

**THE RIGHT RESPONSE: THE REACTION OF THE SILENT MAJORITY TO
THE SOCIAL MOVEMENTS OF THE SIXTIES**

A Dissertation

by

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the conservative response of mainstream Americans to the various social movements that captured the nation's attention in the 1960s. In conjunction with opinion polls, newspaper articles, and archival collections, this project uses an unconventional methodology by analyzing White House mail summaries and personal letters Americans wrote and telegraphed to the White House in response to liberal activities. I conclude that the group President Richard Nixon labeled the "Silent Majority" – while tolerant of tempered social change – despised protests and demonstrations. These citizens felt they were losing their grip on an American identity established in the 1950s that included American exceptionalism, anticommunism, state's rights, and a strong sense of morality. To counter demonstrations and perceived media bias, conservatives mobilized and demanded a return to law and order.

My dissertation explores the Silent Majority reaction to the main social movements of the decade, which also examines their interpretation of the American identity. In the first chapter, I ascertain that conservatives and moderates tried to halt the pace of integration by investigating their response to the Freedom Rides, Ole Miss, and the Civil Rights Act. The second chapter explores the conservative response to the New Left and campus protests; they demanded that university administrations regain campus control from radicals and expel protestors. In the third chapter, I examine the Silent Majority's reaction to antiwar demonstrations and Moratoriums through grassroots

organizations and pro-war rallies. The project then turns to the response to the counterculture in the fourth chapter, and how citizens distrusted Hippies and eventually tried to incorporate them back into the mainstream. The fifth chapter delves into the visceral backlash against Black Power and federally enforced busing mandates in the North. The last chapter investigates the grassroots organization of housewives to counter women's liberation, abortion, and the Equal Rights Amendment. I argue the Silent Majority was not as silent as their moniker implies, and in fact influenced policy decisions and elections, leading to the rise of the neoconservatives in the 1970s.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

“We, the Moderate group, support you. You are our President. We back your stand to remain unmoved by the storms raging around you. Patience can be very rewarding. When the clamor and din ceases, when the shouting and tumult die down, we shall still be here. Those who rage today will be wiser tomorrow, For nothing tempers man more than time, and only time subdues a storm.” – Letter to President Nixon, 1969¹

In January 1970, *Time* magazine chose a group it called “The Middle Americans” as its “Man of the Year.” They were also known as the “forgotten Americans” until President Richard Nixon gave them a name that stuck: the Silent Majority. They could be seen praying in schools defiant of the Supreme Court order, supporting law enforcement in communities, and displaying car bumper stickers reading “HONOR AMERICA” or “SPIRO IS MY HERO,” referring to the vice president who took a firm stand against protesters and perceived media bias that favored liberal movements. As the publisher Roy E. Larsen described, “The American dream that they were living was no longer the dream as advertised.” They seemed to be losing their control over the country to “the liberals, the radicals, the defiant young, [and] a communications industry that they often believed was lying to them.” The year 1969 was their turning point, as

¹ Letter, Jimmy R. Hays of Seabrook, TX to President Nixon, 10/8/1969, folder Begin 6/30/69 (1 of 2); Box 15; (WH/RN).

politicians led by Richard Nixon and Spiro Agnew recognized them and their inherent collective power, and the media caught on. Finally given an identity, the Silent Majority “sought to reclaim their culture” through patriotism and law and order, and their efforts influenced legislation and official policy. Because they had begun “to shape the course of the nation and the nation's course in the world,” *Time* decided that they deserved the prestigious honor of Man and Woman of the Year.²

In the 1960s, a battle for attention ensued between those who were searching for a new set of American values versus those who were content with the traditional set of values set forth in the previous decade. While most Americans went along with changes being made in the Sixties, the Silent Majority did not accept the tactics protesters used in demonstrations, which they considered were un-American. Acknowledging their given name, the Silent Majority accused the media of a liberal bias and sensationalism that ignored the status quo. By using published editorials, opinion polls, and private correspondence, this study concludes that this group of Americans was not as silent as previously portrayed, as they sought to maintain the American ideal through various expressions rather than protests. Some of the social movements lost momentum by 1970, faced with mounting resistance to violence and radicalism. Although varied according to race, religion, class, and region, their responses to social activism became more vocal and visible as liberal groups became more militant, resulting in the rise of the social and cultural New Right in the 1970s and the political ascent of Ronald Reagan.

² “Man and Woman of the Year,” *Time* 95 no. 1, 1/5/1970, 16-25.

The roots of the Silent Majority lay with the Silent Generation that had lived through the Great Depression and World War II. This crop, also known as the “Greatest Generation,” the “Younger Generation,” and “The Lucky Few,” preceded the baby boomers. Echoing the idealism of this generation, Henry Luce in a 1941 *Life* magazine article described the possibility of an American Century, explaining the country’s “duty and opportunity as the most powerful and vital nation in the world... to exert... the full impact of our influence.” Luce believed in a distinctive American spirit embodied in the ideals of a “love for freedom, a feeling for the equality of opportunity, a tradition of self-reliance and independence and also of co-operation,” but also truth, justice, and charity. He declared it “our time to be the powerhouse” to spread these ideals throughout the world.³

The American people in the 1950s formed a sense of national identity in response to foreign affairs. Diplomatically, America had gained the position of global dominance after World War II, and most citizens reveled in the unbridled economic power of the country. Yet the Soviet Union rudely interrupted the American Century with its competition for global hegemony. Tensions ran high between the two countries with vastly differing ideals, as the Soviet Union planned to expand its system of communism while the United States firmly promised to contain the expansion. American fears of communist infiltration in the country ran high, and Senator Joseph McCarthy’s hearings elevated these concerns, leading to a new conformity and consensus to avoid becoming redbaited or blacklisted. The 1959 kitchen debate between Vice President Richard Nixon

³ Henry Luce, “The American Century,” *Life*, 2/17/1941, 63, 65.

and Soviet Premier Nikita Kruschchev displayed the difference of living between the two nations and further upheld the superiority of American technology and suburban materialism that defined the decade.

Anti-communism brought the country together and created a safe and homogenous set of cultural norms and a sense of shared identity: white, middle-class, clean-cut, and youthful. Perceived as the superior race, whites were free to move around the country at will, while blacks were considered second-class citizens, relegated to separate schools, facilities, and neighborhoods. In universities, the administrations made regulations on conduct, and students followed them. Youth celebrated its first cultural movement, as most teenagers danced to rock 'n' roll, cruised down Main Street in their hot rods, and ate at drive-ins. Church attendance was high and social mores about sex outside of marriage were restrictive. Rigidly defined gender roles within the newly redefined nuclear family were common and customary, providing a type of domestic containment against the threat of communism. American superiority relied on its booming consumer culture and strictly demarcated gender roles, as the husband served as the provider and the woman as wife, mother, and purchaser of consumer goods, which turned the process of consumption into a patriotic act.⁴ The Silent Generation that had learned to make sacrifices for the country in times of depression and war wanted to ensure their children would have a much different experience, and spoiled them with

⁴ Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1988). Ruth Rosen, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America* (New York: Penguin Books, 2006), 14-18.

material luxuries, which provided a security that would ironically enable a protest culture.

The following decade of the Sixties is known predominately for the rise of social activism that historian Terry Anderson labeled “the movement.” Most historians of the decade have focused on civil rights, the emergence of the New Left and various student movements, the Hippie counterculture, the rise of black power, and women’s liberation. These social issues ultimately are a large part of the culture wars that divided America for decades. With roots in the Fifties, civil rights activists who saw blacks as being left out of the American ideal wanted to achieve racial equality in America. Beginning with nonviolent tactics of boycotts, sit-ins and marches, African Americans struggled to close the gap between tradition and court rulings, and they eventually triumphed with legislation such as the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

Other movements fed off the energy of the civil rights crusade. Middle-class student activists used vocal and visible approaches at colleges to achieve more freedom on campuses, as sit-ins and teach-ins served as verbal demonstrations against *in loco parentis*. A cultural segment of the movement, the hippies, opposed the materialism that dominated the ‘50s, and they “dropped out” of “the establishment” that included government, military, and corporations. They instead created a counter culture of new living styles, drugs, music, and fashion that eventually became mainstream for many in the younger generation. By the second half of the 1960s, minorities no longer politely asked for their rights, but demanded them through forceful empowerment movements of

Black, Brown, and Red Power. Further, antiwar protests increased in frequency and attendance as the Vietnam War dragged on through the early 1970s.

Lastly, previously involved but marginalized or objectified in other areas of the movement, women began realizing their own sexual, social and economic limitations. In the latter half of the Sixties, women's liberation focused more efforts on the problem of gender discrimination. Through consciousness-raising small groups of college students and wives, political involvement, and cultural influence, women began advocating for an Equal Rights Amendment to equalize opportunities between men and women, which would allow for a liberation from the gender roles that were so important in the Fifties. These feminists gave impetus to controversial discussions and legalization of abortion and gay liberation, whose proponents demanded recognition of their way of life.

All of these movements resulted in more individual freedom and equality by the late Sixties, but these rapid changes also prompted many moderate and conservative Americans to refute "the movement's" motives, tactics, and goals. Since the Communist Party (CPUSA) had been persecuted and hunted in the Fifties, its membership had been on the wane. In the 1960s, they surreptitiously supported liberal movements, particularly civil rights, New Left, and the antiwar organizations. It was still dangerous and harmful to be identified as a communist, and much of this support was kept secret. As deference began to break down and anti-communism loosened its grip on the American image, Americans were willing to accept some modifications to the status quo only to the point of dramatically changing their core values, especially for the region in which they lived. Following their experiences in the '50s, most Americans in the 1960s had a particular

view of what the American ideal should be, and demonstrations were not included in that model.

The “Right Response” to the movement included moderates, conservatives, and increasingly, disillusioned liberals who wished to distance themselves from the New Left. As carriers of the Cold War consensus, conservatives were the mobilizers to refute the movements and gave the Silent Majority its talking points. Leading the revival of conservative politics, the Young Americans for Freedom worked at the grassroots level to help spread conservatism beginning in 1960. White southerners, conservative Christians, opponents of the Equal Rights Amendment, and challengers of abortion were appalled at the radical side of these movements, stimulating a racial, political, social, and cultural backlash. Some Americans who felt pushed too far used means considered unusual for themselves to react against perceived forced change and began to write letters for the first time to their political representatives, sent in editorials to their newspapers, and organized groups against the perceived threat to their American way of life.

Who was in the Silent Majority? The average American in the Sixties was a working citizen who lived primarily in suburbs established after WWII. Robert C. Wood, a social scientist from Massachusetts Institute of Technology and under-secretary at the new Department of Housing and Urban Development, pointed out in 1967 that the majority of America was not composed of “the agitator, not the dissident, not the intellectual, not the educated housewife, nor the conscience-stricken executive—but the working American.” His statistical definition explained this majority of about twenty

million American families as middle class, supported by white or blue collar males earning between \$5,000 and \$10,000 a year. These families lived on the outskirts of a city or the suburbs, 70 percent owning their own home and 94 percent driving their own car. Only 43 percent had completed the eighth grade and 94 percent had no education beyond high school.⁵ In a national Gallup Poll taken in October of 1964, 92 percent declared that they were Christian.⁶ The U.S. Census shows that between 1960 and 1970, 88 percent of Americans were white, while only 10.5 percent were black.⁷ In terms of age, the population bracket of 15-24 year-olds grew the fastest from 1960 to 1970, which reached a 49 percent increase; while those over age 55 grew only 20 percent.⁸

Arguing that politicians had lost the true sense of identity of the American people, one American from Pennsylvania complained in 1962, “Today, despite the fact 90% of our people are white... the Administration today breaks its neck to please the colored people.” He accused politicians of completely ignoring “the backbone of America... the middle class whites,” when they should begin thinking about the very people who have built the America that the politicians were “so ably tearing down.”⁹ America was going through a dramatic transformative period, and although many

⁵ Wood’s findings in Geoffrey Hodgson, *America in our Time* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, 1976), 414.

⁶ Gallup/Potomac Poll #1964-637POS: National Survey of Attitudes, Hopes, and Fears, October 1964, 82.

⁷ Series A 23-28, *Annual Estimates of the Population, by Sex and Race: 1900 to 1970, US*. Bureau of the Census, Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970, Bicentennial Edition, Part 1 (Washington, D.C., 1975), 9.

⁸ Series A 29-42. *Annual Estimates of the Population, by Age: 1900 to 1970, US*. Bureau of the Census, Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970, Bicentennial Edition, Part 1 (Washington, D.C., 1975), 10.

⁹ Letter, Walter S. Cahill to Lyndon Johnson, 4/12/1962, “Civil Rights 1,” Box 125, VP Papers, LBJ Library.

residents agreed with some positive change, they still resisted the mandates, violence, and enforced pace that came with a civil rights movement supported by the federal government.

The 1970 *Time* article described the Silent Majority as more a “state of mind, a morality, a construct of values and prejudices and a complex of fears.” While it was sure to disagree on some things, it represented “a vast, unorganized fraternity bound together by a roughly similar way of seeing things.” Conservatives helped shape this viewpoint, as they held traditional perspectives on anticommunism, opposition to government intervention, conventional morality, and religious freedom. Some voted for Nixon while some voted for Hubert Humphrey. The term signified about 100 million middle and lower-middle class people in America, approximately half the population, older and middle-aged, and middlebrow. According to *Time*, the Woman of the Year worried “about her children being bussed, about the sex education to which they are subjected, the drugs they might pick up at school, the smut for sale on the drugstore newsstand and the neighborhood movie screen.”

Middle America searched for ways to celebrate their nation. According to *Time*, they had been silenced and ignored “while angry minorities dominated the headlines and the Government's domestic action,” and at times, were “treated with condescension.” They could find heroes in Spiro Agnew for his rejection of “effete corps of impudent snobs,” California Governor Ronald Reagan and San Francisco State College President S. I. Hayakawa for their hard line on dissent, and astronaut Neil Armstrong, who gave them a sense of patriotism and pride. The astronauts themselves were “paragons of

Middle American aspiration,” for it gave back to Middle America a victory, not only for the country, but also of its own values.¹⁰ One Californian wrote Nixon after viewing the launch of Apollo 11, “Thank you for giving us the reassurance that our red, white, and blue America is not dead.” She wanted to share that the “pride of being an American last night [while watching the shuttle launch] was a thrilling experience for many of us who have become disillusioned with the sordidness of hippies, draft card burners, protesters, and ‘I don’t wanna workers’.”¹¹

While the Silent Majority tended to center in the American heartland, they could also be found in Queens, New York, and Van Nuys, California. In fact, the Sunbelt of the South and the West was expanding, and stretched across the southern states from Florida to California. Kevin Phillips identified this Sun Belt phenomenon in his 1969 book *The Emerging Republican Majority*, explaining the population shift to California, Arizona, Florida, and Texas as a forging of a “new, conservative political era in the South, Southwest, and Heartland,” the stronghold of political conservatives like Barry Goldwater and Ronald Reagan.¹²

Popular culture also reinforced the traditional American ideal and represents nonverbally the themes of the culture. Trendy films in the Sixties confirmed traditional American roles and propagated conservative values. After all, according to Quigley Publishing that compiled a list of the ten top-earning actors for each year, the favorite actors and the actresses of the decade were John Wayne, Doris Day, and Julie Andrews,

¹⁰ “Man and Woman of the Year,” *Time* 95, Issue 1, 1/5/1970, 16-25.

¹¹ Letter from Mrs. Carol C. Curtis of Sylmar, CA to President Nixon, 8/14/1969. folder Begin 6/30/69 (1 of 2); Box 15; (WH/RN)

¹² Kevin Phillips, *The Emerging Republican Majority* (New Rochelle: Arlington House, 1969), 437.

who all played traditional roles that upheld moral or societal norms.¹³ John Wayne with his height and tough attitude was the quintessential masculine figure worthy to be emulated. Doris Day and Julie Andrews were forever feminine, and the latter's role in the 1965 Oscar-winning musical *The Sound of Music* fortified the womanly position in society and avoided all discussions of race, even with the Watts riots occurring the same year. Popular television programs included "The Andy Griffith Show" (1960–68), "The Beverly Hillbillies" (1962–71), "My Favorite Martian" (1963–66), "The Munsters" (1964–66), "Gomer Pyle, USMC" (1964–69) and "Green Acres" (1965–71), and presented whitewashed versions of the United States and denied discussion of political tensions or social upheaval.¹⁴ Popular songs also propagated messages to their listeners that the era's protesters had gone too far.

As in previous eras, conservatives attempted to maintain control over the changes taking place in America to preserve a comfortable status quo. With liberal gains, the Silent Majority felt they were losing their sense of the American identity. One way they regained control was to elect Republican Richard Nixon to the presidency in 1968. Nixon's administration would assist in the country's move to the right, allowing conservatives to strengthen their grip on the Republican Party.¹⁵ Yet the unorganized group of moderates also needed leadership from a political candidate who would speak

¹³ In actuality, John Wayne and Clint Eastwood are the top two of the poll of money-making stars in American history, with Wayne on the list twenty-five years and Eastwood on the list for twenty-one, many of these years during the 1960s and '70s.

¹⁴ *American Cinema of the 1960s: Themes and Variations*, edited by Barry Keith Grant (New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 2008), 13.

¹⁵ Mary Brennan, *Turning Right in the Sixties: The Conservative Capture of the GOP* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 134.

to their needs to be recognized and respected. It turns out, Nixon was not the conservative that the right-wing thought he would be, as he supported détente, trade with China, the Equal Rights Amendment for women and created the Environmental Protection Agency. Nevertheless, he stood for law and order at just the right time, giving the Silent Majority a confidence that the nation would not rip itself apart over social issues.

On November 3, 1969, President Richard Nixon delivered one of his most famous speeches that finally gave the Silent Majority their identity. Although acknowledging the right of antiwar protesters to free speech, Nixon disagreed with allowing “the policy of this Nation to be dictated by the minority who hold that point of view and who try to impose it on the Nation by mounting demonstrations in the street.” He reasoned that if the “vocal minority . . . prevails over reason and the will of the majority, this Nation has no future as a free society.” Nixon appealed to “the great silent majority of my fellow Americans” for their support in his plan to end the Vietnam War.¹⁶ He hoped to attain a peace with honor in Vietnam and maintain law and order in America, two themes that greatly reverberated with the American people after riots and protests had chipped away at national pride. After giving the speech, Nixon's approval ratings, which had been hovering around 50 percent, shot up to 81 percent for the nation and 86 percent in the South.¹⁷ This speech mobilized dissenting conservatives,

¹⁶ Richard Nixon, “The Great Silent Majority of my Fellow Americans,” November 3, 1969, *Richard Nixon: Speeches, Writings, Documents*, ed. Rick Perlstein (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 187, 189.

¹⁷ Rick Perlstein, *Nixonland: The Rise of a President and the Fracturing of America* (New York: Scribner, 2008), 444.

moderates, and disenchanted New Deal liberals as a loose but coherent conglomeration, and empowered them with a new identity with which they could use in their responses. In fact, letters written to the White House were branded with this proud self-identification, and many Americans vowed to stay silent no more about the movement.

Nixon and Agnew understood that many Americans in 1969 believed the activism of the decade had gone too far in changing the nation and attacking its traditions. Under marching orders from Nixon, Agnew further confronted the protesters as “malcontents, radicals, incendiaries, civil and uncivil disobedients,” and he described the leaders of the Vietnam Mobilization as “hard-core dissidents and professional anarchists.” On the other side, Nixon and Agnew reached out to the Silent Majority in order to boost conservative influence in America. The scheme to polarize the nation in this way, by pitting moderates against protesters, was political gold, and worked well into Nixon’s Southern Strategy to be re-elected in a landslide victory in 1972.

Historians of the Sixties generally focus on the liberal social movements that produced changes within America, but with the rise of President Ronald Reagan’s conservatism after the 1980 election, historians have written conservatives back into the history of the Sixties. Until about 2000, most accounts had neglected the Silent Majority, but a recent surge of monographs described how conservatives did not merely survive the 1960s but used those tumultuous years to launch a response that would dominate the politics of the following era.

Some authors address the activities of conservatives in the twentieth-century, others in the post-1945 era, and fewer on the Sixties decade alone, but all mainly

dwelled on the political side of the conservative movement. In *The Other Side of the Sixties*, John A. Andrew III and Gregory L. Schneider analyzed the Young Americans for Freedom (YAF), an influential association of conservatives formed in 1960. Rebecca E. Klatch compared YAF activists to those in Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) in *A Generation Divided*. Mary Brennan in *Turning Right in the Sixties* described “the conservative capture of the GOP” that occurred later in the decade. Rick Perlstein’s *Before the Storm* and William E. Pemberton’s *Exit with Honor* have provided biographical studies of, respectively, Barry Goldwater and Ronald Reagan, who helped lead the conservative charge in the 1960s. Godfrey Hodgson wrote of “the conservative ascendancy” as a fusing of traditional and authoritative thought with a populist and individualistic strain in *The World Turned Right Side Up*, and Jonathan M. Schoenwald explored “the rise of modern American conservatism” in *A Time for Choosing*. Although Rebecca Klatch and Lisa McGirr included a social aspect in their books, their histories focus only on politics or the Republican Party.¹⁸

Several studies examined the rise of the suburban Sunbelt as the birthplace of modern conservatism. Kurt Schuparra and Lisa McGirr have revealed the New Right’s political breeding ground in California in *Triumph of the Right* and *Suburban Warriors*.

¹⁸ John A. Andrew III, *The Other Side of the Sixties: Young Americans for Freedom and the Rise of Conservative Politics* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1997). Gregory L. Schneider, *Cadres for Conservatism* (New York: New York University Press, 1999). Rebecca Klatch, *A Generation Divided: The New Left, the New Right, and the 1960s*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999. Mary Brennan, *Turning Right in the Sixties: The Conservative Capture of the GOP* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995). Rick Perlstein, *Before the Storm: Barry Goldwater and the Unmaking of the American Consensus* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2001). William Pemberton, *Exit With Honor* (New York: Routledge, 1998). Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001).

