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American Political Parties as Transnational Parties

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This dissertation examines the development and historical foundations of the transnational activities of American political parties. Although there has been a lack of study in this area, American political parties do now have permanent transnational activity. This activity follows two distinct tracks. First, beginning with the 1964 election, the parties launched their abroad committees to gather votes of eligible absentee voters overseas. For this track, special attention is paid to the 2000, 2004, and 2008 presidential elections, particularly the overseas fundraising and campaigning in the 2008 cycle. Second, beginning in 1982, American parties began to conduct outreach with their like-minded colleagues. They joined, or aided in the creation of, party internationals. Congress created the National Endowment for Democracy that, in turn, funded party-themed institutes to provide democratic development assistance to counter the influence of another major transnational movement, Soviet-backed Communism. This dissertation argues these transnational activities are now permanent and, therefore, American political parties ought to be included in the literature on transnational political parties.

Research was conducted by review of relevant literature and supplemented by first-person interviews with relevant actors. Interview subjects were identified through the literature or as leading professionals in their field or both.

The argument takes a structural and historical approach. In addition to examining American party operations in and of themselves, associated actors are examined. The roles of American political consultants as agents of partisan outreach and 501(c)(3) organizations as support structures for transnational partisan networks are given particular attention. The historical approach is used to argue that the differences between traditional and American party transnationalism is a product of the time and place of the individual movements' development.

This dissertation by Michael Read fulfills the dissertation requirement for the doctoral degree in Politics approved by John Kenneth White, Ph.D., as Director, and by Phillip Henderson, Ph.D., and Matthew Green, Ph.D., as Readers.

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Part I
The Lay of the Land

Chapter 1 – Introduction

In 1964, two American expatriates living in London and Paris concerned about the popularity of Republican presidential candidate Barry Goldwater form Democrats Abroad to support the election of Lyndon Johnson. They are unable to actually vote in the election as most states do not allow for non-military overseas absentee ballots to be cast. In 2008, they are given delegate status at the Democratic National Convention. In 1982, President Ronald Reagan addressed a joint session of Parliament in the United Kingdom and calls on political parties in western countries to support like-minded parties struggling in the Eastern Bloc. The following year, western centre-right parties form the International Democratic Union and the United States Congress authorizes the creation of the National Endowment of Democracy. The same year as Reagan's speech, David Sawyer and Scott Miller formally create the Sawyer Miller Group, a political consulting firm specializing in international elections. In 2005, Jeremy Rosen attends the first Washington, DC, screening of *Our Brand is Crisis*, a documentary on the involvement of American political consultants, including Rosen's employer Stanley Greenberg, in the

electoral defeat of Bolivia's Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada. In 2000, George W. Bush wins the state of Florida by 537 votes and becomes President of the United States.

Approximately 15,000 ballots in the state of Florida were cast from outside the United States. In 2008, both presumptive candidates for their party's respective nominations, John McCain for the Republicans and Barack Obama for the Democrats, travel outside the United States on politically motivated foreign tours and give major speeches before receptive audiences. These seeming unrelated events have a common element: they are major points in the transition of American political parties into transnational actors.

Despite the examples listed above, the transition of American political parties from national to transnational actors has occurred under the cloak of public ignorance. Much has been written about the development, history, and activities of American political parties, but their transnational activities and the development of the same have been virtually ignored. This lack of visibility may be partly the fault of academia for concentrating on the lion's share of party activity, campaigns and elections. The political parties, themselves, share some of the blame as they, for their own reasons, have done little to promote or draw attention to their activities abroad. Whether it is due to lack of advertising by the parties or lack of interest from the academy, the fact remains American parties have been conducting transnational activities since the 1960s. The motivations and forms of this activity may differ from traditional models, but they are permanent and institutional activities of the parties. As such, American political parties must be included in the literature on transnational political parties.

When discussing transnational political parties, one is typically discussing one of two things: a global movement made up of separate political parties in multiple countries or a single political party with members or representatives in more than one country. Of the latter, examples include the Irish nationalist Sinn Féin, which runs candidates in the Northern Ireland constituencies for the British House of Commons as well as the Republic of Ireland's Dáil Éireann (House of Representatives) in that country's Oireachtas (Parliament); and the Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party, which was founded in Syria by Michel Aflaq as Pan-Arab nationalist and socialist. The Ba'ath Party maintains branches in Lebanon, Jordan, Yemen and most notably, until it was banned in 2003, Iraq. The literature on the first form of transnational political parties focuses on five types: Communist, Socialist, Christian Democratic, Liberal internationals or transnationals and Green Party movements.

Absent from the literature on transnational political party movements is mention of American parties. An absence of literature is just that, an absence of literature. It is not evidence of an absence of activity.

The transnational activities of American parties have been documented, albeit in a haphazard way. There are three levels of American transnational activity: unilateral, bilateral, and multilateral. On the unilateral front, beginning in the 1960s, American political parties established their own international operations, their individual abroad

committees, to marshal the votes of overseas absentee voters for their party during the electoral cycle.

Like the party movements traditionally included in the literature on transnational parties, American parties have durable and ongoing relationships with their like-minded counterparts in other countries at a variety of levels. Party leaders have often maintained bi-lateral relationships between their party and political allies abroad. Some of the more notable leaders in this regard include Kennedy's relationship with Canadian Liberal leader Lester B. Pearson and Ronald Reagan's relationships with British Conservative leader Margaret Thatcher, German Christian Democrat Union leader Helmut Kohl and Canadian Progressive Conservative leader Brian Mulroney.

While these bilateral relationships were often due to the dictates of executive branch/diplomatic relations, the relationships were sometimes so profound they had a transformative effect on their political parties. A case in point is President Reagan's speech to the British Parliament in 1982 where he called for democratic political parties to further party development in areas where democracy was not enjoyed, touching off a flurry of both congressional and party activity. Congress created the National Endowment for Democracy that would, in turn, create and fund a number of institutes representing various aspects of American political life, including political parties, to provide democratic development assistance. For Republicans, the International

Republican Institute was created. For Democrats, the National Democratic Institute was created.

Like the central characteristic of the traditional transnational party movements, American parties have institutionalized multi-lateral relationships with like-minded parties through international political party associations, more commonly referred to as party internationals. The Republicans were a founding member of the International Democratic Union, a party international especially created to unite center-right political parties, which the International Republican Institute also joined at the lower tier of co-operating organization. While the Democrats would not join a party international at the same level as the Republicans, their NED party-themed institute, the National Democratic Institute, became a “co-operating organization” within the membership of the existing party international, Liberal International. Through NDI, they also later joined with Centrist Democrats International, formerly the Christian Democrats International but more secularized in ideology, at a similar lower tier of membership.

American political parties also have relationships with like-minded political parties through third parties. American political party activists have a long history of working on the election campaigns of parties in other countries. One might see this as freelance partisans practicing their trade abroad when there is no election at home to employ them. They, however, typically work for like-minded parties and often in countries that are a priority to their party back in the U.S. Additionally, there is at least

one documented instance where a president – the closest analog to a standing party leader – did not allow a member of the White House political staff to work on an election campaign for an opposition party because he had a good working relationship with the incumbent head of government which he wished to preserve. As they often work in or for the government they help elect, they end up creating their own ideological network of which their party may take advantage. The party-themed institutes under the aegis of the National Endowment for Democracy, while formally separate from the political parties, provide democratic development assistance to many emerging democracies and help build up their party systems. Ideological, yet formally non-partisan, non-profit organizations registered under s. 501(c)(3) of the *Internal Revenue Code* accept like-minded activists from outside the United States and train them to work in election campaigns. These organizations also have a history of bringing their training services to the former students' home countries and have helped to establish sister organizations abroad.

Purpose

The haphazard nature of the development of these activities raises several questions: What is the current level of transnational activity conducted by American political parties? Where do the transnational activities fit in the overall operations of American political parties? What effect does the domestic political environment have on the parties' transnational activities? To what extent can related actors such as campaign consultants and 501(c)(3) foundations be considered agents of party activity? Are the

transnational activities of American parties the similar or different than that of traditional party movements? Are the two major parties equally engaged in transnational activity or have the parties individually emphasized different areas of activity? To what extent is the party's particular transnational activity driven by domestic electoral or policy needs?

With the increase in prominence of the overseas absentee voter in recent elections culminating in the international tours of the presidential candidates in the 2008 election, have the parties internationalized the presidential campaign? What effect has transnational party activity had on US parties? What effect has American party transnational activity had on other countries' parties? What effect does the participation of American political parties have on party internationals? Is this a permanent activity of American political parties?

To answer these questions, this dissertation examines the institutional, historical, and political elements of the transnational activities of American political parties. The unique institutional features of American political parties vis-à-vis parties based on European or parliamentary models are first examined. These features are an effect of the republican regime and the rules it imposes on parties as they compete for control. One distinguishing feature of parliamentary parties, which American parties lack, is standing party leaders between elections. Although American parties each have a chairperson, the individual is responsible for party operations more so than policy direction. The position is more akin to a party president than a party leader in a European-model party. As American parties are increasingly candidate-centric, political direction often comes from

the presidential nominee. One institutional aspect that is examined is to what extent the increasing length of the nomination campaign, particularly the competition over policy direction, affects the ability of American political parties to engage in transnational party politics.

Next, this dissertation examines the history of American political parties and their activists participating in elections in other countries. With the number of political consultants increasing and supporting a broader number of candidates in each party, election campaigns of other countries become attractive options for employment. With the rise of competitive elections and party development activities in Central and Eastern Europe, there are also plenty of opportunities outside the United States for experienced party activists.

In this regard, special attention is paid to American involvement in Canadian elections. Canada is an ideal comparison for a number of reasons. Its geographic proximity and fairly regular elections make it an attractive destination for American partisans. Its economic and military ties with the United States have often made the outcome of those elections important to the U.S. government in achieving its policy goals. The student mobility provisions of the North American Free Trade Agreement make it easy for Canadian and American students to attend university at each other's institutions. Canada's parliamentary system also offers a comparison of regimes with the United States' separated system. Simply put, the Canadian regime is exactly what the

Framers did not want in a government and the United States' regime is exactly what Canada's Fathers of Confederation did not want.

At the same time, Canada is an imperfect example. Despite an anti-American streak in its political culture historically rooted in the post-revolutionary Loyalist diaspora, it may be too American for comparison. For example, since Canadians receive American broadcast networks as part of their basic cable, the US expatriate in Canada is inundated with the same US political ads in relatively the same volume as the typical American voter and does not experience the disconnect caused by geography which an overseas expat generally faces. As such, their political opinions would be relatively similar to their peers back in the United States as they are not exposed to a radically different spectrum of political ideology.

That said, most Anglophone countries have American political content in their media in either the form of the international versions of US cable news networks or American television programs on their own networks. The case of Canada is just particularly acute.

This examination covers two distinct periods. The first is from the presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt to Ronald Reagan. The U.S.-Canadian relationship prior to Roosevelt is rather complicated, with official U.S. policy until the end of World War I regarding Canada being to seek its annexation. Roosevelt, who grew up spending his

summers in Canada on the province of New Brunswick's island of Campobello¹ in the Bay of Fundy, makes for a good start because he was the first U.S. president to normalize relations and officially visit the country.

The highlight of this period from the perspective of transnational party development is the Kennedy-Johnson presidencies. It was Kennedy who had Democratic consultants seek permission as to what international clients they could take. Since they did what Kennedy told them, this was obviously more than mere advice. It was also for the 1964 campaign that Democrats Abroad was founded in London and Paris to facilitate voting by eligible expatriate voters and to lobby states that did not allow for absentee ballots to change their laws accordingly.

President Reagan marks an end to this period and the beginning of the next period. Reagan's 1982 speech to the British parliament was intended to be a call for American political parties to make transnational activity a regular and institutionalized activity. It was one approach, among many, to engaging democratic movements in countering the influence of Soviet-backed communism in the developing world. This examination considers the aftermath of President Reagan's speech and examines whether or not the intended effects have been realized.

¹ The summer home is now an international park, jointly managed by a Canadian-American joint commission.

Methodology

This dissertation combines three methodological approaches. First, the dissertation takes a structural-historical approach in examining the development of the parties' transnational activities. This approach breaks the activity into its component parts and examines the history of each in turn. The components include: the internationalization of American political consulting, the creation of the National Endowment for Democracy's party-themed institutes, absentee voting and abroad committees, election campaigning outside the United States, and the network of ideological like-minded 501(c)(3) organizations. As is shown in the chapter outline, related components are examined together.

Second, interviews were conducted with relevant actors in American political parties. Interview subjects include officials and activists with deep background or "corporate memory" in their respective institutions. Special attention was given to subjects who are involved in the institutional aspects of present-day transnational party activity by American political parties. Interview subjects include:

- Robert Shrum, Senior Fellow, New York University's Robert F. Wagner School of Public Service, veteran campaign consultant in the United States and abroad, Presidential Campaign Manager for Kerry/Edwards 2004
- Elizabeth Dugan, Vice-President of Programs for the International Republican Institute, also the institute's contact person with the International Democratic Union. At the time of our interview, Ms. Dugan served as the contact for the Republican National Committee with the IDU.
- Morton Blackwell, President of the Leadership Institute, a conservative 501(c)(3) organization.

To supplement the first person interviews, a number of first-person accounts and secondary sources produced by activists and officials who would otherwise be interview subjects were considered.

During the research for this dissertation, this author had the opportunity to attend an event held under the auspices of the International Democratic Union youth wing, the International Young Democratic Union Freedom Forum, June 25 – June 28, 2009. Observations from that event are contained herein.

Finally, the work and opinions of academics that study American political parties along with academics who study transnational movements are considered to obtain a richer understanding of this phenomenon.

Contribution and Originality

At first glance, this dissertation may seem like an exercise of forcing the proverbial square peg into the round hole. It seeks to fill in a major gap in the literature on both American political parties and transnational party movements, as well as to bridge the gaps in the literature on the individual components of transnationalism. The lack of literature prevents it from fitting neatly into pre-existing theories. This is not be interpreted as not fitting into any theory, as it does overlap several theories of political parties albeit awkwardly.

The last major work on the idea that American political parties could be transnational political parties is Ralph Goldman's 1983 edited volume *Transnational Parties*, which was a call to action for parties to engage in transnational party movements in the wake of Reagan's 1982 speech. In his concluding essay, Goldman argues that US parties would have trouble finding ideological cohesion in the spectrum of ideologies represented by existing transnational party movements and the United States government would be best advised to use private interest groups to propagate its democratic program.² As proceeding chapters will demonstrate, some of this has come to pass with private organizations such as the Leadership Institute serving to perpetuate ideological connections.

Of the individual components of transnational political activity, there is little written on the United States experience. Very little has been written on overseas absentee balloting and the international efforts of parties to marshal these votes. There has not been any systematic examination of how transnational the political parties were before Reagan's speech and how transnational they have become after it. Similarly, there have been few works on the role of the non-profit 501(c)(3) in perpetuating international political networks. Studies of cross border party cooperation between American and Canadian parties have also been rare with most recent electoral comparisons using England and Australia, or non-Anglophone countries.

² Ralph M. Goldman, ed.; "Epilogue and Counterpoint" in Ralph M. Goldman, ed.; *Transnational Parties: Organizing the World's Precincts* (Lanham: MD: University Press of America, 1983) Pp. 300 - 303

In terms of originality, the related issues of absentee voting, abroad committees, and campaigning for votes abroad are of particular interest as they detail how American political parties have extended their activities beyond America's borders to secure votes for their candidates. While Democratic activists formed the first abroad committee in 1964 to gather overseas absentee votes for Lyndon Johnson, the literature on absentee balloting has largely focused on the administration of those votes and not the larger political issues. The parties, themselves, only increased emphasis on gathering absentee ballots in battleground states after the close results of the 2000 presidential election, where a few hundred votes in one state determined the presidency for the entire country. It was only in the last election that both major party candidates actually went on international tours, officially in their individual roles of senators but with the unmistakable intention of supporting their campaigns back in the United States.

In terms of contribution to the advancement of theory, as stated previously, there is no single theory that applies. Given the haphazard nature of the development of transnational party activity in American politics, different aspects fall into different areas of theory. The development of the National Endowment of Democracy and the party-themed institutes provide an addition to the growing body of work on political entrepreneurship, such as Jameson W. Doig and Erwin C. Hargrove's *Leadership and Innovation* (1990) and Stephen Skowronek and Matthew Glassman's *Formative Acts* (2007). Much of this literature is biographical and historical focusing on the leadership of

individual executives. It shows success in changing the course of policy is a confluence of factors, including location, personality, internal constituencies, and many others.³ In this vein, where other politicians had previously attempted to create a similar agency, but Reagan's championship of the idea made it a reality. A further sign of Reagan's entrepreneurship on this front is the more active involvement of the Republicans in the formation of the International Democratic Union than the Democrats' involvement in Liberal International.

The idea of United States political parties as agents of policy is not unique to Reagan's efforts. In 1950, the American Political Science Association's Committee on Political Parties released its report *Towards a More Responsible Two Party System*. The Committee was primarily concerned with the fact that the two main American political parties were essentially loose associations of state and local parties and lacked the national machinery to play a constructive role in national affairs. At the time of the report, the two main parties did not even have permanent headquarters. To a certain extent, their diagnosis in 1950 could also explain their lack of involvement in international policy until they were made a part of the same in the 1980s. While several elements of the committee's recommendations can be traced to Westminster-model parties, their report was silent in regards to increasing international activity. Their recommendations, however, on increasing the parties' involvement in the development

³ Jameson W. Doig; Erwin C. Hargrove; *Leadership and Innovation: Entrepreneurs in Government* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990) Pp. 12 - 15

and implementation of national policy can be seen as a beginning a process that would lead to parties eventually becoming international actors.

A final level of theory, developed by authors such as Goldman and V.O. Key, Jr., is the individual activities of political parties are self-reinforcing. Goldman developed the classification system of party-in-the-electorate, party as organization, and party in government. This would be picked up by others by the acronyms PIE, PO, PIG.⁴ Key examines the overlapping influence on parties and politics of public opinion and pressure groups. The classification would be expanded with the addition of PIC (party-in-campaign) in Paul Herrnson's *Congressional Elections* (2004).⁵ In some regards, this dissertation makes the case for a further classification: PA, or party abroad.

Thematic Overview

If the dissertation were to be organized around a single theme, it would be “America coming out”. Looking at history through this lens one can see American political parties as a lagging indicator of American international engagement. As no nation constitutes the proverbial island, governments cannot help but be engaged in international affairs. The prevailing wisdom with regard to political parties, on the other

⁴ Ralph M. Goldman; *The Future Catches Up: Selected Writings of Ralph M. Goldman, Volume I – Transnational Parties and Democracy* (Lincoln, NE: Writer's Club Press, 2002) P. xxiv

⁵ Herrnson, Paul S.; *Congressional Elections: Campaigning at Home and Abroad*, 4th Ed. (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2004) P. 127 & 128

hand, would have one believe that they would be solely concerned with their domestic interests, namely, winning the presidency and maximizing seats in Congress.

International affairs have typically been something for policy, not practice. In the earliest period of American political party history, this was largely true. Political parties were primarily concerned with their own domestic interests, while the American government was regularly engaged in international affairs. The government's engagement during this period might best be characterized as bilateral and *ad hoc*. It was bilateral in the sense that it was mostly between the US and another government, as opposed to multilateral, between the US and more than one other government. It was *ad hoc* in the sense that it was often reacting to an issue or event and would withdraw once a satisfactory conclusion was reached.

One of the earliest examples of this was Jefferson's handling of the Barbary pirates where Jefferson ordered the Navy to withdraw once the pirates' threat had ended, as opposed to potentially invading their countries and toppling their governments. In this period, early attempts at institutional multilateralism engendered negative reactions. For example, even with a German submarine sinking the British ship *Lusitania*, killing 128 Americans on board, it was still almost two years before the US joined the Entente powers in World War I, a war George Washington seemingly predicted more than a century earlier in his mention of "entangling alliances" in his farewell address. The United States entered the war and it was concluded by an armistice in 1918 that would

lead to the Treaty of Versailles in 1919. The treaty created a series of institutions, including a precursor to the United Nations in the League of Nations, which would have had the effect of institutionalizing multilateral relations between governments. The US Senate soundly rejected the Treaty and was largely absent from world affairs until the Second World War.

It should also be noted that until the conclusion of the Second World War, there were only a few countries with political systems with which American parties could cooperate. A handful of European empires controlled most of Africa, Asia, and South America, leaving only a dozen or so parliaments that had any elections at all. The majority of the independent states that exist today are the products of postwar decolonization and, more recently, the collapse of the Soviet Union. In the case of the democratic country to the north of the United States, Canada, the official policy was annexation.

As the United States emerged as an international power in the aftermath of the Second World War, Americans emerged as international travelers and, later, international residents. With the postwar alliance breaking down and giving way to the Cold War, the United States military began to establish permanent military bases abroad. As the government also participated in the development of international institutions intended to manage the postwar peace, such as the United Nations and its subsidiary organs, the

United States' diplomatic presence, and therefore government employee presence, outside the mainland would grow exponentially.

In addition to the increasing number of government employees outside the country, private citizens also began travelling abroad for long periods of time. At first, many travelers would be supervising Marshall Plan-funded postwar reconstruction projects for their companies back home. The duration of many of these projects resulted in American workers establishing permanent residence, starting families and even going to work for local companies when the Marshall Plan projects ended. Additionally, there are always a large number of Americans temporarily abroad, such as students, for long periods without the intention of emigrating. Combining the number of military personnel, civilian government employees together with their spouses, and private citizens residing permanently and temporarily abroad, there are approximately four million Americans abroad at any one time. Most of them are eligible to vote. In the 1960s, the parties formed abroad committees to go after those votes.

American political parties also began to engage their like-minded partisans in other countries. This engagement was, like government engagement in the prewar period, largely based on the priorities of the home party. The party, through the de facto leadership, largely determined in which countries and parties their partisans would work. Since the United States' republican regime and single member plurality has resulted in a two-party system, American parties represent broad swaths of ideology, although

narrower than the overall spectrum of ideologies in European politics. For example, there is no politically viable communist party in the United States. Ultimately, one party can be said to be center-right and the other center-left.

In Europe, where the regimes range from parliamentary to mixed republics and many countries practice some form of proportional representation, parties are more numerous but are more ideologically narrow. As such, where in America one party represents a broad set of ideas, there are many parties competing against each other that would fit into the broad range represented by a single party back home. If the home party did not pick and choose which party they wanted to win a given election, their party activists would possibly be competing abroad against each other. The most obvious case of this practice in the period under discussion was during the John F. Kennedy era of the Democratic Party. Kennedy allowed party activists and White House staff to twice work with the Liberal Party of Canada to defeat John Diefenbaker, but vetoed the same from working with the British Labour Party in order to preserve his working relationship with the Tory Prime Minister Harold Macmillan.

It was not until the Reagan era that the international engagement of parties reached that of the government itself and even then it was a conscious act of the leadership as opposed to an evolutionary one, stating, “democracy is not a fragile flower. Still it needs cultivating. If the rest of this century is to witness the gradual growth of

freedom and democratic ideals, we must take actions to assist the campaign for democracy.”⁶

Reagan’s 1982 speech to the British parliament was intended to coax American parties to engage like-minded parties as a counter-influence to communism. International party engagement was one approach among the many that comprised Reagan’s anti-Soviet strategy. When compared with the volumes of literature on the diplomatic, military, counter-intelligence facets, it is, however, largely forgotten.

Despite being overlooked, Reagan’s speech has had permanent consequences. Congress created the National Endowment for Democracy. American parties created international institutes and joined multilateral party organizations. American parties and the organizations to which they belong have been instrumental in aiding post-Soviet countries develop their own party systems. It is ironic that political parties are at the height of their international activities when there is talk of government disengagement in world affairs, due in large part in reaction to the war in Iraq.

Another related theme is the transnationalism of political parties as an effect of an increasingly transnational or, in other words, globalized American society. With America’s leadership of a globalized world, large segments of society and the economy

⁶ Ronald Reagan ; “Address to Members of the British Parliament; June 8, 1982”; *The Public Papers of President Ronald W. Reagan*; 8 June 1982

are increasingly transnational. If America, itself, is increasingly transnational it stands to reason that so too are its political parties. It is due to America's global leadership that there are, at any one time, millions of American voters abroad thus creating the necessary conditions for one aspect of the American transnational party activity, the abroad committees.

Chapter overview

This dissertation consists of three thematic parts that are divided between eight chapters.

Part I – the Lay of the Land consists of two chapters. *Chapter I - Introduction* will provide an overview of the concept of transnationalism, in general, and transnational political party movements, in particular. Also the uniqueness of the American party system vis-à-vis other systems will be highlighted as to how it influences parties' ability to be transnational. A general case is made for the inclusion of American political parties in the literature on transnational political parties by drawing comparisons to the important characteristics of traditional transnational parties – that which makes them “transnational political parties” as opposed to political parties that attend international conferences – and the transnational activities of American parties with a view to highlighting that what differences may remain between them do not make much difference anymore. The first chapter also illustrates the pre-transnational period of American political parties. This is

the stage covering the period from Thomas Jefferson to Herbert Hoover where activities of political parties were of the purely national variety.

Chapter 2 – Barriers to Transnational Activity is a system examination of the many barriers American political parties face in conducting transnational activity. This chapter focuses on several aspects of American politics and society that serve to make transnational party activity more difficult. The electoral cycle keeps American political parties constantly busy with their domestic obligations. On top of the formal electoral cycle, there is the informal campaign cycle. The presidential campaign has been increasing in both cost and length. For example, the first candidate for the Democratic nomination for the 2008 presidential election announced his candidacy just a few weeks shy of two full years before Election Day 2008.

In addition to the electoral cycle, electoral laws also serve as a barrier to transnational activity. Electoral law reform primarily intended to keep foreign money out of American politics also has provisions to prevent American money from going into foreign politics. This has had the unintended consequence of preventing American parties from even paying dues to their party internationals.

A final barrier is the isolationist streak in American political culture. Rooted in its founding anti-imperialist history and ideology, Americans are leery of foreign entanglements. This is especially true of foreign entanglements that do not do well. This

is especially true of the neoconservative movement within the Republican Party and their aversion to international institutions and alliances. Donors tell the parties and associated organizations they do not want their money spent outside the United States and want efforts to be concentrated on domestic politics. Effects of this barrier manifest itself in different ways. One is that parties have not advertised these activities very broadly and non-profit organizations seek local support when providing their services abroad.

Using the expression of “not seeing the forest for the trees” is the theme for the organization of the remainder of the dissertation. “The forest” refers to the collective transnational party activity by American parties and their place in the global context of transnational activity. “The trees” refers to the individual component parts of that activity. *Part II – the Trees* examines the individual component parts of political parties and their role in transnational political activity. It consists of four individual chapters representing the international activities campaign consultants; absentee voters and the internationalization of the political campaign; American party-themed institutes under the National Endowment for Democracy framework along with party internationals; and the transnational activity of 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations and their role in perpetuating and supporting the networks between parties.

Chapter 3 – Party Consultants: The Tip of the Spear? examines the role of campaign consultants in the transnational activities of American political parties. It begins with an historical overview of political consultancy from its origins in the royal

courts of old to the modern international business it is today. Despite the formal independence of political consultants from their party, they tend to work for the ideological cousins of their domestic clients. The foreign campaign experience of several consultants is examined, including Lou Harris, Bob Shrum, Stanley Greenberg, Dick Morris, and the Sawyer Miller Group among others.

As the activities of today's consultants often intersect with the work of the National Endowment for Democracy's party-themed institutes, an early introduction into the origin and work of those origins is provided. Particular attention is paid to Ronald Reagan's 1982 speech to the British parliament, the establishment of the NED and how the institute's programs promote consultant's work abroad. A more in-depth examination follows in Chapter 5.

The argument is made that, as the title suggests, political consultants serve, consciously or not, as the tip of the spear in inter-party relationships. The relationships consultants make with political parties abroad often translate into relationships for the party back home. This sometimes translates into the establishment of relationships between governments. Campaign consultants often become government consultants after their clients win the election, thus inserting themselves into the new government's relationships with the outside world.

Chapter 4 – The Party at Home Going Abroad examines the role overseas absentee ballots play in the election and how they have forced parties to go international. The laws and system for administering absentee ballots, along with the distinction between *absentee* and *provisional* ballots, is examined. The history of absentee ballots, as described earlier, shadows the history of Americans going abroad in postwar era. It is in this era where America now has a sizable portion of its population that is permanently abroad and parties individually formed abroad committees to facilitate these citizens getting registered for the election and getting their ballots counted towards their candidate in the election. While many of these absentees are service personnel who vote predominantly Republican, the shrinking margins of victory in battleground states makes finding extra votes among permanent overseas absentee voters an endeavor that could potentially mean the difference between victory and defeat.

Given this potential, an ethical question is raised. Should elections be decided by citizens who are permanent residents, and may even be citizens, of another country? First, they only feel the direct consequences of their ballot choice if they actually uproot their lives and return home, while the domestic voters feel the direct consequences of a choice that was potentially decided by someone who does not reside in the United States. Second, permanent residents abroad may not be American in the intellectual sense. As research emerges on social networks showing we get our political opinions from those in our primary networks, those closest to us, it is worth questioning if permanent residents

abroad are more intellectually similar to their country of residence than their country of origin.

Additionally, the international aspects of election 2008 are examined. While it is not uncommon for global events to intrude on an election in the United States, the 2008 election was notable for how often world affairs became part of the campaign. This was, in part, due to the fact that the United States was fighting wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, making foreign affairs central to the campaign. In addition to the wars, the contenders for the Democratic nomination made America's international trade agreements an issue, particularly the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), to stake out claims on votes in America's industrial manufacturing states. It became an issue in two countries when it was reported that an official with the Obama campaign told a Canadian consulate in Chicago that the NAFTA spiel was "all talk". In the course of the controversy that followed, the Canadian government, led by the Conservative Party, was accused of trying to help its Republican allies.

Another international aspect of the 2008 election that is examined in this chapter is the world tours of the candidates. It is not unusual for an incumbent candidate to leave the country during the early parts of the campaign to conduct the nation's foreign policy, but for the first time in decades there were no members of the incumbent administration running in the election and therefore no reason for a candidate to leave the country. Yet both parties' candidates went on international tours shortly after sewing up their

nominations. McCain would actually leave the country twice: first, for his international tour and, second, to give a speech in the Canadian capital of Ottawa on a subject designed to contrast himself with Obama, free trade. Obama only left the country once for a tour that included Afghanistan, Iraq, France and concluded with a major outdoor speech to tens of thousands in Germany.

Chapter 5 – Party Foundations and Party Internationals focuses on the 1982 Reagan Speech to the British Members of Parliament as an act of political entrepreneurship and the activities that followed to institutionalize transnational activities within American political parties. The speech is put into the context of Reagan's multifaceted approach to countering the Soviet Union in the Cold War. Marxist-Leninist ideology was firmly rooted in Eastern Europe and Asia at that time, with communist and socialist parties becoming influential on the left of mainstream politics in western democracies.

Highlighted in this part are the activities that followed the speech. Congress moved to create the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) to help strengthen democratic institutions in other countries. As part of its multi-sectoral approach, four core, independent institutes were created within NED to represent the two major political parties, organized labor and the business community. The Republican National Committee is represented by the International Republican Institute. The Democratic National Committee is represented by the National Democratic Institute. In addition to

these partisan institutes, the business community is represented by the US Chamber of Commerce through the Center for International Private Enterprise, while the labor movement is represented by the AFL-CIO through the American Center for International Labor Solidarity.

The institutes are essentially joint ventures between NED and the sponsoring organization. This is important as it ultimately gives the parties control over the actions and direction of the institutes and allows them to operate independently of NED. They are subsidiaries of their parties and partners of NED, not the other way around.

In addition to their partnership with NED, these institutes are also part of international party organizations. The Democratic National Institute joined Liberal International as a “co-operating organization” – the lowest tier of membership. Both the Republican National Committee and the International Republican Institute are members of the International Democratic Union.

The IDU is particularly significant because it, too, is a result of Reagan’s speech. It was created in 1983 by founding members Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher (UK), then Vice-President George Bush, Chancellor Helmut Kohl (West Germany), and President Jacques Chirac (France) among others to provide a forum for centre-right parties holding similar beliefs to come together and exchange views on matters of policy and organizational interest. This provided an opportunity for them to learn from each

other, to act together, to establish contacts and to speak with one strong voice to promote democracy and center-right policies around the globe. Prior to the creation of the IDU, there was no global forum for center-right parties. There were some regional organizations and a few Christian-Democrat organizations, but nothing for centre-right parties, in general.

Both the International Democratic Union and Liberal International are examined and compared to other international organizations that the literature routinely refers to as transnational party organizations. The inclusion of Christian-Democratic parties, which are traditionally transnational party movements, in the IDU provides its members with access to a previously established transnational network. Like Christian-Democrats, liberal internationalists are traditional transnational party movements. Unlike the IDU, Liberal International is not an effect of Reagan's speech even if the NDI and its membership in LI are. Liberal International was formed in 1947 in Oxford, England, to promote those "liberal principles which are international in nature throughout the world"⁷.

Chapter 6 – Other Organizations “Spreading the Message” examines the role of the non-profit 501(c)(3) organizations in transnational political party activity. While these organizations are formally non-partisan as dictated by section of 501(c)(3) of the

⁷ Liberal International; *Liberal Institutional Constitution* 2005 http://www.liberal-international.org/editorial.asp?ia_id=532

Internal Revenue Code, they are training ideological activists to work in a partisan milieu. They have a history of accepting international applicants into their training programs, travelling abroad to provide training and also helping their international alumni to establish sister organizations abroad.

Part III – The Forest consists of two chapters. This section examines the collective transnational party activity of American political parties. The first chapter in this section puts the transnational activity of the traditional transnational party movements and the activity of American political parties in the context of their respective foundings and historical circumstance. The second chapter of this section, also the final chapter of this dissertation, summarizes the observations made throughout the dissertation and offers conclusions.

Chapter 7 – What does it all mean? focuses on the transnational activities of American political parties from Reagan's speech to the present day in the context of other transnational party movements. This chapter examines more recent transnational activities of political parties, including both bilateral actions and participation in international party organizations. The ways in which transnationalism affect party and government policy are also examined.

This chapter also shows the particular models of transnational party movements are effects of political space and time. Of the traditional transnational party movements

mentioned in the beginning of the chapter, several – Communism, Socialism, Social Democracy and Christian Democracy – are products of the later portion of the Industrial Revolution. The pan-national model of the Sinn Féin and the Ba'ath Party variety stem from the anti-imperialist and decolonization movements after World War I and World War II. The liberal internationalist movement stems from the belief among liberal parties and intellectuals that the cause of World War II was the lack of practice of liberal principles in the world and the solution was to further the same. The Green party movement dovetails the development of the environmental movement.

American political party transnationalism is similarly a product of a different moment in political space and time: the post-détente period of the Cold War. Reagan wanted like-minded political parties of the older eighteenth-century model that were not in the habit of conducting transnational political party activity to join together to counter the major left-wing transnational political movement of the day: Soviet-backed communism. This political circumstance to Reagan's approach led to major differences between traditional, or natural, transnational party movements and to new, or converted, transnational party movements.

Ultimately, this part concludes with an examination of the effects of these transnational activities. The relevance of this study is based, in part, on determining the effects of membership in international party organizations. First, there is the effect that membership in international party organizations has had on American political parties.

Second, there is the effect that American political party membership has had on the organizations and their member political parties. Certainly, the IDU would not even exist without the initiative of a Republican president.

