pro-choice, although the relevance of the nomination to positions on choice is not explicated in the Voter Guide.

¹⁴ Hearings before the Special Committee to Investigate Political Activities, Lobbying, and Campaign Contributions [McClellan Committee]. United States Senate. 84th Congress, 2d Session. Pursuant to S. Res. 219 of the 84th Cong. and S. Res. 47 of the 85th Cong. October 8, 10, November 26, 27, December 11, 12, 13, 1956; January 22, February 28, and March 14, 1957 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1957), 1040. “How do you determine a man’s stand on issues that you are concerned with, if you do not check his voting record?” Goldwater asked, seeming surprised by Scheuer’s initial response (1040). Scheuer clarified his position, indicating that voting records were relevant to their assessment, but not a guiding framework in and of themselves: “I mean without going deeper than a statistical record it is a very unfair evaluation of it, sir,” he explained (1040).

¹⁵ Fenno (1978), 144.

¹⁶ The DNC and DNCC produced “The Complete Voting Record Since 1947, Listed by Subjects,” (not dated, but includes votes as late as 1954, second session of the 83rd Congress) which included party breakdowns of numerous votes, some highlighted as key votes (for national significance), and instructions for filling it out for your congressman.

¹⁷ DNC/DNCC, “The Complete Voting Record Since 1947, Listed by Subjects,” (n.d. but includes votes as late as 1954, second session of the 83rd Congress), CIO Political Action Committee (PAC) Collection Papers, 1943-1960s, Accession # 647. Box 12, Folder 17, “Democratic National Committee, 1954-55, 2 of 2.” Reuther Library.

¹⁸ Ibid. See also Tilford Dudley, “Relations With Democratic Party.” Copy included in Dudley’s correspondence, sent to Roy Reuther November 1, 1955. CIO-PAC Papers, Box 11, Folder 20, “Dudley Correspondence – Democratic National Committee, 1947-56. 2 of 4.” Reuther Library.

¹⁹ An example of the DNC *denying* funds in 1954 sheds light on the procedures by which such aid was normally distributed. Writing to the committeeman for California, DNC chairman Stephen Mitchell explained why he was denying financial assistance to Robert Condon (6th district) and James Roosevelt (26th district), both of whom had faced personal scandals. “Ordinarily, the only problems would be the amounts of money available to us and the Senate and Congressional Campaign Committees, the relative needs of the candidates in California and elsewhere, and an appraisal of their chances for reelection,” Mitchell acknowledges. Moreover, “sound reason and long tradition have kept the National Committee out of the internal affairs of the Party in the several states” – that is, the DNC would normally honor requests for assistance from the state party. But there were exceptions. “The National Committee has no part or place in those elections and remains aloof *except when the general welfare of the Party is involved* or where its opinion or assistance is requested by appropriate Party officials.” The scandals of the two congressmen had thus evoked this concern for party welfare. “The right and privilege to determine how our available funds will be spent are ours,” Mitchell affirmed, “and in these cases we will exercise our right to withhold support.” Stephen A. Mitchell to Paul Ziffren, Democratic National Committeeman for California, 3/31/54. CIO-PAC Papers, Box 12, Folder 16, “Democratic National Committee, 1954-55, 1 of 2” (*emphasis mine*).

²⁰ Lecture #7, “Political Tactics and Aims of Organized Labor.” Updated 2/18/1957. Personal Papers of V. O. Key, Accession # 2000-078. Box 9, “Writings: “Politics, Parties, and Pressure Groups.” Folder “Chap. III. “Workers.” Mss. Notes and revisions.” John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, Boston, MA.

²¹ Tom Amlie to Arnold Zander (President of S.C. & M. Employees), November 7th, 1952. CIO Political Action Committee (PAC) Collection Papers, 1943-1960s, Accession # 647. Box 11, Folder 19, “Dudley Correspondence – Democratic National Committee, 1947-56. 1 of 4.” Reuther Library.