Anticommunism, according to McGirr, was able to unify a variety of different political concerns, bringing together antistatists, advocates of a free market, and believers in traditional morality, capitalizing on the era's discomfort about challenges to sexual norms and the racial hierarchy. Matthew Lassiter was the first to directly address the Silent Majority as a viable group, but like others, also analyzes grassroots Sunbelt politics. Joseph Crespino's *In Search of Another Country: Mississippi and the Conservative Counterrevolution* argues that citizens of Mississippi held ideals of small-government and free market in their "conservative counterrevolution." Darren Dochuk in *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt* agrees that postwar prosperity made the Sunbelt reject economic redistribution and embrace the free market, and a rising conservative strain led by Barry Goldwater and Ronald Reagan mobilized them against liberalism.

The valuable anthology *The Right Side of the Sixties*, edited by Laura Jane Gifford and Daniel Williams, argues that conservatives were not just reactionary to liberal movements, but were instead creating their own sense of identity. Its chapters about the relation between grassroots conservatism and social, economic, and religious issues show that more historians are taking a broader look at the political history of the conservatives of the decade.¹⁹

¹⁹ Kurt Schuparra, *Triumph of the Right: The Rise of the California Conservative Movement, 1945-1966* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1998). Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001). Matthew Lassiter, *The Silent Majority* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006); *The Right Side of the Sixties*, edited by Laura Jane Gifford and Daniel Williams (Basingstroke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012). Joseph Crespino, *In Search of Another Country: Mississippi and the Conservative Counterrevolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007). Darren Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt: Plain-Folk Religion, Grassroots Politics, and the Rise of Evangelical Conservatism* (New York: Norton, 2011).

The personal is certainly political, but this dissertation looks at how and why the majority of citizens – not just conservatives – responded to the movements. This study examines the “Right Response” of the Silent Majority — the reactions of moderates, conservatives, and liberals who disagreed with the methods of the social activists and sometimes, their standpoint. Although this project focuses on the social and cultural response to the movement, any study about the Silent Majority must include its political aspect, for the political arena plays to the people’s intents and concerns, Nixon being a perfect example. Therefore, political speeches and discussions are also included in the analysis of the conservative response. Even more so, extensive research from newspapers, publications, editorials, and correspondence examines comprehensively the sentiments of many Americans and the numerous active right-wing organizations.

A note on primary sources. This research study determines that influential articles and editorials from moderate and conservative publications both reflected and influenced American attitudes, values, and responses. Newspapers such as the *New York Times* and *Los Angeles Times* were used to account for relatively unbiased reporting of the news. Articles from the *National Review*, *American Opinion*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Christian Science Monitor*, and *Dallas Morning News* provide a rightist slant on the same events to show a more conservative interpretation of these incidents. Conservative newsletters like the John Birch Society’s *Human Events*, the American Conservative Union’s *Battle Line*, Phyllis Schlafly’s *Eagle Forum*, *Life Lines*, and Dean Manion’s *Manion Forum* provided fodder for the opposition to the movement. The photojournalism and editorial articles of *Life* and *Time* magazines provide

invaluable insight into the social and cultural pulse of America during this time period. Articles from *Reader's Digest*, the majority of which were reprinted from a wide variety of other printed sources, usually reflect a somewhat conservative opinion. However, when not annotated as a reprint, some pieces were specifically written for the *Reader's Digest* audience.

Opinion polls reveal impressions of how the Silent Majority, or “Middle America,” felt about the social movements during this turbulent era. Since the greater part of the population was not included in news reports, these surveys provide a clear picture of the American’s perception of social change. Polls disclosed that even when the majority of Americans agreed that change was needed – whether it involved racial equality, police brutality, an end to the war, or equal pay – most citizens did not believe that protests, demonstrations, or riots were the correct way to achieve a turnaround. For example, 58 percent of Americans supported desegregation of public facilities and the passage of a civil rights bill.²⁰ But 60 percent of respondents looked unfavorably upon the 1963 March on Washington while only 16 percent supported it (Gallup), and a substantial 77 percent were opposed to antiwar demonstrations in 1969 (CBS).²¹ Yet these social movements monopolized the nightly news and the morning newspapers.

The Silent Majority and conservative organizations therefore accused the media of a liberal and sensational bias in the reporting of the news. In 1963, the balance of Americans receiving their news shifted toward television stations over the newspaper.

²⁰ Harris Survey, November 1963 (RCPOR).

²¹ Paul Herrnson and Kathleen Weldon, “Going Too Far: The American Public's Attitudes toward Protest Movements,” Roper Center, 10/22/2014.

Roper compiled an eleven-year study in 1969 and noted Americans criticized the fairness of all mass media due to the “dramatic and, often, distressing news events reported by television and other media.”²² The President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy, the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, and the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence also found news coverage to be prejudiced, sensationalistic, and inflammatory.²³ According to Agnew, “The American who relies upon television for his news might conclude that the majority of American students are embittered radicals; that the majority of black Americans feel no regard for their country; that violence and lawlessness are the rule rather than the exception on the American campus.” Rather, he assured, “none of these conclusions is true.”²⁴ For this reason, a group of concerned citizens, led by economist Reed Irvine, founded Accuracy in Media (AIM) in 1969. AIM began by sending letters to newspaper editors asking for corrections and if rebuffed, bought advertising space in the paper to print the correction. They expanded their operations to include the distribution of pamphlets, documentaries, and rallies, encouraging the public to become intelligent news consumers.²⁵

²² Burns W. Roper, “A Ten-Year View of Public Attitudes Toward Television and Other Mass Media, 1959-1968,” (New York: Television Information Office, 1969), Folder Poll Information [1], Box 134, (HH/RNL).

²³ Glen Feighery, Two Visions of Responsibility: How National Commissions Contributed to Journalism Ethics, 1963-1975.” *Journalism & Communication Monographs* 11, no. 2 (Summer 2009): 167-210. *America: History and Life with Full Text*, EBSCOhost.

²⁴ Spiro Agnew, “Television News Coverage” Speech, Midwest Regional Republican Meeting, Des Moines, Iowa, 11/13/1969, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/spiroagnewtvnewscoverage.htm>.

²⁵ Accuracy In Media, History of AIM, Accessed 4/1/2015, <http://www.aim.org/about/history-of-aim/>.

Moreover, letters written to the White House further exposed a politically motivated and hostile populace agitated over certain developments. Correspondence from conservative and moderate citizens in letters written to the presidents, vice presidents, and first ladies located in the John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, Richard M. Nixon, and Gerald R. Ford presidential libraries demonstrates that the Silent Majority was more vocal than previously acknowledged, even if it was not publicly known. Brandon Rottinghaus, a political scientist, is the only other authoritative source on comparing presidential mail to opinion polls, and concludes that the former can be just as important as the latter.²⁶

While opinion polls were relatively stable, public opinion mail tended to fluctuate in accordance with recent events, motivating an electorate to express their voice more. These dispatches were clearly important to the presidents, as they received weekly mail summaries about the important topics to the nation, categorized by volume and stance. While presidents surely did not read more than a sampling of the mail, they were still informed of the overall response to current events. As Lady Bird Johnson remarked in an interview, “To read the mail is a marvelous thing in itself. It is sort of like having the pulse of the country, the thinking, and feeling.”²⁷ Negative American sentiment about the Vietnam War, propagated through opinion polls, antiwar demonstrations, and prolific mail, caused President Johnson to decide to not run for re-

²⁶ Brandon Rottinghaus, “Opening the President’s Mailbag: The Nixon Administration’s Rhetorical Use of Public Opinion Mail,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 38, no. 1 (March, 2007).

²⁷ Lyndon B. Johnson: "Interview With the President and Mrs. Johnson on a Recorded Program: "A View From the White House.," December 27, 1968. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=29302>.

election in 1968. President Nixon was so distrustful about the public's perception that he even instructed his mail aides to restrict his weekly sample of mail to only positive and supportive letters, even if he read the weekly summaries. Correspondence represented all walks of life, North, South, East, and West, young and old, male and female, educated and unsophisticated, Republican and Democrat, angry and paranoid. Americans used a variety of arguments, based on innate feelings or information they received from the media. Through every movement, the Silent Majority reiterated their perception of the American image, and upheld their interpretation of the Constitution and their disavowal of communism. Public reaction to the war, racial equality, and gender egalitarianism certainly influenced the policy decisions that the presidents and Congress of the 1960s and '70s made.

One of the largest challenges to political policy of the decade involved racial relations. Chapter two identifies the resistance to integration mandated by the 1954 *Brown v. Board* Supreme Court decision. Some citizens wrote extensively to the White House to try to convince their leaders that integration was against the foundations of the country. Against every effort to implement integration in the South, these citizens rallied their joint efforts to stop racial mixing. They defended their southern way of life against three main waves from 1960-1964: the Students for Nonviolence Coordinating Committee's Freedom Rides in 1961; James Meredith's enrollment at the University of Mississippi in 1962; and the passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1964. When writing the White House in response to these events, radical racists used racially prejudiced arguments against integration, while moderates used various reasons to stop or slow

integration, including legalistic arguments, dictatorial references, religious explanations, or their vision of the American identity. The Silent Majority viewed the nation's character with an emphasis on state's rights and economic and religious freedom of choice, with a sweet spot for a romanticized South.

The Silent Majority's response to campus protests is the topic of chapter three. The main events that garnered a backlash were the 1964 Berkeley Free Speech Movement, the 1968 Columbia University takeover, and the radicalism and unraveling of the New Left, illustrated by protests at the 1968 Democratic National Convention. A complete distinction cannot be made between students of the New Left and antiwar protesters, but for ease of organization, incidents where students and antiwar activities overlap (i.e. Kent State) appear in the next chapter. Organizations both on and off campus fought against student demonstrations and struggled to maintain a sense of order on campuses. The media both helped to create and dissolve the student protests, as Americans watched the demonstrations grow to a distressing level of violence. As protests grew, more Americans, particularly students tired of forfeiting their classes for causes they did not support, began to counter student liberalism, giving them a new voice through media channels. Concurrent to rising student revolts, several groups worked against campus liberalism and uprisings, including Young Americans for Freedom (YAF), the Young Republicans (YR), and the unorganized Silent Majority.

Chapter four examines the responses to emerging antiwar movement in the mid-Sixties as Vietnam War activities increased in 1965. Yet the war divided Americans and made the populace fit into one of two categories – hawks and doves – creating yet

another separation in the country. Although the letters sent to the White House showed that most of these Americans opposed the Administration's policy in Vietnam, they also mainly opposed the antiwar demonstrations until 1969, when protests began to include average Americans and not just a radical extreme. However, as demonstrations mounted and Nixon took actions to start removing troops from Vietnam, many Americans sided with the official Administration policy. Three main demonstrations created a solidified response by a coalescing Silent Majority: the 1965 Moratorium, the 1967 Washington D.C., protests, and the 1969 fall Moratoriums. The responses to these three main events led to organizational actions and reactions including Victory in Vietnam Week, the Silent Majority Organization, Americans For Winning the Peace, Voices in Vital America, Tell It to Hanoi, and American Youth for a Just Peace. This chapter shows the perspective of those who either agreed with the war's aims or disagreed with the increasingly aggressive tactics of the antiwar protesters.

Chapter five concentrates on the right backlash against the controversial counterculture in the late Sixties. Although not affluent college students, hippies were generally against the "establishment" and the Vietnam War. Hippies provoked a special kind of detestation with their use of hallucinogenic drugs, drop-out mentality, and complete rejection of the American materialistic ideal. Reactions to the counterculture were more culturally related, as square youth took issue with drugs and obscenity through programs like Smarteens and decency rallies to proclaim American "clean" values. Disillusioned Hippies were also attracted to the Jesus movement that incorporated their search for spiritualism into a more fulfilling and drug-free position in

society, which in turn garnered a backlash from the established churches. Ultimately, the counterculture music and fashions were adopted into the mainstream, taking the wind out of the Hippie sails.

Chapter six examines the response to the more militant civil rights movement after 1964, as protesters used more hostile tactics to gain attention. The eruption of Watts in 1965 was a major turning point in the reaction to civil rights, as Americans who had previously supported the black cause were appalled at the upsurge in violence in Los Angeles and in other cities as riots erupted on an annual basis during the summers. Negative reactions were extended to the rise of Black Power and federally-enforced busing mandates, particularly in northern states. This chapter addresses the popularity of Ronald Reagan as governor in California, as well as the rightist response to the Black Panthers, led by Huey Newton, in Oakland, and Stokely Carmichael, president of Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. Chapter six contends that racial groups like the Panthers had taken their protests beyond what was socially acceptable and the Silent Majority, through new organizations like the Black Silent Majority, insisted that the violence stop.

Addressing the last major movement of the decade, chapter seven addresses the controversy over the women's rights movement and the increasingly radical liberation movement. Housewives and mothers defended femininity and established American gender roles against what they perceived as a harmful feminist movement that sought to equalize women and men in the workplace and at home. This chapter identifies feminine responses to the propagation of feminism through the National Organization of Women

(1966), the Equal Rights Amendment (1972), and the Supreme Court case *Roe v. Wade* (1973). The formation of conservative organizations like the National Right to Life Committee and Phyllis Schlafly's "STOP-ERA" organization in 1972 were direct reactions to the women's movement. Many Americans were against gender equality due to fears that protective legislation for women would end, women would be drafted for combat positions, or housewives would essentially lose their femininity and status in the home.

Chapter eight as epilogue and conclusion reviews the rise of grassroots conservatives in the 1970s as a reaction to the social activism of the Sixties. The social and cultural reactions against social change in the 1960s culminated in a strong political conservatism represented by Ronald Reagan.²⁸ The epilogue explores how the social liberalism of the Sixties resulted in the re-emergence of American middle-class values and conservatism in the following decades. While the majority of dissenting Americans in the Sixties have historically lost their voices, they made them very clear by the last half of the 1970s. This project draws out these voices that are heard through the decades, as it draws parallels with the accusations of the 2010s of media bias, race baiting, and preferential treatment of special interest groups. For the Silent Majority, rather than retreating with history, has instead expanded into an international movement.

²⁸ Clifton F. White and William J. Gill, *Why Reagan Won: A Narrative History of the Conservative Movement 1964-1981* (Chicago: Regnery Gateway, 1981), 1.

CHAPTER II

THE RESPONSE TO CIVIL RIGHTS

In 1974, the band Lynyrd Skynyrd released what was to become an iconic classic song in American culture, as it persuaded many people around the globe to bop their head to its catchy beat and folksy lyrics. “Sweet Home Alabama” was a direct response to Neil Young’s 1972 songs, “Alabama,” and possibly “Southern Man,” which both critically dealt with the theme of racism in the South, particularly in Alabama, whose “Cadillac has got a wheel in a ditch And a wheel on the track.” Ronnie Van Zant of Lynyrd Skynyrd recognized “ole Neil put her down,” and retaliated by singing up the state that many had come to romanticize. Although none of the members of Lynyrd Skynyrd were actually from Alabama, they still sang the song with pride in the state. The lyrics sweeten the memory of Alabama, with its blue skies, sweet homes, and a waiting Lord. Yet Van Zant grappled with the racial turmoil that hit America in the Sixties and early ‘70s. He sang of how everyone in Birmingham loved the governor, referencing the violence that ensued in the early ‘60s, and dismisses the Watergate scandal, as if to announce that the North should worry about its own troubles and stay out of the South’s business.¹ The song’s catchy beat was an instant hit, reaching eighth place on the U.S. *Billboard* Hot 100, but also curiously placing sixth in Canada, and in the top 100 in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland — places far removed from the South and its racial discussions. However, the fact that this song was so popular as a redeeming cry for the

¹ Ed King, Gary Rossington, and Ronnie Van Zant, “Sweet Home Alabama,” Lynyrd Skynyrd, © 1974 by MCA Records.

South may show that the country was willing to forgive the southern states, or was satisfied that the southern race problem was resolved by the passage of the Civil Rights Act and Voting Rights Act. For the American identity was not complete without the South.

Moderates and conservatives who positioned themselves against the civil rights movement were mostly of an older generation, retaining their mindset of the Cold War in their perspective of racial integration in the early 1960s. Most citizens embraced a vision of the way America should look and act, in accordance with its nostalgic past of a united nation that had been made stronger by a world war that created it as the hegemon in the western sphere. As the decade of the Fifties molded the country with its culture of youth, T.V., and suburbs, a certain conformist American identity was shaped that emphasized the national unity of the country. Americans were stubborn to hold fast to a nation that historically had placed much emphasis on states' rights to make decisions about social matters. In their visualization of the greatness of the nation, the federal government was supposed to protect the nation as a whole against foreign threats, specifically the growth of communism into the American sphere of influence. In the minds of many Americans, especially those in the South, the role of the federal government did not involve meddling in state affairs.

Thus, many southerners argued that it was in violation of the Constitution for the Supreme Court to mandate integration in the South, as these rights were perceived to be reserved for state governments. Those in the federal government who pushed for integration, specifically Justice Earl Warren, President John F. Kennedy, and Attorney

General Robert Kennedy, received vicious attacks in letters and editorials, from southerners who believed that laws could not force change in hearts and minds. Those offended by integration felt the liberal administration in Washington was not adhering to the American way of life, as federal intervention in civil rights was essentially changing the identity of the racial composition and power structure of the nation. As the decade endured the addition of social movements and they became more violent to garner more attention to their cause, the nation became more polarized on the issues at stake. America was going through a dramatic transformative period, and although many agreed with some positive change, they still resisted the federal integration mandates and violence that came with the civil rights movement.

With this mindset, some citizens wrote extensively to the White House to try to convince their leaders that integration was against the foundations of the country. Against every effort to implement integration in the South, these citizens rallied their joint efforts to stop “racial mixing.” They defended their southern way of life against three main waves from 1960-1964: the Students for Nonviolence Coordinating Committee organized the Freedom Rides in 1961; James Meredith enrolled at the University of Mississippi in 1962; and Congress passed the Civil Rights Act in 1964. When writing the White House in response to these events, only radical racists used racially prejudiced hierarchical arguments against integration, while moderates instead used various reasons to stop or slow integration, including legalistic arguments, dictatorial references, religious explanations, or their vision of the American identity.

Six years after *Brown v. Board*, southerners remained upset over the Supreme Court decision. Texan A.W. Barker complained to Vice President Lyndon Johnson that the federal courts were “usurping the right of states to control and operate their own property” and were “roughshod forcing their will on the public” with the excuse that “the Supreme Court decision is ‘the law of the land’.” Instead, Congress should “void and nullify that decision before it is too late... I believe in states rights and I intend to vote accordingly, regardless of party or platform.”² As another strong supporter of states’ rights, James F. Dew argued in 1961, “If Kennedy can force the Sovereign State of Virginia, to submit to the humiliating dictates of Kennedy’s brother and some Negro lovers, we are already under a dictator.”³

Southerners were upset about the Supreme Court mandating the policy of integration in the South. Some people argued that a majority decision in state courts should trump a single decision by the Supreme Court. They frequently used the Tenth Amendment as defense, as “The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.” In the fight against desegregation, state courts overwhelmingly overturned the *Brown v. Board* decision and judges invoked states’ rights. Judge T.W. Davidson of Dallas, Texas, and Judge Harry J. Lemley of Hope, Arkansas, tried to mitigate desegregation only to be overruled by higher courts, or what they called the “totalitarian regime originating in the U.S. Supreme Court.” At one time, the U.S. Fifth

² Letter, A.W. Barker to Lyndon Johnson, 8/22/1960, “Civil Rights 1,” Box 61 (VP/LBJL).

³ Letter, James F. Dew, the Editor of *The Flag of Truth* to Lyndon Johnson, 5/1/1961, “Civil Rights 1,” Box 61 (VP/LBJL).

Court of Appeals struck down 27 measures of the Louisiana Legislature aimed at preserving segregation in public schools, and enjoined 700 state and local officials from taking any steps to impede compliance with the court's order, which the governor and legislature essentially ignored. Citizens of southern states voted to preserve their established education system in such cities as Little Rock, New Orleans, Dallas, and Houston. Revolting against the Supreme Court order, 1,000 white pupils even boycotted two elementary schools in New Orleans listed for integration, reminiscent of the integration struggle at Central High School in Little Rock in 1957. Recalling the righteous fights against both Nazism and communism, Judge Joseph A. Mallery of the Washington State Supreme Court in December 1960 argued against federal intervention, warning, "Regimentation in the private affairs of life... has been the badge of the police state."⁴

Southern citizens had expected the integration process to go slowly. H. Dick Golding wrote to Robert Kennedy, because "the Negro in MASS in the South is sub-standard economically and socially... he is hard to digest into the body politic of the South." Yet it was "being done by dictum and mandate of the laws and by its very nature is a slow process."⁵ Texan Sarah Keen Henderson agreed, saying, "one with power can bend people to their will, but can not change their way of thinking." She was upset that "the so called Supreme Court can tell each state what they can & can't do and the

⁴ Letter, Amos L. Harold to President Kennedy, 9/7/1961, "Civil Rights 1," Box 61 (VP/LBJL).

⁵ Letter, H. Dick Golding Robert Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson, 7/4/1961, "Civil Rights 1," Box 61 (VP/LBJL).

President forces with armed right” what she considered a states’ rights issue.⁶ Indeed, Virginia Durr of Montgomery, Alabama, a personal friend of Vice President Lyndon Johnson and a civil rights sympathizer, understood that strong federal enforcement would not win over the southern resisters, and suggested that the key was for southerners to discuss it amongst themselves instead of fighting the government over the issue.⁷ Even in northern Maryland in 1960, as a poll by Senator J. Glenn Beall affirmed, 63 percent of the citizens of Maryland did not want to see integration moved faster.⁸

An aging veteran of WWI and retired professor of English in Austin, Texas, angrily wrote to President Kennedy about the Supreme Court’s “FORCED integration of many schools,” which he considered “a tragic demonstration of judicial usurpation and tyranny... and a false version of the American people’s detestation of aggressive judicial commissars and federal mandates destructive of their rights as free men and women.” He was furious, claiming that “Usurping, tyrannical courts [were] destroying the spirit, independence, and morale of the American people.”⁹

The arguments of presidential tyranny tied into the fear of communism that had pervaded the country for the preceding fifteen years since the end of the Second World War. Communism was in the forefront of most American’s minds, as the country had fought communism in Germany, Eastern Europe, Korea, Vietnam, Cuba. In fact, as late as 1964, Americans were asked in a Gallup Poll about their main fears; the two highest-

⁶ Letter, Sarah Keen Henderson to Lyndon Johnson, 10/3/1962, “Civil Rights 1,” Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

⁷ Letter, Virginia Durr Lyndon Johnson, 7/19/1961, “Civil Rights 1,” Box 61 (VP/LBJL).