Chapter 8 – Observations and Conclusions summarizes the observations throughout the dissertation and offers conclusions with regard to the state of transnational activity of American political parties.

In terms of offering a conclusion as to which party is more heavily engaged in transnational activity, it depends on the forum. On some levels, the Republicans may appear more active than the Democrats. Republican-allied campaign consultants routinely go to Canada to conduct election-training seminars. The Republicans are more active and formally involved in their international organization, the IDU, than the Democrats are in theirs, Liberal International. This may be more perception than reality as most transnational activity is well below the radar, but there are obvious reasons for this. Transnational activity, generally, as well as NED and IRI, specifically, are the legacies of Ronald Reagan. The Republicans, therefore, have a vested interest in being more visibly transnational than the Democrats. Likewise, Republican policy as of late has not been deferential to the international community and, as such, no one is going to accuse the Republicans of importing other countries' ideas, even though this has been happening, or giving foreign countries a veto over US policy.

For the Democrats, their involvement has been directed through their party-themed institute, the National Democratic Institute. This may be strategic as Liberal International may have been the best available party international for Democrats to join, but certain factors may have caused them to put some distance between them and the international. The current generation of leadership of Liberal International characterizes the organization as a federation, which implies that it has some form of governance over its member parties and organizations. As the like-minded ally of the DNC in Canada, the Liberal Party, has been in government from 1993 until January of 2006, Canada of recent years may also be a poor example because cooperation from the DNC and its associates was likely believed to be unnecessary. With anti-American sentiments being expressed by members of its caucus in the final years of their reign, overt help from an American party was probably not wanted. Now that they are now in opposition, they may return to old habits.

On the other hand, Democrats are far more active and involved in their abroad committee than the Republicans are in theirs. The Democrats Abroad began in 1964, while the Republicans did not follow suit until 1978. Democrats Abroad has their own primary where Republicans Abroad facilitates their absentee ballots in state primaries. Democrats Abroad also has delegation status at the national convention and has more votes for the party's presidential nominee at the convention than some states. Republicans Abroad, on the other hand, has no such status at their nomination convention.

The chapter offers the conclusion that any comprehensive study on transnational political parties must now include American political parties. The transnationalism practiced by American political parties is a different variety than that practiced by traditional transnational political party movements. For the natural transnational political parties, they are individual parties that make up a global movement. For the converted transnational political parties, it is less a transnational party movement than a transnational party alliance. As institutions, they are more *ad hoc* than their traditional counterparts, but they are still ongoing activities of American political parties with staff and volunteers dedicated to them. While not necessarily permanent, they will continue so long as American political parties and party activists get what they want out of them: win elections at home and defeat their enemies abroad.

Chapter 2 – Barriers to transnational activity

At first glance, one might think attempting to include American political parties in the literature of transnational political parties is akin to the proverbial attempt to fit the square peg in the round hole. Upon further examination, this analogy, however, does not work. Like the secondary model of transnational political parties, American political parties belong to international party organizations that have the shared mission of advancing ideological goals and policies. There are also related political foundations that work in lesser-developed countries to help develop institutions for democratic governance, respect for civil liberties and the rule of law. There are also ideologically affiliated organizations that help train like-minded activists in other countries. Individual activists also work with like-minded parties abroad. Through the work of such organizations and individuals, enduring relationships are made between parties. These activities, however, are not natural activities for American parties to undertake. There are significant barriers in place that would normally prevent American parties from doing

things abroad. These are a combination of structural, legal and social barriers. In spite of these barriers, American political parties have been increasingly international in their activity.

From a comparative perspective, to call the political institution in America that mobilizes voters on behalf of a common set of interests, concerns and goals to elect members to public office a “party” is a bit of a misnomer. “Party” implies a single organization that is internally cohesive. The American “party” is anything but. There is a good reason why the formal names of the two major parties contain the word “committee” rather than “party”. That is what they ultimately are. “Party”, in the American case, is a colloquialism that refers to a series of overlapping national and state committees seeking to get (hopefully) like-minded colleagues elected to public office at different levels.

At the national level, there are permanent Republican and Democratic committees for House and Senate elections. The committee that runs the party’s presidential campaign is *ad hoc*, established by the eventual nominee for their specific nomination and election. There are also state and territorial party committees that not only work to get partisans elected to state and local offices, but also run the nomination process in their respective states and territories.

In addition to the institution-based national committees, there are also national committees for specific groupings, such as college students, youth (defined as under 40, where most countries define their youth members as under 30 or 25), and women. One of the committees that has more recently risen in prominence in both the Republican and Democratic parties is the “Abroad” committees that seek to mobilize the expatriate vote. This is discussed in a subsequent chapter. Refereeing the dozens of committees are the Republican and Democratic National Committees. With so many internal organs dedicated to the primary domestic goals of American political parties, international outreach does not command much public attention.

One should also not discount the electoral cycle itself as a challenge for international party outreach. The House of Representatives’ electoral cycle – every seat is up for election every even-numbered year – has both incumbents and challengers in a constant campaign mode. Some states have off-year elections – state and local elections held in odd-numbered years – which mean that those state party committees are constantly campaigning at home.

The electoral cycle challenge is also combined with the fundraising challenges of modern campaigns. The unofficial campaign for simple name recognition and fundraising has commenced earlier and earlier with each successive election. Columnist and founder of NewMajority.com David Frum remarked on a Pajamas TV video blog,

“...anybody who is starting today is already quite late.”¹ This comment was made in June 2009, two and a half years before the first primary contest for the 2012 nomination, unless there is a repetition of the scheduling debacle of 2008 and the Iowa and New Hampshire contests end up in 2011.

The unofficial campaign is no longer confined to the presidential race either. On July 1, 2009, Massachusetts Democrat Andrea F. Nuciforo Jr. filed a statement of candidacy with the Federal Electoral Commission to contest a seat in 2012. The incumbent Democrat John W. Olver is rumored to be retiring that year after his expected re-election in 2010 – one need not spend much time explaining the advantages of incumbency when the candidate at issue is a Democrat in Massachusetts.² It is not uncommon for challengers to run against an incumbent in consecutive elections, building momentum in two-year increments. In the 2008 election, for example, Christopher Shays, the Republican member of the House of Representatives from Connecticut, was defeated by the same Democratic challenger he faced in the previous election in 2006. This constant campaigning creates, in the words of Richard Fenno, a “homestyle” where elected representatives place their primary attention on what goes on in their district and

¹ Pajamas TV; “David Frum on Conservative Chaos: The Sanford Scandal & the ‘Limbaugh Problem’” on *PJTV Daily* 25 June 2009
http://www.pjtv.com/video/Pajamas_TV/David_Frum_on_Conservative_Chaos%3A_The_Sanford_Scandal_%26_The_%22Limbaugh_Problem%22/2072/ 2009; 3 min, 37 sec.; accessed July 16, 2009

² Greg Giroux; “A Very Early Bird Running ... in 2012”; *CQ Politics* 11 July 2009
<http://www.cqpolitics.com/wmspage.cfm?parm1=5&docID=news-000003163956>
 accessed February 3, 2010

state. Following this line of thinking, international outreach in the general sense, save for those on their chamber's respective foreign affairs committee, has little to no priority.

International partisan outreach, specifically, is of no interest.

The openness of American political parties can be a barrier, as well. Probably no other country's party system in the free world has outsourced the administration of its membership to the government to the same extent as the United States. Joining either the Republican or Democratic Party is as simple as checking a box while registering to vote at the state electoral office. When registering, the applicant joins the county, state, and national party simultaneously. It is also possible to check "Independent" to avoid the deluge of direct-mail advertising that otherwise follows. While rules may vary from state to state, American political parties and their processes are so open that one can join on the day of the state's primary and vote for the candidate of choice even if diametrically opposed to the party as a whole.

Other countries, in contrast, require the individual to seek out or be sought out by the party. In the days before the Internet, that involved either going to the local association's annual meeting or giving in to the harassment of a candidate for nomination to join. Annual membership fees are charged. Different parties in a given country will have different rules about who can join and how they can join. Membership application forms typically contain affirmations to support the aims, principles, and policies of the party. An application for membership can be rejected. In federal countries, membership

in a local party does not necessarily include membership in the federal party. Using Canada as an example, a good number of the members of the provincial Liberal parties in provinces where there is no electorally viable provincial conservative party, such as British Columbia and Quebec, are members of the Conservative Party of Canada nationally. The system in the United States is extraordinarily accommodating, such that, as Morton Blackwell explained in an interview, “The leader of the Communist Party of Virginia could walk into his polling place, say ‘I want to vote in the Republican primary’, and there’s nothing I, as state party chairman, can do to stop him.”³

While an extreme analogy, it illustrates that parties, themselves, are actually such broad coalitions that they can be internally divisive. The 1964 presidential election campaign is credited with realigning American political parties resulting in a fit between party and ideology. The Democrats were already the party of the centre-left, particularly in the northeast, but had a distinct conservative faction in its southern wing. Candidate Barry Goldwater was the focus around whom the centre-right conservative movement coalesced within the Republican Party. International outreach to like-minded parties prior to this realignment would have been pointless as the parties themselves were not of like mind.

There are also legal constraints on parties when it comes to conducting international outreach to like-minded parties. The *Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of*

³ Morton Blackwell; personal interview with author; (Arlington, VA; February 6, 2009)

2002⁴, also known as and hereafter referred to as McCain-Feingold, created several amendments to the Federal Election Campaign Act. These included strengthening the prohibition on accepting political contributions, donations, or being the beneficiary of expenditures by foreign nationals (Sec. 303), as well as prohibiting money raised directly by political parties, “soft money”, from being used on anything other than an election inside the United States, more or less including activities outside the United States (Sec. 101).

As discussed in a later chapter, this has had the effect of preventing both the political party foundations established under the umbrella of the National Endowment for Democracy and the national party committees from paying their dues to their respective international party organizations. The irony of this barrier is that the co-author of this bill, Senator John McCain (R-Arizona), is also the Chairman of the International Republican Institute, the political party foundation that represents the RNC within the NED framework.⁵

Many countries also have restrictions, similar to America’s, on parties accepting foreign donations. One of the ways this can prohibit transnational activity on the part of American partisans is on the commercial side. Discounts on products and services for

⁴ 107th Congress; *An Act To amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to provide bipartisan campaign reform*. [H.R. 2356] Mar. 27, 2002

⁵ International Republican Institute; “Board of Directors”; <http://www.iri.org/board.asp> accessed July 20, 2009

political parties may be defined as “donations in kind”. American companies would therefore have to charge the full value in order to make the transaction legal. This could price the product beyond the non-American party’s means. The Liberal Party of Canada ran into this issue when they attempted to purchase at a discount the voter information management system originally designed for the ObamaForAmerica.com from the Massachusetts-based Voter Activation Network. After being informed by Elections Canada that the discount would be considered an illegal foreign donation-in-kind, they paid full price for the system, but held off in deciding how much they would pay for the information service to populate the system.⁶

More significantly, there are also social constraints. Simply put, party members do not prioritize international party outreach and engagement and, in fact, discourage it. Party members want their donations spent on their primary goal for the party: winning elections. Multiple interview subjects reported that in surveys, both formal and informal, donors placed international cooperation at or near the bottom of their priorities or simply outright opposed any such activity.

As the isolationist streak in American political culture is well documented, the social attitude should come as no surprise. According to George Stephanopoulos, then President of the United States Bill Clinton believed that Americans were naturally

⁶ Harris Mcleod; “Libs buy same voter-targeting software used by US Democratic Party and Obama” in *The Hill Times*; 30 March 2009

isolationist but tolerated international engagement, particularly wars, only so long as they believed it was in the national interest.⁷

In *Public Opinion and American Foreign Policy*, Ole Holsti argues that there is so much cognitive distance between the hypothetical average American and foreign policy-making process that the default measurable opinion is contentment. This default contentment is largely due to the fact that the public is largely inattentive to and ill informed about events outside the United States. They become acutely attentive, however, during a perceived moment of crisis but do not necessarily become any better informed. The result is severe swings in public opinion based on daily events with little connection to agreement or lack thereof with the overall policy objectives. Writing in 2004, Holsti highlights the extreme popularity of George W. Bush, with an 86% job approval rating at its peak, in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks as an example.⁸ Bolstering Holsti's logic subsequent to that publication, Bush's popularity would drop precipitously, largely due to the handling of the Iraq War, to the lowest approval rating ever recorded in public opinion polls, 22%.⁹ It was due to foreign affairs that George W. Bush holds the title to being both the most popular and the least popular president in US

⁷ George Stephanopoulos; *All Too Human: A Political Education* (New York, NY: Little, Brown, and Company, 1999); P. 126

⁸ Ole Holsti; *Public Opinion and American Foreign Policy*; revised ed. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004) P. 284

⁹ CBS News; "Bush's Final Approval Rating: 22 Percent CBS News/N.Y. Times Poll Finds President Will Leave Office With Lowest Final Approval Rating Ever" *CBS News.com* 16 January 2009
<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2009/01/16/opinion/polls/main4728399.shtml> accessed 2 April 2009

history.

In his work on American hegemony, *Colossus*, British historian Niall Ferguson noted an historical anti-imperialist streak in American political culture. Ferguson argues that this anti-imperialist ideology has its origins in the American Revolution and feeds into the political isolationism in the present. To Ferguson, the modern anti-imperialism has its roots in the presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, particularly in the president's visit to the then-French colony of Gambia on the way to the Casablanca Conference. Roosevelt remarked the colony was a "hell-hole"¹⁰

There is evidence, however, that Roosevelt held anti-imperialist views prior to his Gambia visit. One need only look at the text of the Atlantic Charter, an agreement negotiated in secret in August, 1941, between the President and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill on how to organize the post-war world. Specifically, one could look at the first and sixth common principles:

First, their countries seek no aggrandizement, territorial or other;

...

Sixth, after the final destruction of the Nazi tyranny, they hope to see established a peace which will afford to all nations the means of dwelling in safety within their own boundaries, and which will afford assurance that all the men in all the lands may live out their lives in freedom from fear and want;¹¹

¹⁰ Niall Ferguson; *Colossus: the Price of America's Empire* (New York, NY: Penguin Press, 2004); P. 67

¹¹ Text of *the Atlantic Charter* <http://www.internet-esq.com/ussaugusta/atlantic1.htm>

He also told his son in 1943,

“The colonial system means war. Exploit the resources of an India, a Burma, a Java; take all the wealth out of those countries, but never put anything back into them, things like education, decent standards of living, minimum health requirements – all you’re doing is storing up the kind of trouble that leads to war.”¹²

By highlighting the arguments that, despite anti-imperialist rhetoric, America is, in fact, an empire, Ferguson shows the foundational ideologies of anti-imperialism and isolationism lead to an inefficient imperialism where the Americans are increasingly intolerant of foreign adventures that go poorly.¹³

Despite all these barriers, political parties and their members do conduct outreach with like-minded parties and partisans in other countries. The extent of this outreach is detailed in subsequent chapters. One of the points that must be kept in mind in this analysis is that given the diffuse nature of American political parties, to do any analysis of this nature, one has to conceptualize American political parties in the broadest possible sense of the word, both in the formal and informal sense. While the electoral components - national committees, candidates, incumbents – are the most visible face of the formal, narrowly defined party, they are not the sole part, either. Do political consultants, typically independent businesspeople, count as partisans? To the extent that they typically work for only one party at home, the answer would be yes. While their formal

¹² Ferguson, *Colossus: the Price of America's Empire* 2004; P. 67

¹³ Ibid.; P. 301

independence from the party might disqualify them, their exclusive partisanship at home along with their tendency to continue to advise their clients once in office would make them an agent of the party in the broader, informal sense. The same would be true of the formally separate and non-partisan political foundations within the NED framework, IRI and NDI. While non-partisan and separate by law, they were also created to be representative of their respective parties.

There is also the question of political groups governed by section 501(c)(3) of the *Federal Election Campaigns Act*, such as the Leadership Institute that, by law, is non-partisan but openly trains young people to be “conservative” activists and candidates. While such organizations may be non-partisan, their membership is not. As will be shown in a subsequent chapter, such organizations serve as a way of building ideological and partisan connections between like-minded activists in other countries.

As is shown in subsequent chapters, the only real barrier to international party outreach is leadership. Parties will be as engaged in such activity as long as there are actors within the overlapping hierarchies that want them to conduct outreach and see value in it. In any event, American electoral politics is growing beyond its borders.

Part II
The Trees

Chapter 3 – Party Consultants: The Tip of the Spear?

American party activists have a long history of working on the election campaigns of parties in other countries. While one might see this as freelance partisans practicing their trade in other countries when there is no election at home, under examination the term “freelance consultant” becomes an oxymoron. Few American political consultants have large enough firms to work with foreign political parties during the heaviest parts of the US electoral cycle; so much of their international activity is in the downtime between domestic campaigns. They typically work for like-minded political parties in countries that are a policy priority to the party in power back in the US. To do otherwise could alienate their main clients at home.

These factors would suggest a pattern to their activities. This chapter highlights examples where a president – the closest analog in the American context to standing leader of a political party – did allow members of his White House political staff and party activists to work on an election campaign for an

ideologically like-minded opposition party and where he did not because he had a good working relationship with the incumbent. Finally, the chapter examines the activities of today's activists. The chapter demonstrates that the decisions of partisans to work with parties in other countries is not purely financial or, simply put, "the boys gotta eat."

Background

From Machiavelli to Rove?

Political consultants trade in one of two things (or a combination thereof) for politicians: research (intelligence, polling) and strategy (communications, organization, GOTV¹). Every ruler from the earliest primitive tribes to the modern presidency has in some way relied on what we would today collectively refer to as political consultants. Today we talk in terms of political survival, but for the ancient tribal chieftains or early kings it was a matter of practical survival. While political thought in regard to public opinion stretches back to the time of Plato, modern thinking on public opinion originates with Niccolo Machiavelli. Writing in his classic *The Prince*, Machiavelli identifies the importance of public opinion in his arguments on the nature of men and the efficacy of ruling through fear versus love:

For men it may be generally affirmed that they are thankless, fickle, false, studious to avoid danger, greedy of gain, devoted to you while you are able to confer benefits upon them, and ready, as I said before, while danger is distant, to shed their blood, and sacrifice their property, their lives, and their children for you; but in the hour of need they turn against you ... Men are so simple, and

¹ Get Out The Vote

governed so absolutely by their present needs, that he who wishes to deceive will never fail to find willing dupes.²

It is interesting to note that despite Machiavelli's assertion of the nature of man is the implication on the relationship between public opinion and governance. Even in a monarchy, favorable public opinion is necessary for political survival. Machiavelli's concern for public opinion was that it was a political force that could bring harm to the prince, not that there is any inherent wisdom in public opinion.³ Machiavelli wrote from experience. At the time of his writing, he was formerly a member of the court of Florence living in the countryside in exile from Florence's new rulers, the Medicis, who had imprisoned and tortured him for his role in supporting the Florentine Republic. He knew all too well that for kings, favorable public opinion is necessary for physical survival, as well. Unpopular presidents lose their re-elections. Unpopular kings lose their lives.

From Machiavelli's time until the twentieth century it was conventional for public opinion to be considered in holistic terms regarding the essence of man. The ideas of the relationship between public opinion and governance became more direct with the advent of the social compact theorists, such as Hobbes and Locke, who postulated that public consent was necessary to form society. However, the term "public

² As quoted in Carroll J Glynn; Susan Herbst; Garrett J. O'Keefe; Robert Y. Shapiro; *Public Opinion* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2004) P. 42

³ Glynn et al.; *Public Opinion* 2004; P. 43

opinion” is believed popularized by Jacques Necker, who served as finance minister to Louis XVI of France. Necker had recognized that political discourse had shifted radically in the eighteenth century. For the first time, a bourgeoisie had emerged to gather to discuss politics through interpersonal means and through the press. For this era, public opinion meant middle-class opinion. Like Machiavelli, Necker recognized that even a monarchy required benevolent public opinion to exist. He remarked that foreigners:

... have difficulty in forming a just idea of the authority exercised in France by public opinion; they have difficulty in understanding the nature of an invisible power which, without treasures, without a bodyguard, and without an army gives laws to the city, to the court, and even to the palaces of kings.⁴

As the ideas regarding the relationship between public opinion and governance evolved, the issue of measuring public opinion arose. With the exception of elections and campaigns, polling, as we know it today, was simply not done until the early twentieth century, specifically the election of 1936. Before 1936, what polling was done was referred to as straw polls. They were informal, unscientific, and frequently doubled as fundraisers for a local political organization, since there was often a fee to participate.⁵

As the telephone was a recent invention in the early part of the twentieth century and the telecommunication infrastructure could generously be described as nascent,

⁴ Glynn et al.; *Public Opinion* 2004; P. 47

⁵ Ibid.; P. 66 – 68

public opinion research was reliant on the postal system to distribute questionnaires and return them in time for them to be useful for publication. Magazines with their regular mailings became the ideal vehicles of the early pollsters. A magazine would send out a polling questionnaire with the mail-out of the current issue to millions of citizens based on various lists, such as phone directories and auto registration records, and publish the results of the questionnaires that the recipients bothered to complete and mail back.

George Gallup laid the flaws of this method bare in the 1936 presidential election. Using the method highlighted above, *Literary Digest* predicted that Republican candidate Alf Landon would beat the incumbent Democrat candidate Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Using a new theory called random sampling theory, George Gallup predicted that Roosevelt would win. According to Gallup's theory, if the members of the sample, a portion of the respondents chosen to be demographically proportional to the general population, were chosen properly and the response rate was reasonably high, the results would reflect the results of the general election. While Gallup's results were off by seven percentage points, Roosevelt won the election. *Literary Digest* used their method from 1916 until 1936 but was so embarrassed by Gallup's results that they issued a public apology and eventually shut down operations.⁶

With Roosevelt, we also have the first president to become obsessed with polling. One of the major issues in his second term was the gathering storm clouds of war in

⁶ Glynn et al.; *Public Opinion* 2004; P. 69

Europe and whether or not America would join the Allies to fight against the fascist Axis powers. On this issue, Roosevelt was notoriously on the opposite side of public opinion. A Roper survey of 5,171 face-to-face interviews published in the December 1938 issue of *Fortune* pegged opposition to joining any war in Europe at 60%.⁷ It was at this time that Roosevelt sought and received the aid of Hadley Cantril, the director of the Office of Public Opinion Research at Princeton University. Cantril gave FDR private access to Gallup's national polls, which were in turn used to monitor support for joining the war in Europe and Roosevelt's Lend-Lease program. Cantril polled the effects of Roosevelt's fireside chats to compare the opinions of those that listened to the broadcasts to those that did not and found a six point favourable increase among listeners in supporting Britain, "even at the risk of getting into war."⁸

The 1930s are also acknowledged as the origin of giving strategic political advice as a business. It was in 1933 that the team of Whitaker and Baker became the very first full-time campaign-only political consultants, as opposed to a public relations firm for which political consulting was a side business. This team devised a negative campaign to defeat California gubernatorial candidate Upton Sinclair and participated in several other high profile races.⁹

⁷ Stanley B. Greenberg; *Dispatches from the War Room: In the Trenches with Five Extraordinary Leaders* (New York, NY: Thomas Dunne Books, 2009); P.401

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Magleby, David B.; Patterson, Kelly D.; Thurber, James; "Campaign Consultants and Responsible Party Government" Pp. 101 – 120 in Green, John C.; Herrnson, Paul S.; eds;

Even with George Gallup successfully developing a scientific method to measure public opinion, the time between distributing questionnaires and having them returned by mail was a sufficiently long delay that it was impractical for political parties to conduct them during the traditional campaign period. This was a time, after all, before the current practice of starting unofficial campaigns for the party nomination and the presidency eighteen months before the actual election. Public opinion research, specifically polling, became more common in the postwar period. As the middle-class developed and the telephone became a common feature in the household, polling became easier to conduct. Calling potential respondents was cheaper and faster than mailing questionnaires and waiting for them to be returned.

The 1960s saw the professionalization of political consulting as an industry. During this era, consultants had become experts in communications and technology, resource allocation, or, simply put, “the art of campaigning”.¹⁰ With increasing ease of conducting public opinion research, political parties and presidents started to do it for themselves. Academia became a source of young consultants. With a generation of graduate students being trained in quantitative research methods, many young academics set up small polling and consulting firms to supplement their income during the lean, pre-

Responsible Partisanship? The Evolution of American Political Parties Since 1950 (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 2002); P. 103

¹⁰ Magleby et al.; “Campaign Consultants and Responsible Party Government” 2002; P. 103

tenure years. An example of this was Richard Wirthlin, whose part-time political consulting while teaching at Brigham Young University eventually led him to work for Ronald Reagan's presidential campaigns and would also serve as a consultant to Reagan during his presidency.

John F. Kennedy's 1960 campaign was the first to employ its own publicly known pollster and political consultant – Louis Harris.¹¹ Previous campaigns had kept the identities of their pollsters a secret as they could lose their corporate clients if they were identified with a losing candidate. Until Kennedy's successor, Lyndon Johnson, began the practice of employing a pollster in the White House, the same pollsters who did market research as part of advertising firms did political polling. Politicians consulted pollsters regularly, they just did so on an *ad hoc* basis.¹² Johnson was known as a voracious micromanager and he wanted to be able to make sure that his aggressive program of social reforms was gaining broad acceptance. He was also preoccupied with the changing direction of public opinion on the Vietnam War.

With Johnson, public opinion research became a permanent activity of the White House. Every president since Lyndon Johnson has employed a pollster either directly by the White House as staff, through their party but working for the president in the White House, or both. Often they work full time as consultants on the presidential staff

¹¹ Glynn et al.; *Public Opinion* 2004; P. 392

¹² Holsti; *Public Opinion and American Foreign Policy* 2004; P. 286

preparing the poll questionnaires and interpreting the results for the report to the president. They outsource the logistics to a polling firm which can get the raw results in a rapid turnaround, preferably overnight. This pattern continued up to and including the Carter administration. With the Reagan administration, a new paradigm emerged that would inextricably link governance to public opinion research and political strategy.

Ronald Reagan entered the presidency with huge support from the American electorate, but that support did not extend to the congressional wings of the Republican Party as the Democrats still controlled both houses. Given that some states that elected Reagan sent no Republicans to Washington among their congressional delegations, it is fair to say that many voters who voted for Reagan as president voted for a Democrat to represent them in the House of Representatives and Senate. These voters are often called “Reagan Democrats” as they were attracted by Reagan’s ambitious agenda to revive the economy and confront the Soviet Union, as well as the fact that he simply was not Jimmy Carter. As the saying goes, the opposition is not voted in, the government is voted out.

One of the innovations in political consulting that aided the Reagan campaign in unseating Carter and in advising Reagan throughout his presidency was the computerization of public opinion research in the form of PINS – Political Information System. Devised by Richard Wirthlin, PINS combined every quantitative, qualitative, and historical data source available and created a virtual political chessboard that allowed

Wirthlin to simulate the effect of Reagan's rhetorical moves on the electorate without conducting fresh polls or focus groups.¹³

Wirthlin remarked that he thought it was a bit of a gamble when his company began putting the system together in 1978, but it was a gamble that paid off. He ended up consulting PINS daily during the 1980 campaign. In office, he argues it helped him advise Reagan more accurately because the results were based on the aggregate data from multiple sources rather than a single overnight poll.¹⁴ Similar systems are now in use by both American political parties and other parties around the world. The most recent versions have also included consumer history from credit reports as data points to correlate with the political opinions.¹⁵

While divided government is a common phenomenon in American politics, compromises in policy are the typical result. For example, Reagan held an absolutist position on the Soviet Union and the Cold War: America must win. The congressional Democrats, many of whom were veterans of the political battles over the Vietnam War, favored the current policy of détente. They saw the Soviet Union as a permanent opponent, rather than Reagan's view of it as an enemy which must be defeated. Also on

¹³ Richard B. Wirthlin; Wynton C. Hall; *The Greatest Communicator: What Ronald Reagan Taught Me about Politics, Leadership, and Life* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2004); Pp. 39 & 40

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Douglas B. Sosnik; Matthew J. Dowd; Ron Fournier; *Applebee's America: How Successful Political, Business, and Religious Leaders Connect with the New American Community* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 2006); Pp. 3 – 8

the domestic front, the Democrats also held entrenched positions on the economy and taxes.

To counter these interests, Reagan's administration developed a unique style of governing that Sidney Blumenthal, writing in *Vanity Fair*, would coin "the permanent campaign".¹⁶ Professional consultant Dick Morris, whose efforts on behalf of Bill Clinton are explored later in this paper, defines the permanent campaign as the need to demonstrate a "daily majority".¹⁷ As Morris argues, the demonstration of a daily majority is necessary to convince Congress – whether divided or unified – to adopt the president's agenda and to overcome bureaucratic inertia to implement the president's agenda.¹⁸ Douglas Lathrop argues:

For some political practitioners, a separation between governing and campaigning is an academic conceit, a contrivance that does not exist in reality. In a democracy, electoral consequences are invariably part of the decision makers' calculus. The permanent campaign theory does not imply that an impermeable barrier has always divided campaigning and governing, but that modern behavior is so different in degree from the past that it has become different in kind. The hallmarks of the permanent campaign, campaign specialists masquerading as policy advisors, multi million dollar advertising schemes, and ceaseless polling, are not analogous to earlier examples of public outreach.¹⁹

¹⁶ As cited in Douglas A. Lathrop; *The Campaign Continues: How Political Campaign Tactics Affect Public Policy* (Westport, CN: Praeger, 2003); P.2

¹⁷ Dick Morris; *The New Prince: Machiavelli Updated for the Twenty-First Century* (Los Angeles, CA: Renaissance Books, 1999); P. 1

¹⁸ Ibid; Pp. 3 - 5

¹⁹ Lathrop; *The Campaign Continues* 2003; P. 40

The permanent campaign is a strategy to avoid compromise. In order to demonstrate that daily majority, constant public opinion research is necessary. Some, such as Sen. Paul Simon (D), equate this with pandering to opinion instead of leading it.²⁰ This view equates standing up to the polls as doing what is “right” as opposed to what is “popular”. Practitioners of the permanent campaign argue that the public expresses what they think is right through opinion polls. Morris argues in *the New Prince* that voters distrust polling because they do not understand it.²¹ He argues, “They think polling is pandering and that disregarding polls is bravery. But this Pickett’s Charge school of politics forces a choice between self-destruction and timidity. Neither option is very good government.”²²

Morris believes that society is moving from what he calls a “Madisonian”, or representative, democracy to a “Jeffersonian”, or direct participatory, one. In such a democracy, polls are the daily expression of the consent of the governed. Voters want to be heard on an ongoing basis between elections and polls translate their opinions into a language that politicians can understand. Polls do not replace leadership, though. Morris argues that a politician who governed by polls would lose control over events. One who ignored polls, though, would lose his mandate.

²⁰ Simon, Paul; *Our Culture of Pandering* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2003); Pp. 6 & 10

²¹ Morris; *The New Prince* 1999; P. 88

²² Ibid.

To Morris, the key is to integrate leading and polling in a dialogue to settle on the right proposal in the best form at the proper time.²³ This “polling as public expression of what is right” argument, however, is undermined by the fact that the other part of the permanent campaign entails massive amounts of advertising by the president’s party and allied interests on behalf of the president’s agenda, typically to counter the advertising run by interest groups to counter the agenda. In the permanent campaign, polling may be more of a report card on which consultants are winning the argument in the court of public opinion.

Another issue with this argument is the extent to which consultants actually create political reality. As David Moore argues in *The Superpollsters*, one of the tasks of the pollster is to actually find the jargon, the words and terms, which resonate with the public in the direction that is of the utmost advantage to his candidate-client or utmost disadvantage to his candidate-client’s opponent. One of the examples Moore highlights is the difference between responses to the proposition, “Too little money is being spent on ...”, when the sentence ends with “welfare” versus “assistance to the poor.” When the survey question ended with the latter, it enjoyed agreement from 63% of respondents, while with the former it only enjoyed the agreement of 19%.²⁴

²³ Morris; *The New Prince* 1999; P. 83

²⁴ David W. Moore; *The Super Pollsters: How they Measure and Manipulate Public Opinion in America* (New York, NY: Four Walls, Eight Windows, 1992); P. 343

Another example is a discovery of Louis Harris; if you attach the adjective “big” to a term, you can get a more favorable rating if you are testing for favorability towards government. Harris discovered he could increase the support for regulation in polling by differentiating “big business” from “business”, which in the public imagination included small business. Respondents were far more favorable to hypothetical regulation if they thought it affected some mega-corporation far away and not their neighbor’s local shop.²⁵ Many pollsters, such as Dick Morris and Frank Luntz, have made careers through specializing in discovering the most advantageous word and phrase choices for their clients. The mirror they are holding up to reality for their clients, however, may be a cracked one.

As an industry, the growth of political consultants has mirrored the growth of the government. This should be of little surprise as most consultants began their careers as Congressional or White House aides before moving on to the private sector to capitalize on their networks for potential private clients. Only a handful of consultants attended the founding meeting of the America Association of Political Consultants (now the Association of Political and Public Affairs Professionals) in 1969. Today, the association claims more than 1,100 members.²⁶ The organization’s membership is still only a small

²⁵ Moore; *The Super Pollsters* 1992; P. 343 - 346

²⁶ Association of Political and Public Affairs Professionals; “About AAPC – Overview” <http://www.theaapc.org/about/>

fraction of the 7,000 professional political consultants Dennis Johnson estimated in his 1998 conference paper on the subject.²⁷

Consultants Step Out

Reagan's Forgotten Front

With an average of over 50,000 elections held in the United States every year, there should be plenty of work for a community of 7,000 plus consultants. American consultants, however, are also in increasingly high demand abroad and are increasingly engaged in foreign elections. This is a relatively recent phenomenon that can be attributed to the Reagan administration.

In his 1982 speech to the British parliament, Ronald Reagan opened another front in his campaign to end the Cold War, the ballot box:

Since 1917 the Soviet Union has given covert political training and assistance to Marxist-Leninists in many countries. Of course, it also has promoted the use of violence and subversion by these same forces. Over the past several decades, West European and other Social Democrats, Christian Democrats, and leaders have offered open assistance to fraternal, political, and social institutions to bring about peaceful and democratic progress. Appropriately, for a vigorous new democracy, the Federal Republic of Germany's political foundations have become a major force in this effort.

²⁷ Johnson, Dennis W.; "Political Consulting: The Making of a Profession." Paper presented at conference, "The Role of Political Consultants in Elections," (Washington, DC, 1998); P. 3

We in America now intend to take additional steps, as many of our allies have already done, toward realizing this same goal. The chairmen and other leaders of the national Republican and Democratic Party organizations are initiating a study with the bipartisan American political foundation to determine how the United States can best contribute as a nation to the global campaign for democracy now gathering force. They will have the cooperation of congressional leaders of both parties, along with representatives of business, labor, and other major institutions in our society. I look forward to receiving their recommendations and to working with these institutions and the Congress in the common task of strengthening democracy throughout the world.²⁸

As stated in Chapter 1, Reagan's 1982 speech to the British parliament was intended to push American parties to engage like-minded parties as a counter influence to Soviet-backed communism. It was one approach among the many that comprised Reagan's anti-Soviet strategy. Like much of the origins of the transnational activity of American parties, it was largely forgotten.

Despite being overlooked, Reagan's speech has had permanent consequences. Congress created the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), which would serve as an umbrella organization for a series of groups and foundations representing various aspects of American politics, labor and commerce. To this end, within NED, American parties created international institutes based on the German Federal Republic *Stiftungen* model which had private foundations aligned with each of the four major political parties.