²² “Transformation of the Democrats into an ideologically liberal party, however, required subtraction as well as addition,” Finegold and Skocpol (1995) note, but Roosevelt’s attempted presidential “purge” in 1938 had been largely unsuccessful, and fostered a backlash toward executive intervention in “local” affairs. Finegold and Skocpol observe, however, that “[m]ost of the anti-New Deal Democrats outside the South were eventually pushed out,” and point to “[a] less publicized but more successful effort [by Roosevelt] in 1940” that “removed three northern “Bourbons” from the Senate.” Kenneth Finegold and Theda Skocpol. *State and Party in America’s New Deal* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1995), 48. But subsequent presidents tended to keep aloof from congressional contests – something Greenstone attributes to the power of Southern Democrats themselves rather than a generalized backlash to such intervention. J. David Greenstone, *Labor in American Politics* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), 330. Either way, the P.A.C. had greater freedom of action, even if it would not be entirely immune from such criticisms of inappropriate “local” intervention – as Greenstone explains, with reference to the labor movement more broadly. “[T]he formal party leadership found its freedom of action restricted by its governmental responsibilities,” Greenstone observes – but the labor movement did not face the same restrictions. Where congressional leaders might need the Southerners in organizational terms, “[t]he unions could use their resources more freely because they stressed formal party control of congressional committees much less than substantive legislative outcomes, which fluctuated with the number of liberal Democrats.” Thus, Greenstone outlines the important role that the unions could play from the outside: “as the strongest organization in the party’s socioeconomic constituency, the labor movement was uniquely prepared in the mid-1960s to try to complete the New Deal realignment in congressional electoral politics” (330). In my formulation, the P.A.C., and similar political action groups provided vehicles to which purges could be “outsourced.” Thus, where much of the literature on the Labor-Democratic alliance has emphasized the ways that labor political action groups supplemented or eventually *took* over functions that were traditionally associated with the political parties (voter registration, mobilization, even candidate recruitment) the P.A.C.’s realigning project suggests a unique function that a non-party group could fulfill for a party, within the U.S. institutional context.

²³ This suggests that while primaries are often regarded as an anti-party reform – in the sense that the regular party organization loses control – they do not necessarily make for a weakened *party*, in the sense of programmatic cohesion. Indeed, the reshaping of a party through primary interventions, among other kinds of action, became the tool for bringing about a realignment of party competition –

where the disruptive impact of a third party had long been thought necessary to do so. Primaries thus raised new opportunities for frustrated interests that might otherwise have formed third parties, but those opportunities had to be recognized as such and tactics developed to take advantage of them. Political action committees would begin to do so.

²⁴ I.e. a reconfiguring of the dominant ideas, institutions, and actors, the distribution of power among them, the level at which major decisions are played out, and the axes of conflict around which political competition revolves.

²⁵ J. I. Seidman, "Political Trends and New Party Movements," *Editorial Research Reports 1934* Vol. I (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 1934). Retrieved from <http://library.cqpress.com/cqresearcher/cqresrre1934051800>. La Follette still favored "more vigorous action" than Roosevelt though.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Donald R. McCoy, "The Progressive National Committee of 1936," *The Western Political Quarterly* 9 No. 2 (1956): 460.

²⁸ "Campaign Expenditures." Hearings before the Special Committee to Investigate Campaign Expenditures, 1952 [**Boggs Committee**]. U.S. House of Representatives, 82d. Cong., 2d. sess. December 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, 1952 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1952), 214. Thomas was the Socialist Party's candidate in six consecutive presidential contests – from 1928 to 1948. He had asked to participate in the hearings but was unable to attend in person, submitting a statement instead. As a witness, he was identified by his position at the Postwar World Council. This organization is not, however, included in my list of organizations generated through witness testimony, because further inspection revealed that Thomas was offering his comments an individual, not as a representative of the PWC.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid., 214-215.

³¹ Ibid., 215.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid., 214.

³⁴ Ibid., 215.

³⁵ Stephen Ansolabehere, Shigeo Hirano, James M. Snyder, Jr., "What Did the Direct Primary do to Party Loyalty in Congress?" in David Brady and Matthew McCubbins (eds.), *Party, Process, and Political Change in Congress, Volume 2: Further New Perspectives on the History of Congress* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007), 23. They quote from Peter F. Galderisi and Benjamin Ginsberg, "Primary Elections and the Evanescence of Third Party Activity in the United States," in Benjamin Ginsberg and Alan Stone (eds.), *Do Elections Matter?* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 1986), 116.

³⁶ Kroll to ADA Convention, p. 5.

³⁷ Ibid. 5-7.