⁸ “Integration Question,” *Baltimore Sun*, 4/16/1960, 12. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁹ Letter, Amos L. Harold John Kennedy, 9/7/1961, “Civil Rights 1,” Box 61 (VP/LBJL).

chosen answers were “Communist danger or the consequences of Communist control,” and “nuclear war.”¹⁰

The fear of communism also appeared with the race issue. “Although the NAACP denies that they are Communistic,” A.W. Barker of Texas wrote, “the goal which they seek will surely divide this nation, and that is the one thing that Russia will be glad to see.”¹¹ Also fearful, Ernest C. Arnold from Muskogee, Oklahoma wanted to take more action against communism, “Why won’t Brother Robert use the FBI to prove that such agitations as... the race agitators in the South are all organized and financed by Communists.”¹²

Many Americans, even as far away as New York, argued that integration violated the expected American way of life. James Heard, President of the 70,000 member National Florists Club in New York City, asked “what can be done for Mr. John Thomas,” who was “a real American white man from New Orleans who sent his two kids to the integrated school” and had to leave the city because integration had ruined the school. Heard called integration “a disgrace to the American flag” and his club wanted “the whole world to know that the white people established the American country.” He thought a “few ignorant people” prevented real Americans “from trying to uphold the

¹⁰ Gallup/Potomac Poll #1964-637POS: National Survey of Attitudes, Hopes, and Fears, 10/1964, 19, 25. (RCPOR).

¹¹ Letter, A.W. Barker to Lyndon Johnson, 8/22/1960, (VP/LBJL).

¹² Letter, Ernest C. Arnold to Lyndon Johnson, 5/31/1961, “Civil Rights 1,” Box 61 (VP/LBJL).

American flag” and they should not be “pushed around by hoodlums” who were bullying their way into white schools.¹³

Not surprisingly, many southerners did not believe that equality was even possible between the races. Standing against integration for this reason, Mr. T.H. Jennings of South Carolina wrote that a black friend of his had told him, “we have our schools and you white people have yours, and we have no right to come to your school any more than you would to ours.”¹⁴ MacDonald Gallion, Attorney General for Alabama also believed, “There will never, never be a state of equality between the white and black races. Either the whites are going to rule, or the blacks are going to rule.” Like others, it appeared to him that “the Government is hell bent on turning the country over to the blacks,” and it would certainly “bring on a lot of bloodshed and irreparable damage to our country and its decent white citizens if some of you in power up there do not take steps to reverse the trend of trying to set these niggers and their traitorous sponsors in CORE and NAACP up in such an all powerful manner.” He hoped that God would “have pity and help the poor white people of this country” to stop the quickening changes in the public racial composition in his beloved South.¹⁵

The identity of the majority of Americans as blue or white collar, middle class, mostly in the suburbs of the Sunbelt, and staunchly anti-communist, set the stage for the resistance against the integration of the Sixties. As the intensity of the civil rights

¹³ Letter, James Heard, President of the National Florists Club in NYC, to Lyndon Johnson, 2/3/1961, “Civil Rights 1,” Box 61 (VP/LBJL).

¹⁴ Letter, Mr. T.H. Jennings to Lyndon Johnson, 1/23/1961, “Civil Rights 1,” Box 61 (VP/LBJL).

¹⁵ Letter to the *Houston Chronicle*, referenced in a Letter, M. Willard Webb to Johnson, 5/30/1961, “Civil Rights 1,” Box 61 (VP/LBJL).

movement began to burn greater and brighter, many citizens fought harder to keep the status quo. It was the southern conservative mentality of retaining states' rights that frustrated black activists, who set in motion a chain of events to test the laws handed down by the Supreme Court, starting with interstate transportation.

Freedom Rides

In 1960, the Supreme Court ruled in *Boynton v. Virginia* against the southern practice of segregation on public buses that crossed state lines, an extension of the 1957 Montgomery bus segregation episodes. In 1961, the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) organized Freedom Rides to challenge the status quo in May of 1961 on the first integrated public bus driving on highways in the South. Their symbolic mission brought attention to the South's disregard for federal law and the continuance of local policies of segregation in public facilities like motels, restaurants, and bus depots. Black and white college students and activists sat together side by side on the bus and tried to use the same facilities at bus stops, knowing full well the violent wrath that southern whites held for them. While a majority of Americans agreed with the goal of desegregating transportation, a number who believed in the use of direct action to achieve it was much smaller. According to a Gallup Poll in June 1961, two-thirds of those polled agreed with

the ruling, but only 24 percent approved “of what the Freedom Riders are doing,” and only 27 percent thought the demonstrations would help their cause.¹⁶

The group of college students met this expected violent backlash from radical right groups like the Ku Klux Klan and the National States Rights Party, particularly in Alabama. In Anniston, the group faced an angry mob as they pulled into the bus station; they were held hostage by whites who inflicted damage upon the bus until the police arrived and escorted the bus to the edge of town with a furious crowd in personal vehicles in tow. Once outside of town, however, the police turned around and the bus had to stop on the side of the road due to two flat tires. After a short period of the mob pummeling the bus and demanding the riders to come out, two KKK men tossed a Molotov cocktail into one of the broken windows, forcing the riders to exit the bus. The threat of the bus explosion, coupled with a warning shot by one of their highway patrol escorts, kept the jeering mob at bay.¹⁷ In Birmingham, several dozen whites attacked the bus within blocks of the sheriff’s office, which prompted an airport evacuation of the riders with the assistance of the U.S. Justice Department. The subsequent journey reinforced the riders with additional volunteers, and they picked up where they had left off. Upon their arrival in Montgomery, however, the riders faced brutal beatings by a mob of upwards of 1,000 whites while police looked on indifferently.

The violence the riders incurred in Montgomery dismayed Attorney General Robert Kennedy. Aware of the political ramifications but more concerned with the

¹⁶ Gallup Poll # 646, May 28-June 2, 1961. (RCPOR).

¹⁷ Raymond Arsenault, *Freedom Riders: 1961 and the Struggle for Racial Justice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 93-98.

physical safety of the riders and the chief assistant of the Civil Rights Division, John Doar, who was physically injured during the melee in Montgomery, Robert Kennedy tried to carefully manage the situation by sending in 400 U.S. marshals rather than troops. He focused on the need to uphold the law, rather than the moral rights of the riders to desegregated bus facilities. Southern politicians appreciated his use of restraint, but to regular citizens, it appeared that Kennedy had joined forces with racial agitators by sending federal forces into a southern state.¹⁸

When Robert Kennedy sent in the marshals to "guarantee safe passage in interstate commerce," many nonviolent southern citizens objected to federal intervention.¹⁹ Blum E. Hester from Houston, begged the administration to "Please remove U.S. Marshalls out of Alabama immediately. Please quit aiding troublemaking negroes at taxpayers expense." She was concerned that "minority groups have Washington under control as this incident indicates" and hoped that "God help America." By 1961, she already complained, "White Americans are getting tired of foolishness."²⁰ Virginia Durr, writing from Montgomery during the Freedom Rides of 1961, explained to Vice President Johnson that "the feeling down here is getting simply awful and the Military are really making it much worse as they are all on the side of the rabid segregationists" who resented "bitterly the President's orders to desegregate and are talking darkly all the time about 'Comunists' and 'Plots' and so on."²¹

¹⁸ Allen Matusow, *The Unraveling of America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1984), 74.

¹⁹ Anthony Lewis, "400 U.S. Marshals Sent to Alabama as Montgomery Bus Riots Hurt 20; President Bids State Keep Order," *New York Times*, 5/21/1961, A1.

²⁰ Telegram, Blum E. Hester to Lyndon Johnson, 5/23/1961, "Civil Rights 1," Box 61 (VP/LBJL).

²¹ Letter, Virginia Durr to Lyndon Johnson, 7/19/1961, (VP/LBJL).

Several citizens, some of high standing, angrily wrote against the northerners involved in the Freedom Rides. For one, MacDonald Gallion, Attorney General for Alabama contended, “It is certainly difficult to understand how a bunch of traitorous criminals such as that bunch running CORE in New York can get by with sending those niggers into the South to stir up the kind of trouble they are.” He expressed frustration that the Kennedys seemed to be saying, “to hell with the good American citizens of the South.” Texan M. Willard Webb echoed him: “It simply makes my blood boil to see the way those CORE and NAACP people in New York are sending those niggers into Alabama and other parts of the South to stir up the trouble they are now bringing about.”²² Mississippi Senator John Stennis sent a telegram to President Kennedy, pushing for “immediate affirmative steps” to be taken “to terminate these journeys or like crusades by this group or by any other group into our area or into any other area of the nation.”²³ One Chicago resident defended the southerners, as he considered, “A restaurant owned and operated by private capital, whether the owners are white or black, is not a place of public accommodation” and therefore should not be subject to federal integration statutes. He asked, “Do the Freedom Riders think they are entitled to ‘crash the gate’ in privately owned places simply because they are Negroes?”²⁴

Several ladies from Longview, Texas sent Vice President Johnson an editorial from the *Dallas Morning News* that reflected the sentiments of every Texan with whom

²² Letter, M. Willard Webb to Lyndon Johnson, 5/23/1961, (VP/LBJL).

²³ Telegram, Senator John Stennis to President Kennedy, 5/24/1961, *Human Rights*: 2: ST 24 (Mississippi): Executive, 20 January 1961-15 October 1962, John F. Kennedy Library.

²⁴ E. Everett Oppenheimer, “Freedom Rides (Letter to the Editor),” *Baltimore Sun*, 2/3/1962, 12. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

they talked. The editorialist argued, “Chaperoning the Freedom Riders from one riot to another is not justice.” The use of tanks and bayonets at Little Rock “was bad enough” for southerners to endure, but “deliberately undertaking to make another Little Rock out of Montgomery is too much for The News to overlook. Certainly an attorney general, whose job is to enforce laws, should not encourage the violation of laws.”²⁵ The ladies compared President Kennedy’s domestic and foreign policies, “We, too, have already had our fill of Bob Kennedy and his Freedom Riders, and certainly do not admire the actions of President Kennedy in his stand on the Cuban situation.” Harkening back to the expectation of the American spirit, they pushed:

The time has come when this nation must have fearless level-headed leaders, who, because of their strength of character, their ability to stand on the ideals upon which this Country was founded, and their reliance upon a higher Power, refuse to become an instrument of any minority group seeking to weaken us from within or to be intimidated by the enemies of democracy from without.²⁶

Winnie Tuffing of Texas also felt that the Freedom Riders meant to incite race riots, “or they have very little knowledge of how keenly the people of the South feel.” She deplored the damage the riots were creating, both for the nation as well as America’s appearance to her enemies, as “it will be hard enough to overcome our enemies overseas, but the thing that is happening now divides our nation, and at the same time sets relations between the north and south back a long time.”²⁷

²⁵ “And So This is Prestige?” *Dallas Morning News*, 5/26/1961. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

²⁶ Letter, Miss Gladys Rea, Mrs. Bernice Smith, Joe B. Allen, Mrs. La Rue C. Dorsey, Hugh F. Thurman, Mrs. Jackye Evans, and Mrs. Margaret Nanny to Lyndon Johnson, 5/26/1961, “Civil Rights 1,” Box 61 (VP/LBJL).

²⁷ Letter, Winnie Tuffing to Lyndon Johnson, 5/22/1961, “Civil Rights 1,” Box 61, (VP/LBJL).

Ole Miss

Shortly after the summer Freedom Rides of 1961, African American James Meredith decided to enroll at the University of Mississippi, in the face of its firm segregated status. In the summer before Meredith enrolled, a Gallup poll asked Americans if they agreed with the Supreme Court decision to integrate all schools, and 62 percent concurred.²⁸ Despite a federal court ruling allowing for his admission to the university, Governor Ross Barnett personally barred Meredith's entrance to register for classes on September 20th. Yet Attorney General Robert Kennedy was able to convince Barnett over the phone to let Meredith enroll with the gentle prodding of the 40 Marshals and 4,000 regular troops he had sent to Oxford to keep the peace. Riots ensued on the campus the night before his expected enrollment, and students fired shotguns while the Marshals tear-gassed dorms.²⁹ When the troops arrived at 5 A.M., the mob set a fire in their path, but the soldiers walked through it without breaking step. A man from the Justice Department in a nearby building remembered its effect as a "kind of visceral, almost physical impact on the mob. They fell back a couple of steps, and there was a kind of exhilaration of breath, as if they had each been punched by the troops marching through the flames, and that was really the end right there... The mob just melted away." The total casualty count included two killed and 375 wounded, including 166 marshals.³⁰

Somehow, Meredith registered on October 1, 1961 at the Lyceum, where the Confederate flag was flown at half-staff; as he came out, a hostile crowd gathered slowly

²⁸ Gallup Poll # 646, May 28-June 2, 1961. (RCPOR).

²⁹ News Bulletin from A.P. 11:33 A.M. 10/1/1962, "University of Mississippi 1," Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

³⁰ Matusow, *The Unraveling of America*, 85.

100 feet away. “Some students yelled, their words indistinct in the chop-chop of helicopters circling overhead,” according to AP News. The passion of last night had not blown away with the tear gas in the fresh breeze of early morning. Yelling students brought marshals on the double again today.” Impassioned students, yelling constantly, shouted at Meredith, “You’ve got blood on your hands. How’s it feel to have blood on your hands? Nigger go home.” Other students, instead of getting violently involved, decided to protest the enrollment by leaving campus.³¹ AP reported the immediate political fallout, as Congress was split along sectional lines, and the majority of Mississippi Congressmen sharply attacked President Kennedy’s speech about the event. However, as expected, Senators from both the North and West praised the enrollment as being “an expression of the public will.”³² Like the response against Freedom Rides, letters showed discontent with the pace of integration, the overruling of states’ rights, and the seeming disregard of the Constitution.

Many Americans blamed the NAACP for trying to force integration too early. Elton Jones of Fort Worth reckoned that the government had not gained any prestige by using force in Mississippi or allowing “the NAACP take a law that is to the NAACP’s advantage in its own hands to push just because at this time it has been adjudged in favor of that group.” A White House memorandum actually agreed with the letters sent in to the president about the detrimental effect the NAACP appeared to have on race relations. One staffer explained, “Many prominent negro leaders in the U.S. are thoroughly fed up

³¹ News Bulletin from AP 11:27 A.M. 10/1/1962, “University of Mississippi 1,” Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

³² News Bulletin from AP 9:40 A.M. 10/1/1962, “University of Mississippi 1,” Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

with the NAACP.” Even Meredith himself had “already complained of the action of the NAACP and the handling of the troops.” Instead, the staffer described, “Many negro leaders believe that ‘advancement’ will come to their race quietly and deplore crowding too fast and are more interested in keeping down juvenile delinquency, for which they feel the negroes are largely responsible.” Also concerned about the image of America to other countries, he believed, “The President and Attorney General will not gain any prestige and may lose a great deal” in global credibility.³³

Americans were also worried about how these incidents reflected on the country from which they expected a certain racial standard. One Texan resident was saddened that the Oxford incident proved “America is no longer free” and “our freedom is gone.” She felt Meredith “ought to have went to his own school where he belonged” like “the majority of Americans” who were “high classed self respecting people who believe in every race staying in their place.”³⁴ Another Texan agreed that the priorities of the administration were misplaced, for “While Russia takes over Cuba you folks spend your time forcing Negroes down the throats of Mississippi.” He had traveled widely across the United States and found that “any where the Negroes are pushing in on the white man’s territory by their new-found force of the Federal government, I do not find acceptance.” Even in the North, he claimed, “The whites of the large Eastern cities are as much up in the air about this as any Southerner.”³⁵

³³ White House Memo, 10/12/1962, folder University of Mississippi 1, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

³⁴ Letter, Mrs. Vera L. Duggin to Lyndon Johnson, 10/1/1962, folder University of Mississippi 1, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

³⁵ Letter, Elton Jones to Lyndon Johnson, 9/27/1962, (VP/LBJL).

Others decided to “Standpat with Ross Barnett” and argued in defense of states’ rights.³⁶ Miss Barbara Hall of Texas was “behind him all the way.” She stated ironically, “It is time someone took a stand for freedom.”³⁷ Thurman Sensing, Executive Vice President of the Southern State Industrial Council of Nashville, Tennessee considered the May 17, 1954 Supreme Court decision a “violation of the 10th Amendment of states powers,” making it “therefore void and of no effect.” Governor Barnett was then, according to Sensing, “doing no more than his sworn duty in resisting this flagrant judicial usurpation of powers with every lawful means at his disposal.”³⁸ Along the same lines, a couple from Baton Rouge, Louisiana agreed in a telegram that “Nine political lackeys don’t dictate law of land” and wanted “experienced trial judges” as they considered the “fourteenth illegal. Our group with Barnett.”³⁹ As an outsider, Mrs. Doris L. Carlson of Fairfield, California asked LBJ to help Gov Barnett to “Make their state laws honored, don’t let a mockery be made of our state laws and governors.”⁴⁰

In addition to arguments for states rights, some wrote to the White House that the Constitution was being trampled as federal courts disregarded the democratic values on which America was based. C.M. Tucker of South Carolina suggested, “Would a careful

³⁶ Telegram, Louie Dickerson to Lyndon Johnson, 9/28/1962, folder University of Mississippi 1, Box 125 (VP/LBJL)

³⁷ Letter, Miss Barbara Hall to Lyndon Johnson, 10/1/1962, folder University of Mississippi 1, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

³⁸ Telegram, Thurman Sensing to Lyndon Johnson, 9/27 1962, folder University of Mississippi 2, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

³⁹ Telegram, Norman and Norma Neyland to Lyndon Johnson, 9/27/1962, folder University of Mississippi 2, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

⁴⁰ Telegram, Mrs. Doris L. Carlson to Lyndon Johnson, 9/29/1962. Folder University of Mississippi 2, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

reading of that antiquated document called the Constitution be helpful, perhaps?”⁴¹ Mrs. Nellie S. Landers of Houston likewise gave a lesson on American politics: “The Supreme Court only expresses an opinion on certain phrases of [the Constitution], and is supposed to base its opinion on the Constitution.” She was concerned that “instead of seeing this country going up — we are watching it going down — down in so many ways — we are worrying — What will be left for our children and grandchildren?”⁴² Charles L. Monroe of St. Louis, Missouri warned that the “danger of outbreaks of violence grows daily.” Like Landers, he explained, “The Supreme Court has no Constitutional power to enact a law. This power resides in Congress.” Therefore, Congress should pass a law to be followed, not solely by a court decision.⁴³

Even many Americans outside the deep South disagreed with the Supreme Court decisions and execution, as they contradicted the common culture of Jim Crow. Carl A. Frank of Maryland was also frustrated over the “present deplorable dilemma of implementing the recent Supreme Court Decision.” He proposed that six members of Congress draft a constitutional amendment, to “erase the cancer of hate and dissension, yes even bloodshed which has never been a cure for true unity of purpose of any people.”⁴⁴ W. E. Davidson of Tennessee agreed that they needed “an act of Congress and

⁴¹ Letter, C.M. Tucker to the White House, 2/1962, folder Civil Rights 2, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

⁴² Letter, Mrs. Nellie S. Landers to Lyndon Johnson, 10/8/1962, folder Civil Rights 2, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

⁴³ Letter, Charles L. Monroe to Lyndon Johnson, 8/22/1962, folder Civil Rights 2, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

⁴⁴ Letter, Carl A. Frank to Lyndon Johnson, 9/29/1962, folder University of Mississippi 1, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

a referendum by states the democratic way.”⁴⁵ After all, as Governor Wallace told a businessman, the Supreme Court was not the law of the land, but only the decision of nine men who had improperly set themselves up as “a third house of Congress, a super-legislature... reading into the Constitution words and implications which were never there.”⁴⁶ Mrs. Marie L. Rose of New York City agreed about “these judges who hand down their ‘interpretations’ -and have so much power over one US tho’ we don’t vote them in. God help us.”⁴⁷

The inclusion of God and religion in the political argument was natural and historical. Southern religious arguments about slavery had a longstanding tradition, for slave owners had pointed to biblical references as justification for the enslavement of a race. Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. had turned this argument against southern whites however, as he argued for everything that conservatives held dear about America as upholding racial equality: the Constitution, the universal love of God, and the Great Commission. But whites also were sensitive to religious arguments because the issue of school prayer was fresh in their minds. In July of 1962, the Supreme Court ruled in *Engel v. Vitale* against prayers written by government officials to be encouraged or recited in schools. One year later, the Court declared Bible reading in public schools unconstitutional, which angered an American majority. In a Gallup poll taken directly

⁴⁵ Telegram, from W.E. Davidson to Lyndon Johnson, 10/1/1962, folder University of Mississippi 2, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

⁴⁶ Dan T. Carter, *The Politics of Rage: George Wallace, the Origins of the New Conservatism, and the Transformation of American Politics* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1995), 130, 137.

⁴⁷ Letter, Mrs. Marie L. Rose to Lyndon Johnson, 10/2/1962. Folder University of Mississippi 2, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

after the first ruling, 79 percent of Americans approved of “religious observances in public schools.”⁴⁸

The verdict was bound to infuriate conservatives, who tied it to civil rights. Mrs. Mary S. Jackson of Michigan wrote, “I think the President and his advisors are going against the law of Almighty God and the Constitution of the United States trying to force a negro in the white schools. You know you can’t mix negroes and whites.”⁴⁹ Reverend Barney B. Norton referred to the “God-hating God-rejecting bunch of men that calls themselves the Supreme Court, when we all know that it’s unbiblical and unconstitutional... the Great God of the universe is the author of segregation.”⁵⁰ Many Americans felt that segregation and racial hierarchy was normal and right in accordance with God’s design and book, which they believed had helped create the American way of life in its foundation. The South considered itself a vital, proud and important member of the America that they had formulated in their minds, and in order to protect the ideals they had built up, they tried to reach fellow southerners in authoritative positions because they believed they would understand the racial situation better.