²⁸ Reagan; "Address to Members of the British Parliament; June 8, 1982" 1982

The American equivalents were the National Republican Institute for International Affairs (later renamed the International Republican Institute - IRI) aligned with the Republican Party and the National Democratic Institute (NDI) aligned with the Democratic party.²⁹

American parties and their foundations also joined multilateral party organizations. The NDI became a “cooperating organization” of Liberal International.³⁰ More notably, the Republican Party was instrumental in the founding of the International Democratic Union, an international organization to bring together conservative and Christian Democrat parties. To highlight the importance to the administration, the Reagan administration sent then Vice President George H.W. Bush to speak on behalf of the administration at the founding meeting hosted by the Right Honourable Margaret Thatcher in London on June 24th, 1983.³¹ Addressing the assembled representatives from 19 political parties, the Vice President stated:

... let us be mindful of all that our great democracies have given to mankind, and all that, with firmness of purpose, they might yet give. So let us inaugurate the International Democrat Union in the determination, to use Lincoln's words in a manner he would have endorsed, that the world under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, shall not perish

²⁹ David Lowe; *Idea to Reality: A Brief History of the National Endowment for Democracy* <http://www.ned.org/about/nedhistory.html> accessed 24 April 2009

³⁰ Liberal International “Cooperating Organizations” http://www.liberal-international.org/editorialIndex.asp?ia_id=525 accessed 24 April 2009

³¹ International Democratic Union “Founders” <http://idu.org/founder.aspx> accessed 24 April 2009

from this earth.³²

The IRI would also become a separate member in the lower tier of “co-operating organizations”.

Consultants come out to play

Through both these international organizations and individually through their aligned political foundations, American parties have been instrumental in aiding countries in Latin America, Africa and post-Soviet Europe develop their own party systems and developing democracies. While many of these democracy-building activities are the subject of a subsequent chapter, two are germane to the subject at hand. First, as Joshua Green noted in his 2005 article “Off-Season Adventures”, American political consulting firms have been increasingly using IRI and NDI sponsored programs to send their young stars abroad to work in foreign elections. This allows them to develop valuable campaign skills in the field that they can bring back to domestic elections.³³ If they do well, they are rising stars with valuable skills and insights. If they fail, no one has to know the firm hired a loser.

³² International Democratic Union; *Founding Meeting of the Union*; Hotel Intercontinental, London, UK, 24 June 1983
<http://idu.org/contentdoc/Founding%20meeting%20of%20IDU.pdf> accessed 27 January , 2010

³³ Joshua Green; “Off-Season Adventures” Pp. 18 – 20 in *Campaigns & Elections*; Vol. 26 Issue 1 (February 2005)

Second, the IRI and NDI have become vehicles to connect foreign parties with experienced American consultants. The same programs that firms use to send junior employees to foreign elections to gain experience also send senior consultants. Stanley Greenberg recounts that it was through one of these sponsored programs, in 1993, that he was first brought into contact with Nelson Mandela to work for the African National Conference (ANC) in South Africa's first post-Apartheid era election. The rules for NDI, however, mandated that they could only sponsor a bipartisan team of consultants and four round trip economy tickets during the campaign, the same benefits that were being provided to the other parties in the election. Since the ANC did not want to work with Republicans, Greenberg informed party representative Ketso Gordhan that he would work pro bono if the party would cover business class travel and survey costs. Gordhan agreed.³⁴

Not all international connections are made through these organizations. The most successful American political consultants are highly sought after. While Greenberg originally thought his history of academic work on South Africa was the reason he and Greer were even asked to go on the NDI sponsored trip to South Africa, his reputation actually preceded him. The truth he later discovered was African National Congress organizers Popo Molefe and Terror Lekota first identified him through *Newsweek's* post-1992 election special issue on Bill Clinton's successful US presidential campaign and the consultants – the so-called “whiz kids” – that brought him to victory. In 1993, as the

³⁴ Greenberg; *Dispatches from the War Room* 2009; Pp. 114 - 115

ANC was planning its election, Molefe and Lekota brought the issue to a meeting with Pat Keefer, NDI's contact in South Africa, and told him, "We would like to work with these people."³⁵

While not the total of his work abroad, in the remainder of the cases in *Dispatches* Greenberg recounts being recruited directly to the campaigns of Tony Blair, Ehud Barak, and Gonzalo "Goni" Sánchez de Lozada by domestic consultants or activists of the respective parties. Given the ultimate result of the meeting as described in the preceding paragraph, NDI unwittingly subsidized a meeting that might otherwise have taken place in Greenberg's offices in Washington, San Francisco or London.

Another Clinton strategist with international experience is Robert Shrum. His recent book, *No Excuses: Concessions of a Serial Campaigner*, contains several references to working with the British Labour Party. In an interview, Shrum explained that Philip Gould, Labour's polling advisor, first approached him to work with the party in late 1988 or early 1989.³⁶ Gould would go on to be an observer in the Clinton "War Room" in Little Rock and would later recruit Stanley Greenberg, James Carville, and others to help Labour's leader, Tony Blair, re-brand the party as "New" Labour (campaigning for the revocation of Clause IV – commitment to the nationalization of major industry – in the party constitution) and eventually defeat John Major's Tories.

³⁵ Greenberg; *Dispatches from the War Room* 2009; P. 116

³⁶ Robert Shrum; personal interview with author via telephone; (New York, NY: February 12, 2009)

The Republican and British Conservative parties also have a working relationship. It was the Tories' media advisors collaborating with the Republicans who developed their negative advertisements in the 1992 presidential election portraying the Democratic candidate, Bill Clinton, as a tax and spend liberal. When Clinton won the election, Tory leader and British Prime Minister John Major apologized for the advertisements in their first meeting as leaders of their nations.³⁷

Major's apparent need or desire to apologize to President Clinton for his party's cooperation with the Republicans as part of maintaining the Anglo-American friendship highlights another potential motivation for American political consultants: conducting the administration's foreign policy by other means. Rather than building links between parties in the Reagan mold, they are just working to achieve their administration's policies. In many of the elections that the high profile consultants work – the Greenbergs, Shrums, Carvilles, Finkelsteins, Morrisises, Luntzs – there is a strong fit between the foreign policy goals of the administrations of the day and the countries in which these consultants have worked.

The United Kingdom and Israel are always, for different reasons, important countries to American foreign policy. When Bill Clinton became president, the United Kingdom was led by the aforementioned Tory Prime Minister John Major, whose own

³⁷ Greenberg; *Dispatches from the War Room* 2009; P. 182

political consultants worked for Clinton's rival Bush campaign in the 1992 presidential election. Israel was led by Labor Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and, later, Shimon Peres (also Labor), who both enjoyed good working relationships with the administration. Peres' successor, Likud's Benjamin Netanyahu, did not. In a Haaretz column just prior to the most recent Israeli election, Akiva Eldar recounted the differences between the Clinton administration and Netanyahu during his tenure as prime minister, quoting then-White House Press Secretary Joe Lockhart, "one of the most obnoxious individuals you're going to come into - just a liar and a cheat. He could open his mouth and you could have no confidence that anything that came out of it was the truth."³⁸

In the case of the United Kingdom, while Labour consultant Philip Gould had been liaising with American consultants like Bob Shrum and Stanley Greenberg for years prior to Clinton's election, after Clinton was elected Greenberg and Gould explicitly sought and received permission from the White House and the Democratic National Committee to create what Greenberg calls a "foreign exchange program". Gould travelled to Los Angeles to observe focus groups in the wake of the Democrats' congressional defeat in 1994 and Greenberg would reciprocate by observing groups in the UK.³⁹

³⁸ Akiva Eldar, ; "Perfect English or not, Netanyahu shares no common language with Obama" on *Haaretz.com* 2 February 2009

<http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/pages/1063057.html> retrieved 29 March 2009

³⁹ Greenberg; *Dispatches from the War Room* 2009; P. 188

For Ehud Barak, whose inexperienced political team had just won the leadership of the Israeli Labor Party in a narrow, upset victory over party stalwart Shimon Peres and was preparing for election in 1999, it was about finding winners. Greenberg, Shrum, and Carville had gotten moderate centre-leftists Bill Clinton and Tony Blair elected and would get him elected.⁴⁰ While there has been much written about the political and the strategic motivations surrounding their involvement, Mr. Shrum said that “the stuff out there about us being there at Clinton’s behest is untrue.”⁴¹ He also noted that Greenberg had at that point not been part of the administration since 1995.⁴²

While these are two modern examples, they follow a potential trend begun by John F. Kennedy and his reported feud with Canadian Prime Minister John Diefenbaker. Journalist Knowlton Nash detailed this feud in his book *Kennedy and Diefenbaker: Fear and Loathing Across the Undefended Border*.⁴³ Nash argues that the generational and policy differences (the UK’s entry in the European Common Market, Cuba, nuclear warheads on the Bomarc missiles Canada purchased from the US, to name a few), coupled with Diefenbaker’s anti-Americanism led to Diefenbaker becoming, in Robert

⁴⁰ Greenberg; *Dispatches from the War Room* 2009; P. 270

⁴¹ Robert Shrum; personal interview with author via telephone; (New York, NY: February 12, 2009)

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Re-titled in paperback: *Kennedy and Diefenbaker: the Feud that Helped Topple the Government*

Kennedy's words, one of only two world leaders that President Kennedy hated.⁴⁴

President Kennedy even admitted to Benjamin C. Bradlee, "I thought he was a prick."⁴⁵

Kennedy favored the Liberal leader, Lester B. Pearson, as Canada's Prime Minister. He was acquainted with Pearson from his time as Canada's ambassador to the United Nations, a post where he was credited with coming up with the United Nations Emergency Force to serve as peacekeepers to defuse the Suez crisis that earned him the 1957 Nobel Peace Prize. Kennedy did not do much to hide this, either. During his state visit to Canada, he was reported to have spent an excessive amount of time speaking to Pearson, seated next to Diefenbaker, at the dinner at the US ambassador's residence. Basil Robinson, a senior Canadian diplomat, noted, "Even the U.S. guests were embarrassed."⁴⁶

The Canadian Liberals, meanwhile, asked Kennedy's campaign pollster, Lou Harris, to join their election campaign for the 1962 election. Harris had previously approached Kennedy about working for Harold Wilson's Labour Party in the UK and was told, "I don't trust Harold Wilson, and I'd hate to see you would do anything that

⁴⁴ Knowlton Nash; *Kennedy and Diefenbaker: Fear and Loathing Across the Undefended Border* (Toronto, ON: McClelland & Stewart, 1991); P. 11; N.B. - Indonesia's Sukarno had the distinction of being the other.

⁴⁵ Benjamin C. Bradlee; *Conversations with Kennedy* (New York, NY: WW Norton & Company, 1984); P. 183

⁴⁶ Nash; *Kennedy and Diefenbaker* 1991; P. 128

would harm my friend Macmillan.”⁴⁷ Based on the conversation, Harris turned Wilson down. When he approached Kennedy about working for Pearson, Kennedy told him, “You do what you want.”⁴⁸ Harris would later tell Nash, “It certainly wasn’t at Kennedy’s specific request, but rather with his acquiescence. Kennedy never stood in the way as he did with Wilson.”⁴⁹

Diefenbaker was reduced to a minority government in that election. Perpetually teetering on collapse, Diefenbaker decided to put the issue of equipping US-purchased Bomarc-B missiles, something Diefenbaker was against, to a debate in the House of Commons. This prompted the State Department, with White House permission, to issue a press release on January 30, 1963, entitled “United States and Canadian Negotiations Regarding Nuclear Weapons”. In the release, the department accused Diefenbaker of being disingenuous: “The Bomarc-B was not designed to carry any conventional warhead.”⁵⁰ The release enraged Diefenbaker who accused Kennedy of interference.

The debate and the press release also exposed the divisions within Diefenbaker’s own caucus. Minister of National Defence Douglas Harkness opposed Diefenbaker’s view and resigned on February 4th. The government lost a pair of confidence measures shortly thereafter and an election was called. Harris would go back to secretly working

⁴⁷ Nash; *Kennedy and Diefenbaker* 1991; P. 166

⁴⁸ Ibid.; P. 167

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid; P. 243 - 247

for the Liberals. Given the open feud that had erupted between Diefenbaker and Kennedy and how Diefenbaker was attempting to use it to play on Canadian's anti-Americanism, Harris instructed Kennedy to "keep quiet about Pearson no matter what you're feeling."⁵¹ On April 8th, 1963, Lester Pearson was elected to a minority government and was promptly invited to meet with Kennedy at Hyannis Port. Pearson thought it more politically palatable to the public that he visit the British Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan, first.

While the Kennedy-Diefenbaker affair might be the most blatant example of a US President using his party consultants to influence the electoral outcome, there are few that rise to this level to sufficiently posit a pattern. The aforementioned Clinton-Blair relationship is another example where consultants sought permission from the White House, but there is no indication in Greenberg's *Dispatches* or in an interview with Robert Shrum that they sought administration approval to work for Ehud Barak. The same holds for Greenberg's clients, save Blair, mentioned in *Dispatches*. To work with Blair, Greenberg sought permission from both the White House and the DNC to establish a long-term working group with Blair's Labour Party.⁵² The reasons for seeking permission are not explained, but it is likely, in part at least, due to the long-term investment of time. The next election, and the opportunity for Blair to defeat John Major's Conservatives, was not until 1997.

⁵¹ Nash; *Kennedy and Diefenbaker* 1991; Pp. 276 - 279

⁵² Supra Note 35

While the bulk of the examples in this chapter relating to American political consultants are skewed toward the Democrats during the Clinton administration, it should not be taken to imply that Republican consultants were not active abroad during the Bush administration. This skew in the narrative is due in large part to recent publications by Democratic strategists on this topic and Mr. Shrum's agreement to sit for an interview. Republican consultants were contacted for interviews, but none of these requests have been granted to date.

A notable example of a Republican participating in an election abroad is the aforementioned Dick Morris. Morris has had a number of international centre-right political candidates as clients, including Vicente Fox (Mexico), Fernando de la Rúa (Argentina), Jorge Batlle (Uruguay) and many others. Of particular interest for this paper was Morris' participation in the 2004-2005 presidential election campaign of Viktor Yushchenko of Ukraine, which came to be known as the Orange Revolution. Yushchenko was considered the more western-oriented candidate in the race with a platform open to expanded ties with, and eventual membership in, the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The outgoing president, Leonid Kuchma, was considered an ally of Russia and its then-President (now Prime Minister) Vladimir Putin. Viktor Yanukovich was running to take Kuchma's place. Morris argues that it was his insistence on the use of exit polls that allowed the Yushchenko campaign to detect vote tampering when the official results skewed towards Yanukovich, who Morris

describes as “the Putin candidate backed by a coalition of the Russian Mafia, oil barons, former KGB officials and communists”.⁵³ The exit polls, he says, projected a 10-point Yushchenko victory but the results the government announced were a narrow victory for Yanukovich.⁵⁴ After several days of protests in the capital of Kiev, which would become known as the “Orange Revolution”, Yanukovich agreed to a new vote overseen by international monitors and conceded defeat after losing. A Yanukovich victory would have been seen as empowering Russian President Putin and his agenda for the former Soviet republics in the Caucasus region, whereas the Yushchenko victory brought the Bush administration an ally in the region.

In May 2006, Canada’s opposition parties accused Prime Minister Stephen Harper of spending more time listening to Republican pollsters than Canadians. The pollster in question, Frank Luntz, met with the Prime Minister the day prior to his presentation to an influential group of Conservatives called the Civitas Society. Luntz urged them to keep digging up dirt on the opposition Liberals and spoke about how choosing the right words can shape public opinion. He also recommended the party focus on such things as accountability and tax reduction and tap into national symbols like hockey.⁵⁵

⁵³ “While we looked away, Czar Putin Stole Ukraine” on *The Hill.com* 24 November 2004 <http://thehill.com/dick-morris/while-we-looked-away-czar-putin-stole-ukraine-2004-11-24.html> accessed 2 April 2009

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Canwest News Service; “Opposition targets PM’s connection to Republican pollster” on *Canda.com* 9 May 2006 <http://www.canada.com/topics/news/politics/story.html?id=c4a55c5d-1686-4e7b-b6e5-405bffce4748&k=14446&p=1> accessed 2 April 2009

The controversy that ensued in Parliament and in the press must be viewed through the lens of the latent, and often not so latent, anti-Americanism in Canada's political culture. As for those familiar with Mr. Luntz's work, his was hardly revolutionary advice. He is well known for his strategy of using creative word choices for political advantage. One could even say he was a little late in giving such advice. After being portrayed by the Liberals in the 2004 election as being insufficiently Canadian, using the Liberal Party of Canada definition, Harper and his campaign team decided to stake out the patriotic ground early before the Liberals had a chance to define them. Harper's campaign manager, Tom Flanagan, noted in *Harper's Team* that in early 2005:

Perry [Miele]'s team also came up with the English campaign slogan, "Stand Up for Canada." Around the world, Conservative parties rarely win elections unless they become indentified (sic) as the party of patriotism; certainly that has been true of the Republicans in the United States and the Conservatives in Great Britain. But we would have to work to reclaim that ground of Canadian patriotism that the Liberals had managed to appropriate for themselves. "Stand Up for Canada" would be a first step in that direction.⁵⁶

Certainly there are advantages to the idea of using political consultants to conduct a "foreign policy by other means" that would make an attractive explanation. If there is no urgency to a particular situation and the democratic system is sufficiently healthy to

⁵⁶ Tom Flanagan, ; *Harper's Team: Behind the Scenes in the Conservative Rise to Power* (Montreal, PQ & Kingston, ON: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007); P. 209

make such a strategy viable, consultants are easier to deploy than intelligence or military operatives. They have the advantage of operating in the proverbial daylight, openly hired by a domestic party or third party, such as a NED foundation, to work on a campaign. If everything goes wrong, the administration has deniability; someone else hired them.

A strict “foreign policy by other means” explanation, however, is insufficient. The foreign policy explanation ignores the fact in the aforementioned examples of Democratic political consultants contributing to elections abroad that post-1992 Republican-aligned consultants were also working in the same elections for the opposing side. This would have been at a time when, being out of the executive branch, they would have had no foreign policy goals to achieve other than embarrassing the president by defeating one of his allies abroad. Using elections abroad to embarrass the president at home is likewise an insufficient explanation because, as Holsti and others have noted, Americans in peacetime pay little if any attention to foreign affairs, in general, and foreign elections, in particular. A Republican-backed candidate could have defeated a Democratic-backed candidate and the American electorate was unlikely to have known or even cared.

Money alone is not a sufficient cause, either. As the title suggests, “the boys gotta eat.” Expenses need to be paid. From conducting polls to purchasing airline tickets, everything costs money. Many of the parties American political consultants work with have the resources to pay these expenses and their hefty consultancy fees, which are

usually based on a percentage of the advertising buy. One of the first political consulting firms to actively recruit clients internationally, the Sawyer Miller Group, was notorious for simply working for whoever could afford them. While they would work exclusively for Democratic candidates/clients in domestic politics, they were, as James Harding reports, “more promiscuous” in choosing their international clientele, working *pro bono* for the Dalai Lama while being paid in cash by Nigeria. They worked on separate occasions against and then for Carlos Andrés Pérez in Venezuela in the 1970s as well as for and then against Manuel Noriega in Panama.⁵⁷

A flush bank account alone, however, is not enough to convince a political consultant to work for a foreign political party. During the course of our interview, Robert Shrum mentioned that the only client he ever turned down was Sani Abacha, the dictator of Nigeria who had a long record of human rights abuses. He said that in doing so he turned down a lot of money, but he will not work for a candidate who does not share his values.⁵⁸ There are few examples of American consultants who work for both major political parties in domestic elections, either. During the heyday of the Sawyer Miller Group, from the late 1970s until co-founder Scott Miller’s retirement in the early 1990s, the company’s main domestic clients, the Democrats, were out of power more in the executive branch than they were in power and therefore had no overarching political

⁵⁷ James Harding; *Alpha Dogs: The Americans Who Turned Political Spin Into a Global Business* (New York, NY: Farrar, Staus, Giroux, 2008); Pp. 3 – 5

⁵⁸ Shrum; personal interview with author via telephone 2009

interests to appease back home, giving SMG the freedom to work with whoever they wanted.

In the end, what ultimately brings American political consultants together with foreign contemporaries in a way that creates enduring bonds are the ideological linkages. Ideologies are, by definition, normative and with its unique republican system, American parties are fewer in number and broader in ideology. An American liberal in the model of the late Senator Paul Wellstone may be considered radical within his Democratic party at home but overly moderate in Europe. As Shrum said, "... just because I'm progressive doesn't mean I favor the most radical candidate."⁵⁹ Regardless of what partisans call themselves in their own countries, common content of ideas leads to common bonds. In an interview conducted for a subsequent chapter on this topic, Morton Blackwell, the President of the Leadership Institute – an organization that trains conservative activists – said that when taking students from nominal conservative parties abroad, they use as a guide the values of Ronald Reagan: limited government, strong national defense, free enterprise, and traditional family values.⁶⁰

Political consulting has moved from the courts of emperors and kings to the towns and parishes of the American heartland. American political consulting is now a business of international scope. Unlike traditional businesses that offer a product or, in this case,

⁵⁹ Shrum; personal interview with author via telephone 2009

⁶⁰ Blackwell; personal interview with author 2009

service, political consulting firms do not travel the world looking for any old client with sufficiently deep pockets. For the most part, their successes at home bring international clients to their doorstep. The consultants, in turn, choose their clients according to their own set of values. This value-connection creates a direct emotional investment in the client in a way that a normal client-consultant relationship would not. Campaign consultants often become government consultants after the election. It is partly how high-priced consultants can afford to give away their services to opposition parties in lesser developed countries; they make their money following the election if the party they back forms the government.

Regardless of motivation, this activity continues to perpetuate the relationship between consultant and foreign like-minded party. This, in turn, leads to durable relationships between American partisan activists and their contemporaries abroad well after the service for a particular election campaign has been rendered. The outcome is ongoing, cooperative relationships between parties. Strategists are often the tip of the spear, building networks of like-minded partisans in other countries of which their home party can take advantage.

Chapter 4 – The Party at Home Going Abroad

Where the previous chapter looked at the tip of the spear – individual party consultants and their activities abroad – attention will now be paid to the spear itself, the political parties. Despite the barriers to transnational activity, American political parties are quite active abroad and have been for some time. This activity began in the 1960s with one of the subjects of this chapter, the creation of the parties' abroad committees to facilitate the votes of American expatriates, and reached its peak in the 1980s with the subjects of subsequent chapters, the creation of the National Endowment for Democracy, the party institutes, and the party internationals. There is little written about such activity, perhaps largely because these activities happen “over there” – not in the United States – away from those who typically study political parties, campaigns, and elections in the United States.

Another factor in the lack of literature on abroad committees is that until the 2000 election the accepted wisdom was that their activities had little effect on the overall

outcome of elections back in the United States. The prevailing belief was the absentee vote amounted to a few thousand votes per state or district and most of those were service personnel who voted Republican. The elections between 1964 and 1996 were also never considered “too close to call” in the same way 2000 was.

This accepted wisdom changed following the 2000 election because the difference of a few hundred votes in the state of Florida decided the election for the entire nation. Suddenly, absentee votes were important, especially for the party that lost the election, the Democrats. As nomination campaigns now appear to begin shortly after mid-term elections, absentee money has become important, too. Trips abroad also make a great set piece for voters back home.

Of the many firsts on election night 2008 ending almost two years of presidential campaigning, two are of special interest. First, it was the first presidential election since 1996 that was decided the night of the actual election. Second, it was the first time the candidates themselves visibly campaigned abroad. While both Barack Obama and John McCain, together with their respective campaigns, stated they were doing their work as United States Senators¹ when they made their international tours and gave their speeches in Berlin (Obama) and Ottawa (McCain) on topics that would coincidentally bolster their

¹ Since election law prohibits campaign and party funds from being spent abroad, the trips had to be underwritten either as an official inter-parliamentary delegation from the United States Senate or a committee trip, unless the candidates wanted to pay for it themselves as private citizens.

credentials (Obama – internationalizing the Afghan mission; McCain – free trade).

Although their opening remarks included statements to the effect they were not about to give a campaign speech, a candidate who gives a speech while campaigning for office is probably giving a campaign speech. They even held fundraisers for their presidential campaigns while on so-called “Senate business” in foreign countries. While the speeches and venues were remarkably different, the undercurrent was the same: dear audience, I am the better candidate to be President of the United States. These speeches and trips abroad in the second observation highlighted the growing importance of two things related to the first observation: absentee ballots and abroad committees.

Just because you don’t live here doesn’t mean you can’t decide the fate of the nation

In his opening remarks before the Economic Club of Canada at the Ottawa Congress Centre, a scant five-minute walk from the Parliament of Canada, on June 20, 2008, the then-presumptive Republican nominee for President of the United States, John McCain, declared: “There aren't any electoral votes to be won up here in the middle of a presidential election.”² According to the Canadian branch of his own party’s abroad committee, however, there are actually approximately 750,000 votes to be found in Canada, over six times the margin of victory of George Bush over John Kerry in the state

² John McCain; “Full Text: McCain’s Ottawa Speech” *CBCNews.com* 20 June 2008 <http://www.cbc.ca/world/story/2008/06/20/f-mccain-remarks.html> accessed 29 June 2010

of Ohio.³ Further, there is an overall estimate of four to five million US citizens living abroad at any one time. Each still validly holds the franchise.

While many of the above referenced number would be American citizens who are temporarily abroad and have no intention of emigrating, such as service personnel on foreign deployment or the estimated 600,000 American students studying in foreign universities or individuals working on temporary projects, others could be those who left for one of the previously mentioned reasons and stayed. Some may even be Vietnam War draft-dodgers who took refuge in Canada when Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau declared that they would have blanket political asylum and stayed even after President Carter provided amnesty. Regardless of the reason for leaving the United States, they may have become permanent residents or Canadian citizens while still retaining their vote as dual citizens.

While different countries have different rules regarding the retention of an immigrant's original citizenship, Canada does not require immigrants to renounce their previous citizenship to gain Canadian citizenship. Citizenship and Immigration Canada suggests applicants renounce their citizenship if the obligations of their previous

³ Republicans Abroad International; "American living in Canada eligible to vote in the 2008 Presidential election" *Canada News Wire* 8 September 2008 <http://www.newswire.ca/en/releases/archive/September2008/08/c2531.html> accessed 29 June 2010

citizenship, such as mandatory military service, entail significant “disadvantages”, but there is no statutory obligation to do so.⁴

There is also no obligation under United States law for citizens who acquire an additional citizenship to formally renounce their American citizenship. Emigrants from the United States, therefore, may retain their citizenship and exercise their rights as US citizens at election time. Several of Canada’s Prime Ministers were dual citizens of Canada and the United Kingdom and, most recently, a Leader of Her Majesty’s Official Opposition, the Honourable Stephane Dion, was a dual citizen of Canada and France. Tom Long, an Ontario-based political consultant who ran to be the first leader of the now-defunct Canadian Alliance in 2000, was a dual citizen of Canada and the United States.

There are definite limits to the advantages of dual citizenship. Canada does not recognize any rights of additional citizenship within Canada. To use a hypothetical situation, a dual Canadian-American citizen arrested in Toronto cannot receive consular assistance from the US government. The United States Embassy Consular Services Canada warns dual citizens, “Claims of other countries on dual national U.S. citizens may conflict with U.S. law, and dual nationality may limit U.S. Government efforts to assist citizens abroad. The country where a dual national is located generally has a stronger

⁴ Citizenship Immigration Canada, *Dual Citizenship* 28 July 2009
<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/publications/dual-citizenship.asp>

claim to that person's allegiance.”⁵ As far as the US Government is concerned, that individual is only a Canadian when in Canada.

Similarly, the Government of Canada will do nothing to facilitate the exercise of an immigrant's voting rights in his home country. The government will not interfere, as Australia did until 1999 by refusing to allow Australian-Italians to use the postal service to mail their absentee ballots in Italian elections⁶, but they will not provide active assistance. The establishment of in-person polling stations outside of those established inside embassies and consulates is also prohibited. This has become a larger issue as countries, particularly Italy and those in post-Soviet Eastern Europe, expand their citizenship laws to allow emigrants and the descendants of emigrants, so-called “diaspora” voters, to apply for citizenship and even run for “diaspora” seats in national legislatures.

Absentee, Early and Provisional Votes

There are typically two types of absentee voters. First, there are voters who are citizens and full-time residents of the United States but who will be absent from their home district on Election Day. This class of absentees and their votes are regulated and

⁵ The United States Embassy Consular Services Canada; *Dual Citizenship* 5 March 2009 http://www.consular.canada.usembassy.gov/dual_citizenship.asp accessed 8 January 2010

⁶ Bruno Mascitelli; Simon Battiston; *The Italian expatriate vote in Australia: democratic right, democratic wrong, or political opportunism?* (Ballan, Victoria: Connor Court Publishing, 2008); P. 5

administered by their respective state and local election laws. They can typically apply for an absentee or provisional ballot in advance of Election Day by declaring they will not be in the polling district on the day of the vote and will not attempt to vote on Election Day.

Second, there are voters who are absent from the United States on Election Day.

The *Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act* regulates this class of absentee voters.⁷ Section 107 defines those covered under the Act as:

- (1) "absent uniformed services voter" means --
 - (A) a member of a uniformed service on active duty who, by reason of such active duty, is absent from the place of residence where the member is otherwise qualified to vote;
 - (B) a member of the merchant marine who, by reason of service in the merchant marine, is absent from the place of residence where the member is otherwise qualified to vote;
 - and
 - (C) a spouse or dependent of a member referred to in subparagraph (A) or (B) who, by reason of the active duty or service of the member, is absent from the place of residence where the spouse or dependent is otherwise qualified to vote;
- ...
- (5) "overseas voter" means --
 - (A) an absent uniformed services voter who, by reason of active duty or service is absent from the United States on the date of the election involved;
 - (B) a person who resides outside the United States and is qualified to vote in the last place in which the person was domiciled before leaving the United States; or
 - (C) a person who resides outside the United States and (but for such residence) would be qualified to vote in the last place in which the person was domiciled before leaving the

⁷ 99th Congress of the United States; *Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act*; Public Law 99-410; [H.R. 4393] enacted 28 August 1986

United States;⁸

This class of absentee voter will be made up, first, of members or the spouses of members of the military, merchant navy, and US government on active duty or service abroad. These are voters who are away because of *duty* or *service* to the United States. Second, it is made up of anyone else who is away from the United States who would be otherwise qualified to vote, be they students, private business, or whomever. Many would be long-term residents of another country. These are voters who are away from the United States by *choice*. The ramifications of this difference will be discussed further in the chapter.

Under Executive Order 12642, the Secretary of Defense is designated by the president to administer the Act. The Federal Voting Assistance Program, which is part of the Department of Defense, administers both the Act and the *National Voter Registration Act of 1993* on behalf of the Secretary. The program states its goals are to "inform and educate U.S. citizens worldwide of their right to vote; foster voting participation; and protect the integrity of, and simultaneously enhance, the electoral process at the Federal, State and local levels."⁹ The Program facilitates the application for absentee ballots with state and local officials. The Program also administers an emergency back-up ballot that is

⁸ 99th Congress of the United States; *Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act*; Public Law 99-410; [H.R. 4393] enacted 28 August 1986; Title I, Sec. 107

⁹ Federal Voter Assistance Program <http://www.fvap.gov/index.html> accessed January 4, 2010

provided for in the Act, the Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot, for voters who "have made a timely application for but have not received their regular ballot from the state or territory, subject to certain conditions."¹⁰ The Act applies specifically to federal elections and not to state and local elections; some states and territories do allow those covered under the Act to vote in their elections. The Act has been amended in the *Help America Vote Act of 2002* and the *National Defense Authorization Acts of 2002 and 2005*.

The reason the Department of Defense is responsible for overseas absentee ballots, military and non-military alike, is both historical and logistical. The historical reason is that before the franchise was extended to women, the main reason for voters (men) to be absent from their homes was military service. Absentee balloting was first necessary in the United States for the Union forces during the Civil War. Fourteen states authorized their soldiers in the field to vote in the presidential election of 1864. Since the combat units of the Union army were organized as state militias with servicemen coming from the state whose units they were in, their respective captain's quarters were used as the polling stations and the captain was to report the results to the state election office.¹¹

¹⁰ 99th Congress of the United States; *Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act*; Public Law 99-410; [H.R. 4393] enacted 28 August 1986, Sec. 103

¹¹ Campbell Lee, Duncan; "Absent Voting" Pp. 333 – 345 in *Journal of the Society of Comparative Legislation*, New Series; Vol. 16, No. 2; 1912; P. 333 – 335

In 1916, with the looming prospect of the United States entering World War I and a large number of men being absent from their homes during the presidential election, Duncan Campbell Lee proposed a model of absentee balloting. It was based on the emergency laws passed by New Zealand in 1914 and Canada in 1915 to allow the members of their expeditionary forces to vote in their elections. Like the Union forces during the Civil War, neither country had provisions to allow their soldiers to vote if they were outside the country at the outset of the war. Neither of the British dominions actually had sizable militaries at the outset of the war. Neither one expected to have an election while their forces were abroad. The war began in August of 1914 and was supposed to be over by Christmas.

The model Campbell Lee proposed is still largely in use today: voting by mail. Since general elections in the United States are essentially run by the states of the Union and there is no American equivalent of the Chief Electoral Officer seen in many Commonwealth countries, application has to be made to home state electoral offices to get a ballot, the ballot must be sent to the applicant, and the applicant must then return the completed ballot in time for polling day.¹² While the process may have been tweaked and improved by the implementation of modern technology, it is essentially the Campbell Lee process which is still administered by the Department of Defense today.

¹² Campbell Lee; "Absent Voting" 1912; P. 334

The logistical reason for the absentee balloting process to be administered by the Department of Defense is that the main reason for Americans to be absent from home at the time of an election is still military service. The literature on counting Americans abroad seems to agree on thing: there is no adequate, scientifically verifiable tally of Americans living abroad.¹³ The running estimate is that 4 million citizens reside outside the United States of which 1.5 million are estimated to be foreign-posted members of the armed services and other government employees, 1.5 million are estimated to be their spouses and the remainder are non-military citizens abroad. To this day, the vast majority of absent overseas voters are connected to the military, either by employment or marriage.

In terms of administration, state electoral offices often lump absentee ballots in with provisional ballots. Provisional ballots are ballots cast by those whose eligibility to vote is brought into question. An elector's eligibility to vote may be challenged at the polling station by party observers for any number of reasons, including:

- The voter refuses to show a photo ID (in regions that require one)
- The voter's name does not appear on the electoral roll for the given precinct.
- The voter's registration contains inaccurate or out-dated information such as the wrong address or a misspelled name.
- The voter's ballot has already been recorded.

¹³ Taylor E. Dark III; "Americans Abroad: the Challenge of a Globalized Electorate" Pp. 733 – 740 in *PS: Political Science and Politics*; Vol. 36, No. 4; October 2003; P. 733

In such an instance and where the elector is confident about being eligible, there is a legal right under section 302 of *the Help America Vote Act of 2002* to cast a provisional ballot. The vote on the ballot will be counted once the elector's eligibility has been verified. If the eligibility of the elector cannot be verified, the ballot is discarded. The elector is notified of the result.¹⁴ Provisional ballots, including the absentee ballots, are typically counted seven to ten days after Election Day.