³⁸ "Responsible parties" would be able to entirely *exclude* pressure groups from political influence, or subordinate them to the party's aims: essentially *forcing* groups to pick a side and thus, essentially, capturing them (because they could make no credible electoral threat to defect). Their selfish interests would then be harnessed to the greater good by the vehicle of party. There was no room in Schattschneider's theoretical perspective, even as it evolved between 1942 and 1960, for interest groups helping to *create* greater party discipline (or, indeed, for real interest group influence under conditions of party dominance).

³⁹ Anthony Corrado, "Money and Politics: A History of Federal Campaign Finance Law," 25-60 in Anthony Corrado, Thomas E. Mann, Daniel R. Ortiz, Trevor Potter, and Frank J. Sorauf (eds.), *Campaign Finance Reform: A Sourcebook* (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1997), 29.

⁴⁰ T.R.B. "Washington Notes: Can Big Business Buy This Election Too?" *The New Republic*, September 9, 1936. p. 128.

⁴¹ *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* No. 08-205 (2010). Syllabus, p. 6.

⁴² Paula Baker, "How Money Became Speech," unpublished manuscript (7/1/2012).

⁴³ The Chamber came under intense scrutiny that year for the way it directed its financial resources into the political process, seemingly against the restrictions on political activity inherent in its non-profit status (not, in this case, its *corporate* status per se).

⁴⁴ Boatright (2007), for example, notes that Democrats used 527s in response to a perceived Republican organizational advantage (2). He also locates this 527 strategy within a broader Democratic effort to replicate the coordinated "complex of groups" and think tanks surrounding the Republican party – a complex that had enabled Republicans to better craft a broad economic message (raising the tension between individual liberal group success and a lack of overall coordination once more) (2). Robert G. Boatright, "Situating the New 527 Organizations in Interest Group Theory," *The Forum* 5 No. 2 (2007): Article 5.

⁴⁵ This process actually feeds into the calls for campaign finance reform that grew ever louder in the late 1960s and were realized in the '70s. There is a further irony involved here, to the extent that these reforms were concerned as much with the increasing *costs* of campaigning, and the parties' inability to meet them alone, as with limiting expenditures. The "outside" spending that helped parties to bridge the gap also drove up those costs themselves.

⁴⁶ Bawn et al. (2011) express a similar belief. See "A Theory of Political Parties," September 5, 2011, 17, and Chapter 1, Note 89 for a fuller discussion.

⁴⁷ Of course, what underpins that "pressure" is largely a threat of electoral retribution. But it is not a threat that, at present, the AARP has seen fit to pursue actively, via the vehicle of a PAC. Though it produces voter guides detailing candidate positions on Medicare, Social Security, and other issues affecting seniors, "AARP does not endorse candidates for public office or make contributions to either political campaigns or candidates." "AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, with a membership of more than 37 million, that helps people 50+ have independence, choice and control in ways that are beneficial to them and society as a whole. AARP does not endorse candidates for public office or make contributions to either political campaigns or candidates." "Who We Are." Accessed 9/15/2012 from <http://www.aarp.org/about-aarp/>

⁴⁸ A similar analysis might be made of the American Farm Bureau Federation, which appears largely bipartisan and does not have a PAC (though some state Farm Bureaus do have PACs, and the Farmers' Union does have a PAC. I'm not sure how to treat this in terms of its union dimension). AIPAC, another possible example, is the American-Israel *Public Affairs Committee* – a 501(c)4 non-profit group that engages in lobbying – it is not an electoral PAC.

⁴⁹ Some efforts along these lines were apparent in the 2012 election, for example, such as “Americans Elect.”

⁵⁰ Testimony of Joseph P. Kamp, September 20, 1944. “Campaign Expenditures,” Part 5 of Hearings before the Committee to Investigate Campaign Expenditures, 78th Cong., 2d. sess. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1944), 251.

⁵¹ Aaron Wildavsky. “The Goldwater Phenomenon: Purists, Politicians, and the Two-Party System.” *The Review of Politics* 27 No. 3 (1965): 411.

⁵² Susan Dunn, *Roosevelt's Purge: How FDR Fought to Change the Democratic Party* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010), 251, referencing “One-Party South Thing of Past, President Says,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 11, 1957. See also Cornelius Cotter, “Eisenhower as Party Leader,” *Political Science Quarterly*, 98 No. 2 (1983): 255-283.

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