Letters again flooded the White House arguing for the supremacy of states’ rights. A Californian concerned about the overextension of federal power through civil rights wrote to President Kennedy in favor of separation of powers: “States rights, and the will of the majority, must be reinstated; if America is to remain free and strong.

⁴⁸ Gallup Poll # 1962-0661: President Kennedy/Business Conditions, July 26-31, 1962. (RCPOR)

⁴⁹ Letter, Mrs. Mary S. Jackson to Lyndon Johnson, 9/30/1962. Folder University of Mississippi 2, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

⁵⁰ Letter, Reverend Barney B. Norton and Endorsed by Mrs. B.B. Norton, Paul V. Pennington, Laurine Pennington to President Kennedy, 9/29/1962, folder University of Mississippi 2, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

Government must be by the people, and applied at the local level in all possible cases.” Using a main argument of those against large government, he continued with the reasoning, “The powers of your office have been extended much to far, and unfortunately your administration has advanced our great nation into the threat of socialism.”⁵¹ Previous residents of Illinois, Iowa, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia sent a joint telegram expressing their feelings on the importance that “Congress take action to constrain the Attorney General and, if necessary his brother the president, from violating the sovereignty of this state in attempting to enroll student Meredith in a manner contrary to state law.” They urged Congress “to indict the Attorney General should he attempt to violate Mississippi law by force,” dictated by “minority groups working in conjunction with leftist elements.”⁵² Not surprisingly, southerners were the staunchest in arguing the importance of the federal government in preserving citizen and states’ rights.⁵³ However, even Americans outside the South agreed, as a national Gallup Poll in October 1964 showed that 60 percent of those questioned were concerned about preserving state’s rights, while only 32 percent disagreed.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Letter, Harold D. Ervin to President Kennedy, 10/7/1962, folder University of Mississippi 1, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

⁵² Telegram, Francis S. Wilson, Harry E. Hohmann, C.G. Bilberry, B.G. McDill, W.G. Wilhite, J.C. Franklin, Jr., G.E. Burchfield, R.C. Howard, L.B. Steele, L.L. Kincade, Jr., Helen Smith, Louise Moulder, Anne Baskin, H.T. Matthews, C.M. Martin, Mary Sue Miller, Rid Caldwell, J.L. Lee, C.W. Strube, Paul D. Walker, and Bill H. Smith from Jackson, MI to Lyndon Johnson, 9/26/1962, folder University of Mississippi 1, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

⁵³ Postcard, Robert L. Hammach of Birmingham, AL to Lyndon Johnson, 9/27/1962; Letter, Miss Barbara Hall of Terrell, TX to Lyndon Johnson, 10/1/1962. Telegram, from Houston, TX to Lyndon Johnson, 9/26/1962, folder University of Mississippi 1, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

⁵⁴ Gallup/Potomac Poll #1964-637POS: National Survey of Attitudes, Hopes, and Fears, 10/1964. (RCPOR)

Telegrams from southern politicians also clogged the White House telegraph. Alabama Governor John Patterson sent a telegram about the “catastrophic” use of “federal troops or marshals in Mississippi under the present circumstances.” He believed Governor Barnett was “right in asserting his authority under the Tenth Amendment of the United States Constitution” and supported him “all the way,” backed by “many millions of Americans in all parts of this nation.” Patterson felt that the use of federal force would “certainly brand the federal government as a dictatorship of the foulest sort. In truth, it will mark the end of our existence as a democratic republic.”⁵⁵ Lee White, adviser to President Kennedy, responded caustically, “I can assure you that the Federal Government will not use physical force to carry out the orders of the Federal judicial system except as a matter of absolutely final report.” He argued that “established Constitutional and legal procedures” must be used when “disobedience of proper judicial decrees” occurred, which “can result only in a breakdown of our judicial process, a development none of us would wish.”⁵⁶

Arkansas Congressman Dale Alford also sent a telegram to President Kennedy to halt federal intervention in Mississippi, using legalistic tactics to convince the president that the entire situation was questionable to the South. He deplored “in the name of the American republic” that Kennedy had made the same tragic mistake as did his predecessor “in sending forces into a sovereign state in complete violation of the rights reserved to the states under our Constitution,” which is “not plastic” and “cannot be

⁵⁵ Telegram, Honorable John Patterson, Governor of Alabama, 9/27/1962, Human Rights: 2: ST 24 (Mississippi): Executive, 20 January 1961-15 October 1962 (JFK).

⁵⁶ Memo, Lee White to the Honorable John Patterson, Governor of Alabama, 9/28/1962, Human Rights: 2: ST 24 (Mississippi): Executive, 20 January 1961-15 October 1962 (JFK).

moulded or twisted to suit the political designs of a few.” Agreeing with the main criticism of *Brown v. Board* as an overstepping by the Supreme Court, Alford argued, “the judiciary has no power to make general rules bearing upon the people and governments of the sovereign states.” The “great moral issue in Mississippi today therefore is not segregation vs integration of the schools; but is instead the issue of the sovereign people and the Constitution vs defaulting public trustees as oath breaking usurpers.” He appealed to American nationalism by contending, “the use of force in any form convinces even the most intellectually uninformed that our values of patriotism are radically confused.” He fully believed, “In our beloved country Mr. President the people are sovereign.”⁵⁷

Two southern senators conveyed the same message. Senator Strom Thurmond of South Carolina felt the use of force to enroll Meredith was “against the right of the state of Mississippi to control its own educational system under Constitutional authority” and was “most shocking and disturbing to millions of Americans, not only in Mississippi and the South, but throughout the country.” He considered the action “unconstitutional, abominable, and highly dangerous,” not only to the people of Mississippi, but also to the prestige of the administration.⁵⁸ Former Senator John B. Farese of Mississippi called the White House on October 2, 1962 to tell President Kennedy, “Our years of friendship prompt me to implore you to withdraw federal troops from our University.” Their “friends in Mississippi join me in this urgent request” for a “cold deliberation and a

⁵⁷ Telegram, Congressman Dale Alford to President Kennedy, 10/1/1962, Human Rights: 2: ST 24 (Mississippi): Executive, 20 January 1961-15 October 1962 (JFK).

⁵⁸ Telegram, Senator Strom Thurmond to President Kennedy, 9/30/1962, Human Rights: 2: ST 24 (Mississippi): Executive, 20 January 1961-15 October 1962 (JFK).

cooling-off period” to prevent the destruction of “our State University” and the cancellation of the upcoming homecoming celebration.⁵⁹

Americans both in and out of the South warned that eliminating the sovereignty of states’ rights would lead to another dreadful Civil War. One Texan warned, “It would be unwise to send troops into Mississippi contrary to the Constitution. The South has been pushed about as far as they can be pushed. In fact they have more cause to secede today than they did 100 years ago.”⁶⁰ A Californian who romanticized Mississippi’s culture and history argued that to force the state to integrate was in essence to “trample on the graves of their brave sons... trample their pride in the dust.” She thought the North did not understand the concept of southern pride, and instead had set up a “Dictatorship over the South.” She pleaded, “Right or wrong, we cannot forever be fighting a Civil War with the South. This is just ridiculous.”⁶¹ A telegram from Congressman Joe D. Waggoner from Louisiana also argued, “If blood is spilled in Mississippi, it will be yet another century before the aroused citizenry of North and South will again share the sense of friendship and respect we all so earnestly seek.”⁶²

Others also offered democratic propositions to try to resolve the tensions over integration to prevent another Civil War. Oswald C. Ludwig, age 73 of San Diego, California, represented many others in his offer to Congressmen of a rational suggestion

⁵⁹ Telephone call, Former Senator John B. Farese of MI, recorded by Gwen King, 10/2/1962, Human Rights: 2: ST 24 (Mississippi): Executive, 20 January 1961-15 October 1962 (JFK).

⁶⁰ Letter, T. Stewart to Lyndon Johnson, 9/27/1962 (VP/LBJL).

⁶¹ Letter, Mrs. Dolores Beckman to Lyndon Johnson (undated), folder University of Mississippi 2, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

⁶² Telegram, Congressman Joe D. Waggoner from Louisiana to President Kennedy, 9/29/1962, Human Rights: 2: ST 24 (Mississippi): Executive, 20 January 1961-15 October 1962 (JFK).

to ease the frustrations in the South. They would have to halt “the use of force against our citizens,” then “stop all proceedings for the integration of Negroes in public schools in any place in the land, until a Constitutional Amendment can be prepared, presented, studied, and adopted by the people of the United States of America, in the way provided by the Constitution itself.” He argued for “law and order” to be “established through the regular Constitutional processes” as “this dictatorial method could sow the seeds of such discontent as to fan the flame for another foolish and heartless civil war.”⁶³

Many others referred to President Kennedy as a dictator. For example, an 82-year-old woman from Houston made it clear that she did not vote for Kennedy and instead called him a dictator in her letter, saying, “He should know the opinions of some of the people, many of whom are or were in his ‘Party’.”⁶⁴ From further up north, Georgia McGuire of Indiana felt she spoke on behalf of the other residents of her state when she told LBJ, “No one likes the way that smart aleck Kennedy lawyer forced that Negro down there & he needs to be out of the White House” because “he is a disgrace.” Scathingly, she revealed she would “rather vote for a dog” because JFK had imposed “too much authority over the people” and now there was “too much Kennedy in the White House.”⁶⁵ In the same way, one resident of Mississippi after the Ole Miss incident called the White House the “dictatorship of the Royal House of Kennedy” under “King

⁶³ Letter, Oswald C. Ludwig (age 73) of San Diego, CA, to all members of Congress, 10/11/1962; Letter, Mrs. Mary Head to Lyndon Johnson, 11/18/1962, folder Civil Rights 1, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

⁶⁴ Letter, Mrs. Nellie S. Landers to Lyndon Johnson, 10/8/1962, (VP/LBJL).

⁶⁵ Letter, Georgia McGuire to Lyndon Johnson, 10/1962, folder University of Mississippi 1, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

Jack and Baron Bobby,” who could teach Nikita Khrushchev “some new techniques in making new Communist conquests.”⁶⁶

Likewise, most southerners strongly wanted the federal government to stay out of state-run schools. W.G. Robinson of Dallas asked, “Are the public schools to be run by a dominating, dictatorial, bureaucratic central government?”⁶⁷ B. Lucy Micardle of Elmhurst, New York went so far as to demand “impeachment proceedings against President Kennedy for treason against United States by using armed forces and false judicial procedures for Negro citizen because of race against the government of Mississippi.”⁶⁸ In agreement, Mrs. Anne Ward of North Carolina also sent a heated message to President Kennedy, claiming, “you have proven you are not great enough to be president of our beloved Democratic Party.” She referenced the Supreme Court as a “Puppet Court” which has “insulted our Southern people.” Claiming to speak on behalf of her fellow southerners, she continued, “We hold you in contempt of degrading our Democratic Party with your presence. In plain English, we hate you. This is war!”⁶⁹

Also infuriated about perceived overstepping of boundaries, Brigadier General Herbert C. Holdridge, U.S. Army (Retired), wrote an open letter to General Maxwell D. Taylor, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, pleading for use of his military authority to stop President Kennedy. “In the name of the Constitution of the United States which

⁶⁶ Letter, Hugh H. Ratner to Lyndon Johnson, 10/13/ 1962, folder University of Mississippi 2, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

⁶⁷ Letter, W.G. Robinson to Lyndon Johnson, 9/27/1962, folder University of Mississippi 1, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

⁶⁸ Telegram, B. Lucy Micardle to Lyndon Johnson and or President Pro Tem of Senate of United States, 10/1/1962, folder University of Mississippi 2, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

⁶⁹ Letter, Mrs. Anne Ward to John Kennedy (undated), folder University of Mississippi 2, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

you have sworn to defend,” he stated, “I direct that you cease and desist from any collaboration with John F. Kennedy in his purpose to impose his will upon the Governor and people of the State of Mississippi” in the Meredith case. He believed, “It is a publicly-known fact that said Kennedy is an outlaw and usurper who rose to power by conspiracy and fraud, to overthrow the ‘republican form of government’ required by the Constitution.” Therefore, he charged it was General Taylor’s “duty to arrest said Kennedy and all of his agents and bring him before duly-constituted tribunals for trial.”⁷⁰

More upset Americans, even those in the North, began to turn to Lyndon Johnson to help save the South from the “dictatorship” of the Kennedys. A telegram from Iowa stated, “Millions demand you end unconstitutional Kennedy military dictatorship immediately.”⁷¹ Also asking for LBJ’s help, Dick and Laurie Johnston of New York, who consciously voted for JFK and LBJ as a team, asked Johnson to go to Mississippi to “contribute not just marginally but crucially” against Meredith’s enrollment.⁷² Nola Brown criticized LBJ, “Where is the red Blood of a Texan or are you a real Texan? Why has it become a crime to uphold our American tradition and the Constitution also states rights?⁷³ A Texan college student wrote to LBJ because he did not expect his letter to be seen by President Kennedy, stating, “I had hoped that Mr. Kennedy would not force the

⁷⁰ Open Letter, Brigadier General U.S. Army (Retired) Herbert C. Holdridge to General Maxwell D. Taylor, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 9/29/1962, folder University of Mississippi 2, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

⁷¹ Telegram, from Robert Dilley to Lyndon Johnson, 10/2/1962, folder University of Mississippi 2, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

⁷² Telegram, from Dick and Laurie Johnston to VP, 10/12/1962, folder University of Mississippi 2, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

⁷³ Letter, Nola Brown to Lyndon Johnson, 10/1/1962, folder University of Mississippi 2, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

issue so strongly. There would have been and may yet be some disastrous results.”

Catching on to early arguments of reverse discrimination, he clarified, “If the Negroes of an area have equal or high quality schools, then the rights of the many, the whites, would be violated in favor of the few, the Negroes.” He also was against rapid change, as he was “certain that this kind of integration is not in the Constitution” and should be undertaken “extremely slowly... not something to thrust upon a people all at once.”⁷⁴

Americans from Texas to New York also mailed in letters to LBJ to express their opposition with a defeatist attitude that they would never get a letter through to the president. Although citizens were unaware, a White House memo proved that the administration, directed by William Hopkins, would not respond to negative letters or telegrams written about the federal intervention in Meredith’s case.⁷⁵ T. Stewart of Texas addressed his letter to LBJ because he did not expect a letter to reach the president. He defended Governor Barnett who he believed was “slighted for Contempt wrongfully, for what red blooded American wouldn’t have contempt for those who would steal away our constitutional rights and replace them with a Federal despotism.”⁷⁶ D.E. Speights of Bryan, Texas was also doubtful that his letter would get past the third secretary, as he implored LBJ, “Why in the name of Almighty God cannot you act or speak out against this complete suppression of the rights of the States and the

⁷⁴ Letter, Curtis M. Sievert to Lyndon Johnson, 10/1/1962, folder University of Mississippi 2, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

⁷⁵ Memo from Jean Lewis, Human Rights: 2: ST 24 (Mississippi): Executive, 20 January 1961-15 October 1962 (JFK).

⁷⁶ Letter, T. Stewart to Lyndon Johnson, 9/27/1962, folder University of Mississippi 1, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

individual?”⁷⁷ Mrs. Marie L. Rose of New York had previously written President Kennedy, but addressed her second letter to LBJ instead as she feared “that our President is surrounded by a sort of palace guard so that he hears only what he is desired to hear. It is difficult, almost impossible, for a President to know what the ordinary unorganized citizen thinks.” She accused Kennedy instead of only hearing “from the highly organized pressure groups and heeds them” and doubted that President Kennedy “was ever in close contact with the ordinary citizens who are the strength of this nation.”⁷⁸ A lady of Kansas wrote LBJ that she was “indeed surprised of your acts in betraying your own white race for the Negro.”⁷⁹ A White House staffer observed, “Senator Johnson may have lost the presidency devoting vital time and attention to getting civil rights legislation through Congress in early 1960.” For in his passage of civil rights measures, “he did not gain support for the nomination with his great effort and no doubt suffered a decline of popularity with the white voters throughout the Nation.” And this did not just apply to the South, as “the residents of Northern and Western states resented their senators being kept to roll call around the clock” instead of serving their constituents at home.⁸⁰

Some citizens warned of international implications stemming from Kennedy’s actions. The United States was already on the world stage during the Cold War rivalry

⁷⁷ Letter, D.E. Speights of Bryan, TX, to Lyndon Johnson, 9/28/1962. folder University of Mississippi 1, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

⁷⁸ Letter, Mrs. Marie L. Rose to Lyndon Johnson, 10/2/1962, folder University of Mississippi 1, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

⁷⁹ Letter, Pearl Milam to Lyndon Johnson, 9/30/1962, folder University of Mississippi 1, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

⁸⁰ Memo, 10/12/1962, folder University of Mississippi 1, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

with the Soviet Union, and inner disruptions created more fear about the perception of America. While conservatives called President Kennedy a dictator for forcing his will upon the South, they also argued that he needed to do so with federal force because the southerners did not respect him or his overreaching authority. LBJ's friend Virginia Durr in Montgomery recognized that "Kennedy is very unpopular here now on account of the racial issue," but she worried that the larger issue was that "he is not regarded with any respect or fear" for people generally regarded him as "impotent." Addressing the larger international issue, Durr knew, "It really seems ridiculous to think we can export our 'way of life' when we cannot even get the Federal government obeyed in our own country" which would become "a terrible handicap to the respect other countries would have for us."⁸¹ Another Texan lady agreed, "the President hasn't had the guts to kick old Khrushchev out of Cuba—a fact of a lot more importance than that one nigger go to a school, because the NAACP paid him to do so."⁸² Ironically, America's racial struggle gave it an international black eye and helped to destroy the democratic image it tried to portray globally in the ideological competition against the communist Soviets.

Dewey M. Johnson, State Senator of the 6th District of Florida, also expressed his concern about America's peril, saying, "I am becoming more and more disturbed by the people resenting the acts of Bob Kennedy in trying to cram down the throats of the South the Negro," which he claims was making more people lean toward other dangerous forms of government. "If President Kennedy could be made to see that he is

⁸¹ Letter, Virginia A. Durr to Lyndon Johnson, 9/12/1962, folder University of Mississippi 1, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

⁸² Letter, Mrs. C.O. Delano to Lyndon Johnson, 10/2/1962, folder University of Mississippi 1, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

not lifting but is destroying American prestige by trying to lower the white to the level of the Negro, maybe he would at least pull his brother off.” As a direct result of “Mr. Bob Kennedy’s action in the South,” Texas had elected a Republican U.S. Senator, John Tower, and Senator Dewey Johnson rightly warned, “It will elect others in the South, if he keeps up.”⁸³

The widespread fear of communism was still very pervasive in 1962 with frequent reminders of Cuba and East Berlin firmly held under Soviet control, and many Americans applied the communist reasoning to the government’s use of force in the South. Idealizing the American way of life as a white one, Mrs. Alfred V. Green of New Jersey also complained that the blacks were “just plain ‘STEALING’ colleges and schools from the white people” after white people had spent “their blood, sweat, or tears” to create these schools and were now forced at gun point to turn them over to blacks. She compared the national government to the Soviets, asking, “Exactly how much worse than us are the Russians? Or, are the Russians really as rotten as our own government?”⁸⁴ More critically, Mrs. Mary S. Jackson of Michigan thought that the communists were more directly involved when she wrote, “Governor Barnett is in the

⁸³ John Goodwin Tower was elected in as the first Republican Texan U.S. Senator since Reconstruction in a special May 1961 election to replace LBJL’s seat. As a conservative, he accused the Administration of being far left of traditional Democrats, and took a firm stand against the Civil Rights Act. Letter, Senator Dewey M. Johnson to Lyndon Johnson, 5/31/1961, folder Civil Rights 1, Box 61 (VP/LBJL).