Research on the administration of the overseas ballot process by Cain *et al.* reveals a high level of satisfaction on the part of those requesting ballots. The numbers are skewed, though. Overseas military voters report a far higher level of satisfaction with the process than overseas non-military voters. The authors argue this is largely due to the patriotism of local election officials who have a tendency to go out of their way to facilitate the ballots for active-duty military personnel and their families. They highlight local election officials who have tracked down personnel on submarines and contacted their superior officers to find out how to send applications electronically. Local election officials have even ignored orders to “shelter-in-place” during a hurricane to wait for a ballot application to come in by fax machine. In the 2006 mid-term elections, the efforts

¹⁴ 107th Congress of the United States; *Help America Vote Act of 2002* Public Law 107-252 enacted 29 October 2002

by local election officials led to a 92% voting rate among the spouses of service members and 82.6% by uniformed service members.¹⁵

Non-military voters tend not to be so lucky. Most use the online application available at the website for the Federal Voting Assistance Program. They report a slightly lower rate of satisfaction than military voters. The ones that contact their state election office directly report the lowest rate of satisfaction. This is due to the logistics of contacting the office from overseas. The absentee looking to cast a ballot from Canada or even Mexico would be fortunate as there would not be a great difference in time zones and the phone lines have a high degree of reliability. The absentee looking to cast a vote while in South America or actually overseas in Europe, Asia or Africa may have to deal with time zone differences, as the election office is likely to be open only during the proverbial 9 to 5 “banker’s hours” in their own time zone. The quality of the phone lines and service may lead to frequent call drops. Several attempts just to send a fax may be required. They probably have to tolerate these frustrations because they are in an area where there is no Internet access, thus eliminating the online application option.¹⁶

Compared to uniformed service members and their spouses, the participation rate of citizens abroad in the 2006 vote was far lower: 49.5% for US citizens abroad

¹⁵ Bruce E. Cain; Karin MacDonald; , Michael H. Murakami; “Administering the Overseas Vote” Pp. 802 – 813 in *Public Administration Review*; (September/October) 2008; P. 804

¹⁶ Ibid

permanently, 41.6% for US citizens abroad temporarily. Many citizens abroad who did not vote, however, reported they did try to vote and for reasons undisclosed did not cast their ballot: 20.1% and 24% respectively.¹⁷ Including these figures increases the overall participation rate in the 2006 for citizens abroad to 69.6% for those permanently abroad and 65.6% for those temporarily abroad.

After the absentee voter has gone through the process, what happens to the actual ballot when it gets back to the local election officials? Normally, absentee ballots, since they are lumped in with provisional ballots, are not counted on Election Day. A narrow vote count where the absentee ballots might determine a winner different than the one otherwise decided on Election Day could cause the local election officials doing the addition to separate absentee from provisional ballots and count those ballots after polling districts reported their results. Historically, this has been a rare exception. Their results are added to the candidates' certified totals well after candidates have conceded and someone was declared a winner. The absentee votes rarely determine the winner. Except when they do.

As stated previously, both the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections were not determined on Election Day. In the latter election, the Democrat challenger, John Kerry, conceded defeat the next day. The 2000 election is infamous for going into December before the Supreme Court of the United States intervened on December 12th to declare

¹⁷ Cain et al.; "Administering the Overseas Vote" 2008, P. 804

the Florida Supreme Court's order for a statewide recount unconstitutional, thus giving the election to Republican George W. Bush over Democrat Al Gore. In both instances, provisional and absentee ballots had the potential to decide the President of the United States.

One of the unintended consequences of the current rules governing the Electoral College system in determining the President of the United States is that it essentially puts the decision-making power in a handful of so-called "battleground" or "swing" states. With most states allocating their Electoral College votes on a winner-take-all basis, if a state solidly trends in polling and historical results for one party, the other does not bother expending resources in the state and concentrates on states that are still in contention. In 2000, the state in question was Florida. In 2004, it was Ohio.

In the case of Florida in the 2000 election, absentee ballots were included in the official statewide recount. By the time all precincts in Florida had reported their results, Bush led Gore by about 2,000 votes. Florida law mandated an automatic machine recount of the ballots. The initial recount reduced Bush's lead to almost 300 votes. Once the absentee ballots were counted and added to the machine total, the official vote count gave Bush a 537-vote lead over Gore. The Supreme Court effectively certified this result with its decision in *Bush v. Gore*.

The absentee ballots had to be counted separately from Florida's machine recount because the ballot provided by the Department of Defense was not in the same format as Florida's and was not readable by the state of Florida's machines. Since the Department provides ballots for all fifty states and the ballot format varies between states, and even between counties within states, the Department's ballot was designed to be read by humans.

The differences between the absentee ballot administered by the Department of Defense and the State of Florida regulations led to many controversies during the recount and also in the court case heard in the Florida Supreme Court and the Supreme Court of the United States. Given the trend of military voters to favor Republican candidates due to their reputation for being strong on defense and national security issues, the Gore campaign had a vested interest in challenging as many ballots as possible. Democratic lawyer Mark Herron infamously authored a memo to Democratic members of canvassing boards on how to use the state's point-of-origin and postmark regulations on absentee ballots to successfully challenge military ballots and included the state's form for doing so.¹⁸ At the time, the Department of Defense's military post office did not postmark its mail with a point of origin and date stamp like that of the US Postal Service, upon which

¹⁸ Berke, Richard L.; "EXAMINING THE VOTE; Lieberman Put Democrats In Retreat on Military Vote" in *The New York Times*; 15 July 2001
<http://www.nytimes.com/2001/07/15/us/examining-the-vote-lieberman-put-democrats-in-retreat-on-military-vote.html?pagewanted=all> accessed January 5, 2010

the State of Florida's regulations were based. The practice of the Florida officials was to fill in the date the ballots arrived, themselves.

Using the directives of the Herron Memo, Democratic canvassers had successfully challenged over 2,400 military ballots until the controversy over the tactic of singling out ballots from members of the Armed services reached national attention. When questioned about the tactic on *Meet the Press*, Al Gore's own running mate, Senator Joseph Lieberman, disavowed the strategy and publicly exposed rifts within the campaign, stating, "If I was there, I would give the benefit of the doubt to ballots coming in from military personnel generally." He encouraged election officials in Florida to "go back and take another look." Mr. Lieberman said, "Al Gore and I don't want to ever be part of anything that would put an extra burden on the military personnel abroad who want to vote."¹⁹ When asked about the senator's remarks, the author of the strategy, Mark Herron, replied to *The New York Times*, "You don't like to see yourself barbecued on national television, especially by guys on your team."²⁰

The controversy over absentee ballots in 2000 informed the strategy of both the Democrats and the Republicans in 2004 and 2008. To avoid a repeat of the Florida mess, campaigns put more get-out-the-vote emphasis on early voting and mail-in ballots in states where it was available for those who would simply be absent or for some other

¹⁹ Berke; "EXAMINING THE VOTE; Lieberman Put Democrats In Retreat on Military Vote" 2001

²⁰ Ibid.

reason unable to participate on Election Day. As Corine Hegland noted in *National Journal*, the 2004 early and absentee get out the vote campaign made “Tuesday” 40 days long.²¹

Despite outspending the Republicans two to one on getting out early and absentee votes in the major battleground states, particularly Ohio, the Democrats lost the 2004 election. They would not, however, let the lesson be that those efforts were in vain. They put even more emphasis on the early and absentee vote in 2008, beginning with their own primary.

The Abroad Committee Comes of Age

This new emphasis on early and absentee voting presented a new set of challenges for get-out-the-vote campaigns. Hal Malchow argues early voters are easy as they were likely to vote even if they have to wait to Election Day, but since a campaign cannot guarantee when an absentee will make up their mind and send their ballot, it is harder to plan a communications strategy around those voters. They will likely make up their minds in September or early October, while campaign strategists usually emphasize their communications in the three weeks leading up to election day.²² These challenges to campaigns for domestic absentees are exponentially higher for overseas absentees.

²¹ Hegland, Corine; “When ‘Tuesday’ is 40 Days Long” Pp. 3042 – 3046 in *National Journal*; Vol. 36, No. 41 Autumn 2004; P. 3042

²² Malchow, Hal; “Strategies for Reaching Voters who Cast Ballots Early and by Mail” Pp. 36 – 41 in *Campaigns & Elections*; July 2004; P. 41

However, the parties already had a vehicle for those voters: the abroad committee. In 2008, they would reach their greatest influence to date.

The abroad committees have been around for decades, but they toiled in relative obscurity until the 2008 primaries. Democrats Abroad was founded in 1965 and is active in 160 countries with “country committees” in 48.²³ While only established in 1978, Republicans Abroad boasts 54 country chapters.²⁴ Both parties’ abroad committees have youth wings, Young Democrats Abroad and Young Republicans Abroad. Their chapters each have regular events and annual meetings. Their individual goals are to facilitate the voter registration and absentee ballots of expats abroad.

Continuing a trend which began in 2004, where Democrats outspent Republicans in getting out early and absentee votes by a 3 to 1 margin, the Democrats put an increased emphasis on the expatriate vote for the 2008 election beginning with the nomination process. Democrats Abroad had their own global primary where members could vote between February 5th and 12th by Internet, fax, or mail as well as in person at drop-in vote centers in 33 countries, with the results reported February 21st, 2008’s “Super Tuesday”. The Internet voting was facilitated by Everyone Counts, whose Chief Operating Officer,

²³ Democrats Abroad; *Country Committees* <http://www.democratsabroad.org/countries> accessed 29 June 2010

²⁴ Republicans Abroad; *Chapter List* http://www.republicansabroad.org/chapter_list.php accessed 29 June 2010

Paul DeGregorio, was ironically a Republican and former Chair of the Electoral

Assistance Commission.²⁵ The results of the Global Primary were:

- Biden 0.1%
- Clinton 32.7%
- Edwards 0.7%
- Kucinich 0.6%
- Obama 65.6%
- Richardson 0.1%
- Uncommitted 0.2%²⁶

They were also given voting delegates to the Democratic National Convention. The delegates were determined in a series of regional caucuses, culminating in a global convention in Vancouver, April 12th – 13th. While the group only had 22 delegates including 8 super delegates, a fraction of the required 2,026 delegates required to win, Democrats Abroad were given more delegates than the states of Wyoming, Alaska, and North Dakota.²⁷ In the close, competitive nomination race that occurred between Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama, the 22 delegates from Democrats Abroad might have had a pivotal role had the decision for the nomination been made, for the first time in decades, on the convention floor.

²⁵ Everyone Counts; *Paul DeGregorio – Chief of Elections*
http://www.everyonecounts.com/index.php/paul_degregorio accessed 29 June 2010

²⁶ Democrats Abroad; *Global Presidential Primary – Revised Results Report*, 21 February 2008
<http://www.democratsabroad.org/sites/default/files/DA%20Global%20Primary%20Results%20FINAL%20REVISED.pdf>; P. 1

²⁷ Drake, Laura; “‘Canadian’ contingent primed to shape U.S. election; Ex-pat Americans get more delegates than some states” in *the Ottawa Citizen* 4 February 2008
<http://ottawacitizen.com> accessed 4 February 2008

Even Canadian unions encouraged American expatriates in Canada to cast their ballots, albeit for the Democrats. The Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC), the union that represents civil servants in Canada's federal government as well as the northern territories, issued a notice to its members on September 8th, 2008, entitled *Voting Rights for dual or resident U.S. citizens*, which read, in total:

American citizens living in Canada can vote in U.S. elections. If you are a U.S. or dual (U.S./Canadian) citizen, you can vote in all Federal U.S. elections. The 2008 presidential election may be the most important one in decades. Exercise your right to vote! Just go to www.votefromabroad.org and follow the instructions to get your absentee ballot. At www.votefromabroad.org, you will need to choose your voting state, which is the last state where you lived. If you never lived in the U.S., but both or one of your parents are American citizens, then choose the state where they last lived. You will need U.S. ID: your state driver's license, if you still have it, and your U.S. social security number (last four digits only). Some states require your U.S. passport number.²⁸

The website to which PSAC's missive directed its members, www.votefromabroad.org, is owned and operated by Democrats Abroad. The "About" page begins:

This website is owned and operated by [Democrats Abroad](http://www.democratsabroad.org). Democrats Abroad is the official Democratic Party organization for the millions of Americans living outside the United States. We work to advance the principles of our Party by spreading the Democratic message to Americans

²⁸ Public Service Alliance of Canada; "Voting rights for dual or resident U.S. citizens" 8 September 2008 <http://www.psaac-afpc.org/news/2008/messages/20080908-e.shtml> accessed 29 June 2010

abroad and encouraging them to vote for Democratic candidates back home.²⁹

Instead of sending its US dual-citizen members to the United States' government aforementioned Federal Voter Assistance Program website, they sent their members to the Democrats' international get out the vote machine. Like the United States, public employees union leadership in Canada tilts leftward and, until changes to Canada's Elections Act came into effect for the 2004 fiscal year prohibiting corporate and union donations to political parties, institutionally donated to Canada's social democratic New Democratic Party. In the last year it could receive union donations, 2003, \$5.2 million came from unions while only \$4.8 million was from individuals.³⁰ The governing Liberal Party of Canada, by comparison, received a meager \$112,000 from unions.³¹

Despite the prohibition on union contributions, the institutional relationship between the major unions and the NDP is still active. Grassroots union members and even union locals have accused the leadership of the unions of pursuing NDP policies to the detriment of the membership.³² One goal of the NDP is to become closer to the

²⁹ Vote from Abroad.org; "About"

<http://www.votefromabroad.org/about.php?adid=KSCW8400038100700> accessed 29 June 2010

³⁰ Elections Canada; *Contributions to registered political parties, by donor category, Fiscal Period 2003*

<http://www.elections.ca/scripts/ecfiscals2/default.asp?L=E&Page=SummariesResult&FP=230&SS=2> accessed 29 June 2010

³¹ Ibid.

³² Deborah Gyapong; "A PSAC Local Wants PSAC to do What Unions Are Supposed to Do" on *Deborahgyapong.com* <http://deborahgyapong.blogspot.com/2008/07/psac-local-wants-psac-to-do-what-unions.html> accessed 29 June 2010

Democrats in the United States, an extension of their leader's desire to replace the Liberal Party of Canada as the main party of the centre-left in Canada. Their leader, Jack Layton, spoke at the Take Back America 2008 Conference, organized by the Campaign for America's Future, an organization that caters to the progressive wing of the Democratic Party, where he asserted common cause with then candidates Clinton and Obama, "I am here today to tell each and every one of you, and Senators Clinton and Obama that you have an ally in Canada to improve the labour (sic.) and environmental standards in the North America Free Trade Agreement."³³

Despite the cognitive dissonance of the leader of the fourth party in a national legislature claiming to speak for his entire country, the common cause rhetoric is part of a pattern. Michael Byers, university professor and former NDP candidate, openly argued the party should drop "New" from its name and establish a formal relationship with the US Democrats. A constitutional amendment was authored to that effect for its most recent annual general meeting, but time expired prior to a vote.³⁴ Layton also attended the Democrats' 2008 convention and has made several speeches and media appearances to insert himself in the US health care reform debate. It should not come as a surprise that an NDP ally like PSAC would contribute to the Democrats' get out the vote machine.

³³ Layton, M.P, Jack; *Jack Layton addresses Take Back America 2008* 17 March 2008 <http://www.ndp.ca/page/6279/print> accessed March 18, 2009

³⁴ Byers, Michael; "Dropping 48-year-old 'New' would help revitalize NDP" in *Toronto Star* 11 August 2009 <http://www.thestar.com/comment/article/679100> accessed 29 June 29, 2010

Absentee voters are now becoming part of the political discourse between elections, as well. The DNC has actively encouraged its supporters abroad to weigh in on health care reform, chiefly to explain their own experiences with public health care in the countries in which they are living. Since the long held tactic of anti-reform groups is to trot out someone who has had a negative experience at the hands of socialized medicine, typically a Canadian due to the proximity and relatability, and portray them as the norm, the Democrats have asked their members in Canada to share their own stories. Members of Democrats Abroad Canada are actively campaigning online via the blog *Health Care Stories from Americans in Canada*³⁵, the link for which can be found on Democrats Abroad Canada's website.³⁶ "If only Senator Lieberman had listened to a classmate now living here in Canada!" is a typical post:

Dear Senator,
I grew up in Stamford, CT but now live in Toronto. I still vote in CT elections as a Democrat abroad. Having lived under both systems of health care I can certainly vouch for our Canadian system. I have lived through cancer and can say that I not only got the best possible care here in Toronto but it cost me not one cent. On the other hand I have seen my father's last illnesses practically bankrupt my family in spite of their carrying health insurance. This has made my mother's old age more precarious and fraught with fear that she too would become ill and not be able to afford the necessary care. My brother has had a transplant. He can no longer get proper insurance because of that. What kind of government cares so little for the health of its people? I hope you will do the right thing-- as I remember you from our high school and our shul-- and support a public option. And at the end of the day we need a bill that will deliver

³⁵ Democrats Abroad Canada; *Health Care Stories from Americans in Canada* <http://healthcare.democratsabroad.ca/> accessed January 9, 2010

³⁶ Ibid

affordable, universal and accessible health care for all our
 U.S. citizens - not a filibuster to close down reforms.
 All the best to you and your family,
 GSR³⁷

Like most blogs, the posts range from pseudonymous to anonymous. The above was posted by an individual named “JYEE”, but some publicly identify themselves. The pattern is as follows: had disease/condition X, received great treatment, and did not pay for it. There is little mention of which level of government actually runs the system, the higher income and sales tax rates which generate the revenue to run the system, the difference in tort laws in Canada which prevent runaway malpractice awards, or that supplementary insurance from private providers is still required to cover dental and optical services as well as certain in-hospital services such as a semi-private room. No one ever accused anyone in a political debate of absolute honesty.

The PSAC missive and the involvement of Democrats Abroad go to the ethics of expatriates voting in a country of which they have chosen to permanently live outside. Despite having the franchise, should they exercise it? Should a recently retired university professor who holds a US passport but has not lived in the country since leaving for the University of Toronto during the Vietnam War be allowed to decide who should lead post-9/11 America? Should a party’s abroad committee have more convention votes than

³⁷ JYee; “If only Senator Lieberman had listened to a classmate now living here in Canada!” on *Health Care Stories from Americans in Canada*; 19 December 2009 <http://healthcare.democratsabroad.ca/2009/12/if-only-senator-lieberman-had-listened-to-a-classmate-now-living-here-in-canada.html> accessed January 9, 2010

some states? The domestic voter in the small state will have to live the consequence of his or her vote while the citizen abroad voter will not.

Barreto *et al.* argue there is little difference in the results between the votes cast via absentee ballots and the ones cast in polling places on Election Day. Their study focused on the 2003 gubernatorial recall election in California in which 2,775,785 absentee ballots were cast, representing about 30 percent of all votes cast. They found there were notable demographic differences between absentee voters and polling place voters. They tended to be older, more educated and from a higher socioeconomic status.³⁸

What Barreto *et al.* did not find in their surveys of absentee voters is a statistical difference between the results of the absentee balloters and polling place balloters. While there were a few skews when they broke down the results by demographic, the overall differences between absentee results and polling place results were insignificant. The recall of Governor Gray Davis was supported by 56 percent of absentee voters and 55.5 percent of polling place voters. With the recall successful, the question became whether or not there were differences between absentee and traditional voters in their preference for the candidates to replace Davis. Arnold Schwarzenegger was the favorite of both absentee and polling place voters, 46.6 percent to 49 percent. Bustamante received 33.2

³⁸ Matt A. Barreto; Matthew J. Streb; Mara Marks; Fernando Guerra; “Do Absentee Voters Differ from Polling Place Voters? New Evidence from California” Pp. 224 – 234 in *Public Opinion Quarterly*; Vol. 70, No. 2; Summer 2006; P. 226

percent of the absentee vote and 32 percent of the polling place vote while McLintock received 13.5 percent of the absentee vote and 13 percent of the polling place vote. Even using statewide ballot initiative Proposition 54, the so-called Racial Privacy Initiative, as a dependent variable showed no difference with both groups having the same preference in defeating the measure.³⁹

The problem with the Barreto study is two-fold. First, it did not make allowances for the differences between overseas absentee voters and absentee voters who used the absentee ballot as an early ballot. In their table on reasons for voting absentee, there is no entry for residing overseas:

Reasons Given for Absentee Voting in 2003 California Recall Election⁴⁰

Reason	Percentage
Ease/Convenience	37%
Hard to get around/Handicap	15%
Too busy	11%
Travelling	8%
Precinct not convenient	8%
I always vote absentee	7%
To get it over with	4%
Received ballot in mail	2%
Other	7%

Overseas absentee voters did not have a discrete category of analysis and were either included in another category or respondents who indicated they were overseas were lumped with “Other”, which only serves to skew the absentee results closer to the polling

³⁹ Barreto et al.; “Do Absentee Voters Differ from Polling Place Voters? New Evidence from California” 2006; P. 232

⁴⁰ Ibid.; P. 229; Source – California Absentee Voter Survey, 2003 (Loyola Marymount University 2003) *N*=300

place results. “Absentee” in this case really meant “early” as opposed to voters who would actually be absent from the state on Election Day.

Second, the study was the 2003 California gubernatorial recall election. While they were not formally in direct competition, the *de facto* main challenger to Gray Davis was Arnold Schwarzenegger, one of the biggest movie stars on the planet. Add to the equation that it was a special state election outside the usual national electoral calendar without even a primary to choose the candidates, and it quickly becomes a political event that is, at best, an outlier in political time, the observations from which should not be drawn to larger patterns.

Christakis and Fowler argue in *Connected* that we develop our political attitudes from our social networks, not just family, but friends, and friends of friends up to three degrees of separation from ourselves. Citing voting behavior studies, they argue that people tend to segregate themselves into like-minded groups. Therefore, the strongest social ties can be found between people who share the same interests. When people with ideological or class-based interests are not surrounded by like-minded individuals in their physical neighborhoods and workplaces, they have a tendency to withdraw and form relationships outside those environments. Christakis and Fowler highlight the Indianapolis Election Study which showed about two out of three friends had the same ideology as the respondent and extrapolate its results to argue the increased polarization

between Republican “red states” and Democrat “blue states” is due to the self-reinforcing nature of local social networks on a national scale.⁴¹

Using this logic, non-military citizen abroad voters are essentially outside American political social networks and are part of their own local social network. While they may still be in contact with friends and family back home, and may even keep up on US news online or through the local feed of CNN, their strongest social network is the one in which they are living. The citizen abroad voters are more likely to conform ideologically to their environs, their social networks rather than their origins. This would likely mean a large ideological difference between the citizen abroad voter and the domestic voter. Despite either candidate rarely polling outside the margin of error in the 2008 campaign, Gallup’s polling of 73 countries between May and October 2008 showed disproportionately favorable support among “world citizens” in the election for Barack Obama, in excess of 80% in some countries and 4 to 1 overall.⁴² John Kerry had a similar level of support outside the US in 2004.

Where domestic Democrats are likely to count among their friends mostly other Democrats and maybe a token Republican to keep themselves honest, the Democrat

⁴¹ Christakis, Nicholas A.; Fowler, James A.; *Connected: the Surprising Power of Our Social Networks and How They Shape Our Lives* (New York, NY: Little, Brown and Co., 2009); P. 185

⁴² Gallup; *World Citizens Prefer McCain Nearly 4 to 1*; 20 October 2008 <http://www.gallup.com/poll/111253/world-citizens-prefer-obama-mccain-nearly-4to1.aspx#1> accessed January 26, 2010

abroad is most likely to associate with social democrats, socialists, greens, and maybe a fellow expatriate Democrat. It would be these Euro-centric ideologies among the citizen abroad's social network that would be informing the vote more so than the network he or she grew up in. Given the broader ideological environment influencing the political opinion of the citizen abroad and combined with a lack of consequence of expressing that opinion through casting a ballot, the issue is, at best, murky.

Given the vast resources the Democrats poured into early and expatriate votes, it is a matter of interest if it actually did, in the end, matter. Since the expatriate voter would be casting a ballot without likely having to experience the consequences of that vote, it should be determined if that vote is significant before highlighting the ethics of casting the ballot. This is additionally important if these voters are then going to interject themselves, whether it is at the behest of their party or on their own initiative, into the political debate between elections, as the letter from Toronto's "GSR" to Joseph Lieberman demonstrates. GSR is a voter in Connecticut even though he lives in Toronto and wants *his* Senator in Washington, DC, to listen to his experiences with a foreign country's health care system. While GSR did not indicate how long he has been in Canada, he did not need to. His vote in Connecticut's election is his leverage over the Senator to take his opinion seriously. Whether the Senator takes his old high school friend seriously is up to the Senator; the fact that there is a vote at stake may be enough to convince him. If GSR and other citizens abroad are going to influence the politics of the country they left behind, is it going to make a difference, first, at the ballot box and,

second, in the policy debate? The short answer is: on the first issue, yes, on the second issue, it remains to be seen.

Even with the increased effort to get out the early and absentee vote, it is hard to say if the efforts the Democrats put into early and absentee votes resulted in Obama's victory. A full 25% of the 2008 vote was cast before Election Day.⁴³ In ten states, the majority of the ballots were cast before November 4th. Five of those ten, Colorado, Florida, Nevada, New Mexico, and North Carolina, were battleground states and two were the emerging battlegrounds of Georgia and Texas.⁴⁴ The Obama campaign's monetary advantage enabled it to invest heavily in get out the vote organization in states Republicans held previously. This resulted in wins in states like Virginia, North Carolina, Florida and Ohio.

Part of the difficulty in arguing with any certainty is that varying reporting methods by state election offices do not offer consistency from state to state. For example, while each state has a category for *absentee* voters, the term for *early* voters is not consistent across the states. Some states do not report the candidate or party vote breakdowns, but publish the demographic breakdown of early and absentee votes.

⁴³ Michael P. McDonald; "2008 Early Voting Statistics" on *United States Election Project* last updated 4 November 2008 http://elections.gmu.edu/early_vote_2008.html accessed January 21, 2010

⁴⁴ Chuck Todd; Sheldon Gawiser; Ana Maria Aruma; G. Evans Witt; *How Barack Obama Won: a State-by-State Guide to the Historic 2008 Presidential Election* (New York: Vintage Books, 2009); P. 27

From the data aggregated on Michael P. McDonald's *United States Election Project* website, there are positive signs it contributed to a handful of Obama's victories. In North Carolina, where Obama barely picked up the state from the Republicans, Obama outpolled McCain among the 2,623,838 early and absentees by 51.4% to 30%, far wider than the 0.03% margin of victory for the state recorded on Election Day. Of the total number of early and absentees, only 8.6% were mailed-in absentee ballots. That is still 225,651 absentee ballots.⁴⁵ Since the overall margin of victory for Obama was a mere 14,177 votes, which is 6.3% of the absentee ballots cast, it stands to reason, even if one follows the prevailing wisdom that three-quarters of any state's overseas absentees are military personnel who would vote for the Republican candidate, there were still enough Obama votes to give him the state and its 15 electoral college votes.

In Florida, 4,377,774 votes were cast before Election Day. Obama outpolled McCain in this state's early and absentees 45.6% to 37.3%. The percentage of absentees in this group was 39.7% or 1,737,977 votes in a state where the margin of victory was 236,450 votes or 13.6% of the absentee votes.⁴⁶ Obama only needed a handful of these votes to pick up Florida's 27 electoral votes.

⁴⁵ McDonald; "2008 Early Voting Statistics" 2008

⁴⁶ Ibid.

Given adequate time and resources, it should be possible to mine the raw data and determine with certainty if expatriate absentee votes meant the difference between winning or losing in the states Obama picked up despite Republican victories in 2004. The publicly available data contains too many variables and inconsistencies to draw such a broad conclusion. Ohio, for example, opened early voting stations almost a month before the campaign but classified those votes as *absentee* instead of *early* like other states. The result was that 81.8% of Ohio's 1,456,364 early and absentees were lumped in the same category as overseas ballots.

There is enough consistency in the publicly available data in some states to show that Obama was trending very favorable with the early and absentee vote in North Carolina and Florida, both of which he picked up from the Republicans with a margin of victory that was a small fraction of the absentee ballots casts. Even if McCain managed to win the absentee votes in those states, it was not by a margin large enough to prevent Obama from winning the state. Those two pickups alone represent 42 more votes in the Electoral College than John Kerry had in 2004 when he fell only four votes short of beating George W. Bush. Therefore, it can at least tentatively be said that the expatriate vote resulted in Obama's victory.

For campaigns, the ethics are clear: deliver every available vote and dollar for your candidate regardless of its location. Should the expatriate vote, however, be allowed to decide who leads a country in which the voter does not live? It is not without

precedent for a democratic country to restrict the voting rights of its citizens abroad.

Canada, for example, does not allow citizens to exercise their franchise if they have been outside the country for five or more consecutive years.⁴⁷ Five years, it should be noted, is also the constitutional limit a government can remain in power before the Governor-General would be forced to dissolve the House of Commons and call an election; five years is often used as a standard time-limit in Canada, with another example being the five-year limit on the invocation of the “notwithstanding” clause of the constitution.⁴⁸

The restriction was intended to prevent the election being determined by people who do not actually live in the country. The origin of the restriction was in the report of the *Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing*, popularly known as the Lortie Commission, after the Commission’s chair Pierre Lortie. At the time the commission was established in 1989, there was no mechanism in the *Elections Act* to allow Elections Canada to register overseas Canadians to vote who were private citizens, as opposed to government employees, members of the Canadian Forces or spouses of the same posted abroad. The Commission recommended amendments to the *Elections Act* to

⁴⁷Elections Canada, *Voting by Mail while Inside or Outside of Canada* http://www.elections.ca/content.asp?section=ins&dir=svr&document=int_step2_q4&lang=e&textonly=false accessed January 26, 2010. Note that this rule has exceptions for those serving abroad with the Canadian Forces, employees of the federal and provincial governments posted abroad, and Canadian citizens working with international organizations of which Canada is a member.

⁴⁸s. 33 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the “notwithstanding” clause, allows an act of Parliament or a provincial legislature deemed to be in violation of the Charter to operate for a maximum period of five years.

allow Canadians who were overseas residents to vote as long as they were qualified and had not voted in a foreign country's election since becoming a non-resident.⁴⁹

Lortie's recommendation did not include a defined time limit. That was introduced in the committee stage of Bill C-114, *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act*. Bill C-114 contained omnibus amendments to the *Canada Elections Act* to give legislative force to Lortie's recommendations. The members of the *ad hoc* special committee of the House of Commons that studied the bill was uncomfortable with going from non-resident, private citizen Canadians having no right to vote to an absolute, permanent right to vote. The compromise was the five-year limit; it was made over Lortie's objection, who argued the right to vote of a Canadian citizen living abroad should be no more restricted than a citizen who resides in Canada. It is unclear, however, if this restriction would survive a court challenge under the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

Given the natural rights basis of American citizens' voting rights, it is also unclear if any restriction short of a constitutional amendment would survive a US Supreme Court challenge. Writing on the analogous issue of dual resident voting, defined as casting a ballot both in a district where the elector owns property but does not live and in the district in which the elector does live, Ashira Pelman Ostrow argues laws restricting the

⁴⁹ Paul Lortie; *Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing* (Ottawa, ON: Government of Canada 1992); Recommendation 1.2.8

voter to his or her primary residence violate the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. Her logic applies to overseas votes, as well. When Congress' 1970 amendment to the Voting Rights Act which prohibited denying the presidential vote to any citizen for failure to comply with any state durational requirement was upheld, the Court based its decision on the constitutional right to interstate travel and on the enforcement clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. In *Dunn v. Blumstein*, the Supreme Court held unconstitutional the requirement for residents to have been *bona fide* residents of the state for a prescribed length of time before being granted the right to vote in state or local elections, unless they were necessary to satisfy a compelling state interest. Even preventing voter fraud and having a knowledgeable voter base was not considered sufficient justification to restrict the fundamental right to vote.⁵⁰ If prevention of voter fraud and promotion of a knowledgeable voter base are not considered sufficiently compelling interests for the state by the Supreme Court in restricting ballot access for people from neighboring states or districts within the state, the Court would likely reach a similar conclusion when it comes to restricting ballot access on the same grounds for people residing in other nation-states.

Finally, the primary beneficiaries of the overseas absentee vote now make up majorities in both Houses of Congress and reside in the White House. Do not expect

⁵⁰ Ashira Pelman Ostrow; "Dual Resident Voting: Traditional Disenfranchisement and Prospects for Change" Pp. 1954 – 1991 in *Columbia Law Review*; Vol. 102, No. 7; November 2002; P. 1954

measures restricting the accessibility of the citizens abroad voting rights to be forthcoming. Citizens abroad voting is here to stay.

Going to the International ATM

The 2008 election was the first electoral cycle in which presidential candidates actually campaigned abroad. While both campaigns denied they were campaigning abroad, both John McCain and Barack Obama toured Europe and the Middle East and gave speeches, although neither candidate mentioned the other in his speeches abroad. Both candidates held fundraisers at which it was explicitly noted that only expatriate US citizens could donate. Even Rudy Giuliani held an international fundraiser during his rather brief time as a candidate for the Republican nomination. John McCain made an additional trip abroad to Ottawa, Canada's capital, to give a speech on the importance of free trade at the same time that Obama was being criticized for his opposition to the North American Free Trade Agreement. Obama gave a speech in Berlin on the tail end of his own international tour. All this was done with the media in tow like any other campaign stop, just with much worse jet lag.

The 2008 campaign was notable for both the level of activity in trolling for both votes and money abroad. International fundraising is not new, and has often been controversial. It is illegal for political campaigns to accept foreign donations, which are basically defined as donations from a non-citizen of the United States or a foreign-owned entity, be it a corporation or foundation. American citizens living abroad, however, are

not considered “foreign”. The abroad committees regularly host their own fundraisers in the countries in which they operate, but those events raise funds for the party, not candidates. There is a general lack of literature on international fundraising or fundraising in general that does not concentrate on either someone’s violations of the rules or ethical norms or on the larger issue of campaign finance reform.

The level of candidate fundraising abroad in the most recent electoral cycle was notable. Between March 2007 and January 2008, Hillary Clinton, Rudy Giuliani, Fred Thompson, Rep. Dennis Kucinich, and Michelle Obama on behalf of her husband, had all travelled to London, England, for fundraising events.⁵¹ According to César Soriono writing in *Politics*, “With a population of more than 50,000 well-heeled Americans, London is like a big overseas ATM for our campaigns. More than half the money donated by expats to US presidential candidates in the first three quarters of 2007 came from Americans residing in the British capital.”⁵² As most of those who went abroad did so for economic and financial reasons most expatriates are considered to be economically well off. Even those who left for political reasons, such as the aforementioned draft dodgers, would be quite financially capable as most were in the upper middle class economic stratum. Many had enrolled in university to be allowed into the destination country prior to the declaration of various blanket asylums and amnesties.

⁵¹ Soriano, César G; “Jumping the Pond: Why the ’08 Hopefuls are Courting Expats Like Never Before” Pp. 34 & 35 in *Campaigns and Elections*; vol. 28, issue 1; January 2008; P. 34

⁵² Ibid.