⁸⁴ Letter, Mrs. Alfred V. Green to Lyndon Johnson, 10/1/1962, folder University of Mississippi 1, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

right, it seems to me a communistic trick being forced on Mississippi and any other state.”⁸⁵

Of course, numerous Americans believed that the blacks themselves involved in the civil rights movement, not just the white leaders helping them, were also conspiring with communists for a takedown of the country. A Texan wrote that James Meredith, “whether he knows it or not” was “being used as a tool of the Communists to cause discord and confusion in this country.” In agreement, one lady from Louisiana asked LBJ to denounce the president’s handling of “Communist infiltrated Negro groups” at Ole Miss.⁸⁶ Like others who protested the quick pace of integration, another Texan blamed the communists for pushing “the Negro too far too fast,” which had done a disservice to the blacks by causing “many formerly tolerant people to look upon the negro as being a despicable being.”⁸⁷ Eighty-eight year-old Mary Head was a fierce anti-communist and felt it her duty to tell LBJ of the talk in coffee shops came to the consensus that “forced integration was communist inspired,” reasoning that “the pro communist rulings in favor of the communists by the Supreme Court for the past dozen years... does look like a communist idea since they desire to conquer the whole world.” She explained if the Russians could create strife and divide the American people, they

⁸⁵ Letter, Mrs. Mary S. Jackson to Lyndon Johnson, 9/30/1962, folder University of Mississippi 2, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

⁸⁶ Letter, Mrs. Virgil E. Ford to Lyndon Johnson, 10/2/1962, folder University of Mississippi 2, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

⁸⁷ Letter, T. Stewart Lyndon Johnson, 9/27/1962, folder University of Mississippi 2, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

would be using “one of the best and oldest known pieces of strategy to win any war as ‘divide and conquer’ which is as old as man himself.”⁸⁸

Others warned that President Kennedy’s firm actions to dismantle segregation would result in a clear voter message in the next election. Democrat H. Dick Golding of Houston was concerned that the northern states and their politicians did not understand the defiance of the southerners to rapid integration, which would cost his political party the next election in the very least. Highlighting the still existing sectional differences between North and South, he wrote to Robert Kennedy, “The continuance of Freedom rides are a disservice to the negro cause for they are alienating those who already have accepted integration and hardening the resistance of those who haven’t.” He sent a newspaper clipping with the results of a recent Gallup poll that indicated that although Americans approved of the principle of racial integration, they preferred “a gradual approach in putting desegregation rulings into effect.” Like others, he warned that the resentment against the Kennedys was “strong enough to make a Democrat vote Republican” and recommended that an immediate non-political member of the Kennedy family, perhaps Father Joe, “express himself to soften Southern feelings and emotion.”⁸⁹ Golding also addressed a letter to Vice President Johnson, perhaps thinking that he could better make him understand as a fellow Texan, reiterating his concern over the Democrats losing the next election. He believed it was “imperative to take remedial action now before the cement of resentment sets. I find that most Northerners

⁸⁸ Letter, Mrs. Mary Head to Lyndon Johnson, 11/18/1962, folder University of Mississippi 2, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

⁸⁹ Letter, H. Dick Golding to Robert Kennedy, 7/4/1961, folder University of Mississippi 2, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

underestimate the explosive nature of the emotional feeling that has built up around the these so-called non-violent Freedom rides.”⁹⁰

Southerners made it clear that they would stop voting for the Democratic ticket if the leaders within the party continued to force integration. Mrs. Nellie S. Landers of Houston agreed with others that integration, particularly at the University of Mississippi, was “a communist inspired affair,” but she accused Kennedy of using it to receive votes from the blacks. However, she felt he was out of touch with “the opinions of some of the people, many of whom are or were in his ‘Party’,” as “he has put more people into the Republican bracket than anyone else ever did.”⁹¹ Another lady of Texas concurred, “If Kennedy crushes the state of Mississippi he will crush the Democratic Party in the South.”⁹² “This, of course,” Dr. Andrew Small argued, is what invariably happens when one or a few men get unlimited power.” He found it ironic that the federal government administered “social justice at the point of a bayonet for one citizen.”⁹³

Indeed, President Kennedy’s poll ratings dipped after the Ole Miss incident, and his grip on the South was slipping, especially with emerging political candidates like Barry Goldwater entering the presidential race. *Time Magazine* took a state-by-state poll of hundreds of political figures and concluded that President Kennedy was not

⁹⁰ Letter, H. Dick Golding to Lyndon Johnson, 7/4/1961, folder University of Mississippi 1, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

⁹¹ Letter, Mrs. Nellie S. Landers to Lyndon Johnson, 10/8/1962, folder University of Mississippi 1, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

⁹² Telegram, Lea Harris to all Presidential Electors, 9/29/1962, folder University of Mississippi 1, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

⁹³ Letter, Andrew S. Small, M.D. of Dallas, TX to the Honorable Ralph Yarbough, 10/9/1962, folder University of Mississippi 1, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

necessarily a “sure 1964 winner,” especially if Texas turned Republican.⁹⁴ Presidential hopeful Senator Barry Goldwater told a crowd in South Carolina that he was firmly against court-enforced integration, school busing, racial balance in schools, and the Civil Rights Act, as he believed “the ultimate solution lies in the hearts of men.”⁹⁵ He did not feel that legislation or the federal government could regulate the sentiment of the heart, for time was the only way to change it. And it was the fear of the government supporting blacks more than whites, along with a fear of change, which set the mood for 1963 and the resistance against the Civil Rights Act.

The Civil Rights Act

Conversations about the Civil Rights Bill began to polarize more Americans on the issue of civil equalities. Congress was to decide on a landmark bill that would legally prohibit discrimination based on race. By 1963, the reaction against civil rights was hardening and strengthening as organizations increased their efforts to influence others through various forms of media. Like previous repulsions, the Silent Majority in writings depended on certain rationales based on legalism and anticommunism, but new hurdles fanned the flames and gave them a new momentum. As black legal and federal victories in employment and schools did not have the desired immediate result by making these institutions racially equal, civil rights leaders began to demand reverse discrimination to rectify the gap between court rulings and reality, thus angering many more white

⁹⁴ Dana Gatlin, “Vietnam, 'Rights' and Goldwater,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 10/7/1963, 5. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁹⁵ “Goldwater Comes Out Four-Square Against Integration: Republican,” *Philadelphia Tribune*; Nov 3, 1964; ProQuest Historical Newspapers, 1.

Americans than before. At the same time, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) began enforcing the Fairness Doctrine that required equal airtime to both ideas, resulting in a primarily conservative backlash by those who depended on their one-sided programming to influence their constituents. Yet debates about equality in media coverage, particularly in the televised news, became heated as the Silent Majority fought against news networks that focused on the liberal movements, and clamored for more coverage of their actions against civil rights. To get their version of the truth out, they realized that the nightly television news was not their most favorable outlet, and thus looked for other ways to communicate to Americans their position against civil rights, predominantly on the radio and in mailed newsletters. Perhaps the Silent Majority received its moniker because it found other written ways to be influential, unlike the vocal liberal movements of the decade that received more media coverage.

A majority of Americans, while in favor of the Civil Rights Bill, deemed gradual implementation necessary. According to a Gallup Poll taken the summer of 1963, 49 percent of Americans still thought the Kennedy Administration was pushing racial integration too fast, while 26 percent thought the speed about right and only 10 percent pushed for a quicker pace.⁹⁶ A Harris survey in that November asked Americans if they were in favor of civil rights legislation or the outlawing of public discrimination. Their answers showed 58 percent were in favor, while 32 percent were opposed to both

⁹⁶ Gallup Poll # 1963-0676: Russian Nuclear Weapons, Testing/1964 Presidential Election, August 1963. (RCPOR).

statements.⁹⁷ By April of 1964, the number in favor of the civil rights bill that had just been passed had jumped to 70 percent.⁹⁸ However, in light of new implementations of the act, that number dropped even below the previous year's numbers, as only 54 percent were in favor in that August.⁹⁹ And Americans expected the bill to work slowly, as a full 89 percent who opposed the civil rights bill stated they did so because the bill went too far.¹⁰⁰ A Gallup poll in October of 1964 asked if the Civil Rights law should be strictly enforced or gradually, and 62 percent answered in the latter while only 23 percent thought it should be strictly enforced.¹⁰¹

Opposition started months in advance to stop the Civil Rights Bill dead in its tracks, including the use of previous constitutional arguments. Most Americans believed change was inevitable, but should not be rushed; intense fears about reverse discrimination leaked their way into rational reasoning. At the same time, it had become popular to support civil rights, putting much pressure on those who resisted the fast pace of change. The Southern States Industrial Council Bulletin, a conservative organization of southern business leaders, accused the civil rights liberals of ignorance, conformity, having an itch for publicity, and impatience. They argued that blacks had made "solid progress" in the last 100 years. But they viewed the integrationists as using an "approach to civil rights for the Negro" that they considered "profoundly and demonstrably wrong and doomed to ultimate failure" because it was "literally impossible" to "confer equality

⁹⁷ Harris Survey, Nov, 1963. (RCPOR)

⁹⁸ Harris Survey, Apr, 1964. (RCPOR)

⁹⁹ Harris Survey, Aug, 1964. (RCPOR)

¹⁰⁰ Hopes And Fears, Sep, 1964. (RCPOR)

¹⁰¹ Gallup Poll, Oct, 1964. (RCPOR)

on the Negro by court decree and legislative fiat” unless it was “supported by an overwhelming majority of the people affected by it.”¹⁰² Conservative Dan Smoot agreed in his newsletter, claiming, “The pending Civil Rights Act is the most dangerous piece of legislation considered by Congress since the Reconstruction Era” because it “violates numerous specific provisions of the Constitution” by discarding “ancient, fundamental principles of American jurisprudence.” He continued, “It neither provides nor guarantees civil rights for anyone,” and instead would “enact into law the demands of racial agitators that the whole system of American constitutional government be set aside for the purpose of giving preferential treatment to negroes in the United States.”¹⁰³ North Carolinian Isabelle Garrison posed the question, “why not equal rights for whites?”¹⁰⁴ Further, an editorial in *The Citizen* pointed out the oxymoron of the rising violence associated with the civil rights movement: “Thus, while their sanctimonious leaders prate of ‘non-violence,’ the swaying and chanting of hysterical Negro masses give the lie to this pious fiction” while the Justice Department instituted its “policy of anti-white racism.”¹⁰⁵

A year earlier, on June 30, 1963, Martin Luther King, Jr. had demanded “discrimination in reverse” for blacks on NBC’s “Protestant Heritage” TV show, terrifying the paranoid and awakening the moderates. He explained, “There must be

¹⁰² Southern States Industrial Council Bulletin, 12/15/1963, folder Civil Rights – General, Box 491 (GR/CUA)

¹⁰³ “Discrimination in Reverse,” *Dan Smoot Report*, 5/25/1964, folder Civil Rights – General, Box 79, 165, (GR/CUA)

¹⁰⁴ Letter, Miss Isabelle Garrison to Lyndon Johnson, 9/27/1962, folder University of Mississippi 2, Box 125 (VP/LBJL).

¹⁰⁵ Editorial Opinion, *The Citizen*, July-August, 1962, 2, folder Civil Rights – General, Box 491, (GR/CUA)

some concrete, practical preferential program whereby Negroes” could become more involved in the life of the nation.¹⁰⁶ Wyatt Walker, MLK’s aid, stated that in order for their demands to be met, “American legislatures, courts, and law had to be bypassed, the Constitution must be replaced, and our entire economic systems, educational procedures, free enterprise structures and profit system had to be abolished, and that America had to move rapidly to a socialist system.” For if all these things were not done at once, without the slightest delay, the Negroes in the NAACP, CORE and the Southern Christian Conference would take “whatever revolutionary measures required to enforce these demands at once, and that neither delay, compromise nor alternatives would be tolerated.”¹⁰⁷ Dan Smoot claimed that “civil rights supporters falsified their objective: they do not want to eliminate racial prejudice; they want to create it.” He explained, “They do not want negroes to be ignored *as negroes* and treated like other human beings: they want negroes to be given preferential treatment *because they are negroes*.”¹⁰⁸

Talk of reverse discrimination made many white Americans both angry and leery of civil rights leaders, whom some condemned as Communists for their revolutionary threats. Astonishingly, in September of 1964 and even through October 1965, almost half of those polled believed that communists infiltrated civil rights organizations.¹⁰⁹ Conservative organizations also tried to discredit the civil rights movement and their leaders. Smoot claimed that King’s two aides were members of the Communist Party,

¹⁰⁶ “Dr. King is Target of Eggs in Harlem,” *New York Times*, 7/1/1963, pg. 21.

¹⁰⁷ *American Review* mailing, GR, Box 79, “Civil Rights – General,” (GR/CUA)

¹⁰⁸ “Discrimination in Reverse,” *Dan Smoot Report*, 5/25/1964, 161.

¹⁰⁹ Hopes And Fears, Sep, 1964; Gallup Poll, Oct, 1965. (RCPOR)

and that King was known to be a close friend of Anne Braden, Carl Braden, Aubrey Williams, and Dr. James Dombrowski — all supposedly members of the Communist party and officials of the Southern Conference Educational Fund, which Smoot claimed was “in fact a Communist Front and a Subversive Organization.”¹¹⁰ Further, a picture of MLK in 1957 at Highlander Folk School in Monteagle, Tennessee was printed in *The Augusta Courier* and was highly circulated in many a conservative newsletter. The picture showed King with Abner W. Berry of the Central Committee of the U.S. Communist Party, Aubrey Williams, President of Southern Conference Education Fund, Inc., and Myles Horton, Director of the Highlander Folk School for Communist Training. According to the *Augusta Courier*, these men became known as the “Four Horsemen” of racial agitation for bringing “tension, disturbance, strife and violence in their advancement of the Communist doctrine of ‘racial nationalism’.”¹¹¹ Indeed, the Highlander Folk School School was later abolished by an act of the Tennessee Legislature for being considered as a subversive organization. M. Nat Andrews of Birmingham sent letters to the members of the House of Representatives, claiming he had the picture of MLK at Monteagle as proof of King’s communist connections. He quoted a leading Communist in England, who stated, “We must realize that our party’s most powerful weapon is racial tension” as substance enough to halt King and his operations.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ “Discrimination in Reverse,” *Dan Smoot Report*, 5/25/1964, 161.

¹¹¹ “Martin Luther King...Communist Training School,” *Augusta Courier*, 7/8/1963, 4.

¹¹² Letter, M. Nat Andrews to Members of the House of Representatives, 6/25/1964, folder Civil Rights Bill, Box 80 (GR/CUA)

Conservatives also accused the Congress of Racial Equality as being part of a communist conspiracy. Senator James O. Eastland (D-Mississippi), with access to the files of the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee and the House on Un-American Activities judged, “From investigation and examination of the facts and records there can be little doubt, in my judgment, but that [CORE] is an arm of the Communist conspiracy” who “sow strife and discord in this country.”¹¹³ Additionally, Smoot believed at least 658 officials of the National Council of Churches in support of the civil rights movement had communist front records.¹¹⁴

Capitalizing on the mood, Fred Schwartz held a recurring anticommunism school to educate Americans of the perils of communism. Six hundred and fifty people turned out at his school at Carnegie Hall in 1962 on the first day of the five-day seminar to hear his principles about communism, its evil properties, and how it proposed to conquer the world.¹¹⁵ Even in 1963, he kept an ambitious schedule. For example, in September alone, Schwarz traveled the country from Southern California to New York City, giving schools at eight locations.¹¹⁶ As these portable schools created a hotbed of discussion, two studies examined Schwartz’ school in 1963. In April, *The Journal of Social Issues* ran a full journal of articles about the foundation and implications of the anticommunist school, while Professor Raymond E. Wolfinger of Stanford gave a notable paper at the American Political Science Association based on the analysis of 308 attendees of the

¹¹³ “Activities in the Southern States,” speech by U.S. Senator James O. Eastland, *Congressional Record*, 5/25/1961, 8349-63.

¹¹⁴ “Discrimination in Reverse,” *Dan Smoot Report*, 5/25/1964, 173.

¹¹⁵ “Schwarz School Draws 400 Here.” *New York Times*, Aug 28, 1962. 4.

¹¹⁶ GRR Vol 2, No. 17, 9/16/1963, GR Box 426, “Vol. 2, No. 17 9/16/63,” 66 (GR/CUA).

school. The latter concluded the school “appeals to well-educated, well-to-do, Republican, Protestant people” who were only part of the right wing. However, in disagreement of Wolfinger’s narrow-focused microanalysis, Schwarz denounced the study as “hostile and biased.”¹¹⁷ Regardless of the petty battle of pointing fingers, the anticommunist schools were highly publicized and well attended.

Other patriotic organizations also campaigned against communism. Formed in 1949 “to undergird our constitutional Republic and combat the increasing threat of Socialistic Communism to the American Way of Life,” by 1963, the Freedoms Foundation had increased their promotional mailings and fund-raising, and passed out thousands of awards annually for patriotic endeavors to editors, teachers, speakers, students, and others to counter the communist image in America and support the American way of life.¹¹⁸ According to Wesley McCune, one of the “most effective right-wing lobbies” was created in 1963 to carry on the fight against the pending Civil Rights Bill: The Coordinating Committee for Fundamental American Freedoms, which “combined the talents of a northern newspaper publisher with that of southern segregationists, professional staff help and plenty of money.” They were part of the “public suspicion that the civil rights movement is Communist-inspired,” and a “whole series of incidents were carried off by the radical right in answer to integration demonstrations.”¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ GRR Vol 2, No. 18, 9/30/1963, GR Box 426, “Vol. 2, No. 18 9/30/63,” 70-71 (GR/CUA).

¹¹⁸ GRR Vol. 2, No. 20, 10/28/1963, GR Box 426, “Vol. 2, No. 20,” 79-80 (GR/CUA).

¹¹⁹ Wesley McCune, “The Right-Wingers: Who They Are and What They Have Done in 1963,” GR Box 491 folder Wesley McCune Writings, 2. (GR/CUA).

The Economic Council, another rightist organization, argued that communists would absolutely take advantage of the opportunity of the 1963 March on Washington to further their agenda. They argued that there was “a growing conviction among responsible people that this march is not a test of the Negro community, but of the American community.” Therefore, “the public peace, the mark of a civilized community, must and shall be preserved.”¹²⁰ Televangelist Carl McIntire was also distressed that his public opposition to the March was ignored, forcing him to write to the FCC to complain that the National Association of Broadcasters gave too much time to his rival, the National Council of Churches, with which he had been feuding for several years because of its alleged liberalism.¹²¹

Taking a different tact, a few citizens wrote in their opinions to their local Chicago newspaper. One citizen wrote to the editor of the *Chicago Tribune* to complain about the provisions of civil rights bill, which “sound like the mandates laid down to a conquered enemy by the conqueror.” He believed the Senate was standing “between American freedom and almost complete government control over the private affairs of men — white and Negro alike” and had a duty to prevent an authoritarian regime.¹²² Mrs. R.D. Bull wrote to the same editor that she believed “the majority in favor of the bill do not even know what is contained in it.” She warned its passing would “turn our

¹²⁰ “Civil Rights and Economic Wrongs,” *Economic Council Letter*, Letter 557, 8/15/1963, GR Box 491, folder Civil Rights – General, (GR/CUA)

¹²¹ GRR Vol. 2, No. 19, 10/14/1963, 75, GR Box 426, folder Vol. 2 No. 19 10/14/63 (GR/CUA).

¹²² “Civil Rights Bill (Letter to the Editor),” *Chicago Tribune* 2/27/1964, 20. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

supposedly democratic system into a socialistic dictatorship” by reinstating slavery.¹²³ Her point about ignorance of the bill’s contents was not unique, as many Americans felt the news was biased and sensational in providing limited information about the civil rights movement.

In fact, three presidential commissions tasked with investigating disturbing national issues agreed that media coverage could be improved. The President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy (Warren Commission), the 1965 National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (Kerner Commission), and the later 1968 National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence (Eisenhower Commission) concluded news coverage to be prejudiced, sensationalistic, and inflammatory. The Warren Commission began this criticism by highlighting the unprofessional actions of reporters present during the transportation of Lee Harvey Oswald and his assassination by Jack Ruby. Policemen needed to push reporters out of the way to proceed down the hallway, as the reporters pushed in to ask Oswald questions for their stories, against police directives. This commission was the first of the three to recommend a set of journalist codes to urge media constraint against sensational news. However, journalists were loath to accept outside criticism or establish a set of federally suggested codes that would presumably destroy their right to free speech.¹²⁴

¹²³ Mrs. R. D. Bull, “Civil Rights Bill (Letter to the Editor),” *Chicago Tribune* 2/27/1964, 20. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

¹²⁴ Glen Feighery, Two Visions of Responsibility: How National Commissions Contributed to Journalism Ethics, 1963-1975.” *Journalism & Communication Monographs* 11, no. 2 (Summer 2009): 167-210, 169, 199.

Some conservatives felt that the government was conspiring to censor news outlets to prevent full disclosure of news or opinions about civil rights. One Texan believed this reached to both television and print media like “NBC, CBS, local news papers” while Marie L. Rose of New York City asked, “What happened to our ‘Freedom of the Press’,” that had seemingly fallen under control “Kennedy Power Consolidated.”¹²⁵ Senator Barry Goldwater agreed, and told an audience in New Hampshire he believed “disagreement and dissent are being discouraged in this country.” He continued, “What we have actually today is fascism on the left,” as “under fascism you are not allowed to say anything, and under Communism too.”¹²⁶

To many on the right, the Federal Communications Commission appeared to stand in the way of disseminating persuasive conservative arguments over the airwaves. The 1949 “fairness doctrine” had only been applied on a case-by-case basis since its inception, and required “if one viewpoint of a controversial issue of public importance is presented, the licensee is obligated to make a reasonable effort to present the other opposing viewpoint or viewpoints.” It also states, “it is immaterial whether a particular program of viewpoint is presented under the label ‘Americanism,’ ‘anti-Communism’ or ‘states’ rights,’ or whether it is a paid announcement, official speech, editorial or religious broadcast.”¹²⁷ Several powerful congressmen, including segregationist Congressman John Bell Williams (D-Mississippi) “blasted the FCC for attempting to

¹²⁵ Telegram, from E.J. Wilburn to Lyndon Johnson, 7/17/1961; Letter, Mrs. Marie L. Rose to Lyndon Johnson, 10/2/1962, folder Civil Rights 1, Box 61 (VP/LBJL).

¹²⁶ Charles Mohr, “Goldwater Says Dissent Is Stifled: Rights Bill Goes Too Far, He Insists in New Hampshire,” *New York Times*, 1/22/1964, 27; “We’ve Gone Too Far On Rights’, Goldwater Says,” *Chicago Daily Defender*, 1/23/1964, 4. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

¹²⁷ GRR Vol. 2, No. 17, 9/17/1963, 67. GR Box 426, folder GR Report Vol 2-17 9/17/63 (GR/CUA).

apply the doctrine to the subject of racial integration.” He told *Broadcasting Magazine* that “no responsible person in his area would take the integration side—only agitators” and declared, “I consider this an act of intimidation on the part of the FCC against a selected group of broadcasters and an attempt to use radio and TV as a propaganda vehicle for socialism, the New Frontier and forced race mixing.”¹²⁸

Other strong conservatives also railed against the FCC’s enforcement of the fairness doctrine, as it affected their broadcasts. Even privately paid broadcasts were supposed to feature opposing viewpoints to the main line, which defeated the purpose of many conservative and religious radio and TV shows. Most prominent in the religious sphere were Dr. Carl McIntire, leader of the American Council of Churches in direct opposition to the National Council of Churches, and radio evangelist and Billy James Hargis, radio and television evangelist on *Christian Crusade*. Others like the Freedom Foundation; Luther Broadus III, editor of a farm paper owned by John Birch leader Tom Anderson; and Dan Smoot, the ex-FBI agent who ran an ultraconservative program and started the Organization for the Protection of Conservative Opinion in Broadcasting, also pushed to get more conservative viewpoints on radio and TV.¹²⁹ Further, Clarence Manion, who helped find a publisher for Barry Goldwater’s book *Conscience of a Conservative*, led his radio show *Manion Forum*, which propagated conservative messages over the airwaves like the religious *Life Line* radio broadcast with an accompanying mailed pamphlet to 300 daily radio stations. Financed by Texas oil

¹²⁸ GRR Vol. 2, No. 17, 9/17/1963. folder Vol. 2 No. 19 10/14/63, GR Box 426 (GR/CUA).