The Obama campaign had a number of fundraisers in London. In addition to Michelle Obama's fundraising trip to London mentioned in Soriono's article, Obama 08 held a fundraiser during the primary period. Elizabeth Murdoch, daughter of News Corp. Chairman Rupert Murdoch, hosted a fundraiser for Democrat-leaning American expats in her London home on April 28th. A copy of the invitation can be found in the Appendix. The "event chairs" included actress Gwyneth Paltrow, who had made England her full-time home since marrying the lead singer of the British band Coldplay. One of the "event hosts" was David Blood, who, with Al Gore, runs an investment firm that specializes in environmentally sustainable companies.⁵³ The invitation indicates three levels of support: VIP - \$2,300 (the statutory maximum for the primaries), Regular - \$1,000, and top-up previous contributions to the \$2,300 maximum.⁵⁴ The invitation also indicates that only US citizens can contribute and requires a US passport number in the returned RSVP form.⁵⁵

London would also be the final destination on one of McCain's international tours after he had essentially sewn up the Republican nomination. Unlike his other stops in Iraq, Jordan, Israel and France, McCain not only met the country's head of government

⁵³ Luo, Michael; "Murdoch's Daughter Hosts Obama Fundraiser" in *The Caucus: the Politics and Government Blog of the Times*; 1 April 2008
<http://thecaucus.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/04/01/murdochs-daughter-hosts-obama-fund-raiser/> accessed January 12, 2010

⁵⁴ Appendix A

⁵⁵ Ibid.

with his fellow members of the Armed Services Committee, Lindsay Graham (R) and Joseph Lieberman (I), but also attended a \$1,000-a-plate luncheon fundraiser at Spencer House hosted by the Honourable Nathaniel Rothschild, a wealthy British financier whose family is the owner of the fundraiser's venue.⁵⁶ Once again, notices about the fundraiser indicated that only US citizens could contribute.

Campaigning Abroad for Votes at Home

The 2008 presumptive presidential candidates' international tours between when they secured their nominations and the conventions was the culmination of several factors including those in the preceding passages of this chapter. It was not the first time the candidates' campaigns had actually gone abroad. In previous campaigns, candidates' representatives, often a family member, were the public face of the candidate outside the United States. In 2004, Diana Kerry, the sister of then-Democratic nomination candidate John Kerry, addressed the Democrats Abroad caucuses in Edinburgh, Scotland, and during the general election hosted events in Mexico, France, London, and Canada. That same year, George Prescott Bush, the nephew of the incumbent president, spoke at Republicans Abroad events in Mexico, France, Germany and Switzerland, in support of his uncle's re-election campaign.⁵⁷ What made the 2008 election unique was the presumptive candidates themselves joined their proxies on the international stage.

⁵⁶ Mosk, Matthew; "Senator's Supporters Are Invited to Lunch with a Lord" *The Washington Post* 15 March 2008 P. A6

⁵⁷ Kevin Sullivan and Mary Jordan; "Signing Up a Remote Electorate for November" *The Washington Post* 19 July 2004 P. A1

McCain's trip abroad after eliminating the competition was about more than fundraising, although that was still of consequence for his campaign. McCain wanted to assert his foreign policy credentials at a time when Clinton and Obama were still fighting their fierce nomination battle. While experienced in foreign policy matters from his years on the Armed Services Committee, much of his political capital had become invested in Gen. David Petraeus' "surge" strategy to reverse the deteriorating security situation in Iraq. McCain had been an advocate of such a strategy almost a year prior to its development and became known as the "face of the surge". He, along with Senate colleague Joseph Lieberman, even went so far as to declare "the surge worked" in an op-ed in *The Wall Street Journal*.⁵⁸ With violence down, candidate McCain wanted to take some political credit.

Previous trips did not go so well. In touting the early successes of the surge in 2007, McCain made the claim during one such trip that he was now able to walk down certain streets in Baghdad without military protection.⁵⁹ He made this claim only to be photographed with flak vest and helmet along with, according to the *Think Progress* blog,

⁵⁸ McCain, John; Lieberman, Joseph; "The Surge Worked" P. A15 in *The Wall Street Journal*; 10 January 2008 <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB119992665423979631.html> accessed January 12, 2010

⁵⁹ Unaccredited; "McCain Says Americans Aren't Getting The Full Picture" on KWTX.com 1 April 2007 <http://www.kwtx.com/home/headlines/6817722.html> accessed January 12, 2010

“100 American soldiers, with three Blackhawk helicopters, and two Apache gunships overhead.”⁶⁰

A gaffe-free trip to Iraq would have been helpful, but McCain needed at the time to generate recognition of broader foreign policy credentials than those for which he was being given credit. Israel would provide a stop in a country that was on the front line of the “War on Terror” before there was a war on terror. Its largely Jewish population and the importance of the country to America’s Jewish population also represented a significant Democratic constituency, which Republicans have tried to dislodge for decades. Jordan was a majority Muslim country that was a productive peace partner with Israel. France, under the leadership of Jacques Chirac, actively attempted to prevent the United States’ invasion of Iraq at the United Nations. Now that Chirac had retired and been replaced by Nicholas Sarkozy, who was seen as more amenable to US policy in the region, McCain wanted to be the first presidential contender to meet with him. They had met the previous July, well before the primaries. Britain was one of the few major countries that was a contributor to both the missions in Afghanistan and Iraq and had a close relationship with the United States.

McCain made one last international visit before accepting the Republican nomination, the aforementioned trip to Ottawa. Unlike his previous trips, which were as

⁶⁰ Faiz Shakir; “McCain Strolls Through Baghdad Market, Accompanied By 100 Soldiers, 3 Blackhawks, 2 Apache Gunships” on *Thinkprogress.org* 1 April 2007 <http://thinkprogress.org/2007/04/01/mccain-iraq-stroll/> accessed January 12, 2010

a member of the Armed Services Committee with the campaign reimbursing the Treasury for the campaign-related travel during the trips, he was invited to speak to a luncheon of the Economic Club of Canada. It was open to the public, for \$100 a plate, and tickets sold out in 90 minutes. There was an invitation-only meet and greet reception beforehand, organized by Thomas D'Aquino of the Canadian Council of Chief Executives.⁶¹ It was not a campaign event *per se*, but it was certainly a campaign speech on a topic that would highlight a major difference between McCain and Obama: the importance of free trade and the benefits of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

The Obama campaign had made an issue of renegotiation of the labor and environmental agreements in NAFTA to differentiate Obama from Hillary Clinton during the primaries, particularly in the so-called “rust-belt” states like Ohio. Clinton’s husband, Bill Clinton, as president had ushered the ratification of NAFTA through the Senate during the first year of his presidency. He further liberalized United States trade policy by negotiating several additional bilateral free trade agreements; he signed and sought ratification of the World Trade Organization Treaty and made the favored-nation trading status with China permanent.

⁶¹ In the interest of disclosure, the author’s employer was invited to the reception. Due to commitments abroad, neither he nor the author could attend.

Environmentalists and organized labor, the latter of which was a major Democratic constituency in Ohio, opposed these agreements because the labor and environmental portions often did not apply to the less developed country, putting unionized manufacturing jobs in jeopardy as factories could be located in the country with lower labor and environmental standards without jeopardizing their access to the American market. With the manufacturing industry in Ohio suffering from foreign competition, the Obama campaign exploited the Clintons' history on free trade as a wedge issue by promising to renegotiate the agreement to make the labor and environmental provisions binding on Mexico. Obama's increasing popularity due to this issue forced Clinton to promise to renegotiate the agreement, as well.

Shortly before the primary, the Clinton campaign began spreading the story that one of Obama's economic advisors, Austen Goolsbee, was having conversations with the Canadian consulate in Chicago and was telling the staff that Obama's comments on NAFTA were politically motivated and would not become policy once elected. The Obama campaign denied it. When the Canadian media discovered this through an off-the-record conversation with the Prime Minister's Chief of Staff, Ian Brodie, during the media lock-up prior to the tabling of the federal budget and the memo to the Minister of Foreign Affairs from the Consul-General regarding the meeting was leaked, it very quickly became news in the United States. Bob Shrum, speaking on *Meet the Press*, accused Canada's Conservative government of campaigning for the Republicans,

“You’ve got a right-wing government in Canada that is trying to help the Republicans and is out there actively interfering in this campaign.”⁶²

Obama’s own campaign manager, David Plouffe, wrote recently on the matter, “We thought there might be some dirty tricks at play on the part of the conservative (sic.) government north of the border but brushed it off as a tempest in a teapot.”⁶³ The damage was done. Hillary Clinton won the Ohio primary with 54% to Obama’s 44%.

The NAFTA controversy was not the Obama campaign’s sole international adventure during the presidential campaign. Shortly after Hillary Clinton suspended her campaign thus making Obama the presumptive nominee, he went on an international tour of his own. The campaign had identified very early in their planning stages that Obama’s lack of foreign policy credentials would be a weakness. The Clinton campaign had made it an issue during the primaries, culminating in their infamous “3 a.m.” commercial that ran in Texas. The commercial’s narrator asked the voter who they wanted answering the phone in the White House when the phone was ringing at 3 a.m. because of some foreign crisis, superimposed with the image of a mother watching over her sleeping daughter late at night. Despite the actress playing the daughter coming forward as an Obama supporter, the footage having been filmed over a decade earlier for a security company,

⁶² CTV.ca News Staff; “Canada pulled into U.S. debate on NAFTA” on *CTV.ca* 3 March 2008 accessed March 3, 2008

⁶³ David Plouffe; *The Audacity to Win* (New York, NY: Viking Press, 2009); P. 195

Clinton won Texas by four points. Due to Texas' rules on how delegates are distributed, they split the delegate haul, 92 – 92.

Clinton could call Obama's credentials into question, but she could not stop him from winning the nomination. She suspended her campaign on June 6, 2008, thus preserving party unity by preventing a convention floor fight among the Democrats' "super delegates". This freed Obama to leave the country to work on the foreign policy weakness and blunt the natural advantage of the presumptive Republican nominee in this area, long-time member of the Armed Services Committee and Vietnam War veteran John McCain.

The campaign team had actually begun talking about a trip abroad as early as summer 2007.⁶⁴ According to Plouffe, such a trip would accomplish two equally important things, "It would show that Obama could operate effectively on the world stage and would also acutely demonstrate how this election would change the nature of our relationship with the rest of the world."⁶⁵ The campaign wanted to leave America to demonstrate to the American voter that Obama's lack of foreign policy experience would not be a detriment. Considering the international antipathy to the policies of George W. Bush, the Republican incumbent, lack of credentials might have been an asset on such a trip.

⁶⁴ Plouffe; *The Audacity to Win* 2009; P. 271

⁶⁵ Ibid.

The itinerary was purely political: Iraq, including a meeting with General David Petraeus, to demonstrate his commitment to bringing US troops home within sixteen months of being elected; Afghanistan, to show his commitment to completing that mission;⁶⁶ Israel to demonstrate his commitment to the Jewish state and demonstrate his intention to play a leading role in Middle East peace; Germany to meet with Angela Merkel, a Bush ally, and hold a public event; and Britain to do a quick meeting with Gordon Brown. Obama insisted late in the planning stages on adding a meeting with President Sarkozy in France to the itinerary because he was worried that passing over the country during the campaign would later be perceived as a slight if he was elected president and already frosty relations between the two might start off on the wrong foot.⁶⁷

Left unwritten in most accounts is that Obama's trip was almost identical to McCain's March itinerary. The major differences between the two were no stop in Jordan, a stop in Germany, and a public event during the trip. Plouffe states Berlin, Germany, was chosen as the scene for the public event because:

... we thought Berlin would mean more to people. Germany was perceived as less socialist than France and a less reliable ally than Britain; our relationship, while strong, had weathered recent ups and downs. In a rare

⁶⁶ Like McCain's trip, the Iraq and Afghanistan portions were conducted in his capacity as Senator and member of the Foreign Relations Committee, with fellow Senators Jack Reed and Republican Chuck Hagel in tow. As such, no campaign staff or resources could be used for that portion of the trip and the candidate was staffed by employees from his Senate office.

⁶⁷ Plouffe; *The Audacity to Win* 2009; P. 272

instance, we did not poll this. We based our decision on gut and instinct.⁶⁸

Timing worked well for the campaign in more ways than one. It was originally timed politically to get real news coverage, as opposed to simple pundit chatter, that would reach voters before they mentally checked out of political news in the dog days of summer.⁶⁹ With the primaries over, the media could join the tour, thus allowing the campaign to get some earned media out of the trip. With the Democrats still fighting among themselves for the nomination in March, very little press travelled with McCain. With the primaries over, a far larger contingent travelled with Obama. McCain aide Mark Salter grouched to a *Newsweek* staffer about the media virtually ignoring his candidates' March tour, "McCain goes to Iraq – they make fun of him. Obama goes to Europe – three anchors and 200 other reporters go to chronicle the history-making Save America's Reputation Tour."⁷⁰

McCain had been punished for going on his tour while the more interesting story for the media was at home. As Caesar et al. argue, though, the McCain camp had only itself to blame. McCain's March trip and his frequent criticism of Obama for ignoring the situation in Iraq had served to create a wedge on the issue between the two. McCain

⁶⁸ Plouffe; *The Audacity to Win* 2009; P. 273

⁶⁹ Ibid.; P. 272

⁷⁰ Evan Thomas et al.; *A Long Time Coming: the Inspiring, Combative 2008 Campaign and the Historic Election of Barack Obama* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2009); P. 85

had even dared Obama to make a visit, which seemed like a good idea at the time. It looked quite different when Obama essentially accepted the dare by going.⁷¹

For the Obama campaign, they had a brief window between Clinton's concession and late July, the peak of the summer season, to fit in an international tour with media coverage for the voters back home before the electorate checked out. For Americans not involved in politics, which would be the vast majority of the population, summer is vacations, sports, cottages, barbeques, and, coincidentally on presidential election years, summer Olympic games; not election campaigns.

Timing had hurt the Democrats in 2004. Although they held their convention in July, the traditional time for such events, it was completely forgotten by the time the Republicans held their convention in September. That was mere days after the American public had finished watching two weeks of the US Olympic Team competing in the Athens games. As the conventions have become more a formality and political pageant, networks have scaled back their coverage. As networks have scaled back their coverage, Americans have tuned out.

The timing of the conventions also affected the Democrats financially. Under the election rules, the party's general election period for public campaign financing began

⁷¹ James W. Ceaser; Andrew E. Busch; John J. Pitney, Jr.; *Epic Journey: the 2008 Elections and American Politics* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2009); P. 137

once the candidate accepted the nomination. That meant the Kerry campaign had to make their \$75 million in public financing last for three months, while the Bush campaign had just two months to spend the same amount.⁷² Having forgone public campaign financing, timing was not an issue on the financial side of the equation. Their party having already scheduled the convention for after the Olympics, a successful public event for Obama in a foreign country was the last political image many Americans saw before they checked back into political news in the fall of 2008, when both parties held their conventions.

Timing would unexpectedly come in handy at the beginning of the tour. After the first day of Obama's tour, when the images being beamed back to American audiences were of Obama playing basketball with troops in Iraq and taking a helicopter tour of the country with General Petraeus that some press had captioned "Senator Bad-Ass", John McCain was attending a fundraiser in the northeast United States and paying a visit to former president George H.W. Bush in Kennebunkport, Maine, where he was photographed in a golf cart in country club attire. The contrast could not have been clearer: Obama is new, young, and strong; McCain is establishment, old and weak.⁷³

To make the trip more business-like, less campaign-like and to portray himself as presidential, Obama also had a series of high-level meetings with heads of state and

⁷² Altshuler, Bruce E.; "Scheduling the Party Conventions" Pp. 660 – 669 in *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 36, No. 4; December 2006; P. 663

⁷³ Plouffe; *The Audacity to Win* 2009; P. 278

heads of government at each stop in the tour. In Iraq, he scored a minor coup when Prime Minister Nouri Al-Maliki seemingly endorsed his plan to withdraw US troops from the country over a 16-month period. This provided him valuable political cover against McCain's charges the policy would risk defeating the military's efforts. The meetings with European leaders went very well, with well-covered, gaffe-free press conferences that succeeded in portraying Obama as presidential.⁷⁴ The exception came when the President of France, Nicholas Sarkozy, was so effusive in his praise and seeming endorsement of Obama that the campaign felt it was embarrassing. It created some blowback in the American press, portraying Obama as Europe and France's candidate.⁷⁵

The Obama campaign clearly recognized the importance of stagecraft. The choice of location for the speech in Berlin was as important for the campaign as the speech itself. As Michael Deaver, White House Deputy Chief of Staff under President Ronald Reagan, was once quoted, "...what's around the head is just as important as the head."⁷⁶ The original choice of location was the Brandenburg Gate to evoke the image of John F. Kennedy speaking there in front of the Berlin Wall in his famous *Ich bin ein Berliner* speech. There was concern within the campaign that the differences between a president speaking during the Cold War and a presidential candidate speaking during

⁷⁴ Ceasar et al.; *Epic Journey: the 2008 Elections and American Politics* 2008; P. 137

⁷⁵ Plouffe; *The Audacity to Win* 2009; P. 277

⁷⁶ Bumiller, Elisabeth; "Keepers of the Bush Image Lift Stagecraft to New Heights" Pp. A1 & A2 in *The New York Times*; vol. CLII, no. 52; 16 May 2003; P. A20

peacetime would make that location too much of an issue. Instead, the speech was held at the Victory Column in Tiergarten Park.

The speech in Berlin provided the brilliant television moment intended. Over two hundred thousand people showed up in Tiergarten Park, Berlin. According to Plouffe, “The scene was breathtaking. Obama strode onto the stage looking out into the historic Berlin streets, and a mass of humanity waving American flags hung on his every word. The hunger for new American leadership was palpable.”⁷⁷ Lost on all involved was that the candidate gave a speech to Germans on joining a military effort in front of a tribute to 19th century German militarism. The image that mattered was the crowd of flag-waving Europeans showing Americans they were eagerly awaiting Obama’s election.

McCain, to contrast, visited a German restaurant in Columbus, Ohio, Schmidt’s Restaurant und Sausage Haus. Banking on the Tip O’Neill adage, “all politics is local” and local voters would be resentful of Obama’s international adoration, McCain had a series of events in the battleground state of Ohio beginning the day of Obama’s speech in Germany. McCain’s Ohio events were a series of small events in restaurants, coffee shops, and Kiwanis clubs which culminated in a rally at the famous Sturgis Motorcycle Rally where he received a standing ovation when he mocked Obama’s Germany visit,

⁷⁷ Plouffe; *The Audacity to Win* 2009; P. 278

“As you know, not long ago a couple hundred thousand Berliners made a lot of noise for my opponent. I’ll take the roar of fifty-thousand Harleys any day.”⁷⁸

The tour was viewed by the campaign itself as a success, but it was not without its controversies. The press reported that Obama cancelled a visit with wounded soldiers who were recovering at the US Army base in Landstuhl, Germany, when the campaign was told by the Department of Defense that regulations permitted him as a United States Senator to visit, but those regulations would not permit campaign staff and media cameras to accompany the candidate.⁷⁹ An early passage of the Berlin speech created another controversy when he introduced himself: “Tonight, I speak to you not as a candidate for president, but as a citizen – a proud citizen of the United States, and a *fellow citizen of the world*” (emphasis author’s). The latter phrase was considered too post-national for some commentators.⁸⁰

There is some debate, however, as to whether the tour had much of an impact. For the campaign team, controversies aside, the tour resonated with the voting public. The tour in general and the speech in particular became a piece of the mental puzzle in convincing the swing voter Obama could handle the presidency. Plouffe argues:

According to our research, the campaign itself increasingly became a touchstone for people when describing how they were wrestling with the experience issue. In focus groups,

⁷⁸ Ceaser et al.; *Epic Journey: the 2008 Elections and American Politics* 2008; P. 138

⁷⁹ Martin; 2008

⁸⁰ Plouffe; *The Audacity to Win* 2009; P. 278

we heard more and more voters saying, “Well, he might not have been an executive or been in Washington long, but he seems to run a hell of a campaign and doesn’t play it safe. Beating Hillary Clinton, giving a speech in Berlin, travelling around the world. All that should mean something.”⁸¹

Journalist Chuck Todd, in summarizing the election campaign for his book *How Barack Obama Won*, would call the speech “a scene that seemed to leave much of this country awestruck by Obama’s worldwide popularity.”⁸² Todd would also say the speech unofficially began the general election campaign.⁸³ For the campaign team, there were two audiences in Berlin. The local audience was a mere set piece. The audience that truly mattered was an ocean away. They liked what they saw.

The counter-argument to the tour’s success is that, despite the good press, positive results did not actually show up in polling. The McCain campaign quickly countered with their “Celeb” advertisement. The 30-second spot used footage of the speech, calling Obama “the world’s biggest celebrity” and comparing him to pop singer Britney Spears and Paris Hilton, both of whose public exploits belong in tabloid magazines and not scholarship, while questioning his readiness to actually lead on a number of issues.⁸⁴ The advertisement was derided by the press and punditry, and elicited a video response

⁸¹ Plouffe; *The Audacity to Win* 2009; P. 279

⁸² Todd; Gawiser; 2009; P. 18

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ JohnMcCaindotcom “Celeb” July 30, 2008

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oHXYsw_ZDXg accessed January 24, 2010

from Hilton herself, in which she referred to McCain as a “wrinkly white haired dude”.⁸⁵ The McCain advertisement that followed the next day, “The One”, was even derided as racist for using “codewords” that would create the image of Obama as the antichrist to southern whites.⁸⁶ As Caesar, Busch and Pitney show in *Epic Journey*, the tour was not as universally hailed amongst the voting public as it was in the media. While 35 percent of those polled expressed a favorable opinion about the trip, 39 percent expressed no opinion at all and 29 percent expressed a negative opinion.⁸⁷ Obama and McCain ended the month virtually tied in the national tracking polls, 45% to 44%. For this side, the tour was a great television moment but it had little to no immediate effect on the results of the campaign.

Presidential contenders can no more predict how the world will behave than a meteorologist can guarantee the accuracy of weather forecasts. World affairs intruded on the US presidential election would once more in the summer of 2008. On August 7, Russia invaded the former Soviet republic of Georgia in what was the climax to a long dispute over the break-away Georgian territories of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. McCain acted swiftly to the news in a way which highlighted his foreign policy experience by calling Georgian President Saakashvili to make clear America’s solidarity

⁸⁵ Paris Hilton; “Paris Hilton Responds to McCain Ad” on *Funnyordie.com*; 1 August 2008 <http://www.funnyordie.com/videos/64ad536a6d/paris-hilton-responds-to-mccain-ad-from-paris-hilton-adam-ghost-panther-mckay-and-chris-henchy> accessed 24 January 2010

⁸⁶ Caesar et al.; *Epic Journey: the 2008 Elections and American Politics* 2008; P. 138

⁸⁷ Caesar et al.; *Epic Journey: the 2008 Elections and American Politics* 2008; P. 138; quoting <http://www.gallup.com/poll/109159/Month-Graphs.aspx>

with Georgia. His response also highlighted his long-standing suspicion of Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, of whom McCain once said, “I looked into his eyes and saw a ‘K’, a ‘G’, and a ‘B’.”⁸⁸ Obama, on the other hand, issued a statement to the press from Hawaii, where he was on vacation and preparing for the Democratic National Convention, which was roundly criticized for being timid and weak. While it may have given McCain a slight advantage, the invasion of Georgia did not strike the electorate as a major event. It was also overshadowed, in part, by the Beijing Olympics, which dominated the news from August 8th until 24th.⁸⁹

Conclusion – The National Campaign has Gone International

Every citizen of the United States of America has the right to vote.⁹⁰ They have the right to vote even if they do not actually live in the United States of America. Since few countries force their immigrants to renounce their original citizenship to acquire citizenship in their new country and United States law is silent on the matter for its citizens who acquire additional citizenship, they may even have the right to vote while being a citizen of another country.

Although Americans living abroad can vote, there is the question of whether they should vote or whether they should even be able to vote. Federal employees and US

⁸⁸ Ibid.; P. 139

⁸⁹ Caesar et al.; *Epic Journey: the 2008 Elections and American Politics* 2008; P. 139

⁹⁰ While the right to vote is considered fundamental in the United States, some states have laws removing convicted felons from the state’s voter registration roles.

servicemen and women, along with their families, who have been posted overseas are one issue. They are absent from the United States during the election only because of their service to the government. They should not be denied their say in the government simply because they chose to serve it and most of these government postings are also of temporary duration. However, since they are allowed to vote, it is understandable that all those temporarily outside the United States during an election year who are not government employees, such as students and even professionals who have recently left the country, would also be allowed to continue to exercise their franchise.

What of the one million plus professionals who have taken up *de facto* permanent residence or maybe even citizenship in a foreign country? There is little research specifically on the voting behavior of absentee balloters as it compares traditional ballot box voters and what little there is is problematic. Part of the problem is the inconsistent recording of absentee ballots from state to state. Another problem is faulty research design by the principal investigators, as they failed to differentiate between absentee votes cast as *de facto* early ballots and absentee ballots cast by voters who do not actually live in the state. Behavioral research on social networks, however, suggests the longer a citizen stays abroad and builds a social network in the destination country the more that citizen replicates the political opinions of his or her surroundings instead of his or her origins. According to the law at present, that citizen with the foreign-formed political opinion still has the right to vote.

Do not expect this to change anytime soon. While it is not uncommon for Western democracies to restrict the right to vote to their citizens who reside in the country and those only temporarily absent from the country, it is unlikely such a statutory change would be successful. The United States Supreme Court has already ruled that neither the prevention of voter fraud nor having a knowledgeable voter base are sufficiently compelling reasons to allow for restrictions on the fundamental right of a citizen to vote. With such a precedent, a constitutional amendment would be the only viable method of imposing such a restriction.

Another concern is that of a double standard. With several states having laws that automatically remove citizens from their state's voter registration roles upon being convicted of a criminal offense, US citizens who reside permanently abroad actually have more rights than US citizens living in America who, by virtue of their conviction disqualifying them from admittance to another country, are permanently restricted to their home country. With the primary beneficiaries of the citizens abroad vote now occupying the positions necessary to put forward such a restriction, there is no reason to expect a proposal to correct this imbalance to be forthcoming.

While the ethics of casting a ballot in an election in which one will not be materially affected are murky, for a candidate running for election the message is clear: there are votes to be had outside the United States. There is also a tremendous amount of money available for the fundraisers. Most citizens abroad, save for servicemen and

women, government employees and students, left for economic reasons, such as work, and remained abroad for a combination of economic and personal reasons. The income of Americans living abroad is typically higher than those in the United States. They have to be able afford the foreign cost of living and income taxes which pay for their comparatively generous social safety nets, after all.

The 2008 campaign saw that international resource tapped like never before. Since the 2000 debacle in Florida where a few hundred votes in one state decided the fate of the election for the entire country highlighted the importance of absentee voters, the major political parties began investing heavily in early and absentee voting. Despite outspending the Republicans on such votes in Ohio in 2004, the Democrats conceded the state the day after the election as tracking showed the majority of the absentees would actually be US servicemen, who would likely have cast ballots for the Republican incumbent.

Heavy emphasis was placed on absentee votes in 2008 not only in the general election, but in the primary process as well. The Democrats gave their abroad committee an increased role, from simply facilitating Democrat voter registration and ballots of expatriates for primaries in their home states to having their own primary and delegates to the national convention. While they did not get enough delegates to actually decide the nominee and the nomination was decided the old fashioned way, through attrition, the Democrats Abroad, and international votes in general, gained a new prominence in the

election campaign. It will take until 2012, when the next primary season begins, to see if this becomes permanent.

In all likelihood, Democrats Abroad will continue their rise in prominence within their party. As campaigns become increasingly expensive, campaign fundraisers have gone to well-heeled citizens abroad to supplement their domestic fundraising. Almost every major candidate in both parties held at least one fundraiser outside the United States. Additionally, the abroad committees raise money for the party. Eventually, Republican expatriate donors will want the same level of access and prestige as their Democratic contemporaries. The Republicans also need to play catch-up on their get-out-the-vote organization for early voting, a trend that according to Todd and Gawiser is increasing in US elections, not decreasing.⁹¹

The abroad committees are of particular importance to the issue of the transnational activity of American political parties. They represent a major and institutional transnational activity of political parties. These committees are permanent organs of their respective parties dedicated to engaging their voter bases abroad, as do many European parties and their diaspora voters. While the committees do not engage with other parties *per se*, their activities are transnational nonetheless.

⁹¹ Todd; Gawiser; *How Barack Obama Won: a State-by-State Guide to the Historic 2008 Presidential Election* 2009; P. 27

Another international aspect of the 2008 election of note is the candidates' world tours. While both the presumptive nominees went on their own international tours to demonstrate their foreign policy credentials to swing voters, it is far from certain this will be repeated in 2012. Despite the media success of Obama's tour, McCain quickly neutralized it with his "celebrity" commercial which reduced Obama's immediate gains by half and by the time voters went to the polls the economy had supplanted foreign policy issues as the number one issue.⁹² As if to once again highlight the argument from Holsti's *Foreign Affairs and Public Opinion* and even Plouffe's argument regarding the timing of Obama's tour, the Russian invasion of Georgia a mere week later in the summer served to highlight McCain's attributes but also caused nary a blip in the polls as the issue was supplanted by the Olympic Games.

As parties increasingly troll for votes and funds abroad, the ethics as well as the laws regarding overseas voting will have to be sorted out. Since federal law is largely silent on the actual qualifications for voting, officially deferring to the rules of the last state an overseas voter resided in prior to leaving the country, as long as voters were qualified to vote before leaving the United States, they can vote in an election in a state they have neither lived in for years nor plan to ever live there again. Given the absentee vote in two states that Barack Obama "picked up" from the Republicans in 2008 which gave him the necessary Electoral College votes to win the election should he also retain

⁹² Todd; Gawiser; *How Barack Obama Won: a State-by-State Guide to the Historic 2008 Presidential Election* 2009; Pp. 18 & 45; Most important issue (total): Economy – 63%, Iraq – 10%, Terrorism – 9%, Health Care – 9%, Energy 7%

the states Kerry won in 2004, the combined early and absentee vote heavily favored Obama and Democrats. The disproportionate amount of support Obama enjoyed abroad was reflected in expatriate ballots and it could reasonably be inferred that the election may have been ultimately decided by overseas ballots cast by people who do not, and do not plan to, actually live in the United States of America during the mandate of the president for whom they voted.

Chapter 5 - Party Foundations and Party Internationals

Previous chapters have examined the barriers to transnational political activity, how political consultants operate outside the barriers, and how American political parties have worked within the barriers to informally campaign abroad. This chapter looks at two related sets of organizations: the political foundations established by the National Endowment for Democracy, namely the International Republican Institute and the National Democratic Institute, and the international party organizations, the International Democratic Union and Liberal International. These organizations are being dealt with in the same chapter, as opposed to separate ones, due to their common point of origin. Three of the organizations listed above as well as American involvement in the fourth all stem from US President Ronald Reagan's 1982 speech to the British parliament. The speech resulted in nothing less than opening another front in the Cold War against the Soviet Union.

It is difficult to explain the Soviet influence on political parties abroad without sounding like Aldo Ray's gruff Master Sergeant Muldoon from the John Wayne film *the Green Berets* who explains to a skeptical journalist why it is America's interest to be in Vietnam by dumping captured ordinance and munitions from Soviet-bloc countries on his lap. The Soviet Union exerted direct control over many communist and socialist parties on both sides of the Iron Curtain. Control was often exerted in the form of funding. Party workers abroad were paid by Moscow. In return, party workers often served as spies.

When Igor Gouzenko, a cipher clerk at the Soviet Union's embassy to Canada in Ottawa, defected with documents detailing a massive North American spy network operated by the GRU (the Soviet military intelligence service), many members of communist parties and civil servants in Canada and the United States were implicated. Among them was Fred Rose, Member of Parliament for Cartier and Leader of the Labour Progressive Party, known prior to its being outlawed during World War II as the Communist Party of Canada.¹ Marxist parties in Latin America, Africa, and Asia enjoyed Soviet assistance and where these parties could not gain democratic support, they often enjoyed military assistance, too.

¹ CBC Digital Archives; *The Gouzenko Affair* 2009
http://archives.cbc.ca/war_conflict/national_security/topics/72-176/

It was to counter this influence that Reagan issued his call for western-style political parties to become more international in their outlook and work abroad to help build democratic party systems based on common belief in the rule of law, individual freedom, representative democracy and market economics. The objective of this act of political entrepreneurship was:

to foster the infrastructure of democracy, the system of a free press, unions, political parties, universities, which allows a people to choose their own way to develop their own culture, to reconcile their own differences through peaceful means.²

As stated in previous chapters, this touched off a flurry of activity. In *FY84/85 State Department Authorization Act (H.R. 2915)*, Congress created the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) and allocated an annual budget of \$31.3 million. The six goals of the organization, as included in the legislation were:

- encouraging democratic institutions through private sector initiatives;
- facilitating exchanges between private sector groups (particularly the four proposed Institutes) and democratic groups abroad;
- promoting nongovernmental participation in democratic training programs;
- strengthening democratic electoral processes abroad in cooperation with indigenous democratic forces;
- fostering cooperation between American private sector groups and those abroad "dedicated to the cultural values, institutions, and organizations of democratic pluralism;"
- and encouraging democratic development consistent with the interests of both the U.S. and the groups receiving assistance.³

² Reagan; "Address to Members of the British Parliament; June 8, 1982" 1982

³ Lowe; *Idea to Reality: A Brief History of the National Endowment for Democracy* 2008

The organization is the successor to democracy assistance that was often provided by covert means by the Central Intelligence Agency and also succeeded where previous attempts to create similar organizations had failed, such as Congressman Dante Fascell's April, 1967, bill to create an Institute of International Affairs and Congressmen Fascell and Donald Fraser's 1978 proposal for a "QUANGO" (quasi-autonomous non-governmental organization) to be called the Institute for Human Rights and Freedom.⁴

The terms of reference permitted private sector affiliate institutes: one for labour, one for business, and one each for the two political parties. The bill set aside funds for the Free Trade Union Institute, an affiliate of the AFL-CIO incorporated in 1978 that would serve as labor's affiliated institute. Soon after the establishment of the NED, the remaining three institutes were created: the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE), an affiliate of the US Chamber of Commerce; the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), representative of the Democratic Party; and the National Republican Institute for International Affairs (now formally the International Republican Institute or "IRI"), representative of the Republican Party. All the affiliates and institutes were established as non-profit organizations under s. 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

The party institutes, in particular, were based on the party foundations found in the Federal Republic of Germany (popularly known then as "West Germany"), called the

⁴ Ibid.

Stiftungen. Some of these party foundations were established in the early 20th century, but were banned by the Nazis when they outlawed all political parties save their own. They were re-established in the post-war era. With the generous public subsidies of the German party system, these foundations not only developed their political education and research functions within the Federal Republic, but also soon became active in international political projects. The Social Democrats were the early pioneers in this activity, using money given to their Ebert Foundation by the German foreign ministry for its work with the organization of anti-Communist trade union in Latin America, ORIT.⁵

West Germany created its ministry for overseas development, *Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit* (BMZ) in 1961 and began to allocate public funds to political foundations on a regular basis in 1962 for projects in developing countries officially characterized as “socio-political education” and support for “social structures”. The foundations also received smaller grants from the foreign ministry (*Auswärtiges Amt*), for “international activities in industrialized countries.”⁶

Michael Pinto-Duschinsky argues there were specific reasons why this model was particularly attractive for West German authorities to conduct some of their most sensitive overseas aid operations through party foundations. West Germany’s Hallstein

⁵ Pinto-Duschinsky, Michael; “Foreign Political Aid: The German Political Foundations and Their US Counterparts” Pp. 33-63 in *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)*, Vol. 67, No. 1; January 1991; P. 33

⁶ Ibid.; p. 34

Doctrine linked their diplomatic relations to foreign countries' refusal to recognize East Germany. Accordingly, they felt compelled to counteract Communist influence abroad, particularly in the Third World. At a time when memories of the Nazi era were still fresh, payments were thought to be more acceptable if they came in the name of political parties rather than the German government. The system of West German payments to foreign political organizations had the general approval of the United States. Foremost, it permitted the Federal Republic to become a force in world politics at a time when it was literally on the frontline of the Cold War without raising alarms.⁷

As Pinto-Duschinsky stated, the model of political foundations making payments to foreign political organizations had the general approval of the United States. They so approved of the model it is safe to say that once the political will existed to do something similar, they copied them wholesale. However, there are some significant differences. Where the German political foundations were initiatives of their respective political parties and were founded during a formative time in the German government, allowing the government to outsource much of its nascent development activities to the foundations, the American political institutes were relative latecomers and were squeezed into a crowded field of pre-existing agencies and programmes.

The US foundations are part of a larger framework, the National Endowment for Democracy, which in turn competes for funding with four labor institutes of the

⁷ Ibid.

International Department of the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations, the Agency for International Development's Human Rights and Democratic Initiatives Program (responsible for grants under section II6(e) of the *Foreign Assistance Act of 1978*), and the Democracy Program for Latin America, which is administered by the Agency for International Development's Latin America and Caribbean bureau.

The German foundations, by contrast, are mostly autonomous from government. The German foundations also receive significantly more funding from the public treasury. According to Pinto-Duschinsky, the German government's funding for the foundation's international projects in 1988 was equivalent to \$170 million dollars. The overall cost of the United States' political aid programmes in that year was \$100 million. Of that amount, the National Endowment for Democracy managed between 20 and 25% and, in turn, awarded their party foundations, a mere \$1.8 million.⁸

Even though the institutes were designed to receive their funding directly through NED, the annual contribution is not enough to pay staff at their respective Washington, DC, headquarters plus the more than 800 employees worldwide. The majority of their annual budget comes from grants to run their programmes, with funding coming from the U.S. State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development. They also

⁸ Pinto-Duschinsky; "Foreign Political Aid: The German Political Foundations and Their US Counterparts" 1991; Pp. 34 & 47

share costs by partnering with other countries' departments. NDI lists several foreign governments and foreign government agencies as "donors".⁹ While their non-profit status allows them to solicit private donations, private donations only amount to 0.15% of the annual budget for the IRI.¹⁰ From the more extensive list of non-government donors listed in NDI's annual reports, one could infer they receive more in private donations, but it is doubtful that it is much more.

Despite the funding discrepancy, there are abundant structural similarities. Both are legally distinct entities from the political parties and are not permitted to pass money to a party. As stated previously, the American institutes are registered as non-profits under s. 501(c)(3) of the *Internal Revenue Code* and, as a consequence, are formally non-partisan entities. The reality for both German foundations and American institutes is they are firmly connected with a party. They draw much of their staff from the party elite and from former members of the party's government administrations.

Both the German foundations and the American institutes are governed by boards that include some of the most senior leaders within their parties. Their chairs are also usually top party figures. The Chairman of the International Republican Institute is John McCain, Senator and the 2008 Republican nominee for President. Their board includes

⁹ National Democratic Institute; *Who Supports Our Work* http://ndi.org/who_supports_our_work accessed November 13, 2009

¹⁰ International Republican Institute; *Frequently Asked Questions* <http://iri.org/frequently-asked-questions> accessed November 13, 2009

David Dreier, sitting Republican Member of the House of Representatives; Ambassador L. Paul Bremer, III, Presidential Envoy to Iraq under President George W. Bush; and Lawrence S. Eagleburger, Secretary of State under President George H.W. Bush.¹¹

Similarly, the Chair of the National Democratic Institute is Madeleine Albright, Secretary of State under President Clinton, and a board that includes Tom Daschle, former Senator; Geraldine Ferraro, 1984 Democratic Vice-Presidential candidate; and Donna Brazile, 2000 presidential campaign manager for Al Gore. The NDI also has a “Senior Advisory Committee” that includes a number of Democratic notables, among them Bill Bradley, Mario Cuomo, Christopher Dodd, and Michael Dukakis.¹²

Despite the tightrope created by the legal implications of the non-profit status under the Internal Revenue Code and the domination of partisans in the administrative positions, the institutes today take a non-partisan approach as dictated by law. This author spoke with Elizabeth Dugan, then Vice-President of Programs for the International Republican Institute and the organization’s contact person with the International Democratic Union, on the history of the institute and its contemporary activities. She was quick to begin by mentioning there is no formal affiliation with the Republican National Committee and such formal partisan affiliation would be illegal under s. 501(c)(3) of the *Internal Revenue Code*. Formally, the institute is the proverbial “RINO”

¹¹International Republican Institute; *Learn More About IRI – Board of Directors* <http://iri.org/learn-more-about-iri/board-directors-and-officers> accessed November 12, 2009

¹² National Democratic Institute; *Board of Directors* http://ndi.org/board_of_directors accessed November 12, 2009

– Republican In Name Only. This author asked why separate institutes were created if the law forces both organizations to be non-partisan. Surely a single institute with the same amount of funding as the two institutes combined would operate with lower overhead expenses and be more efficient. She replied, “It’s probably an apocryphal explanation, but the people who ushered the legislation through Congress probably thought it would go through easier if Republicans and Democrats each had separate institutes.”¹³

The formal non-partisanship is more a prohibition against taking political sides in domestic politics. Abroad, the institutes do have to make a choice as to which parties they will work with. While the IRI often works with center-right parties in developing countries, it does not exclusively work with them, either. In many countries where the IRI is working, however, the party systems are so nascent that ideological alignments have not taken root. Developing democracies tend to have multiple political parties with overlapping ideologies. They also tend to be regional and local. Not only have the ideological alignments not taken root, the coalescence into national political parties has not yet happened.

The work of the institutes is mostly that of institution building and technical assistance. The technical assistance offered by the institutes focus on five key areas:

¹³ Elizabeth Dugan; personal interview with author; (Washington, DC: 14 November 2008)

- Building party organization,
- Recruiting party activists,
- Supporting candidates in their campaigns for office,
- Building vibrant civil society by supporting the growth of the non-governmental organization (NGO) community, and
- Encouraging electoral and democratic reforms.

The focus on these areas is premised on the idea that competitive political parties are one of the cornerstones of democracy. Political parties perpetuate the competition of ideas that is necessary for a competitive system. Parties also provide a vehicle to facilitate the democratic process of elections and perpetuate the legitimacy of the electoral system.

Shortly after the founding of the NED and the institutes in 1983, they began their work, first, in Latin America and the Caribbean. It was felt at the time those regions had the best hope for early success. The region was known for being run by a variety of military juntas, Soviet or Cuban-backed Marxists, and a few weak democracies perpetually on the verge of overthrow by either the former or the latter. The geographic proximity of the region makes its stability a national security issue for the United States. As such, the US government historically found itself often supporting the former when the alternative was the latter. To paraphrase Jeanne Kirkpatrick, if the choice was between an authoritarian and a totalitarian, the US chose the authoritarian. The perpetual problem for US policy on this front is the glaring contradiction with its own values. The Soviets had no such problem; Marx prescribed dictatorship as the means to usher in his communist utopia. The support of strongmen, thugs and mass murderers to the Soviets was not a necessary evil, it was just necessary.

Latin America presented the most pressing need and the greatest opportunity for success. The weak democracies were weak for a variety of reasons. Many had only recently been de-colonized in the 1960s and 70s. Some empires, notably the British, were better at leaving viable governing institutions and parliamentary democracies behind than others, notably the French and Spanish. Geographic proximity to both the United States and Soviet-ally Cuba made the governments in the region little more than pawns in the Cold War geopolitical chessboard. With no cultural history of democracy in post-imperial Latin America, the population valued strong, effective leadership over democratic participation if they could not have both. This made them prime targets for both Marxist and non-Marxist military regimes. Since the non-Marxist military regimes in the region were ultimately supported by the United States, the US government had the necessary political and economic leverage to transition those countries from dictatorship to democracy. The work of the institutes would lay the groundwork to make those democratic transitions permanent.

In those early years, they quickly discovered what they could and could not do. They could not expect to find mature political parties with firm ideological cleavages. They had to define success in minimal terms and values in the broadest sense.

While the institutes have often been criticized as exporters of US-style republican democracy, Ms. Dugan stated:

We couldn't if we tried. We tailor our programs to the local needs, politics, and culture. The local population needs to invest in these new institutions and parties. We discovered quickly they won't invest if they feel it's something alien being imposed from above. They don't want to cast off one form of colonialism to have it replaced by another. If the concept of democracy is going to have real value for developing systems, it has to be a shared value among its participants. They have to buy into it. We, though, in our programming need to keep the competition of ideas a central value. Local partners will always say 'it's different here' about their country so we found it worked best to flatter by making them the architects of their own vision. As they say, you know who is susceptible to flattery? Men, women and children. If we could just add water and stir, we would all be rich and IRI wouldn't exist.¹⁴

It is ironic that these institutions may prove to be more valuable than ever after winning the Cold War, rather than in winning it. With the fall of the Soviet Union and their Communist proxies abroad, there were many countries in need of assistance in their individual transitions to democracy. The work of the institutes has since expanded to South America, Africa, and Eastern Europe. Ms. Dugan remarked, "We're in the Balkans, but not the Baltics."¹⁵ The institute has worked in over 100 countries and currently has programmes in 65 countries. The programmes they are currently working on include developing new models of governance and political training to give parties the tools required to govern effectively on their first day in office. They are also running programmes to develop the civil society and the non-governmental organization

¹⁴ Dugan; personal interview with author 2008

¹⁵ Ibid.

community that highlights their responsibility within the system, as well as programmes to aide in the development of private, free media.¹⁶

To highlight the urgency of the work these institutes do, one need only look at Belarus. A former Soviet republic, it is surrounded on three sides by countries where these institutes are quite active: Ukraine, Poland, Latvia, and Lithuania. The fourth side, sharing part of its north and its entire eastern border, is Russia. Despite declaring its independence in 1991, the leadership was quickly dominated by recalcitrant holdovers from the Soviet era. Alexander Lukashenko was elected president in 1994 and has been known for his Soviet-era policies and for rewriting the constitution to eliminate the limits on his term of office.¹⁷

Another creation stemming from Reagan's speech to the British Parliament is the International Democratic Union (IDU). The IDU is an international party organization, or party international, similar to older internationals like Liberal International, Socialist International, or the Christian Democrat and People's Parties International (now the Centrist Democrat International). The IDU, however, is a forum of political parties of the center-right which includes conservative, Christian Democrat, and liberal-conservative.¹⁸

¹⁶ Dugan; personal interview with author 2008

¹⁷ BBC News "Profile: Alexander Lukashenko" on BBC News
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/3882843.stm> accessed November 13, 2009

¹⁸ Centrist Democrat International and the International Democratic Union have overlapping memberships as many Christian Democrat parties are members of both organizations. CDI is known to be historically more specific to spreading the principles

At the time of our interview, Ms. Dugan was serving in a dual capacity as both the IRI's and the RNC's contact person with the IDU. This provided the opportunity to discuss the current state of the relationship between the party international and the American party. Ms. Dugan reported that it was on the upswing. There was a decline in relations during the 1990s as many Republicans were worried the organization was becoming a "glorified talk shop". Meetings became more about talking about politics than doing politics, "There would be a meeting to talk about writing a white (policy) paper on a subject. A meeting to talk about who would write the paper. A meeting to write the paper. A meeting to edit the paper. A meeting to launch the paper."¹⁹

During this period, it was decided that personnel at IRI would "keep the homefires burning" and IRI's contact for the IDU would serve the dual role of representing both it and the RNC. Since IRI was doing international work anyway, this seemed like a good fit. As it exposed her to the broader membership of the IDU and increased the contacts she could make for her work at IRI, Ms. Dugan felt it was a mutually beneficial relationship.²⁰

of Christian Democracy. The organization is thought to be more centrist and communitarian in its political outlook.

¹⁹ Dugan; personal interview with author 2008

²⁰ Ibid.

The relationship began to turn around in 2005. John Howard, then Prime Minister of Australia, was elected Chair and immediately began to refocus the organization toward a more proactive stance. Howard used his close relationship with Republican president George W. Bush to forge a closer relationship with the Republicans and encourage greater participation by American conservative partisans.

Another one of Howard's priorities was to encourage member parties to expand their value systems to allow for a broader range of parties to become members. Democracy promotion activities exploded. The IDU launched a number of election training programs for senior member parties to share their knowledge with younger, developing members. They hold a meeting of candidates and campaign managers from member parties twice a year. These meetings often involve exchanges of information on campaign technology, fund-raising techniques, opinion polling, advertising and campaign organization. Unlike the democracy promotion work done by the IRI, which often but not exclusively works with like-minded parties, the IDU's work is exclusively in service of its mission to "exchange policy ideas, assist each other to win the political argument, and to win elections"²¹ for its members, like-minded center-right parties.

The IRI and Ms. Dugan have welcomed the growth of the democracy promotion conducted by the IDU, "I can remember when it was just a couple of German foundations

²¹ International Democratic Union; "History" <http://idu.org/history.aspx>

like Adennauer and Hanns Seidel along with the (British) Westminster Foundation.”²²

As the contact for both the IRI and the RNC, she has used her involvement to increase the IRI’s collaboration with other like-minded parties and organizations both as partners and collaborators as well as clients for IRI’s programs. She believes that John Howard’s tenure as Chair of IDU has steered the organization toward being more practice oriented.

Getting the RNC more involved since its involvement declined during the 1990s has been difficult. As discussed in Chapter 2, as a political party the RNC is primarily dedicated to four main activities: gain seats in legislative branch, win presidency, retain incumbents in both branches, and host its quadrennial convention. Along with their domestic focus, the laws regulating the financing of political parties also prevent them from participating to the fullest extent of their intentions. The previously mentioned, the McCain-Feingold campaign finance reform act prevents money raised by the RNC from leaving the country. Due to this prohibition, both the RNC and IRI need to have bank accounts which are separate and independent from their main accounts to pay their IDU dues.

Despite the relative lack of involvement of the RNC, the Republicans have always been central to the organization even in the waning years. The IDU holds a major event every four years to coincide with the Republicans’ quadrennial convention. The last event at the 2008 convention at Minneapolis-St. Paul attracted over 140 participants.

²² Dugan; personal interview with author 2008

However, the RNC's involvement is increasing. The party had appointed a dedicated volunteer, Marilyn Ware, as its own representative to stay in contact with the IDU. Ms. Ware is the former US Ambassador to Finland, having served as head of mission to that country from 2006 until 2008. Ambassador Ware served as sponsor and host for the aforementioned IDU event at the 2008 Republican National Convention in Minneapolis-St. Paul. She organized the Young Leaders Forum held in Washington October 18th to 21st, 2009. The event attracted close to 60 participants from 30 IDU member parties and countries.²³ Ambassador Ware has also become the organization's deputy treasurer.²⁴

According to Ms. Dugan, the RNC once again sees the benefits of having friends around the globe. She felt the trickle-down effect of the Bush administration rhetoric during the lead-up to the invasion of Iraq, particularly the so-called "cowboy" rhetoric of the "with us or the terrorists" and "old Europe versus new" lines. These had the effect of alienating the American government from its traditional European allies. There was also a negative impact on the cooperation between the American institutes and their foreign partners and American partisans involved in IDU activities. Republicans are now using the IDU as a vehicle to help repair their relations with like-minded parties in allied countries, particularly those where the like-minded partisans are part of their home

²³ IDU UPDATE - 30 October 2009

http://idu.org/contentdoc/IDU_UPDATE_091030.pdf

²⁴ International Democratic Union; "Officers" <http://idu.org/officers.aspx>

government. Ms. Dugan now counts the Republicans as one of the most active members of the IDU and one which is firmly committed to John Howard's vision.

With modern technology, Ms. Dugan believes it is easier to maintain relationships made at the various international fora but also thinks the ability of technology to preserve the relationships made abroad is rather limited. In many of the countries where the IRI is active, Internet access ranges from limited to non-existent. If it is available at all, it is often heavily controlled by the government. Even telephone access can be limited. The only way to properly maintain relationships is to be physically present. Ms. Dugan believes that the RNC must be careful not to fall back into the habit of taking relationships for granted.

On the conservative/Republican side, it was readily apparent that the relationship is quite healthy. This author took advantage of his Conservative Party of Canada membership to attend the International Youth Democratic Union Freedom Forum, which was held in Washington, DC, from June 25th to 28th, 2009. The IYDU Secretary based in London organized the event, hosted by the College Republicans and held at the Heritage Foundation, save for a reception at the inconveniently named "Loser's Lounge" room at the Capital Hill Lounge and a tour of Congress.

The event brought participants from the College Republicans in the United States as well as the conservative and center-right parties of the United Kingdom, Finland,

Sweden, Russia, Germany, Romania, Australia, New Zealand, Italy, Denmark, and Mozambique. While there were several registered participants from Canada, this author ended up being the only one who made it to the event. Between the time the event was announced and the time the event commenced, the center-right provincial party in Ontario, the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party, scheduled its convention to choose a new leader for the same weekend. As a result, the other Canadian registrants had to cancel.

With the exception of the opening address from Phillip Dunne, a British Member of Parliament and the Conservative's lead person on the subject of international outreach, the schedule of the first day read like an exercise in American exceptionalism. Save for a few sessions, most were distinctly American in focus, albeit aimed at an international audience. Drs. Joseph Antos from the American Enterprise Institute and Robert Moffatt from the University of Maryland provided an overview of the health care system in the United States. They argued the mix of government expenditures in the form of subsidies to employers to provide health insurance, Medicare for seniors, Medicaid for underprivileged children, and block grants to private hospitals to compensate for uninsured Americans seeking service, created a system which is an inefficient mess. Stephen Moore from the *Wall Street Journal* spoke about the prospects for economic recovery under President Obama. It will come as no surprise to those familiar with Mr. Moore's work at the *Journal* and his former organization, the Club for Growth, that he thought those prospects were dim. Christopher Horner of the Competitive Enterprise

Institute and author of *Red Hot Lies: How Global Warming Alarmists Use Threats, Fraud and Deception to Keep you Misinformed* offered evidence to counter the view of the global warming activists in the environmental movement and highlighted case studies where dissenting views on global warming and climate change were suppressed.

Carlos Gutierrez, who served as Commerce Secretary under President George W. Bush, also spoke in defense of the United States' Cuba embargo policy. As Cuba was a vacation destination for many non-American participants, this ended up being one of the more contentious presentations. The discussion centered on the relative merits of the US embargo versus the constructive engagement being conducted with other communist countries, such as China.

The presentations on the second day were more explicitly for the international audience, Grover Norquist from Americans for Tax Reform spoke about political coalitions, specifically the difference between the coalitions of the center-right and center-left. He argued that the defining characteristic of the groups that make up the center-right coalition is “on their signature issues – the issue that drives their vote – they all want the same thing from government: to be left alone.”²⁵ Gun owners do not want to be treated as criminals. Parents do not want to be forced to send their kids to dilapidated schools where they will be force-fed the state curriculum. The key to the success of the

²⁵ Norquist, Grover; *Leave Us Alone: Getting the Government's Hands Off Our Money, Our Guns, Our Lives* (New York, NY: Harper Collins, 2008)

conservative coalition, to Norquist, is that everyone sticks to their signature issue and does not force it onto coalition partners.

The example Norquist used was how the movement to preserve school prayer in public schools became the school choice movement. By broadening from the narrow goal of preserving prayer in school, which was a losing battle in an increasingly secular and multicultural society, to school choice, parents looking to protect their children's values found common cause with previously liberal parents whose children were on the wrong end of the Warren court's decision on school busing. These liberals, now fitting Irving Kristol's definition of a conservative as "a liberal mugged by reality", were in favor of inner-city students being bussed to their suburban schools until their children came home with the notice that they were being bussed into dilapidated inner-city schools. They could further broaden their base by including the home school movement, parents who were educating their children at home rather than in a public or private school. By making the issue about "choice" rather than "prayer" those concerned with the latter were still represented because they were ultimately seeking to choose schools with prayer. This resulted in formidable numbers who were united by the belief that the government would not let them choose what is best for their children. Creating a political coalition from historically opposed elements was instructive.

Jonah Goldberg from National Review Online spoke on the topic that was the focus of his most recent book entitled *Liberal Fascism*. He argues fascism both

historically and presently is a product of the political left, having originated as an insult by the international socialists, the Bolsheviks in the Soviet Union, to the national socialists in countries like Italy and Germany. It remains an insult by the extreme left to anyone not as left as them.

It was prior to these sessions that the real political networks were being built. First, Manda Zand-Erwin, the head of Alliance for Iranian Women, updated the Forum on the work of pro-democracy dissidents in Iran in the wake of the recent election and crackdown by security forces. Zand-Erwin worked for the government of Iran under the Shah and fled when the revolution installed the Ayatollah Khomeini. She heads an organization based in the United States that supports women's rights in her former home.

Second, there were updates on the IYDU's freedom campaigns. A Member of Parliament from Mozambique spoke about the need for solidarity in dealing with the Mugabe regime in Zimbabwe. He was also using the Forum to build contacts within the center-right political foundation and think-tank community with an eye to establishing one in his home country. When he mentioned this to Grover Norquist later in the day, he was given the contact information of an associate working in Kenya to build up the non-government organization community in Africa.

Eliecer Consuegra Rivas, a recently exiled youth activist from Cuba, conducted the freedom campaign for Cuba update with translation provided by Aramis L. Perez.

Consuegra Rivas detailed human rights abuses by the Castro regime and called for worldwide solidarity with pro-democracy dissidents. He thanked those from countries who had opened their embassies to dissidents to use the Internet, which the regime has banned. He also provided participants who could travel to Cuba, non-US citizens, with concrete ways they could help dissidents. These included bringing extra memory cards for digital cameras to give to dissidents who work in the resorts, who would in turn smuggle the cards out loaded with photos documenting the regime's abuses. Flash memory, otherwise known as thumb drives, would be considered helpful. He also offered to connect travelers with the families of the imprisoned and disappeared dissidents so they could take their stories back to the free world.

Third, the organization was updated on the progress being made on planning their study trip to Lebanon, originally to be conducted in January 2010 but later moved to April 15th to 18th. The study trip would serve as a fact-finding mission on the Lebanese political scene as well as providing an opportunity to meet with the Lebanese Forces Student Association. The LFSA is the youth wing of the Lebanese Forces political party, the only Christian-based center-right Lebanese party dedicated to free market economics. The goal of visiting the LFSA is to learn more about the present-day situation in Lebanon and the Middle East, and to hear about how conservative and Christian values are being implemented politically in Lebanon. The organization found this especially interesting since Lebanese politics is plagued by the extremist left-wing Muslim political party Hezbollah. The law in many western countries considers Hezbollah to be a terrorist

organization, one which has been known to frequently mobilize its private militia to control the country when political measures do not suffice to meet its ends.

While on the surface much of the event was profoundly American in content and tone, there was an underlying theme from start to finish: here is what we are doing, take it home to your country to counter the leftists you face. Ironically, the least useful presentation was one of the more informative ones – the healthcare presentation. While it provided convincing arguments that US healthcare is a confusing mess with a mixture of private and public elements in need of reform, the presenters had no prescription for reform and prescription for reform was not the goal of the presentation. Information about the questions on healthcare currently before the American people which were decided one way or the other decades ago was not particularly helpful for the non-Americans in the audience; for them, the debate on healthcare reform outside the US is usually of the “who (national vs. provincial/state government) pays how much for what” variety.

The Forum was also a productive networking session. As is common at such events, some of the most interesting and useful discussions occurred outside the formal sessions. The Member of Parliament from Mozambique, who was setting up a centre-right think tank in his home country, was able to obtain from Grover Norquist the contact information of a colleague who was doing similar work in Kenya. The Cubans suggested concrete ways non-American tourists to the country could help dissenters by bringing

flash memory drives and memory cards for digital cameras as well as meeting with the families of political prisoners. The planned study trip to Lebanon showed the group is actively seeking to further its network of like-minded, center-right political parties.

One could argue the Freedom Forum shows that both the International Democratic Union and the International Young Democratic Union are transmitters of specifically American center-right or conservative values, as opposed to more generally western or global political values and ideas of center-right politics. Such an argument ignores the antecedents, namely that the IDU and IYDU were specifically founded to build a network of like-minded parties in other countries to counter Soviet-backed Marxist parties. Like-minded parties on the center-right end of the spectrum encompassed founding parties whose beliefs were congruent with those of leaders such as Ronald Reagan, Margaret Thatcher, Helmut Kohl, and Brian Mulroney. Like a fishing net, it was designed to be cast outward and gather large numbers. In that regard, it has been a success growing to over 80 members in the IDU and 100 members in the IYDU, with some countries' parties having more than one youth group and often a separate wing for associations at post-secondary institutions, representing countries on every habitable continent.

The Democrats seemed much less inclined to participate in similar international party networks. Where the Republicans are full members of IDU, the DNC is not a member of the counterpart organization, Liberal International. The National Democratic

Institute is a member at the level of “co-operating organization” and the Young Democrats of America are full members of the youth wing, International Federation of Liberal Youth. As speculated earlier, the DNC lack of engagement in Liberal International relative to the RNC’s and IRI’s involvement in the IDU may, in part, be because the IDU is a new organization and very much a part of the legacy of Ronald Reagan. Liberal International, having been founded in 1947, is much older. It spent its formative years in the postwar years before the ideological movements in the United States had coalesced into particular parties. For most of the organization’s first twenty years, an American liberal was as likely to be a Republican as a Democrat.

There is no real lack of ideological fit between the Democrats and Liberal International. It is not that the organization is too far leftward in its orientation. Liberal International casts itself as an organization of classical liberals in the vein of John Stuart Mill. The group’s founding values contained in the Oxford Manifesto of 1947 are not far off the values of Franklin D. Roosevelt-era Democrats and contain several passages that are nearly identical to Roosevelt and Churchill’s Atlantic Charter. The problem lies in the ideological breadth of Liberal International, today, which puts American Democrats into the more conservative wing of the organization’s ideological spectrum. As the organization grew both in numbers and left-leaning orientation, social and collectivist liberal parties joined the organization. Subsequent declarations and manifestos moved it more to the European left than the American center. Its youth federation only recently removed the word “radical” from its name (though the “R” remains in its official

abbreviation). Today it not only claims John Stuart Mill as one of its foundational thinkers but also David Ricardo, who believed in the abolition of private property and was a direct influence on the work of Karl Marx.

There is also the fact that Liberal International is organized as a federation. As a federation, members must adhere to the organization's manifestos. While there is much in the various Liberal International manifestos that Democrats would find agreeable, there are some contentious items that could lose votes at home. For example, in its most recent manifesto to commemorate the 50th anniversary, the Oxford Manifesto of 1997, the federation committed member parties to, among other things:

- abolish capital punishment all over the world;
- redirect public spending from military expenditure towards investment in social capital, sustainability, and the alleviation of poverty;
- limit the sale of arms, and to prevent the sale of the means of repression to non-democratic regimes, and to promote the effectiveness of the UN register of conventional arms;²⁶

While there are sure to be allowances as to how members adhere to the manifestos, outright adherence to the 1997 manifesto by US Democrats would lead them to be further accused by Republicans of being soft on crime and weak on national defense. Democrats have often gone to great lengths to counter these accusations. Then-Governor of Arkansas Bill Clinton left the presidential primary campaign trail to witness an execution.

²⁶Liberal International; *Oxford Manifesto 1997 The Liberal Agenda for the 21st Century: The Liberal Manifesto, adopted by the 48th Congress of Liberal International on 27-30 November 1997 in The Town Hall in Oxford, UK 27-30 November 1997*
http://www.liberal-international.org/editorial.asp?ia_id=537 accessed November 3, 2009

In 2004, Democrats nominated Vietnam War veteran John Kerry to counter the wartime leader image of George W. Bush.

The organization does not seem to be as well organized as its conservative counterpart or even its liberal youth federation. Its website is woefully out of date, having not updated the section on the annual Isaiah Berlin Lecture since 2003.²⁷ There is a large picture of the late Senator Edward M. Kennedy on the entry for the 2001 lecture *Liberty, Pluralism and Politics*. The lecture, however, was given by Charles Kennedy, Member of Parliament in the British House of Commons and then Leader of the Liberal Democrats.²⁸ There is a link to the 2009 lecture given by Michael Ignatieff, Member of Parliament and Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition in the House of Commons, Parliament of Canada, in the "Human Rights" section.²⁹ The link takes you to the text of the speech which is actually hosted on the website of the Liberal Party of Canada.³⁰ The pictures from the Ignatieff lecture are also hosted externally, on the free photograph-sharing website Flickr.³¹ The photos are primarily of the organization's leadership,

²⁷Liberal International; *The Isaiah Berlin Lecture* http://www.liberal-international.org/showChildrenOnly.asp?ia_id=521 accessed November 3, 2009

²⁸Ibid

²⁹Liberal International; *Pictures from the 2009 IB Lecture featuring the Michael Ignatieff now available!* http://www.liberal-international.org/editorial.asp?ia_id=1827 accessed November 3, 2009

³⁰Michael Ignatieff; *Liberal Values in Tough Times* (Isaiah Berlin Lecture: London, UK) 8 July 2009 http://www.liberal.ca/en/michael-ignatieff/speeches/16008_isaiah-berlin-lecture-liberal-values-in-tough-times accessed November 3, 2009

³¹<http://www.flickr.com/photos/40416683@N05/>

British Lords dressed in black tie, the type of crowd that would make many American politicians blanch.

The section of the Liberal International website for its Annual Congress has this year's Congress in Cairo, but is missing previous ones. There is not one entry in the organization's online calendar; both the Isaiah Berlin Lecture and the Congress in Cairo are absent. From outward appearances, Liberal International has become the sort of "talk shop" Elizabeth Dugan worried the International Democratic Union would become.

Is Liberal International in the shape it is in because of the lack of involvement of American Democrats relative to Republicans involvement in the IDU? There is certainly not the same level of investment by the parties in their like-minded organizations. It is difficult, however, to establish a causal connection. Since interview requests to the NDI have thus far been unanswered, it is impossible to come to an objective conclusion. One can only infer.

Many have recognized that Americans were provincial in their mindset. They saw no reason to leave the country for any reason, neither for business nor vacation. The vastness of the country and its geographical diversity, combined with the comparatively primitive modes of travel available in the early part of the twentieth century, gave Americans little reason to travel abroad. Much of what the world offered was closer to home. Those who lived in Chicago and wanted to escape the winter could travel to

Florida or California more easily than to the Caribbean. Puerto Rico, to this day, emphasizes in its tourism promotions the lack of a passport requirement for travel to the US protectorate. For those looking to do the opposite and go on a winter holiday, the ski resort towns of Colorado, Wyoming and New England are much closer than the Alps. The world also came to America. Not having an imperial history, even arguably having an anti-imperial history, made America an attractive destination for immigration and education. The lack of need to travel and the large volume of immigration combined with the anti-imperialist ideology discussed in Chapter 2 led to a provincial mindset in which native-born Americans did not feel the need to travel beyond their borders. To experience Chinese culture, people travelled to their city's Chinatown district, not Beijing.

That world ended with World War II. Americans do not and cannot live in that semi-idyllic past anymore. Neither can or do American political parties, but it took them much longer to go abroad. As the immediate post-war consensus deteriorated and gave way to the Cold War, America's interests became global. The Marshall Plan tied the American economy to the global economy. While the American military strategic, economic, and political interests were now global, American political parties' interests were still local. Elizabeth Dugan referred to this as the "what of it?" stage of American political parties. American political parties were aware of other like-minded parties outside the United States and their activities, for better and for worse on the world scene, but did not do anything about it.

In the final stage of the Cold War, the presidency of Ronald Reagan, American political parties finally started to act on the world stage. Doing so was not a natural act but rather was a conscious act of will, that of President Reagan's. His speech to the British Parliament in 1982 was the turning point between several failed attempts to replicate the German *Stiftungen* foundations and a comprehensive, if ultimately underfunded, plan to open up another front in the Cold War: the ballot box. The Reagan administration provided the necessary impetus to create the National Endowment for Democracy and its subsidiary institutes, one for each political party, which would serve the same function as the German foundations.

The parties also joined party internationals, organizations of like-minded parties that are typically the nexus of individual trans-national party movements. For the Democrats, the National Endowment for Democracy institute representing their party, the National Democratic Institute, joined Liberal International. In the case of the Republicans, being outside the traditional ideologies of the traditional trans-nationals forced them to find like-minded centre-parties like the British Conservative Party, the German Christian Democratic Union, the French National Party and the Canadian Progressive Conservative Party and create their own international for parties of the centre-right, the International Democratic Union.

While participation has waxed and waned over the years, these institutes and the party internationals have become durable institutions that have allowed American parties to convey their ideas abroad. Generational and technological changes have seemingly led to change within the parties. As successive generations take positions within the parties, a deeper appreciation of the global scene is leading to greater appreciation of opportunities for American partisans to liaise with like-minded parties.

The advent of the Internet, e-mail, and, most recently, social networking websites have made it easier to keep in touch with like-minded co-partisans and development partners. Increase of ease of conducting business leads to cost efficiencies. These factors combine to make transnational activity easier to conduct. The easier something is to do, the more likely parties are to do it. Most importantly, political parties have realized they cannot operate in a political vacuum. They recognize there is a world outside the boundaries of the United States and there are friends to be found in that world. In the words of Elizabeth Dugan, the attitude of American parties being somehow alone in the universe “is so last century.”

Chapter 6 – Other Organizations “Spreading the Message”

After considering the role partisan consultants play, along with the direct involvement of the parties themselves in international party groups, a *prima facie* case can be made that American political parties, in the broadest sense of the term, have built durable networks of like-minded political parties and related organizations. Also included are the non-partisan, yet ideologically motivated, organizations that train political activists. Despite their legal non-partisan status, as enforced through elections law and section 501(c)(3) of *Internal Revenue Code*, these organizations are training young ideological activists and partisans from all over the world and, in doing so, are building activist and partisan networks.

One such organization is the Leadership Institute. Founded in 1979, its mission is to increase the number and effectiveness of conservative activists and leaders in the public policy process. To accomplish this mission, it identifies, recruits, trains, and places conservatives in government, politics, and the media. The Institute takes what it calls a “nuts and bolts” approach to training conservative activists in practical skills to participate in the public policy process by preparing them to:

- Form independent conservative student groups
- Publish independent conservative newspapers
- Manage grassroots-oriented campaigns
- Run successfully for elected office
- Formulate policy as elected officials or key staff members
- Succeed in the competitive field of broadcast media
- Communicate a conservative message using the media¹

To this end, the Institute offers 41 educational programs, an internship program, and an Employment Placement Service to help conservatives gain employment in various areas of public policy and broadcasting. The facilities at its headquarters in Arlington, Virginia, include classrooms, dormitories for up to 46 students, and a 485 square foot production studio.²

This author first became aware of the Leadership Institute while working for the Speaker of the Senate of Canada. Scott Reid, the Conservative Member of Parliament for Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington, had on two occasions arranged for the Leadership Institute to run day-long seminars for Conservative parliamentary staff and interns. Upon commencing the research for this dissertation, this author arranged to interview Morton Blackwell, the Founder and President of the Leadership Institute.

The connection to Canada's conservatives began in the early to mid-1980s, but outside the then-budding relationship between the leadership of the US Republicans and

¹ Leadership Institute; *About Us*; 2009; <http://www.leadershipinstitute.org/aboutus/> accessed October 21, 2009

² Ibid.