¹²⁹ GRR Vol. 2, No. 19, 10/14/1963, 75. folder Vol. 2 No. 19 10/14/63, GR Box 426 (GR/CUA).

billionaire H.L. Hunt, it combined “economic, religious, spiritual and patriotic messages” and in 1962 had featured Rev. Wayne Poucher, James Dobbs, and ex-FBI Gene Scudder, who were all replaced in 1963 by Bob White from Minneapolis radio and Ralph McCune, a theological newcomer.¹³⁰ These programs made a serious appeal to Americanism and the foundations on which the country was founded — under God.

In 1963, the Right Wing grew as their publications became more improved and effective and they took greater advantage of radio and television. By the end of the year, the combination of Carl McIntire, Clarence Manion, Dan Smoot, Howard Kershner, *Life Lines* and Billy James Hargis were now heard some 6,000 times a week through syndication.¹³¹ The conservative publication *Human Events* (named after the first line of the Constitution) reached circulation above 100,000. Several businessmen in Nashville, Tennessee even tried to get the local public schools to use the *Life Line* newsletter in their classrooms, but the metropolitan area board denied it.¹³² Even the back of the liberal Republican journal called *Advance* in its Fall 1963 issue had a red, white and blue promotion for the long-playing record, “What is a Republican?” which was promoted by Ronald Reagan, known then as “the Hollywood personality whose speeches for General Electric and others are extremely popular with right-wing audiences.”¹³³ American citizens against civil rights and the pending bill sent in money to halt the progress of the bill. An intensive study of the financial support of the political and economic right wing,

¹³⁰ Wesley McCune, “The Right-wingers: Who They Are and What They Have Done in 1963,” 423, folder “Wesley McCune Writings,” GR Box 491 (GR/CUA).

¹³¹ McCune, “The Right-wingers,” 2.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 12, 77.

¹³³ GRR Vol. 2, No. 21, 11/12/1963, 82, folder Vol. 2 No. 21 11/12/63, GR Box 426 (GR/CUA).

completed by Group Research, Inc., disclosed that 30 leading groups had spent \$14,300,000 on lobbying and estimated that others spent at least as much—totaling about \$30,000,000 for 1963. Going back to 1955, the GRI study found that right-wing groups were surprisingly growing at the rate of 17% annually through 1964, many in response to increased liberalism in the civil rights movement, college campuses, and American culture.¹³⁴

Many more organizations formed and grew directly in response to civil rights. The *First National Directory of 'Rightist' Groups*, published in 1963, listed 3,100 rightist organizations' names, which included radical, conservative, and moderate groups.¹³⁵ The far right radical groups grew noticeably in answer to civil rights, and although they stood apart from Middle America, they made quite a raucous. The obvious racist groups, such as the American Nazi Party led by George Lincoln Rockwell and the Ku Klux Klan, which had become “more brazen and intimidating,” both grew in influence and numbers in 1963. A reorganized Klan in North Carolina, for instance, had become “the biggest there during the past 40 years with only a year of work.”¹³⁶ Additionally, (White) Citizens Councils, who fiercely resisted school desegregation, now had paid organizers on both coasts and claimed units in “about 28 states,” providing “communication and ammunition to many bitter-enders now in the news.” Tom P. Brady, who conceived the movement, was elected to the Mississippi Supreme Court as a result of his visible fight against desegregation. The National States Rights Party also

¹³⁴ GRR Vol. 3, No. 17, 9/15/1964, 65, folder Vol. 3 No. 17 9/15/64,” GR Box 426 (GR/CUA).

¹³⁵ GRR Vol 2, No. 18, 9/30/1963, folder Vol 2-No. 18 9/30/63,” GR Box 426 (GR/CUA).

¹³⁶ GRR Vol. 3, No. 17, 9/15/1964, 68, folder Vol. 3 No. 17 9/15/64, GR Box 426 (GR/CUA)

published its newspaper, *The Thunderbolt*, against integration, proclaiming its opposition to the Civil Rights Bill.¹³⁷

Like existing organizations, new groups were formed specifically to stop civil rights progress. The newest National Association for the Advancement of White People (NAAWP) was created to counter the NAACP under William F. Miller as President, previous YMCA secretary, and Dale Baxter as regional director. Likewise, the National Association of Americans for the Preservation of Caucasians (NAAPC), headquartered in the Tabernacle Baptist Church of Memphis, sent a hateful, open letter signed by Pastor J. H. Melton to members of Congress to support white dominance.¹³⁸ Also, the newly-formed Association of Tenth Amendment Conservatives, composed of students attending colleges in Mississippi, declared their purpose was to “meet the impending invasion” of their state by an influx of Northern college students sponsored by the National Council of Churches by planning conservative chapters all over the South during the 1964 Freedom Summer.¹³⁹ Lastly, with a complement on the West Coast for the retention of American values, Walter Knott, one of the most active leaders of the right, established a new aptly named Freedom Center with a research, writing, speaking, and film staff at Knott’s Berry Farm and Ghost Town, Buena Park to cultivate an American image based on the Constitution.¹⁴⁰

The city of Jackson, Mississippi, also became more politically involved in trying to halt civil rights equality. The Jackson Junior Chamber of Commerce, supported by its

¹³⁷ McCune, “The Right-wingers,” 12.

¹³⁸ GRR Vol. 2, No. 15, 8/12/1963, 58, folder GRI Report Aug 12, GR Box 426, (GR/CUA)

¹³⁹ GRR Vol. 3, No. 9, 5/15/1964, folder Vol. 3 No. 9 May 15, 1964, GR Box 426 (GR/CUA)

¹⁴⁰ GRR Vol. 2, No. 22, November 27, 1963, 86, folder Newsletter #22, GR Box 426 (GR/CUA).

Mississippi parent group, launched Operation Freedom Writer to “educate citizens of key states of the alleged dangers of proposed civil rights legislation.” They mailed letters to friends and relatives in seventeen states where Congressmen were uncommitted on pending civil rights bills.¹⁴¹ Taking political lobbying further, the wives of Alabama Governor Wallace, Mississippi Governor Johnson, ex-Governor Barnett and John C. Satterfield, some of biggest names in the fight against pending civil rights bills, formed the Women for Constitutional Government in protest against the desegregation of Ole Miss University. They held their second national convention in 1964 in Jackson with the goal to replace liberal Congressmen with “solid conservatives.”

These Congressmen were soon to vote upon what was to be a landmark piece of legislation. President John F. Kennedy had initially conceived and announced the Civil Rights Bill in his civil rights speech of June 11, 1963, but Lyndon Johnson had to take up the crusade when Kennedy was assassinated that fall, with his Camelot legacy as the impetus for the bill. As racial resistance and violence in the South was constantly shown on television networks, civil rights leaders brought their plight to the nation with the March on Washington. After receiving years’ worth of letters from Americans in opposition to government-backed racial equality, President Johnson knew he gambled losing the southern vote by supporting the bill and admitted to Kennedy’s aide Ted Sorenson, “I know the risks are great and we might lose the South, but those sorts of

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

states may be lost anyway.”¹⁴² Americans in opposition to LBJ’s stronger Civil Rights Act fervently rallied the troops to halt the congressional approval of the legislation.

One of the most effective organizations opposing the bill was the Coordinating Committee for Fundamental American Freedoms (CCFAF). It had been organized in summer of 1963 under William Loeb, editor and publisher of *Union-Leader* (out of Manchester, New Hampshire) specifically to combat the pending civil rights legislation with “the strategy of creating public pressure against the bill on undeclared members of Congress.”¹⁴³ The new CCFAF received contributions of \$133,000 from the summer to the end of 1963, with its principal source being the Mississippi Sovereignty Commission, which also supported the White Citizens’ Council — although the Commission claimed most of the income came from private contributions. Like other organizations, it also distributed pamphlets and placed newspaper ads opposing civil rights legislation, which were authored by John C. Satterfield, recent president of the American Bar Association and legal adviser to Governor Ross Barnett.¹⁴⁴ Its main device was an ad in about 225 newspapers showing a crude fist swinging a blackjack, an image to represent bullying by the authorities. The CCFAF quickly became “the chief lobby against pending civil rights legislation” and by March was well on its way to becoming one of 1964’s biggest spenders among Washington’s many lobbies. The

¹⁴² Nick Kotz, *Judgment Days: Lyndon Baines Johnson, Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Laws that Changed America* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2005), 61.

¹⁴³ GRR Vol. 3, No. 12, June 29, 1964, 45, folder Vol. 3 No. 12 6/29/64, GR Box 426, (GR/CUA)

¹⁴⁴ GRR Vol. 3, No. 2, 1/31/1964, folder Vol. 3 No. 2 Jan 31, 64, GR Box 426 (GR/CUA)

CCFAF received \$449,320 in less than a year and a half from Mississippi, Louisiana, and Florida to try to influence undecided congressmen.¹⁴⁵

Other organizations fell back on their historical red-baiting to influence voters to distance themselves from civil rights. Using this effective and proven tactic, right-wing groups banded together in a loud outcry and attacked the perceived communist elements within the civil rights movement in a concerted effort to stop the looming Civil Rights Bill. It was rare for the different conservative factions to join forces, but it was easier to do so when they were united against a measure rather than in favor of one. They not only kept up an onslaught to convince the public, but also attacked members of Congress, arguing that “Negro leaders of the drive were subversive” or used activities “designed by the Communists as part of the conspiracy.” The conservative John Birch Society distributed ads declaring any vote in support of the bill would be “a nail in the coffin of the American Republic,” and speeches by John Rousselot, western leader of JBS, charged that further legislation would “hasten a Communist takeover of the U.S.” Taking it further, the radical Minutemen group sent out a twenty-page mailing of pictures and headlines alleging Communist influence in civil rights groups. Additionally, Dan Smoot in his newsletter devoted an eight-page issue of his *Report* to alleged Communist connections of civil rights leaders and Ezra Taft Benson’s column in *Free Enterprise*, published by the organization We, The People!, who also charged that the drive for civil rights was a Communist plot.

¹⁴⁵ GRR Vol. 3, No. 6, 3/30/1964, 21, folder Vol. 3 No. 6 3/30/64; GRR Vol. 3, No. 18, 9/30/1964, folder Vol. 3 No. 18 9/30/64, GR Box 426 (GR/CUA).

Televangelists aimed to defeat the CRA. Carl McIntire kept up a drumbeat of attacks on the bill, alleging Communist backing for and claiming Biblical opposition to it. Billy James Hargis distributed a pamphlet called “The Negro Question — Communist Civil War Policy” and a recent letter to his supporters that displayed the fist and blackjack used in ads by the CCFAF that denounced the National Council of Churches and the “ ‘Bloody Race War’ Planned This Summer!” that would erupt in wake of passage of the bill.¹⁴⁶

The FBI also was leery of communist infiltration. FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover echoed the right-wing suspicions that communists were targeting the civil rights movement by his comments before a House subcommittee, which was made public on April 22, 1964. According to the FBI report, “The approximate 20 million Negroes in the United States today constitute the largest and most important racial target of the Communist Party, U.S.A. The infiltration, exploitation, and control of the negro population has long been a party goal and is one of its principal goals today.” He warned blacks, “the Communist Party is not motivated by any honest desire to better the status or condition of the Negro in this country, but strives only to exploit what are often legitimate Negro complaints and grievances for the advancement of Communist objectives.” He substantiated his claim by stating, “We do know that Communist influence does exist in the Negro movement and it is this influence which is vitally important. It can be the means through which large masses are caused to lose perspective

¹⁴⁶ GRR Vol. 3, No. 12, 6/29/1964, 45, folder Vol. 3 No. 12 6/29/64, GR Box 426 (GR/CUA)

on the issues involved and, without realizing it, succumb to the party's propaganda lures."¹⁴⁷

Armed with this new information, American citizens from across the nation mailed letters and sent telegrams urging President Johnson and congressmen to reconsider passing the Civil Rights Bill before the Senate voted upon it. Edward D. Biter, Sr. of Dover, Delaware, was one of many who sent an Alert Effort mailing to legislators, including the article titled "FBI Chief says Reds at Work in Rights Drive," from *The Dallas Morning News* of April 22, 1964 to urge senators and clergymen to "REPUDIATE and WITHDRAW his endorsement of the Civil Rights Bill in its entirety," unless he be labeled "a tool" and "guilty of aiding and abetting the Communist and assisting in destruction" by "selling us into slavery."¹⁴⁸ A John Birch ad in the hometown newsletter *Big Bear Life* also claimed the agitators were communist and the civil rights law was "the most discriminatory legislation ever to be put on the federal statute books — it takes away many more rights from all the people than the rights it secures and guarantees."¹⁴⁹ Senator Barry Goldwater believed that "100 percent of Republican senators would vote for a sensible civil rights legislation but not for just anything that comes along that would be destructive of states' rights."¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷ "J. Edgar Hoover Speaks Out on Reds in the Negro Movement," *U.S. News & World Report*, 5/4/1964, 33.

¹⁴⁸ Edward D. Biter, Sr. of Dover, DE, *Alert Effort* mailing to Senators and clergymen, GR Box 491, "Civil Rights – General," (GR/CUA)

¹⁴⁹ "The Birch Tree advertisement," *Big Bear Life*, 7/21 (no year). folder Civil Rights – General, GR Box 491; Report Vol. 3, No. 2, February 29, 1964, 15, folder Vol. 3 No. 4 Pages 13-16, GR Box 426 (GR/CUA),

¹⁵⁰ William Theis, "GOP's Goldwater Qualifies Support Of Civil Rights Bill," *Atlanta Daily World*, Jun 7, 1963, 1. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

Policemen in the North began to be criticized for taking any measures to keep the peace and many citizens in turn strongly supported law and order. The building of a new elementary school in Cleveland angered blacks, as they believed it would cause greater segregation by allowing whites to avoid the new school. One demonstration by blacks in protest of the new school resulted in the death of a reverend lying in the path of a bulldozer. Three-dozen complaints of police brutality were brought to the FBI to investigate the incident in the wake of the protests. “The shoe is on the wrong foot,” said Mayor Ralph S. Locher. “It is wrong to use federal funds to investigate alleged police brutality and make no investigation of Communists involved in violence on picket lines and demonstrations on school board property.”¹⁵¹ Senators Strom Thurmond, (D-South Carolina) and Herman Talmadge (D-Georgia) also challenged Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy to instead “prosecute subversives allegedly involved in riotous civil rights demonstrations at Cleveland, Ohio.” Thurmond backed Mayor Locher as “exactly right” when he said, “let them investigate Communists — not our law-abiding policemen.”¹⁵² In March 1964, Senator Barry Goldwater accused President Johnson of creating the appropriate climate that had enabled civil rights to turn to violence, and correctly predicted, “we will see more violence before we see less; we will see more recourse to the naked force of government before we see less.”¹⁵³

¹⁵¹ “FBI to Check Complaints in Cleveland Racial Broil,” *Daily Reporter*, 4/18/1964, 7. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

¹⁵² Frank Van Der Linden, “Subversives Accused in Ohio Strife,” *Jackson Daily News*, 4/28/1964. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

¹⁵³ “Barry Blames Johnson For Rights Riots,” *Chicago Tribune*, Mar 5, 1964, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, 3.

Many Americans were concerned that violence would rise, and advocated a strengthening of law enforcement. M. Nat Andrews of Birmingham, Alabama wrote a foreshadowed “letter of mourning” to all the U.S. Representatives “for the unnumbered innocent white girls and women who will be insulted, assaulted and many killed throughout the United States if you pass the Civil Rights Bill!” The “So Called Peaceful Agitators” of both races have “promoted hate” and “caused a complete breakdown of respect for law and brutal attacks on police in many cities,” including a four-hour attack on the police of Lansing, Michigan, and in places like Cleveland and Chicago. Andrews was frustrated about the media portrayal of northern violence, which was “reported, and rightly so, that ‘Demonstrators Attack and Battle Police,’ but the same issue in the South was reported as the ‘Police Attack and Battle Demonstrators.’”¹⁵⁴ Louis E. Lomax, Negro author and lecturer, said that gang killings of white persons such as reported in New York City were likely to spread across the nation. Lomax said that even “passage of the civil rights bill in Congress wouldn’t solve the Negro problem” and that “they’ll have to be settled at the local level.”¹⁵⁵ Ironically, by July of 1964, in a recent Louis Harris public opinion poll, the sentiment about law and order had shifted from a standpoint of resistance against federal troops, as 71 percent now said they favored sending federal troops to preserve peace in the South should violence arise, with 20 percent against.¹⁵⁶ In other words, white southerners accepted federal maintenance of law and order when conducive to their agenda.

¹⁵⁴ Letter, M. Nat Andrews to Members of the House of Representatives, 6/25/1964 (VP/LBJL).

¹⁵⁵ “Killing of Whites Likely to Spread, Negro Warns,” *Minnesota Tribune*, 5/5/1964.

¹⁵⁶ “Poll Finds 2-to-1 Opposition To Students in Mississippi,” *New York Times*, 7/8/1964, 20.

Senator Barry Goldwater, outspoken proponent of desegregation, but opponent of forced integration that worked against states' rights, reached out to a segment of the American population and strummed a familiar chord for them. A *New York Times* editorialist put it best in June of 1964 as he described this “greater army of the discontented and frustrated” respectable lawyers, businessmen and housewives who agreed with Senator Goldwater:

In a variation of the old isolationist strain, they fiercely proclaimed superiority of all things American—and their certainty that most things American were being ‘sold out’ to the Communists. Supreme Court decisions about prayer in schools seemed to them a Communist plot to ‘outlaw God’; and when the specter of Negroes moving into previously white neighborhoods, restaurants, swimming pools, jobs and schools began to approach reality, they stiffened in resistance. Most did not regard themselves as reactionaries or ‘out of the mainstream.’ Instead, they saw themselves as the heralds of a new and stronger allegiance to the American ideas of free men and free enterprise.

For these individuals, Barry Goldwater was strong and truthful, and they considered him “the lone holdout against a menacing and vaguely un-American Big Brother. He was the symbol of their protest, the hope of their future.”¹⁵⁷

With this in mind, President Johnson was in a unique situation with the Civil Rights Bill of 1964. His fellow southerners expected him to hold to the same values of the South, yet he had a record of standing up for civil rights in both his state level and congressional experience, as he was one of the strongest proponents of the 1957 Civil Rights Act. At the same time, liberals were wary of him, as he – as a southerner – had yet to establish a presidential reputation as an advocate of black equality. The House of

¹⁵⁷ Tim Wicker, “Goldwater Appeal: Not Only ‘Nuts and Kooks’,” *New York Times*, 6/21/1964, 41. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

Representatives quickly passed the Act in February of 1964. However, it faced much more opposition in the Senate, as the threat of a filibuster loomed over its future. In order to shut off the debate, two-thirds (or 67) of the Senators needed to vote in favor of ending discussion, which had never been done on civil rights issues.¹⁵⁸ President Johnson knew that Republican leader Senator Everett Dirksen (R-Illinois), who was on the fence about the bill, could force the numbers needed for cloture. Therefore, for three long and frustrating months, LBJ worked hard night and day persuading Dirksen with the promise of favorable judgeships and state project grants to end the filibuster by getting the Republicans behind him, joking that he courted Dirksen more than he did his own wife.¹⁵⁹ The Senate finally voted on the Civil Rights Act, and even with 21 opponents from the South, three Democrats outside the South, and five Republicans against it, it still passed 73 to 27 and LBJ signed it into law on July 2, 1964.

As much as he deserved to enjoy the victory of what historian Allen Matusow has called “the greatest liberal achievement of the decade,” Johnson did not revel in the multiple newspapers that his top adviser Bill Moyers brought to him the next evening with headlines proclaiming his triumph.¹⁶⁰ When asked why he was so melancholy, LBJ answered, “I think we just delivered the South to the Republican party for my lifetime and yours.”¹⁶¹ His fear was confirmed: that November, the Texan lost five southern states in the presidential election. From 1968 to 1992, only one Democratic candidate,

¹⁵⁸ The number required for cloture did not change to 60 until 1975.

¹⁵⁹ Robert Weisbrot, *Freedom Bound: A History of America's Civil Rights Movement* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1989), 91.

¹⁶⁰ Matusow, *Unraveling of America*, 95.

¹⁶¹ Joseph A. Califano, *The Triumph and Tragedy of Lyndon Johnson: The White House Years* (New York: Touchstone, 1991), 55.

Jimmy Carter, won a majority of votes in the South, proving the South would never forgive LBJ or his party for dismantling segregation.¹⁶²

In fact, disenchantment with the pace of desegregation continued to rise in the years after the Civil Rights Act was enacted, and not just by southerners. In a Gallup Poll taken in October of 1964 in which the majority identified themselves as Democrats, 73 percent vocalized their distaste for demonstrations, while 62 percent believed the Civil Rights Act should be gradually enforced with persuasion.¹⁶³ A Gallup Poll two years later reported the highest resistance of whites to measures that improve the lot of blacks since the spring of 1962, when 32 percent of Americans thought the administration was pushing integration too fast. By 1966 when urban race riots were on the rise, that number had risen to 52 percent, while 29 percent thought the pace about right and only 10 percent thought integration was not being pushed fast enough. The poll reported the main factor was an adverse reaction to the riots and rising black power movement.¹⁶⁴ A Harris survey in September of 1965 asked if they considered civil rights demonstrators harmful or helpful, and 68 percent of them answered that they considered them harmful.¹⁶⁵

Americans clung to their national identity in trying to preserve a way of life that was comfortable, where standards and boundaries were firm and predictable. Integration and federal enforcement of the mandate caused a resistance, particularly in the South, to

¹⁶² Bruce Schulman, *Lyndon B. Johnson and American Liberalism* (Boston: Bedford St. Martin's, 2007), 82.

¹⁶³ Gallup Poll # 1964-0699: Politics/Elections, October 8-13, 1964, 19.

¹⁶⁴ "Backlash Is Found At a 4-Year Peak," *New York Times*, 9/30/1966, 39. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

¹⁶⁵ Harris Survey, Sep, 1965. (RCPOR).

changing the Jim Crow status quo. The Silent Majority pitted against integration may have been more visibly southern white men, but behind the scenes, the letter-writers were actually composed more of homemakers from across the nation. Although historians have traditionally analyzed conservatives as racist, the arguments the majority of moderate and conservative individuals and groups used relied instead on legalistic matters that highlighted the existing American system. The government assumed southerners would willingly accept the Supreme Court ruling as law, but realized that the South demanded a vote by representation, which was carried forward by the House of Representatives and Senate in the historic bill. When the South realized they could not control the Congress to vote against the Civil Rights Act, they voted against the President, but lost that battle too, as President Johnson won by a landslide in the 1964 election — regardless of losing the South as he anticipated. The election confirmed the growing polarization that had been taking hold in the first few years of the decade that would split America apart. When the southerners could fight no more against equality for the races, at least not legally, African Americans would refuel their fire in the second half of the decade with recurring summer riots and the rise of Black Power.

CHAPTER III

STUDENTS AGAINST CAMPUS RADICALISM

While Bob Dylan was singing folk songs about the answer blowing in the wind, times changing, and weathermen, Tony Dolan was mimicking Dylan's style but mocking his message. Along with Janet Greene — the conservative answer to Joan Baez — and Vera Vanderlaan, Dolan wrote several “counterfolk” songs in response to the rising liberalism displayed in the Sixties. Their joint album, later compiled and titled *Freedom Is A Hammer*, cried against communism and proclaimed patriotism. As an undergraduate at Yale University, Dolan began writing songs after being inspired by Barry Goldwater's book *Conscience of a Conservative* — mainly songs against communists, with lyrics attacking students protesting against House Un-American Activities Committee in “Abolish, Abolish.” He composed the album “to show that conservatism swings.” Dolan even specifically battled campus protests in his song “Join the S.D.S.,” for one can:

Join the S.D.S., and learn to love the communists
Now Dr. Spock is with them and I'm gladly for
No other protest movement needs a baby doctor more.

Arguing that the news media was distorting the reality of support on campus, he sang in the “New York Times Blues”:

All the news that fits, we print
Embellished with a pinkish tint
Did you see the front page the other day?
Professor Stanley Sperba called Barry Goldwater a fink

And the ADA blew up the Statue of Liberty
That was on page 106, I think
Just the facts, ma'am.¹

He tried to bring light to alleged media bias that promoted news reports that sold, not ones with a majority opinion. Using his conservative network, Dolan had William F. Buckley, the editor of *National Review* and the host of the T.V. program *Firing Line* write the back cover of the album, and Buckley promoted it in his syndicated column. He made such an impact that he was invited onto the *Dick Cavett* and *Merv Griffin Shows*. Dolan was proud that his picture was the only one of a Yale undergraduate student displayed in Goldwater's bedroom.² Dolan was to become the symbol for many traditional students who wanted to maintain the status quo of anticommunism and respect for authority in a new era of student insubordination.

Following the 1950s decade of conformism and stifled free speech, and taking their cue from the accelerating civil rights movement, liberal students on campuses nationwide began to awaken to the issues facing a new large class of baby boomers. Enrollments at universities had begun to change as administrations were forced to resort to the use of computers for accountability and larger, impersonal class sizes to cater to the incoming baby boomer classes. However, at the same time, the university administrations were reluctant to change traditional or legal policies of *in loco parentis* that allowed universities to serve in the place of parents. Therefore, they limited student

¹ Tony Dolan and Vera Vanderlaan, "Abolish, Abolish," and "New York Times Blues" Album Freedom Is A Hammer, © 2012 by Omni Recording Corporation.

² Wayne Liebman, "Sophomore Cuts Album," *Yale Daily News*, 12/12/1967.

rights and speech and tried to avoid integration of the races, particularly in the South. Young college students untouched by the redbaiting of the 1950s were unafraid to exert their authority to challenge campus administrations and their policies. The student protest movement chronologically followed the civil rights movement and initially borrowed its tactics of non-violent sit-ins to gain the attention of the campus administrations. In fact, the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) 1962 Port Huron Statement focused on the “Southern struggle against racial bigotry,” combined with “the enclosing fact of the Cold War.” SDS identified the university as “the obvious beginning point.” They pictured “the ideal university” as a “community of controversy,” for students and faculty were directed to “make debate and controversy, not dull pedantic cant, the common style of the educational life.”³

In general, students and community members alike reacted against liberalism spreading across campuses. Three main events that garnered a backlash were the 1964 Free Speech Movement, the 1968 Columbia University takeover, and the radicalism and unraveling of the New Left, illustrated by protests at the 1968 Democratic National Convention.⁴ Organizations both on and off campus fought against student demonstrations and struggled to maintain a sense of order on campuses. The media both helped to create and dissolve the student protests, as Americans watched the demonstrations grow to a level of distressing violence. As protests grew, more Americans, particularly students tired of forfeiting their classes for causes they did not

³ Students for a Democratic Society, Port Huron Statement, 1962.

⁴ While SDS was very much involved in antiwar activities and mobilizations as well, those actions will be addressed in the next chapter.

support, began to counter student liberalism, giving them a new voice through media channels.

Concurrent to rising student revolts, several groups worked against campus liberalism and revolts. One such group had centered its actions around the campus since the beginning of the Sixties with their focus on anti-communism, which had served as a source for the development of American identity in the previous decade. Two years before the Port Huron Statement of SDS was formally adopted, the Young Americans for Freedom (YAF) already had met in the home of William F. Buckley and approved their manifesto, the Sharon Statement. In this short but substantial document, YAF activists made clear their conservative stand for the market economy, the primacy of the states, and victory over communism. The general assertions of the Sharon Statement countered the growth of SDS as campus protests heated up in the latter half of the Sixties. YAF's main goals were to uphold the U.S. Constitution and to oppose "collectivism, socialism, statism, and the other utopianisms which have poisoned the minds, weakened the wills and smothered the spirits of Americans for three decades and more."⁵ By 1963, YAF claimed a membership of 10,000 on college campuses alone.⁶ Of the three main factions working against SDS, YAF was the most conservative and used highly visible means such as counter rallies and counter protests to halt liberal changes on campus.

⁵ "Conservative Youth Group Disrupts Leftist Protest," *San Diego Union*, 3/8/1969, <http://www.proquest.com>, A1, A4.

⁶ Jonathan M. Schoenwald, *A Time for Choosing: The Rise of Modern American Conservatism* (New York City: Oxford University Press, 2001), 244.

Another group, the Young Republicans, also used fellow college students to further their cause against liberalism. In 1961, at the Young Republican National Convention in Minneapolis, college students sang out the familiar paean of militancy, “We Shall Not Be Moved,” but with different lyrics, singing instead, “Abolish liberation-ra-lism; we shall not be moved.” This group of about 1,200 Young Republicans was increasingly a political phenomenon of conservative activists, but Vice President Nixon with foresight warned them their organization “cannot and must not become the instrument for extremist views.”⁷ For while the YR organization was welcomed in the struggle for traditional campus policies and leadership, it still was associated with its parent political party, and radical proclamations would damage both organizations. The Young Republicans were more moderate than the YAF and utilized political methods such as national conferences and political lobbying to get their agenda passed.

Another collection of Americans that worked against SDS was composed of college students and community members who disagreed with both the violent tactics that SDS would employ by the end of the decade and the organization’s actual ties to communism. This last faction would eventually fall under the title, “The Silent Majority,” but although they were unnamed and unclassified for several years, were only hushed by their lack of media coverage. Not radical enough for news networks, they instead worked directly against SDS through counter-protests and breaking campus

⁷ David S. Broder, “Young Zealots Lead Right-Wing Surge,” *Washington Evening Star*; 6/26/1961, A-1, A-6. ProQuest Historical Documents.

strikes, but also applied pressure through writing letters to influential politicians and holding cultural events. While their collective voice was not as loud as SDS in the news, they had a significant impact on university campuses in the Sixties, and as a result attracted greater media attention by the end of the decade. This unorganized contingent of Americans found other ways through university administrations, letters to their newspapers, and direct action against SDS to have their opinion heard. All three groups, the YAF, Young Republicans, and the Silent Majority, had to combine efforts in order to work against the escalating liberalism and violence they encountered from SDS, as no one tactic alone could combat such a visible and antagonistic power on campuses.

The Free Speech Movement

The Free Speech Movement (FSM), launched on the University of California Berkeley campus in the 1964-65 academic year, garnered national attention and initial widespread support from a variety of organizations. In September of a crucial election year, UCB denied the right of political canvassing at the corner of Bancroft and Telegraph Avenues, leading to the largest campus outburst up to its time. It involved a bricked area along Bancroft Way that had historically been considered off-campus, but reevaluation of the location concluded that it was indeed part of campus property, thus removing all political canvassing from the area in compliance with existing campus codes.⁸ For three months, over twenty varied associations on campus, including YAF,

⁸ Wallace Turner, "Berkeley Protest Becomes A Ritual: The Campus Ban on Political Recruiting Spurs Furor," *New York Times*, 11/15/1964, 49. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

the Young Republicans, and SDS, protested the university administration's decision to ban club tables placed at the entrance at Bancroft and Telegraph Streets to solicit political funds, which had essentially silenced their right to political free speech. Students picketed meetings, spoke out on campus, and occupied Sproul Hall, the administration building on campus. A hundred graduate students joined in on the protests, collecting signatures on a petition and ignoring the ban on tables.⁹ On September 30, Chancellor Edward Strong announced just before midnight that eight students were suspended indefinitely and students retaliated by setting up more tables. On October 1, former graduate student Jack Weinberg was arrested for remaining at the CORE table, but a crowd encircled the police car in which he was held and immobilized it from leaving for thirty-one hours. The situation deflated when the university administration agreed to drop the charges. A month later, Weinberg began speaking on campus for the budding Free Speech Movement that had grown out of the protests.¹⁰ As demonstrations and resulting suspensions increased, university regents agreed to allow the raising of political funds and recruitment of demonstrators, but would hold students accountable for illegal actions.¹¹

But the relationship between the student protesters and the administration waned. On December 3, Mario Savio, President of the Berkeley Chapter of SNCC, led about one thousand students in a massive sit-in of Sproul Hall. Chancellor Strong interrupted their

⁹ "Campus Protests a Ban On Politics," *New York Times*, 11/11/1964, 28. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

¹⁰ Wallace Turner, "Berkeley Protest Becomes A Ritual: The Campus Ban on Political Recruiting Spurs Furor," *New York Times*, 11/15/1964, 49. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

¹¹ "California Eases Curb On Students: University Regents Allow Campus Political Planning," *New York Times*, 11/21/1964, 12. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

singing, sleeping, and talking around 3:30 A.M. with a statement asking them to leave. Although some students vacated the building, most stayed. Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr., stating that the students' actions constituted anarchy, ordered the arrest and removal of the students remaining in the building the next morning, resulting in over 790 arrests, the largest mass arrest in California's history. In agreement, Clark Kerr, President of UC Berkeley, issued a statement that although he had sympathized with the student concern in September, it had overnight become "an instrument of anarchy and of personal aggrandizement."¹²

Moderate and conservative students were appalled at the turn of events. The Young Republicans had initially supported FSM, but soon withdrew their support when they believed protester "activities had become destructive to our chances of broadening political activities on campus and that they no longer represent[ed] those students legitimately interested in broadening." Nearly 20 percent of those arrested at UC Berkeley were not even students, and, according to the conservative publication *Human Events*, only 3 percent of the 27,500-member student body was a demonstrator.¹³ In fact, in many student protests, several were post-graduate students between 21-30 years old, including a number of chronic demonstrators who remained within their ranks even after they left college. Undergraduate students who were frustrated with the protests used

¹² Wallace Turner, "796 Students Arrested as Police Break Up Sit-In at U. of California," *New York Times*, 12/4/1969, 1. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

¹³ William L. Coats, Jr., "A Student's Report on the Berkeley 'Free Speech' Controversy," *Human Events*; January 9, 1965. Turner, "796 Students Arrested," 31.

these demographics to get them removed from campus.¹⁴ At the noon rally the day after the Sproul sit-in, students with signs reading “Throw the Bums Out” and “Law Not Anarchy—The Majority of Students Do Not Support This Demonstration” tried to explain to the nation that not all students were in agreement on the purpose and tactics used at Berkeley.¹⁵ Adults polled about the student demonstrators at colleges in September of 1965 found 65 percent considered protesters more harmful than helpful.¹⁶

Off-campus conservatives were also upset about the FSM protests. They emphasized the illegitimacy of the disruption and the communist leanings of some of the leaders, such as Bettina Aptheker, Duran Bell, and members of the W.E.B. DuBois Club. As some were members of the Young Peoples Socialist League, Young Socialists Alliance, and the Off-Campus Political Party Slate, the FBI termed SDS a Communist organization.¹⁷ David Lawrence, founder of the conservative publication *U.S. News and World Report*, was quoted in the conservative radio broadcast, the *Manion Forum*, to have said, “The Communist influence on the campus in American universities has increased so substantially in recent months that it has now become an important factor in the organization of demonstrations.”¹⁸ *Manion Forum* declared that one way to stop “this criminal clamor on the campus” was to recognize “its subversive origin, its seditious sustenance, and its treasonable purpose,” which was “seeded many years ago when Red

¹⁴ Statement of Attorney General John N. Mitchell before the Special Subcommittee on Education of the Committee on Education and Labor, House of Representatives, concerning Campus Disorders, May 20, 1969; folder Campus Disorder [I]; Box 16; (JD/RNL).

¹⁵ Turner, “796 Students Arrested,” 31.

¹⁶ Harris Survey, Sep, 1965 (RCPOR).

¹⁷ “Mario Savio” *Firing Line*, Nov 1970, Vol. XIX, No. 11, Reel 91— Series 6 (SP/UCBB).

¹⁸ “Manion Forum,” Weekly Broadcast No. 555; May 23, 1965, folder Academic Freedom, Box 115,(GR/CUA).

Socialists laid siege to our schools and colleges in an ambitious plan to capture this country by subverting and changing its ‘mind’” in the “well-tested tradition of patient but persistent Communist strategy.” They went on to rail against academic freedom as a “scientific brainwashing operation,” for they assumed anything was “fully protected as long as it ridicules American patriotism, undermines religious morality and attacks those who fight Communism at home or abroad.”¹⁹

Some conservative newspapers tried to balance the positive attention most of the media gave the incident. The *San Francisco Examiner* asked in an article titled, “Who Runs the University of California?” and suggested that the FSM protesters should be expelled. *The Oakland Tribune* proposed that UC Berkeley was a training center for communists, and the *U.S. News and World Report* announced FSM as “A Campus Up roar That Is Blamed on Reds.” Ronald Reagan in his bid for the 1966 governorship even proclaimed, “Observe the rules or get out.” He blamed “beatniks, radicals, and filthy speech advocates” for bringing “shame upon a great university,” and vowed to “clean up the mess at Berkeley.”²⁰

In response to the leftist protestors, some students in the UC system took visible actions to counter the Free Speech Movement. Several students at UC Los Angeles began the “Responsible Free Speech Movement,” to demonstrate their support of the university regents’ program dealing with political activity on campus, carrying signs that read “Responsible UCLA Students Welcome Regents.” Standing for law and order

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Terry Anderson, *Movement and the Sixties* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 110.

became a political platform, as William L. Coats, Jr., the President of the UC Young Republicans pointed out that SDS and student protesters were still culpable under the law: “Nor does *anyone* possess the inherent, or legal, ‘right’ to decide what laws they will obey—and flout those that happen to conflict with their personal or group preferences.” He expressed the views of many in saying, “There has to be discipline for all—and where discipline breaks down, by assault on these principles, anarchy begins.”²¹

Students and administrators also reacted to FSM maneuvers. In February of 1965, a handful of conservative students used official university procedures to unseat Mario Savio, a leader of the Free Speech Movement, from the steps of Sproul Hall. The conservatives booked the loudspeaker unit for their use, forcing the Free University speakers to move to the lower plaza.²² The conservative message proved effective, as YAF numbers reached 20,000 with 250 chapters nationally.²³ Almost in answer, the Free Speech Movement demonstrators took it up another notch by displaying signs with four-letter words, which shocked students and administrators alike. UC Chancellor Martin Meyerson contended that these obscene signs “symbolized intolerance for the rights and feelings of others.” Frustrated by constant protests, bad administrative decisions, and haranguing on campus, President Kerr and Chancellor Strong both announced their resignations in March.²⁴

²¹ William L. Coats, Jr., “A Student’s Report on the Berkeley ‘Free Speech’ Controversy,” *Human Events*; January 9, 1965.

²² “Conservatives Oust Savio,” *San Francisco Examiner*, 2/12/1965; <http://www.proquest.com/>,

²³ Anderson, *Movement and the Sixties*, 109.

²⁴ “U. of Cal. President and Chancellor Quit,” *Chicago Tribune*, 3/10/1965, <http://www.proquest.com/>, 1.

In May, Attorney Jerome C. Byrne from Harvard released the report from the Special Forbes Committee of the regents of the University of California about the FSM at Berkeley. He greatly favored the student protesters, criticized the university leaders, and admonished several administrators. Although Byrne's report briefly mentioned the protestors' disregard for due process in favor of direct action, it proposed that students be allowed "a larger measure of control over their own affairs." Warren M. Dorn, chairman of the California supervisors law enforcement committee, disagreed with Byrne's "campus-oriented philosophy" that let "academic beatniks and ivory tower professors" manage a university without regent oversight, even when the taxpayers were paying the bill. Edward W. Carter, President of the Regents, agreed with Dorn, and rejected Byrne's "philosophical sanction for the behavior of the relatively small proportion of students who engaged in and the minority of the faculty that actively supported civil disobedience."²⁵

In response, a May 15 editorial in the *Indianapolis Star* put forth a shocking proposal. "The way to stop another University of California incident," it advocated, "is not to give in to threats of a bunch of leftish sheep who care not for our country's welfare. The way to stop it is to disperse the illegal mob with whatever means are required. And that means tear gas, police dogs, police horses, fire hose, and whatever else is necessary."²⁶ Those who agreed with this tough stance were not few in number, and their number increased as campus protests became more radical and moved off

²⁵ "The Berkeley Report," *Chicago Tribune*, May 14, 1965, <http://www.proquest.com/>, 20.

²⁶ Eugene Pulliam, "Leftist Revolt," *Indianapolis Star*, 5/15/1965.

campus. A Harris poll in August of 1968 naively grouped both Hippies and student protester together when they asked respondents about their influence on the breakdown of law and order. A strong 72 percent thought these two groups were a major or minor cause of the breakdown, while only 19 percent thought they were hardly a cause.²⁷ Both groups were increasingly blamed for societal disruptions as violence mounted at the end of the decade.

Universities across America exploded with campus protests in 1968-1969. Students protested over a wide range of issues, including special programs for minority groups, more student participation on committees, changing disciplinary practices, administrative responses to grievances, administrative indifference to local community problems, and stopping the U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War.²⁸ By the fall of 1968, SDS claimed 100,000 members and poll data indicated that 20 percent of students strongly or partially supported the need for a mass revolutionary party.²⁹ Multiple occurrences took place on the campus of San Francisco State College, one being a “rampage of looting brawling and attempted arson of a campus bookstore, all in the name of four hoodlums who had beaten up the editor of the student newspaper.” At Berkeley, SDS “deployed radio-directed students as shock troops, erected barricades and fought pitched battles with police in an assault on the Oakland Induction Center.”

²⁷ Harris Survey, Aug, 1968 (RCPOR).

²⁸ *Campus Tensions: Analysis and Recommendations, Report of the Special Committee on Campus Tensions*, (Washington D.C.: American Council on Education, 1970), folder Campus Disturbances, Box 77 (JD/RNL).

²⁹ Allen Matusow, *The Unraveling of America: A History of Liberalism in the 1960s* (New York City: Harper & Row Publishers, 1984), 337.

According to the American Council of Education's Report of the Special Committee on Campus Tensions, the 1968-69 academic year was notably turbulent, but confirmed that the majority of students were not protesters. Of the nation's 2,300 colleges and universities, 145 (over 6 percent) experienced incidents of violent protest, and an additional 379 (over 16 percent) experienced nonviolent but disruptive protest, resulting in disruptions at 524 institutions. The committee reminded its readers, "at most times and on most campuses disruption is not occurring. The news media, not surprisingly, focus upon incidents of disorder and ignore the campuses during time of tranquility." Seven million college students were enrolled in the fall of 1969, but no more than 15 percent were active in particular incidents. Disorders also hit large private universities more than public ones, as one in three private institutions and one in eight public universities had incidents of comparable severity. Of the 1968-69 violent incidents on campuses, 55 percent had occasion to call in police; 62 percent of issues ended with the college administration negotiating issues when protest was violent; 83 percent negotiated when protest was non-violent. Nevertheless, the committee also found that a majority of American students were "satisfied with most of their collegiate experience."³⁰

Americans quickly became disillusioned with the student protests. A Gallup poll at the end of 1968 asked if respondents thought student demonstrations would increase or decrease, and almost two-thirds were convinced that disruptive student activity would

³⁰ *Campus Tensions: Analysis and Recommendations*, 7-41.

increase, while only a quarter thought they would decrease.³¹ Respondents disagreed with campus protests, as a full 70 percent polled the next February still believed that college students should *not* have a greater say in the running of colleges.³²

U.S. Attorney General John Mitchell pointed out that campus protests tended to increase after an SDS national meeting. In October 1968, leaders at the “Boulder and Boulder” meeting in Colorado called for a national strike of high schools and colleges on November 4 and 5 to protest the 1968 federal election, leading directly to the strikes at University of Michigan on November 4, the University of Denver on November 5, and a demonstration at the Lincoln Memorial on November 5. In December of 1968, the SDS National Council at the University of Michigan held a panel discussion on the need for a nationwide coordinated attack on military activities on campus, such as ROTC units and military research grants. Four months prior, only six violent actions against ROTC installations occurred; in the four and a half months after the convention, there were twenty-two incidents.