Canadian Progressive Conservatives. Of the various campaign schools the Leadership Institute ran across the country, there was usually one in Washington State or Oregon that would attract students from Canada, particularly members of the provincial Social Credit Parties from British Columbia and Alberta, and later from the new federal Reform Party. In what is likely indicative of the schism that occurred in the centre-right movement in Canada, Mr. Blackwell mentioned that he could not remember if any members of Canada's Progressive Conservative Party had attended their sessions. "Occasionally, but it was unusual," he stated.³

Members of the Leadership Institute eventually began to organize candidate training schools in Canada. Since, as indicated previously, domestic laws and donor attitudes prevent the Institute from spending its own money outside the United States, they developed a work-around whereby the local Canadian organizers would pay expenses such as travel and accommodation and the staff from the institute would donate their services. In the days before Free Trade between Canada and the US, there were some kinks. Mr. Blackwell specifically mentioned that Canada Customs wanted to charge import duties on the binders containing briefing materials that were to be given away at the first training session in Vancouver. The duty applied not to the actual materials, only to the binders containing them. Today, the staff of the Leadership Institute runs training programs a few times a year through the aforementioned Mr. Reid's office.

³ Blackwell; personal interview with author 2009

The Leadership Institute runs training in countries other than the United States and Canada, under similar arrangements as those made in Canada. Among the countries where the Institute has conducted sessions are Poland, Austria, Tanzania, Bolivia, and Chile. Programs have been run in Chile 19 times. Graduates have also been helped to establish analogous organizations in their home countries. These include the Young Britons Foundation (United Kingdom), the Hellenic Leadership Institute (Greece), l'Institut Formation Politique (France), Leadership Institute Japan, and the New Right Institute (South Korea). Mr. Blackwell also mentioned receiving a visit from Preston Manning, the founder of both the Reform Party and the Canadian Alliance, when he was establishing his retirement project, the Manning Centre for Building Democracy.

When asked about the criteria the Leadership Institute uses to decide which ideological groups in other countries the organization will work with, Mr. Blackwell indicated his test was their congruence with the political philosophy of Ronald Reagan. In particular, he cited Reagan's principles of limited government, free enterprise, strong national defense, and traditional family values. He believes that demonstrable adherence to political principles is a better indicator of political ideology than party affiliation alone. Anyone can join the Republican Party, but not all Republicans are conservative; "The head of Virginia's Communist Party can show up to a polling station on primary day and

request to vote in the Republican primary and there's nothing I can do as the local chairman to stop him.”⁴

When asked if the Institute sought advice from the Republican National Conference as to which international groups it should do business, Mr. Blackwell replied that it was more likely that the RNC would check with him. He had made substantial contacts while serving on the White House staff during the Reagan administration, where one of his tasks was to create a directory of freedom activists in the Soviet Union and Soviet-controlled Eastern Europe. The creation of such a directory was intended to make activists less vulnerable to state intimidation as it showed the Soviet police services that the American government knew who the activists were and would therefore notice if they disappeared. The Institute started to accept students into its internship program from Warsaw Pact countries in the mid-1980s. Mr. Blackwell also used a 1993 speaking tour to further build his international network. He used his tour of universities to meet with faculty and students and to find potential recruits for Leadership Institute programs. The only requirement, aside from ideological congruence and secure funding, was a good working knowledge of English. In the immediate post-Soviet era, the Institute found its programs so popular they had to create a rule that they would accept no more than two students from any one country at a time.

⁴ Blackwell; personal interview with author 2009

Democrats have only recently got into the act. While there are many Democrat/liberal/progressive-oriented 501(c)(3) non-profit and 527 political organizations, few are involved in the sort of professional activist training engaged in by the Leadership Institute. Wellstone Action was founded in January 2003 to honor the memory of the late Senator Paul Wellstone. It offers Camp Wellstone, a two and half day training session for candidates, campaign managers, and activists; an advanced campaign management school for the same; and a labor training program for unions to develop a “progressive pro-worker” agenda.⁵ Wellstone Action is unique for political 501(c)(3) non-profits as it is located in St. Paul, Minnesota, and not in Washington, DC. Accordingly, it does not offer an internship program.

For a more national focus, there is the Center for Progressive Leadership. Like Wellstone Action, it offers hands-on leadership training for progressive campaigners and activists. It has a national office and five state offices in Arizona, Colorado, Michigan, Ohio and Pennsylvania, where it offers its programs. Like the Leadership Institute, the focus is on core political beliefs:

- Progressive Philosophy, Vision and Values
- Strategic and Campaign Planning
- Communications and Messaging
- Fundraising
- Policy Leadership
- Management

⁵Wellstone Action!; *Labour Training Programs* <http://www.wellstone.org/our-programs/labor-training-program> accessed January 20, 2010

- Core Leadership Skills⁶

The CPL specifically targets its recruitment to the states where it has established offices and “from communities which have traditionally lacked access to political power, including women, people of color, and GLBT individuals.”⁷

The CPL expresses certain small “I” liberal internationalist values in its goals and values, chiefly:

Peace and Security: In order to protect the security of all people living in the United States, we must join with other nations and international organizations to promote peace. The government must invest in protecting our national infrastructure and ensure Americans are able to live free from violence in their communities and homes and free from environmental hazards at home and at work.

Global Cooperation: Internationally, the United States must support security, peace, and development through trade, aid, negotiation, and political engagement. The United States must act as a good global citizen and should promote on a global scale the same values it aspires to domestically.⁸

Despite these internationalist values, it is unclear from the materials whether or not international applicants are actually accepted in its programs. An e-mail sent to the organization on January 20, 2010, has not received a response as of this writing.

⁶Center for Progressive Leadership; *About US*
<http://www.progressiveleaders.org/aboutus/> accessed January 20, 2010

⁷Center for Progressive Leadership; *About Us*
<http://www.progressiveleaders.org/aboutus/> accessed January 20, 2010

⁸Center for Progressive Leadership; *About Us – Goals and Values*
<http://www.progressiveleaders.org/aboutus/goalsvalues.htm> accessed January 20, 2010

Regardless of the state of Democratic/liberal/progressive internationalism in its 501(c)(3) community, the fact remains there is a level of transnational activity by this type of organization. It just happens that in this category, the bulk of the activity is on the conservative side of the ideological spectrum. While their ability to operate internationally is limited by the restrictions imposed by section 501(c)(3) of the *Internal Revenue Code* and by the attitudes of their own donors, these organizations have demonstrated the axiom “where there is a will, there is a way.” These organizations have creatively worked around the law to take their programs and expertise abroad to train like-minded activists in other countries and build capacity for similar institutes abroad. They get around the obstacles not by violating the law or the donors’ trust, but by counting on the international organizer, typically someone who has previously travelled to Washington to take part in one their programs, to raise the funds to pay for the expenses of the training sessions. The trainers donate their services. By having to raise the funds to pay for the sessions, the local activist is either effectively beginning to build a network or is tapping into an existing network that shows a market for such ideas and strategies. This is transnational network building at its most basic.

The question becomes whether or not it is specifically *political party* transnationalism. Chapter 2 argued the broadest, perhaps colloquial, definition of “party” ought to be used, as what is considered “party” and “partisan” in ordinary conversation may not be considered as such by the legal definition. Some operations of the parties might not be considered parties under the elections law, but may be allowed by other

statutes. The non-partisan provisions of 501(c)(3) in the *Internal Revenue Code* make this a difficult line to walk for the organizations, but not necessarily for the general public. To the outside observer of American politics, “conservative” and “Republican” are interchangeable, as is “Democrat” with “liberal” and “progressive”. While the tax code forces organizations to declare themselves to be non-partisan, the political system forces their trainees to belong to a party to utilize the skills they gain at these sessions. The Leadership Institute may be training “conservatives” and the Center for Progressive Leadership may be training “progressives”, but, if they are going to fulfill their training by working in campaigns, they will be working as “Republicans” and “Democrats”.

Some 501(c)(3) organizations have been criticized for their efforts on behalf of supporting party policies. These have largely been cause-oriented organizations such as environmental groups, as opposed to the ideology-oriented organizations highlighted herein. Further complicating matters, some organizations registered under 501(c)(3) of the *Internal Revenue Code* may have parallel sister organizations registered under section 527 of the *Federal Election Campaign Act*, which does allow an organization to participate in political debates in support of or in opposition to parties, candidates and policies. The separation between these organizations is often on paper, leading to criticism of the 501(c)(3) organization for the acts of the 527 organizations.

Even if one does not agree with the broader definition of “party”, the students of these non-partisan organizations will eventually work in parties’ campaigns both in the

United States and, for the international students, in their home countries. Even if the “conservative” is too conservative to work for the Republican Party and chooses to work for a minor party, the work is still for a political party, just not one that will likely matter. The same for the “progressive” who decides the Democrats are not pure enough and goes to work for the Green Party. Ultimately, the political system forces an activist with an ideological disposition by one name or another into a political party.

These ideological, non-partisan organizations are in fact building networks that will be used by partisans. While the organizations may be ideological, as opposed to partisan, in scope and purpose, they will ultimately be manned by staff and volunteers who are also partisans. As political parties have co-opted and organized the electoral system to serve their interests, the ideological organization’s American graduates will be forced by the electoral system to declare a partisan affiliation to participate in even the most minimal capacity in a political campaign and election. The same is true for their participation in the political system if they want to go to work for a member of the legislative branch or an officeholder in the executive branch. Their international graduates, who came to learn from the most experienced political activists, will be exposed not just to an ideology in and of itself but also to ideology married to and shaped by a particular electoral system. These international graduates have a history of returning home to both participate as partisans in their own electoral system and to create their own ideological organizations. With the overlap between party and ideology, these

organizations are building transnational networks of which American political parties can take advantage.

Part III
The Forest

Chapter 7 – What does it all mean?

Previous chapters have focused on the international outreach of partisan consultants, parties, and partisan organizations. While the question of whether or not parties conduct international activities has been answered, several questions remain. Do these *international* activities rise to the level of *transnational* activity? Are American political parties therefore transnational political parties? If American political parties are transnational political parties, does this mean all political parties are transnational? This chapter will address these questions.

American political parties are conducting transnational activity, but this does not necessarily make them purely transnational political parties. Then again, most transnational political parties are not purely transnational political parties, either. Some are not even political parties under the traditional definition. In the end, individual transnational parties are reflections of a particular time and place.

American political parties are no different. As Americans have spread past America's borders, so too have its parties. As America's interests have spread past America's borders, so too have its parties. As Americans have made friends abroad, so too have its parties.

The instinctual answer for most observers of American politics to the questions above would be in the negative. They would cite the lack of literature on the subject. Not much has been published, hence the author's reliance on interviews to fill the gaps and to tie together seemingly unrelated or only tangentially related subjects. Much of the literature cited also bemoaned the lack of discourse on the subject.

Comparative politics specialists may argue that American political parties cannot be transnational parties because they are still national parties in their outlook. The international activities described in previous chapters only serve either their national goals of winning domestic elections or their government's foreign policy goal of countering a particular competitive influence. Having begun over a century after the individual parties' foundings, transnational activity is certainly not part of either American political party's *raison d'être*, but it is not a supplemental activity, either. This view also negates the fact that winning domestic elections is a primary goal of traditional transnationals. A transnational ideology would quickly be found to be meaningless if the parties did not eventually win elections in order to turn ideas into laws and policies. A

strict political-party-as-instrument-of-policy view ignores the obvious fact the policy has succeeded and, yet, the activity continues. Other transnationals are also instruments of their government's foreign policies, hence state directive or sponsorship or both are insufficient grounds for disqualification.

Having disqualified the negative responses, only the positive responses remain. The level of American political parties' international activity does in fact rise to the level of transnational political parties. This does not necessarily make American political parties transnational political parties of the traditional models. There are stark differences between the two traditional models of transnational political parties, and they are reflective of their political time and place.

If American political parties fit the definition of transnational political parties, does this say more about the state of literature about transnational political parties than the actual activities of political parties? Is the literature about "transnational" parties, in fact, really about "trans-Europe" parties? Academic literature is always a lagging indicator of a phenomenon.

Modern transnationals certainly developed in postwar Europe and their rise is inextricably linked to the movement of European integration. The rise of the European Economic Community, which in turn led to the creation of the European Parliament and later the European Union, has led to co-operative supra-national party caucuses allowing

for truly trans-national green parties of the first model, even if it is cobbled out of the parties of the second. Of the examples mentioned in the introductory chapter, namely socialists, communists, social democrats, Christian democrats, liberal internationals/transnationals and Greens, the first two tend to be tied up with totalitarian movements. In those cases, they are political parties in name only and are arms of the government; they serve as instruments as political control and the distribution of political patronage. The remaining four are primarily European movements despite significant involvement from parties on other continents.

In the post Cold War milieu, socialist parties that did not form a totalitarian government have been in the process of rebranding themselves as either social democrats or non-Marxist variants of socialism, such as parties based on pre-Marxist socialist utopians like Henry George. As discussed in Chapter 4, Canada's nominally socialist New Democratic Party recently attempted to drop the "New" from its name to tie its brand more to the United States Democratic Party than to its combination agrarian-populist and labour-centric socialist history.¹

There are very few open and electorally viable communist parties left which might allow it to be called a transnational movement. Ironically, where such parties are viable they already form the government and have outlawed their competitors. As a

¹ Gloria Galloway; "NDP Name Change Debate Fizzles" on *Globe and Mail Update*; 16 August 2009 <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/ndp-name-change-debate-fizzles/article1253745/> accessed August 17, 2009

global movement, it is a shell of its former self. Emerging research argues that the international communist movement was not particularly cohesive from the outset. The national parties spent more time arguing about who was the more accurate interpreter of Marx's dictates than plotting world domination.

Presently, communist ideology is a thin cover for a handful of totalitarian regimes, the largest of which, China, now allows property owners, Marx's primary enemy, to be members of the party. China hosted the 2008 Summer Olympics, with all the commercialism that entails. The communist party movement is also the least European, controlling governments in China, North Korea, Vietnam, Laos, and Cuba. In 2006, a communist revolution overthrew the monarchy in Nepal, but the first elections of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal resulted in a victory for the centrist Nepali Congress rather than the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist).

That leaves a series of party movements that are concentrated in Europe. The Greens are popular across Europe and have even been influential members of governing coalitions in Germany and Ireland. They have been elected to seats in New Zealand and Australia where there are elements of proportional representation, but in the latter country the Greens benefit from an agreement with the Australian Labor Party to allocate a certain portion of ALP ticket votes on the Australian transferrable ballot system to the Greens.

In North America, their greatest success is in Mexico with more than a dozen combined elected members in the lower and upper houses of the Congress of the Union. In Canada, the Greens have yet to win a seat in the House of Commons. They briefly had one when independent Member of Parliament Blair Wilson (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country) switched his affiliation to the Green Party of Canada in the dying days of the 39th Parliament. Wilson lost the subsequent election, but the switch allowed their leader, Elizabeth May, to participate in televised debates between the party leaders. No Green candidates were elected in the 2008 general election. In the United States, their highest electoral achievement was Ralph Nader's showing in the 2000 election, which Democrats credit with the election of George W. Bush. They have been on a downward trend ever since.

Social democrat and Christian democrat parties are far more numerous, but their electoral viability is still concentrated in Europe. While there are dozens of both social democrat and Christian democrat parties in Europe, there are fewer in other continents and they tend to be of minority party status. The reasons for their disproportionate strength in Europe are two-fold: their origins are European and the European Union, specifically the European Parliament.

Social democrat parties come out of the European socialist movement of the late 19th century. While social democrats originally advocated Marxist political and economic thought in the strictest sense, they began to reject ideas of class revolution in

favor of reformism as a more desirable way to achieve socialist ends. Social democrats deviated further when they assumed a moderate position on the welfare state, which incorporates elements of socialism and capitalism into a mixed economy where the economy is still largely controlled by private interests, albeit heavily regulated.

However, there are a series of social programs to ameliorate its shortcomings including welfare for those unable to work, health care for the sick, and unemployment insurance for the temporarily unemployed.² The moderate direction taken by social democratic parties, particularly those in more developed western European economies, allowed them to avoid the stigma which the more orthodox Marxist parties suffered during the Cold War when Marxism became inextricably linked to Stalinism and Maoism. They thereby survived to be electorally viable movements to the present day.

The moderate ideology notwithstanding, social democrat parties are part of the same transnational network as the socialist parties: the Socialist International. Originally founded in 1889 and dissolved on the eve of the outbreak of World War I, Socialist International went through several variations during the course of the 20th Century. Its pre-WWI version was responsible for the declarations of May 1st as International Labour Day and March 8th as International Women's Day. It reformed in 1923 as the Labour and Socialist International. The present version was reconstituted as the Socialist International after World War II, a period of rapid growth for socialist and social

² Sheri Berman; "The Roots and Rationale of Social Democracy" Pp. 113 – 144 in *Social Philosophy & Policy* vol. 20, no. 1; June 2003

democratic parties after they had been largely suppressed under Nazi-occupied Europe. Despite a long history, it only began to extend its network beyond Europe with its 1976 Geneva Congress and began formal relations with Latin American parties.

Christian democrat ideology can find its origins in the reaction to the rise of the socialist and trade union movements by the Roman Catholic Church, particularly in the papal encyclical *Rerum Novarum* of Pope Leo XIII. The encyclical, entitled “The Rights and Duties of Capital and Labour”, addressed the working conditions of the poor while arguing that market forces should be tempered by moral considerations. It supported the right of labor to form unions, but rejected the radicalism of communism as well as unrestricted capitalism, whilst supporting private property ownership.³ The communists and socialists denounced Christian democracy and its proposed partnership between owners and labor as “corporatism”, a denunciation used to this day. The first Christian democrat parties were founded by German working-class Catholics but grew to encompass the more conservative elements of the Protestant population. After World War II, Christian Democrats came to be seen as a neutral yet unifying voice of a compassionate conservatism, as distinguished by the conservatism of the German far right. In contemporary politics, many Christian democratic parties have muted the religious origins of the movement and have become more secular.

³His Holiness Leo XIII; *Rerum Novarum* – *Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII on Capital and Labour* 15 May 1891

http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/leo_xiii/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_15051891_rerum-novarum_en.html

European political parties have an additional incentive to be transnational where parties in other regions do not: the European Parliament. Founded in 1952 as a common consultative assembly of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSR), a precursor to the European Union, its members were originally appointed by their national governments. As the ECSR gave way to the European Political Community and subsequently to the European Union, the European Parliament also evolved into a formal parliament with, beginning in 1979, direct election of its members. Members of the European Parliament, or MEPs, are now elected by direct universal suffrage for fixed five-year terms.

The European Parliament is an environment that encourages transnational party activity. With left-wing parties, socialists and greens in particular, having transnational elements in their central ideology, centrist and center-right European political parties must reach out to like-minded parties to form parliamentary groups, formal coalitions of European political parties, large enough to counter the dominant left-wing parliamentary group, the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats. The centre-right – conservatives, liberal conservatives, and Christian democrats – had for decades coalesced around the European Peoples Party-European Democrats to form the largest parliamentary group. That coalition has since splintered, with the European Democrats – British, Polish and Czech conservatives – leaving to form the European Conservatives

and Reformists parliamentary group. The remaining members of the European Peoples Party still make up the largest group.

Elementary school-level science tells us the same seeds grown in different soil will yield different results. Different soils have differing qualities, including minerals, nutrient levels and water retention abilities, which affect plant growth even if the seed is the same. In the case of transnational party movements, the seed is the party, the different soils are political space and time, and the different movements are the plant.

The first and second models of transnational party movements grew out of specific times and spaces. In the first model, the pan-national party model, the movement arose out of the anti-imperial movement of the early 20th century. Sinn Féin was founded in 1905 to establish Irish independence for the Irish nation.⁴ The Ba'ath Party was created in 1940 to resurrect the freedom and glory of the Arab Nation that was crushed by the Ottoman Empire and the Western imperialism that had replaced it.⁵ These were specific to their time and place.

The second model of transnational party movements was also specific to a time and place. While their individual ideological and party roots dated back to the Industrial

⁴ Brian Feeney; *Sinn Féin: A Hundred Turbulent Years* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003); Pp. 49 - 50

⁵ Devlin, John F.; "The Baath Party: Rise and Metamorphosis" Pp. 1396 – 1407 in *The American Historical Review*; Vol. 96, No. 5; December 1991; Pp. 1396 – 1397

Revolution, the totalitarianism of Nazi tyranny in Europe ended most of these movements. They were restarted in their present incarnations in the immediate post-war, but pre-Cold War, years. This allowed centre-left movements to re-emerge and spread across Europe. The Soviet Union's post-war occupation of Eastern Europe and its support of nationalist movements in Asia and Africa spread the communist transnational party movement by force of arms.

Soviet totalitarianism incidentally allowed its less hostile to capitalism variant, social democracy, to spread in Western Europe as it made the democratic option appear more attractive. European economic and political integration, particularly the creation of the European Parliament, provided the environment for European transnational party movements to flourish on the continent as the support of large coalitions made up of parties from many countries was required to get any measure passed through the Parliament. The transnational party movements became natural coalitions. As the Soviet Union collapsed and newly independent countries transitioned to democratic politics and market economics, European transnationals expanded into these emerging democracies, offering their experience and ushering them into European Union.

The American model of transnationalism evolved as the country's political, economic, and military interests evolved. There is a positive correlation between the major transnational developments within American political parties and the major events of the second half of the twentieth century. As argued in the previous chapter, the first

major act of American party transnationalism was the development of the abroad committees in the early 1960s. The creation of these committees was the result of several developments. Prior to World War II, Americans did not travel abroad in large numbers to more or less become permanent residents of other countries. World War II sent large numbers of voters abroad for the first time during an election year since the Civil War, thus necessitating a system to administer overseas absentee ballots. As the postwar military occupation of West Germany transitioned into the Cold War, an era began where there was a permanent American presence abroad. The United States became a charter member of the United Nations and had permanent representation at its myriad of international agencies, the offices of which were spread all over the world. Private citizens travelled abroad for their employers overseeing projects funded by the Marshall Plan in rebuilding Europe. Some of these private citizens stayed abroad permanently.

By the time John F. Kennedy became President of the United States, there was a constant proportion of registered voters abroad. Most of these were military voters on deployment to US bases abroad or in combat during the Korean and Vietnam Wars.

As the optimism of the Kennedy era faded in the late sixties, the proportion of civilian voters abroad grew as middle-class males started to attend university abroad in larger numbers. This was in part due to a desire to get beyond the reach of the selective service draft and the Vietnam War. Many took up permanent residence abroad, even taking out citizenship in their destination country, and did not return even after Jimmy

Carter granted the “draft dodgers” amnesty. The result was that there were almost one million US citizens permanently residing abroad who were eligible to vote. While the government, through the military, provided a process for citizens abroad, military and non-military alike, to vote *in absentia*, the parties had an obvious interest in maximizing their own abroad votes, hence the abroad committee to permanently conduct international outreach to citizens abroad was born.

While this first act of American party transnationalism may be construed as more of a national act with an international scope, the same could be said of the European parties. They are essentially national parties with international scopes. The European transnational parties do coalesce into supra-national parties for elections to the European Parliament, making them more like the traditional model of transnational parties. Traditional Westminster-style national parties in Europe, however, do this as well. The supra-national regime of the European Union forces a certain amount of transnationalism on political parties and politicians who would not be so disposed if they were not part of the Union.

The second act of American party transnationalism was also an effect of time and place. While the historical milieu was still the Cold War, in this case the driving force was the presidency of Ronald Reagan. This stage saw American parties reach out to their like-minded contemporaries to encourage political allies to operate in a transnational manner as a counterforce against Soviet-driven communist transnationalism. The parties

built permanent institutions to perpetuate these relationships. They created government agencies and party-themed institutions to provide democratic development assistance from a Western, American perspective to counter the development assistance being provided by the Soviets. American parties joined party internationals, a major characteristic of the European transnational parties. While the Democrat-themed institute, the National Democratic Institute, joined a lower tier of the older organization, Liberal International, the Republicans joined with many parties of the center-right, including Christian-democrat transnationals, to form the International Democratic Union. The International Democratic Union, with the full and active participation of the Republican Party, became a permanent forum for center-right parties to liaise and exchange expertise. More importantly, it became a vehicle for mature Western parties in general and the Republicans in particular to communicate their values and election tactics to younger parties in the developing world. The goal of the organization, after all, was to encourage the election of Western-friendly, center-right political parties abroad.

The sharing of common goals and values between political parties in other countries is the essence of transnational political parties, so while the American variety of transnationalism is different from the Euro-centric variety, they are transnational nonetheless. Transnationalism may not be at the core of their activity, but it is a regular activity that contributes to their central mission of electing their own partisans in American elections. Their broader international engagement served a foreign policy interest of the government of the day, but, as was illustrated by Chapter 3, this is not

unique. Germany essentially outsourced its democratic development to the foundations of its major political parties, all of which are transnational movements, demonstrating that state sponsorship of transnationalism does not disqualify American activities from being transnational.

As American political parties increasingly interact with like-minded parties in other countries, how does it affect the party systems in countries where American parties conduct their outreach? The proverbial “what came first, the chicken or the egg” form of analysis is, as is usually the case, not helpful. As noted in Chapters Three and Five, the American partisans who are at the front lines of this outreach are highly sensitive to charges of cultural imperialism and adapt their activities to fit local regimes and customs. Adaptation helps the local contacts accept the advice of the visiting Americans, but it is also useful to the American partisans. The presidential regime in the United States is unique to the United States and, therefore, the strategies employed by US partisans might not be directly transferrable to electoral systems and campaigns abroad. Adaptation also has a commercial advantage.

While they may have adapted their tactics to fit the local regime, there are certain effects that might be called “Americanization” of foreign electoral campaigns. First, however, it is useful to distinguish “Americanization” from simple “modernization”. While these two terms may seem interchangeable, “modernization” generically refers to applying modern technology and tactics such as data mining and voter identification to

campaigns, while “Americanization” refers specifically to aspects of *American* campaigns being applied to foreign campaigns. Almost every modern democracy has employed technology to the fullest of its parties’ resources to maximize its voter identification and get out the vote drives, often purchased from American sources, but that does not make it specifically modern.

One of the phenomena accompanying the modernization of democracy in the Western world is declining rates of voter participation. While the United States’ voter turnout rate is among the lowest, turnout rates are down overall throughout the OECD.⁶ As voter turnout rates in their countries decline, parties turn to various voter information-mining programs to identify and get out the vote for their party from a declining base of available voters.

While it is often difficult to separate the Americanization of election campaigns from the overall Americanization of popular culture that is endemic to globalization, it is noticeable in campaigns conducted in Commonwealth countries and in other parliamentary democracies where the top office is not the head of state (the President), but the head of government (the Prime Minister). In such contests, the goal is not to maximize the nation-wide vote for a single individual, but to maximize the vote in a majority or, in a multi-party democracy, a plurality of single member districts. This is

⁶ Conference Board of Canada; *Society – Voter Turnout* September 2009
<http://www.conferenceboard.ca/HCP/Details/society/voter-turnout.aspx> accessed January 31, 2010

because the leader of the party with the most seats in the legislature wins the election and becomes the Prime Minister.

Such a system requires an effort by the national party to get the vote out for hundreds of candidates on Election Day. As articulated in previous chapters, in the United States there are various layers of the party dedicated to getting out the vote for the various offices and branches of the representative branches of government and a party can effectively control the government by winning one branch or another. In the Commonwealth, executive and legislative branches are fused making it impossible to become Prime Minister without winning at least a plurality of seats in the legislative branch. The communications strategy for the national campaign of such an election would be expected to emphasize the collective party identity.

While this was historically true, the last few decades have increasingly seen national campaigns emphasize their leaders over their party. The campaign which has probably been the most openly dominated by American consultants, namely that of the United Kingdom's Tony Blair, emphasized his leadership rather than Labour Party policies. This may be to the detriment of the party's long-term fortunes as it inextricably ties support for the party to the leader's fortunes. With the unpopularity of the Iraq War hastening Blair's retirement as Prime Minister, the Labour Party found public perception of its policies were so closely tied to Blair that there is little hope his successor, Gordon Brown, can salvage the party's fortunes. The Conservative leader, David Cameron,

became widely referred to as “Prime Minister in Waiting” after beginning to lead Brown in the polls since late 2007.⁷

It should be noted that Cameron is “Prime Minister in Waiting” no more, having won the most seats in the May 6th, 2010, British election and forming a coalition government with Nick Clegg’s Liberal-Democrats. In his campaign to unseat Brown by making his Conservative Party more appealing to Labour voters, Cameron convinced Democrat-leaning consulting firm Squier, Knapp, Dunn to advise him in preparation for the British election’s televised debates, the first in a British election. Firm principal Anita Dunn had previously worked for Barack Obama in 2006 and the New York City mayoral campaigns of Democrat-turned-Republican-turned-Independent Michael Bloomberg, upon whose recommendation Cameron hired them.⁸

The formal independence of partisan consultants from their party combined with the Democrats lack of direct involvement in the party internationals may be helpful in this instance. The international commercial interests of the consultants it hires are far more extensive than its own network between parties, much of which is again formally separate as it is actually a network of the National Democratic Institute.

⁷UK Polling Report; *Voting Intention* <http://ukpollingreport.co.uk/blog/voting-intention> accessed February 1, 2010

⁸ Iain Martin; “Obama Advisers to Aid Tories’ Election Battle” in *the Wall Street Journal*; 25 February 2010
<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704240004575085702114873156.html>
 accessed 27 June 2010

With its effects on their like-minded partner parties noted, how does this transnational activity affect political parties in the United States? Most of the effects are organizational. Even before the idea of transnational political parties was fashionable, American political parties created committees to troll for votes abroad. As their transnationalism moved from a model based on strict partisan self interest to a model based on an interactive relationship with like-minded parties in other countries, the relationships led to the creation of new partisan institutions. The parties had to adapt their structures to conduct this work. American electoral and tax laws which were meant to prevent foreign influence on campaigns and elections have forced the parties to establish separate bank accounts to simply pay for their transnational participation. The parties established permanent positions within to coordinate these activities. They joined (or created to join) party internationals, permanent institutions. They created government-funded institutes to spread American political values through democratic development assistance. The level of participation by each political party varies by activity, but they are participating nonetheless.

This is difficult to see from the outside looking in. The Republicans, for example, are more active in their party international than the Democrats are in theirs. However, this is not apparent from the nationalist, populist rhetoric emanating from the party leadership. From Woodrow Wilson's advocacy of the League of Nations, to Franklin Roosevelt's "Four Freedoms" speech, to Bill Clinton's support for the International

Criminal Court, the Democrats have a history of internationalism in their rhetoric. It thus seems odd that the party is not even a full member of its international. Rhetoric does not necessarily reflect reality. Wilson's advocacy of the League was fruitless, Roosevelt did not live to implement his ideas for the post-war world and Clinton's signature on the Rome Convention came with minutes left in his presidency along with an op-ed published in *The New York Times* saying that if he were still president, he would not send it to the Senate for ratification.

On the issue of abroad committees, however, the Democrats have recently become far more aggressive in courting their overseas absentee votes than the Republicans, even allowing them their own primary to and convention delegations in the nomination process. On this front, the internationalist rhetoric may have broader appeal, as it would be attractive to Americans who are permanently residing abroad and thus are exposed to a broader stratification of political ideologies, including those of the transnational party movements described herein. This broad appeal, backed up by organization, has already resulted in Democrats gaining a larger share of absentee overseas votes and may have potentially won an election. It is a different model of transnational political party than those that originated in Europe, but American political parties are unique in their diffuse structure that leads in turn to a diffuse model of transnationalism. It is transnationalism, nonetheless.

Chapter 8 – Observations and Conclusions

Transnational party activity is not a natural activity for American parties, but it is an activity they are undertaking. American political consulting is a global business with partisan consultants in demand in countries large and small. There are party-themed institutes of technical assistance enabling American partisans to share their expertise with developing democracies. The Republicans and Democrats both belong to party internationals, international organizations made of like-minded political parties. The parties also maintain abroad committees to conduct partisan outreach to Americans living abroad so they can do what American political parties do best: win elections.

It is not a natural activity in part because of the historical evolution of American political parties and in part because of institutional obstacles posed by the American political system. The two are not unrelated. Unlike the traditional transnational political party movements, American political parties were created not to forward a particular ideology but to win elections.

The first modern American political party, Thomas Jefferson's Democratic-Republicans, was formed primarily to oppose the policies of the Federalist government of George Washington and, later, John Adams. While Jefferson was not without his own ideology, the impetus to form the party was opposition to government policy. From Jefferson to Roosevelt, America's foreign policy interests were largely *ad hoc*. Its most sustained efforts were territorial expansion and these generally avoided entanglements with the old empires of Europe. Foreign engagements during this era were in the service of protecting trade on the high seas or, once again, territorial expansion. The country was largely isolationist.

Even American involvement in World War I only began after a cruise liner with American passengers was sunk in the Atlantic Ocean. President Woodrow Wilson also failed to sustain American international involvement when he could not convince the United States Senate to ratify the Treaty of Versailles, the formal end of World War I. The creation of several international organizations, including the League of Nations and the International Labor Organization, also met with Senate objections primarily based on the belief that such organizations would limit American sovereignty.

The Franklin Delano Roosevelt era resulted in two changes that later facilitated American political party transnationalism. The first change was Roosevelt's response to the Great Depression, the New Deal, which began the ideological coalescence of the

political parties. The Democrats nationally became the party of modern liberalism, which became shorthand for state intervention in the economy and large-scale public works projects. This, however, did not make the Republicans the *de facto* conservative party right away. There was still a conservative faction among the democrats, the southern Dixiecrats, which was becoming increasingly marginalized within the party in the post-Roosevelt era due to their opposition to the civil rights movement. There was also a northeastern-based liberal wing of the Republican Party. The 1964 Republican presidential candidacy of Arizona Senator Barry Goldwater completed the ideological alignment through coalescence of the conservative vote around the Republican Party. It was not until the 1960s that it could truly be said that America had ideologically coherent political parties to forward an ideology.

The second change began under Roosevelt with America's involvement in World War II, which was continued under his successor Harry Truman. Postwar America became permanently engaged in world affairs and large numbers of American citizens began to live abroad for long periods of time, even taking up permanent residence overseas. As the postwar occupation of Germany gave way to the Cold War and the United States established permanent military bases in allied countries, there were eventually over a million US servicemen abroad at any one time. As many of these postings were non-combat postings, spouses were allowed to be posted on base. As the United States became a charter member of the United Nations and had permanent representation at their various bodies, along with other organizations and alliances

developed to manage the postwar world, America's diplomatic presence also expanded greatly overseas. Between the uniformed services, diplomatic corps, and other US government employees, there were between two and a half and three million US government employees and their spouses posted abroad at one time.

Private American citizens also began to travel abroad in larger numbers. The Marshall Plan expanded America's business interests into Europe and Asia and globalization expanded them worldwide. As American business went global, so did its employees. Like the military, business sent employees and their families abroad in large numbers for the first time to supervise their reconstruction projects under the Marshall Plan. Unlike the military, however, many of these employees were not "rotated out" every few years. The result was that significant numbers became permanent overseas residents. Combined with students and others temporarily abroad, there are approximately one to one and a half million private citizens abroad. These permanently abroad citizens did not surrender either their citizenship or their vote.

With so many Americans abroad holding the franchise which could legally be exercised, parties committed their first act of transnationalism by creating abroad committees to facilitate getting those overseas absentee votes into ballot boxes for their candidates back home. Since the bulk of the overseas vote consisted of government employees, the government created the system for overseas voters to apply to their state election offices to get ballots and return them in advance of the election. The abroad

committees served to identify votes for their parties and facilitated the application process to make sure their votes were counted.

In an election where 120 to 130 million votes are cast, four million votes may not seem like much. In most elections since the establishment of the abroad committees, one or two million more votes for the candidate in second place would not have made a difference. The abroad committees thus toiled in relative obscurity.

That changed with the last election of the 20th century when a few hundred contested votes in the state of Florida decided the presidency and almost stretched the election into the 21st century. In the recount controversy that followed, the challenge and disqualification of overseas absentee ballots figured prominently in the Democrats' recount strategy. Realizing that a few more local votes in a couple of swing states could decide the election, beginning in 2004 the Democrats invested heavily in early and overseas absentee votes in swing states. In 2008, they courted the overseas vote beginning with the nomination.

Despite the first burst of transnationalism in the 1960s, institutional barriers prevented American political parties from pursuing transnational political parties on their own. These barriers included the electoral system, the party system, and simple attitude. First, the electoral system perpetuates a constant election cycle. That keeps parties constantly engaged in domestic politics and leaves very little time or resources for

activities that are not directly related to campaigns and elections. The most recent presidential election campaign essentially began on December 28, 2006, when John Edwards became the first viable candidate to announce his candidacy for the Democratic nomination. This was less than two months after the mid-term elections, more than a full year before the first primary and a little less than two years before the actual presidential election.¹

Second, many of America's election laws and party regulations are designed to keep foreign influence out of US elections. These laws have also had the effect of keeping domestic parties from *providing* influence abroad. American election laws that prevent foreign money from coming into candidate and party coffers also prevent party monies raised in the United States from leaving the country. This blocked political parties from paying their dues to their respective party international and kept them from participating. To circumvent the restriction, the parties set up special bank accounts outside the party's main accounts to pay the membership dues.

Third, donor and member attitudes are a barrier. With the exception in the 1970s of a few Congressional false starts at something similar to the National Endowment for

¹ It should be noted that two candidates had actually declared their candidacy earlier. Tom Vilsack, Governor of Iowa, announced his candidacy on November 30, 2006, three weeks after the mid-term elections. Mike Gravel, former Senator from Alaska, announced his candidacy on April 17, 2006, almost eight months prior to the mid-term elections! Neither was given a particularly realistic chance at success. Vilsack withdrew by February 23rd and by March 28, 2008, Gravel had switched to the Libertarian Party.

Democracy, there did not appear to be much interest in political party transnationalism among the party elite before Ronald Reagan took up the cause in 1982. More than one interview subject cited donor attitudes as the number one obstacle to transnational activities. Donors were more concerned with politics at home than abroad. In the absence of leadership from the top of the party, that was the focus which predominated.

Such obstacles allowed partisan consultants to flourish where parties could not. There are a few reasons for the rise in prominence of the work of political consultants in foreign elections. The principal consideration is simply that the number of elections in a given election year in the United States has remained the same since the last state joined the Union, but the number of professional political consultants has exploded. Since domestic elections could not possibly employ everyone, many have plied their trade abroad. The most successful consultants in domestic politics are, not surprisingly, the most in demand abroad.

A common misconception of political consultants is that, since they are entrepreneurs, they are politically independent. This could not be further from the truth. Most political consultants began their careers by volunteering with campaigns when they were younger and later used the contacts made during those early years to build a base of paying clientele. With limited exceptions, their domestic political business dictates their international political business. The expectation is that consultants who work for Democrats at home will work for center-left candidates abroad. The same is true for

Republicans. This does not mean consultants will work for the most radical left or the most reactionary right candidate just because they are described as left- or right-wing at home. Client candidates or parties abroad must also have a certain fit with the consultant's particularly American political ideology. The consultant's ease of movement relative to their party's allows them to build connections between like-minded parties and leaders that may be useful for their clients at home.

By accepting students from outside the United States into political activist training programs, the community of non-partisan 501(c)(3) organizations also serves to facilitate political party transnationalism. They are contributing to the transnational network by helping their former students build sister organizations in their home country. The non-partisanship forced upon these ideological organizations by the *Internal Revenue Code* places a different set of encumbrances on them than those faced by political parties. As they are fully funded by donations and sponsorships, they are also especially sensitive to the attitudes of their donors. They manage to work around it by having the local organizers provide funds to cover expenses, such as the cost of travel and accommodations. This, in turn, forces the local organizers to build their own local network to raise the funds necessary to bring in the American activists.

Political party transnationalism is not a natural activity for American political parties; they had to be made to do it. They were made to do it by Ronald Reagan. For Reagan, western party transnationalism in general and American party transnationalism

in particular would provide a counterforce to a far more pernicious transnational party movement, the Soviet-backed communist party transnational movements. It was Reagan's speech to the British parliament in 1982 that set out his vision to open another front in the Cold War, the ballot box:

The objective I propose is quite simple to state: to foster the infrastructure of democracy, the system of a free press, unions, political parties, universities, which allows a people to choose their own way to develop their own culture, to reconcile their own differences through peaceful means.²

Reagan's speech began the process that led to the creation of the National Endowment for Democracy and its subsidiary institutes: the International Republic Institute to represent the Republican Party and the National Democratic Institute to represent the Democratic Party. These institutes, while formally separate from their respective parties, served to provide technical assistance in developing democracies. In many of the emerging democracies in which they are engaged, the parties are so nascent they have yet to ideologically coalesce along the traditional left-right spectrum. These organizations nevertheless serve as communicators of American political values, particularly the competition of ideas and respect for the rule of law, even if they are broadly defined.

Another step taken as a result of Reagan's speech was the joining of party internationals, organizations made up of like-minded political parties. For transnational

² Reagan; "Address to Members of the British Parliament; June 8, 1982" 1982

political party movements, party internationals are a central nexus for the movement's national parties to come together and share their common goals and policies. For the Democrats, the Democratic Party in the form of the Democratic National Committee did not actually join Liberal International but National Democratic Institute joined as a co-operating organization, the lowest tier of membership. The College Democrats joined the youth organization, the International Federation of Liberal and Radical Youth.

The issue of joining a party international was more difficult for the Republicans. While there was a party international for the Christian democracy movement, Christian Democrat International, there was no party international for western political parties of the centre-right broadly defined. The Republicans and their like-minded party allies, including several prominent Christian democrat parties, rectified this problem by creating their own party international, the International Democratic Union. The founding meeting for this organization was convened under the auspices of Reagan ally Margaret Thatcher, British Prime Minister and leader of the country's Conservative Party. The Republican Party was a charter member at the highest level of membership. The International Republican Institute also joined as a co-operating organization. The College Republicans joined with other parties' youth wings to form the International Young Democratic Union.

One of the noteworthy effects of the creation of the International Democratic Union is the effect it had on its precursor, the Christian Democrat International. Whether

intentional or circumstantial, the creation of the IDU coincided with a schism within the Christian Democratic International between what could be called the “capital C” Christian Democrats and the forces of secularization who wished to mute the Christian foundations of Christian Democracy in favor of a more generic communitarian approach.

While no party actually left the Christian Democrat International, many of the “capital C” joined the IDU and focused their efforts on growing that nascent organization. In 2001, the organization re-branded itself the Centrist Democrat International to reflect its move closer to the political center. In a telling sign of this shift, the National Democratic Institute became its link to US politics. At the same time, its co-presidents were Pier Ferdinando Casini (Italy) and Vicente Fox (Mexico), both prominent figures in their respective country’s center-right parties.

No account of American political party transnationalism would be complete without mention of the ideological, yet non-partisan 501(c)(3) organizations. These organizations are non-partisan by law, but they are training people to work in American elections and in the institutions of government; in essence, they are training activists to be partisans. The training programs offered by these organizations are also in high demand from like-minded activists outside the United States. Not only do like-minded activists come to take courses with these organizations, thus bringing American training back to their home political system, they often enlist the help of the organization in creating a sister organization in their home country. The most notable of these organizations on the

American right is the Leadership Institute and on the left the Center for Progressive Leadership.

In terms of issuing a “report card” on transnational political activity, there are difficulties in comparing Republican activity with Democrat activity as apples and apples. The different parties, for reasons of their own, have participated at different levels in different milieus. One exception is on the democratic development front. The National Endowment for Democracy party-themed institutes, the International Republican Institute and the National Democratic Institute, both seem to be equally engaged in providing democratic development assistance.

In terms of party internationals, the Republicans are more visibly engaged in their party international, the International Democratic Union, than the Democrats are in theirs, Liberal International. The Republican National Committee is a full member and active participant of the International Democratic Union and the International Republican Institute. The Democratic National Convention, however, is not a full member of Liberal International. The National Democratic Institute is a “co-operating organization”, the lowest level of membership.

There are reasons for this incongruity. For the Republicans, their relationship with the International Democratic Union is largely about the legacy of Ronald Reagan and the Cold War. The recent leadership of John Howard, the former Prime Minister of

Australia and a staunch ally of recent Republican President George W. Bush, has re-energized the organization which many involved thought was drifting towards stagnation. The closeness of the member parties' leadership in recent years seems to have invested the international with much of its vigor.

The Democrats did not appear to be as involved in Liberal International so it is hard to say if their involvement is actually on the wane. The present state of Liberal International has been described in previous chapters, but the answer for the Democrats' lesser involvement remains elusive. One reason not discussed previously is the objective. When the Democrats went transnational with the Republicans in 1982, they were looking for mature partners who might potentially be in government in the future and who were thus potentially allies for a future Democrat government. The British Liberal Party had not been in that position since the 1940s when the socialist Labour Party became the main party of the British left. The Liberals have been a distant third place in the House of Commons since. At the time the Democrats were looking for allies, the Liberals were actually moving further from the political center by merging with the Social Democratic Party (SDP) to form the Liberal Democrats. The merger has only in the most recent electoral cycle affected the party's chances of returning to power, with the party making sufficient gains to force David Cameron's Conservatives into a coalition government.

Despite its problems, Liberal International was the only party international remotely close to the ideology of the Democrats, which may explain why, through NDI,

they only joined the lower tier of membership. The Christian Democrats joined with the Republicans to form the International Democratic Union. The alternative of joining the social democrat movement would have put them in the party international Socialists International, which, during the Cold War, was not a wise choice for an American political party that wanted to win an election someday. Now that the Christian Democrat International has rebranded itself as the Centrist Democrat International, the NDI has seen fit to also join it as a cooperating organization.

Where Democrats are far more engaged in transnational activity is in outreach to US citizens abroad. Having lost the 2000 election by a few hundred votes in the state of Florida, the Democrats invested heavily in marshalling early and absentee votes in 2004. The Republicans increased their investment, as well, but only put in a fourth of the resources that the Democrats did. They relied on the traditional voting pattern of overseas absentee voters, three-quarters of whom were US servicemen deployed overseas who typically voted disproportionately Republican. In that election, the Republicans won despite the Democrats four-to-one investment.

Undaunted, the Democrats repeated their efforts in 2008, but this time placed special emphasis on the overseas absentee voters who were permanent residents abroad. They held a Democrats Abroad primary for their overseas members and even had a Democrats Abroad delegation with votes at the convention apportioned according to the primary results. The Democrats Abroad delegation had more votes than some states.

Unlike 2004, the early and absentee vote increased significantly for the Democrats and may have decided some of the state victories that gave Obama the presidency. The Democrats are also keeping the abroad members engaged in the political debates back home by having them weigh in on issues, particularly healthcare reform, through online and social media.

In a strange twist in the 2008 election, both presidential campaigns took their campaigns abroad. At the primary stage, almost every major nomination candidate held at least one fundraiser in London, the home of tens of thousands of well-heeled American expatriates. After their nominations had been clinched, both John McCain and Barack Obama went on international tours. McCain did so to reinforce his foreign policy credentials; Obamas did so to generate some foreign policy credentials.

Since this was the first time both parties' candidates did something like this during a political campaign, it is difficult to say if campaigning abroad by one or both nominees will be repeated in future campaigns. The jury is also still out as to the effectiveness of the 2008 tours. One aspect likely to be repeated is the international fundraising. There are citizens abroad who are not just eligible to vote but also eligible to donate money to the parties and candidates. As long as campaigns spend more and more and the parties refuse public financing, the parties will shake every tree they can to fund their efforts even if the tree is not planted in American soil.

These activities that are typical of transnational political parties are now permanent activities of American political parties. Staffs have been hired to manage these relationships. Prominent party members and elected officials regularly attend and promote these activities. They also enjoy support from the parties' broader ideological partners in the 501(c)(3) organization community. While their primary mission remains the same as it has been since their respective foundings, namely to win elections for their candidates, their level of transnational activity also makes them transnational parties.

The American variety of political party transnationalism is not the traditional Euro-centric model. It is not necessarily uniquely American, either, as many of the American political parties' allies have followed suit and adopted similar practices. Therefore it is not entirely accurate to refer to this model of political party transnationalism as "American", nor is it accurate to refer to the traditional models collectively as "Euro-centric" despite their common European origins.³

The differences between the older models and the newer models of political party transnationalism are analogous to the divisions within a religious congregation between the natural members and the converted members. The natural transnationals would be akin to those of both the pan-national single party transnationals like Sinn Féin and the

³ Michel Aflaq and Salah al-Din al-Bitar were educated in Westernized schools in what was then the French Mandate of Syria and formulated the ideology of the Ba'ath movement while observing the rise of national socialism in Europe while students at the Sorbonne in Paris, France.

Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party as well as the multi-party transnationals of the communist, socialist, social democrat, Christian democrat, liberal international, and green parties. These were parties founded as transnational in both organization and purpose. They are international movements in the form of political parties. Therefore, transnational party activity for these political parties is a natural activity.

The converted transnationals are more like those parties based on the eighteenth century Westminster model, including traditional parties in Great Britain, Canada, Australia and, of course, the United States of America. These are parties that were originally founded as national parties to run to form national governments. Since this is actually the older model of political party and predates the advent of transnational party movements, there was no broad international movement to which they could belong even if they wanted to do so. They are political parties that joined together to form a movement. They adapted, or converted, to a transnational environment when the politics of the day dictated it, or, to further the religious analogy, when the spirit moved them.

The difference between the natural and converted models of transnational political party movements underscores the importance of the different political time and space in which they were developed. As argued in the preceding paragraph, the converted transnational parties are actually the original model of political party. Many of the parties in this model are among the first political parties in their country, having been founded to organize for their country's first elections. In some cases, such as Great

Britain, parties evolved in the gap between the written and unwritten constitutions to facilitate the operation of the legislatures, particularly the lower houses where elections were eventually allowed. Their scope was strictly national.

The converted transnationals had to be converted because there was no transnational movement to which they could belong. That changed with the advent of the Industrial Revolution in Europe, particularly the second phase beginning around the latter half of the nineteenth century. The rapid industrialization and urbanization of Europe led to widening social divisions between factory owners and workers. In this environment, the work of Friedrich Engels and Karl Marx came to prominence. Their works *The Communist Manifesto* in 1848 and the first volume of *Das Kapital* in 1867 were not only critical of capitalism, but also called for as a solution the world wide revolution of the working class (proletariat) and the abolition of class distinction and private property ownership. From this soil was born the communist, socialist and, later, social democrat transnational party movements. The movement was largely underground until the October Revolution on 1917 brought the Russian communists, the Bolsheviks, to power under the leadership of Vladimir Lenin. The Communist International was formed two years later.⁴

⁴ This was actually the third international. The first was the International Workingmen's Association which formed in 1864 and lasted until 1876. The second international was formed in 1889 and lasted until 1916.

It was also this environment which saw the development of the Christian democracy movement, largely in reaction to the rise of the socialist/communist political movements and the trade union movement. Looking to address the excesses of the Industrial Revolution without the radicalism of the Communists, Christian democrats took inspiration from the Papal encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, in which the Church recognized the misery of the workers due to the excesses of the new industrial capitalist economy. The result was a party movement that incorporated the views held by liberals, conservatives and even socialists, within the broader framework of moral and Christian principles.⁵

Unlike the transnational party movements that emerged from, or in reaction to, Marxist thought, the movements which emerged in the early twentieth century had little to do with the Industrial Revolution. These transnational movements could actually be said to be national movements but they are transnational by definition because a political boundary divides the nation among two or more states. Sinn Féin, Irish Gaelic for “we ourselves”, was founded in 1905 to forward the Irish Catholic republican movement in Ireland in their quest for independence from the United Kingdom. During Ireland’s War of Independence, Sinn Féin became the *de facto* political wing of the Provisional Irish Republican Army, creating a model combining political and military operations that would be replicated in the Middle East in the latter half of the twentieth century by

⁵ Szulc, Tad; “Communists, Socialists, and Christian Democrats” Pp. 99 – 109 in *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*; Vol. 360, Latin America Tomorrow; July 1965; P. 100

terrorist organizations like Hamas and Hezbollah. When the treaty that ended the War of Independence resulted in the creation of a Republic of Ireland with three predominantly Protestant counties in Northern Ireland remaining, Sinn Féin had members in two separate countries.

Since the division of Ireland under the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921, Sinn Féin has run candidates in elections for both the Republic's Oireachtas Éireann ("national parliament") and Northern Ireland's seats in the United Kingdom's House of Commons. Since the implementation of the Good Friday Accords creating a Northern Ireland Assembly, Sinn Féin separated from the IRA, which itself formally dissolved, and entered into a power-sharing agreement with the main Protestant political party, the Democratic Unionist Party. Sinn Féin had several executive positions in the government and, in 2004, elected a member to represent all of Northern Ireland in the European Parliament. That member sat with the European United Left – Nordic Green Left voting block.

The origins of the Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party are also found in the nationalist movements of the early twentieth century. Like the Irish Catholics of Sinn Féin, the Arab "nation" was spread over many jurisdictions. Over the preceding millennia, the territory of the Middle East typically considered Arab changed hands between the various kingdoms and empires almost continuously. One of the consequences of World War I was the dissolution of the final empire to control the area, the Ottomans. The Ottoman

Empire was divided into a series of Mandates administered by individual members of the victorious powers through the newly formed League of Nations. For the first time in centuries, the Arab nation was politically divided.

It was in the western schools of the French Mandate of Syria, and later at the Sorbonne, that Michel Aflaq and his contemporaries created the Arab Socialist Ba'ath party as a pan-national, therefore transnational, party movement to unify the Arab nation in the Middle East, bringing together the artificial states created in the aftermath of World War I. Its ideology combined French Jacobinism, the international and National Socialism to which Aflaq was exposed in Europe as a student, with his own Arab nationalism.

The party operated in many Arab countries, but only held power in Syria and Iraq. A *coup d'état* by the military wing against Aflaq's historic leadership in 1955 permanently split the movement into rival Syrian and Iraqi factions. They became separate parties with parallel structures. The Syrian faction became an ally of the Soviet Union while the Iraqi faction adopted a more centrist approach. By the time the Iraqi Ba'athists took power in 1963, the only commonality was the name.⁶

The environment in which Liberal International was founded in 1947 was far different, the brief period between the end of World War II and the onset of the Cold

⁶ Devlin; "The Baath Party: Rise and Metamorphosis" 1991; P. 1405 – 1406

War. There was still a spirit of triumphalism among the elite of the victorious powers, particularly in the west. The Atlantic Charter mentioned in Chapter 2 had formed the basis for the United Nations, which officially came into existence in 1945. Liberals believed there was no political problem that could not be solved by the application of liberal principles and they crafted their 1947 Oxford Declaration accordingly.

The most recent of the natural transnational political party movements, the Green Party movement, has origins outside both the Marxist dialectic touched off by the Industrial Revolution and *The Communist Manifesto* and the anti-imperialist nationalism of the early twentieth century. It is also the first movement to begin outside the “old world”. The first Green Party was actually founded in Tasmania, Australia, as the United Tasmania Group (UTG) in 1972. It began in response to the Tasmanian government’s plan to flood Lake Pedder, an Australian national park, as part of a plan to build a hydroelectric dam. Four weeks later, the party’s candidates were campaigning in their first election.⁷

Despite being a new and local party, they set out their first program in the context of the global environmental movement. The UTG’s first leader, Dr. Richard Jones, wrote the pamphlet *New Ethic* that became the charter of the Green Party movement. It begins by clearly tying the opponents of the Lake Pedder development to a larger movement that did not yet have form:

⁷ <http://www.globalgreens.org/history/chronology/1972> accessed February 10, 2010

We citizens of Tasmania and members of the **United Tasmania Group**,

United in a global movement for survival;

Concerned for the dignity of humanity and the value of cultural heritage while rejecting any view of humans which gives them the right to exploit all of nature;

Moved by the need for a new ethic which unites humans with nature to prevent the collapse of life support systems of the earth;

Rejecting all exclusive ideological and pragmatic views of society as partial and divisive;

Condemning the misuse of power for individual or group prominence based on aggression against humanity or nature;

Shunning the acquisition and display of individual wealth as an expression of greed for status or power;

While acknowledging that Tasmania is uniquely favoured with natural resources, climate form and beauty;

Undertake to live our private and communal lives in such a way that we maintain Tasmania's form and beauty for our own enjoyment and for the enjoyment of our children through **unlimited future** generations;

Undertake to create aesthetic harmony between our human structures and the natural landscape Where our individual and communal needs demand modification to the natural environment;

Undertake to regulate our individual and communal needs for resources, both living and non-living, while preventing the wholesale extraction of our non-replenishable resources for the satisfaction of the desire for profit;

Undertake to husband and cherish Tasmania's living resources so that we do minimum damage to the web of life of which we are part while preventing the extinction or serious depletion of any form of life by our individual, group or communal actions;⁸

⁸ Jones; 1972

The same year, the transnational party began to take shape when the first national Green party was founded in neighboring New Zealand, the Values New Zealand Party.⁹ The movement first sprang up in Europe when the first Green Party of the United Kingdom, PEOPLE, was formed in 1973. In addition to previous Green works, PEOPLE also built its inspiration for the works *The Blueprint for Survival* by the Ecologist and *The Limits of Growth* by the Club of Rome. Over subsequent decades, Green Parties sprang up in Europe and Africa as well as in North and South America. In 1992, the movement held its first “planetary meeting of Greens”.¹⁰

The new millennium saw the green party movement become a truly transnational movement at the organizational level. In 2001, the Green Parties formed their party international, Global Greens, at a congress in Canberra, Australia.¹¹ In 2004, the Europe-wide European Green Party was founded to run candidates for the European Parliament.¹²

While the Green Parties were forging a path outside the dialectics of the twentieth century, the Cold War had governments mired in the old issues of international peace and

⁹Global Greens; *Global Green Party History Chronology - 1972*
<http://www.globalgreens.org/history/chronology/1972> accessed February 10, 2010

¹⁰Global Greens; *Global Green Party History Chronology - 1992*
<http://www.globalgreens.org/history/chronology/1992> accessed February 10, 2010

¹¹Global Greens; *Global Greens Charter - 2001*
<http://www.globalgreens.org/globalcharter> accessed February 10, 2010

¹²Global Greens; *Global Green Party History Chronology - 2004*
<http://www.globalgreens.org/history/chronology/2004> accessed February 10, 2010

security. In many ways the Cold War was a synthesis of both the Marxist and the anti-imperialist movements. Both the Soviet backed Marxist governments and the democratic west supported anti-imperialist movements when it suited their geopolitical needs. The Soviets and their allies were supporting communist and socialist parties as well as communist militias throughout the developing world. The foundation arms of the transnational parties of American ally West Germany were supporting democratic development and building anti-communist allies, but they were largely alone.

It was in this environment that America found religion and converted its parties to incorporate transnationalism in its operations. While not the sole cause, the election of Ronald Reagan signaled the end of the Détente period of the Cold War. Reagan was elected on a platform opposed to the Carter-era concessions to the Soviet Union. Military spending was ramped up, along with counter-intelligence operations and the opening of the new front of political party transnationalism.

The new transnational activities adopted by American parties did not re-invent the wheel. While such activities were new to American parties, they were old activities for their allies in the Christian democracy on the right and the liberal international movement on the left. This allowed American transnational activity to interact with established networks and come online with these new activities at a much faster pace than had they been established from scratch. Even the network that had to be created, the International Democratic Union, was not drawn from thin air. It managed to build on the existing

network and experiences of the Christian democracy movement along with Reagan's network of political allies among the centre-right governments of the United Kingdom, Germany, Canada, and others.

Having established that American political parties engage in transnational activities, the question remains: do these activities rise to the level of a new, as yet unidentified transnational political party *movement*? While it is clear American political parties are operating on a transnational level, it is less clear if this is in the form of a movement, something less, or something more. The preponderance of evidence suggests that it is something less than a movement.

The model of an international political party *movement* involves multiple national parties operating separately in multiple countries with a central organization, a party international. Since the converted transnational political parties intersected with allied natural transnational political party movements, they are nearly identical in structure to the movement model. They have separate parties joined in congress with a central organization, the party international.

The exception to the movement model being the pan-national model is that of a single party operating in multiple countries. These parties, however, generally began as national parties. Politics may have made the national movement pan-national, therefore transnational, by dividing the nation between multiple states, like Sinn Féin. An

alternative is that foreign powers had already divided the nation among different states and the party aspired to unite the divided nation, like the Arab Socialist Ba'ath party.

While the structure appears identical to a transnational party movement, the history and internal workings of the network suggest it is not identical. This is where the disproportionate involvement of the parties in the institutions of the transnational activity of parties matters. The low level of involvement of the Democrats in Liberal International along with their involvement in Centrist Democrats International, suggest an act of political convenience in reaction to the events of the day rather than dedication to an ideological movement.

Like the Republicans, the Democrats could not find a transnational party organization that was a good fit for their domestic politics. By the early 1980s, Liberal International, as argued previously, represented a broader ideology and set of policy interests than the Democrats were comfortable representing to the American electorate. Unlike the Republicans, who worked around being the proverbial square peg by cutting their own properly shaped hole into political space that would fit them, the Democrats made no attempt build a network, preferring token involvement in an existing one.

The network organization created by the Republicans is also telling. The International Democratic Union bills itself not as a party international, but as a “working

association”.¹³ It is not as ideologically homogenous as the traditional movements. The member parties commonly identify with the political values of the center-right, including recognition of the ideals of liberal democracy, freedom of the individual, the need for economic growth to be based on individual initiative and free, competitive enterprise economies. However, they are parties representing different political ideologies: conservative, Christian democrat, and other “like-minded” parties.¹⁴ Party names can sometimes be misleading, particularly on the center right, as the name is often historical and the ideology is more recent. As mentioned previously, “Republican” only became synonymous with “conservative” in America following the Goldwater campaign of 1964. A more extreme example of the incongruity between name and ideology is Australia’s party of the center-right, the *Liberal* Party of Australia.

The traditional transnational party movements are typically homogenous in ideology, as their parties were formed individually and later joined in party internationals as part of a grander plan to spread the ideology and policies of the movement worldwide. The International Democratic Union is also different in this regard. While the Christian democracy movement was founded to promote a particular ideology to achieve positive change, the same cannot be said of its offspring. While the International Democratic Union promotes its political beliefs and would like them to be universally accepted, the

¹³ International Democratic Union, *History* <http://www.idu.org/history.aspx> accessed 10 February 2010

¹⁴ International Democratic Union, *History* <http://www.idu.org/history.aspx> accessed 10 February 2010.

motivation to create the organization was to oppose an ideology and transnational party movement, Soviet-backed communism.

The oppositional nature of its origins has had drastic effects on its operations. As previously noted, Elizabeth Dugan of the International Republican Institute took the view that the International Democratic Union was, until John Howard became Chairman, in danger of becoming a “talk shop”. The period of the organization’s doldrums corresponded to the era from the demise of the Soviet Union until 9/11. All involved were still committed to spreading the organization’s message and policies, but the problem was the lack of urgency following the collapse of their principle competition. They were a victim of their own success.

The terrorist attacks of 9/11 opened many eyes to the threat to national security of terrorist organizations, especially those of the radical Islamic variety. The 9/11 attacks at the World Trade Center in New York; the Pentagon in Washington, DC; and United flight 93, which crashed in a field of Shanksville, Pennsylvania; claimed victims from over two dozen countries. In the months and years that followed, organizations allied to the perpetrators, Al Qaeda, staged attacks in Madrid, Spain; London, England; Bali, Indonesia; and many others. They would use the least developed countries on earth, like Afghanistan and Somalia, as bases of operation to strike at western targets.

For the International Democratic Union and its leadership the rise of radical Islam provided a renewed sense of urgency to their operations. John Howard, at the time still Prime Minister of Australia, became the chairman of the International Democratic Union in 2005 and refocused the organization on the mission of expanding the membership and encouraging political parties of the center-right in new and developing countries to strengthen political systems to counter the political force of radical Islam.

This is not to suggest that 9/11 somehow saved the International Democratic Union from the lethargy of America's 1990s holiday from history. While it did renew its purpose, there are still internal contradictions which the Republican leadership papers over that could prove problematic if certain divisions within the party gain prominence. The main one is the isolationist streak within the party that is often found in the more libertarian wing as well as the neo-conservative wing. For the latter, something like the International Democratic Union is not a problem like other multi-national institutions, particularly the United Nations, as long as it remains a viable instrument of US policy and does not require the United States to surrender its sovereignty. For the libertarian wing, any international engagement is a limitation on sovereignty. As one Republican attendee at the IYDU Freedom Forum said, on condition of anonymity, "We would talk about this stuff more, but it would drive the Ron Paul people nuts and the rest of us to distraction."

Another issue for the organization is simply keeping the next generation of Republicans involved. Most of the Republicans currently involved in leadership roles in the IDU began their political careers during the organization's beginnings under the leadership of Ronald Reagan. For the organization to continue, it will require the involvement of the Republicans. Based on what was said at the Freedom Forum, it is not altogether clear if this will be possible. While those Republicans and College Republicans who were in leadership positions were enthusiastic about the organization's prospects, some of the attendees from outside the leadership were less so. This miasma may be genuine or it may just be an expression of the views of a few students during what seemed like a low point in the Republican Party's prospects in the early summer of 2009.

The International Democratic Union is certainly a lesser party international than its contemporaries with respect to party sovereignty. It places far fewer obligations on its member parties than other internationals. This once again goes to its oppositional origins. It was intended to bring together like-minded parties of the center-right to provide a counterforce and oppose a transnational political movement. At the same time, the Republicans and the International Republican Institute are far more instrumental to the International Democratic Union than the National Democratic Institute is to either Liberal International or the Centrist Democrats International. By comparison, DNI is little more than a hanger-on to existing transnational party movement networks. The

International Democratic Union may be slightly less than a transnational party *movement*, but it is certainly a transnational party *alliance*.

It should come as no surprise that the party international led by an American political party is the lesser international. The Wilsonian/Rooseveltian American liberal belief in international institutions as the protector of peace and security gave way to a Reagan-era conservative suspicion of such institutions. While it is possible to argue that such institutions prevented World War III, a skeptic could equally argue that the real prevention of another global-scale conflict was the prospect of mutually assured destruction by nuclear weapons.

The Reagan-era skepticism of international institutions is one of the reasons for the International Democratic Union being more of a transnational party alliance than a movement. Canadian political scientist Stephen Clarkson, writing in *Does North America Exist? Governing the Continent After NAFTA and 9/11*, argues American policymakers prefer institutions that are *ad hoc*, contrasting the institutions created by the North American Free Trade Agreement against the trading rules of the European Union. He argues the Reagan-era skepticism towards global international governance institutions like the United Nations, an underlying belief these organizations ultimately sought to become global government, led to creating flexible institutions within NAFTA, as opposed to the creation of a continental supra-state like the European Union.

The permanent secretariat under NAFTA does not actually have an office and is comprised solely of whomever the member's executive branch designates as the lead office on trade. The NAFTA dispute resolution tribunals are not permanent and are established to deal with particular complaints from member countries. They are dissolved once the process has run its course. The European Union, on the other hand, recently moved from a rotating presidency to a permanent executive. It has a permanent trade office that resolves disputes between members. It is well known for handling cases of regional origins labeling disputes, which is a technical way of saying it decides that only cheese that comes from Parma, Italy, can be called parmesan cheese in the European Union.¹⁵

To extend Clarkson's logic, this preference for *ad hoc* institutions that adapt to contemporary circumstance permeates domestic institutions; the most malleable of those institutions are the political parties. Since they are institutions of governance, but are not defined as such, or even defined as existing, by the constitution, they are the most adaptable. The regulations imposed on the finances of political parties have proven to be a barrier, but the parties have also proven they can work around them.

Regardless of the level of activity, American political parties are now transnational parties. They are transnational in scope largely because the American

¹⁵ Stephen Clarkson; *Does North America Exist? Governing the Continent after NAFTA and 9/11* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2008); P. 12

people are now transnational. Between the international interests of the American government and the increased mobility of private citizens, there are over 4 million Americans abroad during any given election cycle. In an era of elections coming down to several hundred votes in a single swing state, chasing those overseas votes, alone, will send parties outside their borders. In addition, parties can liaise with like-minded parties and other third parties to act as vehicles of public policy, such as countering the political force of Soviet-backed communism, in ways which would only draw suspicion if conducted directly by government.

Transnational party activity is now essentially a permanent activity of American political parties. The parties have staff and resources dedicated to transnational party activity. The parties also have permanent organs dedicated solely to that activity. While the National Endowment for Democracy's party-themed institutes are formally separate from their parties, the institutes are staffed with partisans and are directed by boards of directors and board chairs who are prominent members of the parties, both in terms of sitting members of Congress and former officeholders in Congress and their parties' presidential administrations. Since the taxpayer funds them, the partisans can achieve a high level of results with a minimal level of investment.

The parties also have "outside" help to perpetuate their transnationalism. Partisan consultants, including pollsters, fundraisers, and campaign managers who work for American political party campaigns, have grown in size and scope and are now an

international business. In taking on international clients, they often later serve as intermediaries between their international and domestic clientele. There is also the training provided by the community of 501(c)(3) organizations. These non-partisan organizations train activists, both American and foreign, to work in partisan milieus. They also have a history of helping former students from abroad establish similar organizations in their home country.

At the same time, if this transnational activity is so important to the parties, why is there a lack of research on the subject? Even the research cited herein on the various aspects of American political party transnational activity lamented a lack of research on their subject. The reason is simple: the individual aspects of American political party transnationalism have suffered from a distinct lack of “sexiness”, for lack of a better word, as well as falling between the cleavages of the various sub-disciplines of academia.

The American narrative of the Cold War is Ronald Reagan giving the “Tear Down the Wall” speech, reigniting the arms race, summits, the Central Intelligence Agency versus the KGB, the fall of the Berlin Wall, the solidarity movement in Poland and the collapse of the Soviet Union. Congress creating party-themed institutes to provide democratic development assistance is nowhere to be found. It is too international for American politics and too American for international relations.

For other subjects, the issue has been relevance, both real and perceived. Prior to the 2000 presidential election, it is safe to say no one thought overseas voters, absentee ballots, and citizens abroad actually mattered. The discipline has been playing catch-up in the intervening years. Political consultants turned out to be too busy doing international campaigns to actually write about them. When Robert Shrum was asked why his book, *No Excuses*, did not include much more than passing references to his international work, he replied, “It would have double the page count. The editors thought we should keep it focused on the domestic work.”¹⁶

Is it a permanent activity? Theoretically, there is no such thing as permanent activity in politics. The closest one gets to permanent activity in politics is continuing activity. Transnational party activity is likely to continue for a number of reasons, the principal one being that it ultimately gets political parties what they want. First, it wins elections. Second, it achieves political goals and even defeats their foreign enemies. Third, someone else pays for much of the activity. The taxpayers fund the National Endowment for Democracy institutes. The 501(c)(3) organizations provide training for the activists of US parties’ foreign allies at the expense of the allies. As long as American parties get what they want at minimal cost from their transnational political party activities, they will continue to find ways to do them

¹⁶ Shrum; personal interview with author via telephone; 2009



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