After the March 1969 SDS meeting in Austin, several universities were also affected by occupations. On April 9 at Harvard, students led by SDS forcibly ejected officials from the administration building. On April 23 at American University, SDS occupied an administration building. The next day, SDS halted the operations of both George Washington University’s Institute for Sino-Soviet Studies and the University of Washington Student Placement Center. On April 30 at Columbia University, SDS took

³¹ Gallup Poll, Dec, 1968 (RCPOR).

³² Gallup Poll, Feb, 1969 (RCPOR).

over two university buildings, and the day after, Stanford's administration building was occupied. And at the end of the semester on May 13 at Boston's Northeastern University, forty students led by SDS took over a meeting room and lounge.³³

Although violent incidents occurred on a small number of campuses, the effect of campus protests was drastic, especially in California. By the end of the academic year in May of 1969, there were already disturbances on more than 250 college campuses, resulting in 3,000 arrests and property damage exceeding \$2 million. At San Francisco State College, a bomb blinded a student, and a second bomb was found before it exploded. At Pomona College in Claremont, California, a secretary was blinded in one eye and lost two fingers when a bomb exploded as she was removing it from a college mailbox. At UC Santa Barbara, a custodian at the Faculty Club died from burns when he picked up a package containing a bomb. UC Berkeley in an eight-month period saw four instances of arson and two bombings, resulting in over one million dollars of property damage.³⁴

SDS leaders admitted their radical leanings. Their 1962 Port Huron Statement had called for controversy, started by a militant left on university campuses to unite academia with the community. But their solutions were articulated in terms of ultimately making political change within the Democratic Party – not by anarchic methods. The New Left's ideology grew more radical in the seven years since their inception, and the conservative press highlighted their revolutionary rhetoric. Eugene Methvin, the editor

³³ Statement of Attorney General John N. Mitchell before the Special Subcommittee on Education of the Committee on Education and Labor, House of Representatives, concerning Campus Disorders, May 20, 1969.

³⁴ Ibid.

of *Reader's Digest* magazine ran a story calling the SDS "engineers of campus chaos." He included juicy quotations, such as when SDS National Secretary Greg Calvert had proclaimed, "We're working to build a guerilla force in an urban environment. We're actively organizing sedition."³⁵ Methvin argued that SDS used various tactics to disrupt society, such as lighting trash-can fires and pulling fire alarms in high schools as "forms of protest," making but not using appointments with university deans and registrars to "overuse the bureaucracy," and checking out an excessive number of books to disrupt library operations and study programs. Communists were also instrumental in the organization, as known communists sat in on SDS meetings and coached organizers from the start. In turn, SDS leaders were welcomed at secret communist conventions. At the SDS Convention in East Lansing in June of 1968, two of the three national leaders had proclaimed to be communists. Bernadine Dohrn, inter-organizational secretary for SDS and later a member of the Weathermen, had in fact widely admitted in 1968, "I consider myself a revolutionary communist."³⁶ SDS members even marched with a red flag of communism and black flag of anarchy down the convention hall. "The ability to manipulate people through violence and mass media has never been greater, the potential for us as radicals never more exciting, than now," said one speaker. Many SDSers were non-communist, but their common bond was "a passionate desire to destroy, to annihilate, to tear down."³⁷

³⁵ Paul Hoffman, "The New Left Turns To Mood of Violence In Place of Protest," *New York Times*, 5/7/1967. ProQuest Historical Newspapers, 1.

³⁶ Carl Oglesby, *Ravens in the Storm: A Personal History of the 1960s Anti-War Movement* (New York: Scribner, 2008), 214.

³⁷ Eugene H. Methvin, "SDS: Engineers of Campus Chaos," *Reader's Digest* (October, 1968), 4.

With a strong anti-communist background, the Silent Majority used the political background of SDS as fodder in their rage against the disorders on campus, attributing it to the destruction of societal values and university property. While the New Left made distinct attempts to distance themselves from the New Deal Old Left, the latter did the same as the new Left became more radical in their ideologies. Methvin of *Reader's Digest* called Students for a Democratic Society “a small but highly active band of college students” who were “doing everything they can to dispense with both democracy and society,” instrumental in making “college campuses... explod[e] with violence, bloodshed, and arson.” New York University philosophy professor Sidney Hook agreed: “By their lawless actions, the members of SDS threaten to become the true grave diggers of academic freedom in the United States.” *New York Times* education writer Fred M. Hechinger voiced his concern, stating, “Any society, academic or otherwise, that lacks the will to defend itself against illegitimate disruption and takeover is crippled and, as a free society, may be doomed.”³⁸ SDS had embraced a radical Marxist view of revolution and set forth to destroy American democracy through uprisings.

Columbia University

At the SDS convention in 1968, the group decided to launch a national campaign they dubbed “Ten days to shake the empire,” and selected Mark Rudd, SDS chairman of Columbia University, to lead it. He represented the “action freaks” section of SDS that overcame the intellectually sophisticated “praxis axis” faction that had dominated the

³⁸ Methvin, “SDS,” 5.

organization. Columbia University administrative officials had recently angered SDS over two specific issues: the university's sponsorship of war-related research, and the building of a gymnasium that would dislocate part of the adjoining black community. SDS activists followed the more militant style of the black radicals, and according to activist Todd Gitlin, "deference and civility were resoundingly dumped."³⁹

On March 27, Rudd led 100 students into Low Library and demanded the end of sponsorship of the university by a defense research institute, the Institute for Defense Analyses. In response, the university placed six students on probation for violating a ban on indoor protests. Rudd further announced a new march for April 23, but his group was blocked when 150-200 anti-SDS youth called Students for a Free Campus stood between them and the library. The protesters occupied Hamilton Hall instead of the library, imprisoning Dean Henry Coleman and his two aides for twenty-five hours. Rudd demanded amnesty for the SDS protesters and also that the university discontinue construction on a nearby gymnasium that would have discriminated against neighboring Harlem residents who lived in the neighborhood by only allowing them limited access. The next day, Rudd led a multitude of youths, some not even a part of SDS, into Low Library, seized three other buildings, broke into the president's office and handed out copies of the president's personal correspondence. It was a well-organized operation,

³⁹ Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (New York: Bantam Books, 1993), 306-308.

with the use of forty walkie-talkies, telephones, and runners to be dispatched from an SDS “war room.”⁴⁰

However, other students were outraged about being shut out of their classes. They formed a “Majority Coalition,” and swiftly collected 2,000 signatures demanding that the university president take “firm action” against the protesters. Majority Coalition spokesman Paul Vilardi articulated, “Students do have some reasonable complaints, but what SDS is doing to Columbia is like slitting your wife’s throat because she eats crackers in bed.” Taking a stand against SDS, 400 counter-protesters, wearing coats and ties as their own badge of protest, formed a human wall around the Low Library offices to stop food and messengers from getting to the SDS war room. As the risk rose when radicals armed themselves with pipes, staves, and bricks, President Kirk sent the Coalition home and had police clear the buildings, arresting 707 protesters in their wake. Uninvolved students were upset that 26 percent of those arrested for campus disturbances were not even enrolled in college. The arrests led to a campus-wide strike, and faculty distressed over the situation cancelled classes for the rest of the school year. Four weeks later, Rudd and his followers marched onto campus again and barricaded campus gates. Bent on destruction, several students set fires in the Fayerweather History

⁴⁰ Peter Millones, “A Calm Follows Night Of Tension: Planning for Early-Morning Ouster of Sit-Ins Began Hours Before Move,” *New York Times*, 5/1/1968, 35. ProQuest Historical Newspapers. Methvin, “SDS,” 5. David Bird, “300 Protesting Columbia Students Barricade Office of College Dean: 300 At Columbia Set Up Barricade,” *New York Times*, 4/24/1968, 1. ProQuest Historical Newspapers. Nicholas von Hoffman, “Columbia U. Is Fragmented With Opinions: Lines Formed,” *Washington Post*, 4/30/1968, A3. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

building, others hurled bricks at police, and someone else even broke into a professor's office who had condemned violent extremism, and burned his manuscript, which represented ten years of his research and notes.⁴¹

Moderate students found ways to thwart radicals on campuses. A new group for this purpose, calling itself Students for Columbia University, claimed 500 members of both students and faculty. It worked against SDS on the New York campus by distributing leaflets, holding debates and counseling freshmen to the errors of liberalism. Peter Sordillo, a junior and vice chairman of this student group, said it was organized "to fight coercive tactics."⁴²

Eugene Methvin, writing for *Reader's Digest*, proposed several lessons from this incident. First, students and faculty must "support prompt action to maintain campus peace," like the example made at Brooklyn College. When SDSers seized the BC registrar's office, moderate students condemned the disrupters as "today's version of Hitler's storm troopers," and demanded "strict enforcement of the law." College authorities immediately expelled the protesters, police took them to jail, and peace quickly returned to Brooklyn College. Secondly, Methvin warned that campus administrations must "not appease or temporize with totalitarian minorities using coercion and anti-democratic tactics." And lastly, Americans had the duty to uphold needed university reforms. Jonathan Edelstein, a junior student at Columbia, commented, "Students are usually idealists and in fact come to college to seek a better

⁴¹ Methvin, "SDS," 5.

⁴² "The Quiet Majority," 36.

world by getting the best possible education.” However, he believed, “if we let a dictatorial extremist minority who think they have already found all the answers rob us of that opportunity, we will lose the future.”⁴³

Taking the initiative to reach out to “uncommitted” students, the Young Americans for Freedom sent out in January of 1969 a “National Coalition Campus Action Kit” to all campuses with a local chapter. YAF national leaders Alan McKay and Randal Cornell Teague stated in their introductory letter, “The radical revolutionaries of the new left are dedicated to making it the initial battleground from which an assault on American society at large can be undertaken.” They argued that student protesters around the country were calling for the destruction of the established order in both the community and academia. On many campuses, the response to SDS was one of silent opposition to the New Left, which was portrayed as “well-organized, trained, and equipped with a plan for action.” Responding to this problem, the kit provided the background knowledge and printed materials to enable “the responsible student majority” to counter the student protesters by reflecting “the true student opinion on college demands and educational reform,” that asserted the college campus is a “place for education, not revolution.” But most importantly, they needed to remind college

⁴³ Methvin, “SDS,” 6.

administrations that responsible students would not allow their campus to be taken over by “the anarchists of the New Left.”⁴⁴

The blue buttons that they distributed were a big success both with frustrated students and some politicians. The *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner* spoke highly of the YAF, as it noted, “You won’t see them in any pictures of violence, raving on television or destroying public property. And yet they are waging an important battle in a quiet and effective way.” In February of 1969, thirty YAF members attended the State College Board of Trustees meeting in Los Angeles, wearing these blue buttons and carrying signs. Yet their cause was the opposite of what was expected from student picketers, as they proclaimed instead their support for Governor Ronald Reagan and Dr. S.I. Hayakawa, president of San Francisco State University. Governor Reagan “gratefully accepted a blue button,” which signified YAF’s peace on campus campaign. The newspaper proclaimed that the Young Americans for Freedom campaign deserved “recognition and praise,” as their members were “good citizens, dedicated to confronting campus radicals with a solid front against coercive tactics.” Recognizing a conglomeration not yet identified by this name, the journalist stated, “The silent majority at last is willing to be seen—if not heard—and the blue buttons are appearing everywhere.” In the Los Angeles area, 10,000 blue buttons, plain with no words, were

⁴⁴ The kit included several additional materials: a booklet about suggested opposition methods to New Left; the book by Alice Widener called *Student Subversion U.S.A.*, which outlined the goals of SDS; *New Left Quotes*, which provided the strategy and views of SDS leaders; important articles about New Left, such as “What Happened at Columbia (and Why),” “The Other Student Peace Movement,” “SDS: The Politics of Regression,” and “Conservatives in Crisis”; and posters, buttons, and their paper, *Student Subversion—The Majority Replies*. Letter to YAF Leaders from Alan McKay and Randal Cornell Teague, “Young America’s Freedom Offensive -- Your 1969 Programs,” 1/21/1969, Folder Young Americans for Freedom, Box 26, (FP/STH).

worn proudly. A journalist remarked, “Nine out of 10 who ask want to wear the blue buttons as soon as they learn of their significance... Hail the blue buttons!”⁴⁵ A related group called “Coalition for a Peaceful Campus” was formed at Rutgers University in New Jersey, and members also proudly distributed bright blue buttons. Ralph Fucetola, from the Coalition, said those who wear the coalition’s blue button “signify their intention of thwarting ‘would-be revolutionaries’ and preserving peace and academic freedom.”⁴⁶

Ray Gallagher, Commander-in-Chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW), supported YAF and their new mission. It responded to “increasing demands from concerned parents and voters that effective counter-action be taken against SDS, the Black Panthers and other campus revolutionaries.” He believed that the solution was to support those who have been battling them since the beginning — the YAF, “the only nationally organized student group capable of defeating the SDS revolutionaries...reaching the student moderates by offering positive programs and responsible alternatives to the irresponsible ‘non-negotiable demands’ of the student anarchists.” The national YAF carried out major “Freedom Offensive” campaigns to counteract the “Student Crisis” with twenty-five regional leadership training schools to educate hundreds of key people as campus organizers. They staged rallies, counter-demonstrations, and petitions drives, distributed over a million and a half pieces of literature on campuses, and helped form the same type of “majority coalitions” on many

⁴⁵ “Unsung Heroes,” *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner*, 1/3/1969.

⁴⁶ “The Quiet Majority: Other Side of Campus Revolt,” *U.S. News and World Report*, 5/26/1969, 35.

notable campuses as seen at Columbia “to prevent SDS-types from gaining power in student body governments.”⁴⁷ As seen in a confrontation against SDS on the Stanford campus in January of 1969, the YAF used SDS tactics to foil the protesters. In this particular encounter, YAF members blocked the entrance to the Applied Electronics Library, where SDS had planned a mill-in, carrying signs that read, “If you liked Hitler, you’ll love SDS” and “Reject SDS Demands.”⁴⁸

Yet more students who had previously been silent began to find other methods to counter SDS. In May of 1969, a detailed report of student resistance to radicalism was released as “The Quiet Majority: Other Side of Campus Revolt,” in *U.S. News and World Report*. The journalists estimated, “For every hard-core radical on American college campuses today, it is estimated there are 99 other students whose main interest is getting an education.” This large section of the student body, known as the “quiet majority” or the “sleeping giant,” was “accused of apathy in the face of campus turmoil and of relying on ‘somebody else’—usually the administrators—to restore order at colleges and universities.” As the article posited, however, there were signs that “the ‘sleeping giant’ [was] awakening and the ‘quiet majority’ [was] beginning to be heard.” “Moderate” students made their voice heard when they were able to vote on issues, tending to “oppose radical programs and violent methods” and “work actively for law and order on their campuses.”⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Letter from Ray Gallagher, Commander-in-Chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, date unknown, Folder Young Americans for Freedom, Box 26, (FP/STH).

⁴⁸ “Militants Foiled By Own Methods,” *Los Angeles Times*, 3/7/1969.

⁴⁹ “The Quiet Majority: Other Side of Campus Revolt,” *U.S. News and World Report*, 5/26/1969, 34.

Using the existing structure of student government and legal channels to put forth student sentiment, a newly organized national group called the Association of Student Governments, representing 300 student governments nationally, coordinated efforts to give voice to moderates on campus issues. Ned Callan, the Association's vice president in charge of programs, explained that until then, "the campus wars have been fought mostly by groups on the extreme left and the extreme right. There has been a big vacuum in the middle. We plan to fill this vacuum and develop a moderate approach to the problems of higher education." The plan was to collaborate with the establishment and through the system to effect changes within a quick time frame. According to Callan, "Kids in college don't want to wait five years for things to happen. They say, 'I'll be gone by then... We young people are 50 percent of the nation now. Advertising, industrial design, everything is geared to us—and yet the decisions are not ours." At an increasing number of colleges and universities, direct-action groups were mobilizing "to cool off campus hotheads."⁵⁰ The gathering of the student governments proved that university students could not be considered a monolithic block, and the radical left was still a minority.⁵¹ When the Association met at the White House on September 20, 1969, Nixon addressed them as "fellow presidents," finding commonality with them as a former student body president. He was delighted that they were trying to find answers to

⁵⁰ "The Quiet Majority," 34.

⁵¹ "No Complacency on Campus," *New York Times*, 9/23/1969, 46. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

the generation gap without resorting to violence, and encouraged them to listen and have respect for the opinions of others.⁵²

Moderates took action elsewhere. For example, at Palm Beach Atlantic College in West Palm Beach, Florida, students effectively eliminated the threat of SDS on their campus through use of their student council. According to student-body president Kenneth Bagwell, “The students here believe it is high time some student body spoke up for the huge majority of students and let it be known that they are strongly opposed to disruptive actions of small groups of students.” The student council unanimously recommended a ban on adverse organizations on campus, and the new 1969 college catalogue read: ‘Students requesting admission to Palm Beach Atlantic are required to sign statements affirming that they are not members of the organization Students for a Democratic Society or any other such organization, nor will become affiliated with such while enrolled at Palm Beach Atlantic.’⁵³

In Los Angeles, campuses jumped on the majority bandwagon. Students at Los Angeles City College called for the removal of the student executive council, which was supportive of a boycott of classes.⁵⁴ After another confrontation of SDS on the same campus, President Nixon himself wrote a letter of commendation to Steve Frank, age 22 and a veteran of the Vietnam War, who led nine other students to dismantle barricades

⁵² Richard Nixon: "Remarks to Members of the Association of Student Governments," 9/20/1969. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. Accessed 5/13/2015. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=2238>.

⁵³ “Students Ask Ban on Revolt,” *Des Moines Register*, 4/6/1969, 11. “The Quiet Majority,” 35. “Florida College Students Ask Ban on Adverse Groups,” *San Antonio Express*, 4/6/1969, 15.

⁵⁴ “LACC Student Council Faces Recall Election: Move Is Outgrowth of Protest Against Unit's Action in Calling for Class Boycott,” *Los Angeles Times*, 3/21/1969, C4. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

set up by militant students at the entrance of L.A. City College. Nixon stated, “There is no substitute for the firm will of an academic community” when “defending its own rights against disruptive, coercive, or repressive elements.” He encouraged, “The militants can’t be allowed to prevent the rest of us from getting an education.” Nixon understood to some degree, “All students have grievances. I have grievances. But that doesn’t mean I’m going to overthrow the Government or set fires in classrooms.”⁵⁵ Following the shift away from the traditional liberalism on campus, the neighboring California State College in Los Angeles in May month chose a conservative student-body president and put thirteen other conservatives and five moderates into office. Also pushing back at UC Los Angeles, antiviolence groups formed and held rallies showing a great deal of student support.⁵⁶

On other campuses, moderates found ways to make their voice heard above the din of liberal radicals. At UC Berkeley, the student group Campus Democracy Now (CDN) started a new newspaper called the “Golden Bear.” Its editor, Ed Winn, explained, “Radicals turned the campus upside down with a handful of people. We proposed to turn it rightside up, although we had only a handful of people.” CDN aimed instead to “restore campus unity through negotiations, not demonstrations; and through accommodations, not confrontations.” CDN joined the statewide association United California Students for an Academic Environment.⁵⁷ Some educators believed that moderation was being achieved as campus newspapers such as CDN’s publication began

⁵⁵ Linda Mathews, “Nixon Lauds Students Who Led Action Against LACC Militants,” *Los Angeles Times*, 4/6/1969, B. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

⁵⁶ “The Quiet Majority,” 35-36.

⁵⁷ “Berkeley,” *San Rafael Daily Independent Journal*, 11/1/1968, 4.

satirizing the campus wars, as one professor stated, “There is a feeling that things aren’t so serious when you begin to make fun of them.” For example, at Princeton University in April, a group of students including thirty football players prevented an SDS rally after finding that radicals planned to seize a university building. A few days later, counterdemonstrators at Princeton also frustrated an SDS attempt to interfere with Marine Corps recruiting.⁵⁸

The majority of Americans agreed with the moderate student perspective to strengthen administrative responses to the campus disruptions. A poll conducted specifically for President Nixon in April of 1969 showed that only 21 percent thought he had done an excellent or good job of dealing with student unrest, while 63 percent stated he had done a fair or poor job. However, only 47 percent polled thought it was the job of the federal government to manage the problem, as the same percentage thought it should be left to the college and local authorities.⁵⁹ Instead, a robust 94 percent believed college administrations should have taken a stronger stance on student disorders.⁶⁰

Students at Allen University, a predominately black university in Columbia, South Carolina, found another way to support their school. Students raised more than \$40,000 in a drive to improve their school and help pay off its debts. In the school newspaper, “Allen Journal,” Hesikiah Stewart, a senior, announced his dream that Allen University have new buildings, a broader curriculum, a larger student body, and accreditation. In a “reverse twist,” they “boldly announced that ‘instead of protesting and

⁵⁸ “The Quiet Majority,” 35-36.

⁵⁹ Nixon Poll, Apr, 1969 (RCPOR). The White House under the Nixon Administration specifically ran its own polls to help decide official policy, and thus did not use the standard Gallup or Harris organizations.

⁶⁰ Gallup Poll, May, 1969 (RCPOR).

throwing bricks' we were joining hands, and with the help of God and our college president, raising \$100,000 for the preservation and uplifting of our Alma Mater." They knew they could demonstrate, boycott classes, or occupy an administration building like protesters at other universities, but asked what would be achieved by doing so. They knew their school suffered from lack of funds and believed that "activism in the manner of a positive program would result in far more progress than would the negative program of violence and demonstration." Stewart assured his readers that the students of Allen "want to be heard, and we don't think it's an anathema to sit down and listen. We feel that we will be heard, because we don't have to shout above the clatter of the militant battle cries. We are not now accepting what the militants are saying—which is to fight the establishment."⁶¹

Other national groups personally countered SDS tactics with the use of the same techniques. The aptly named Silent Majority Against Revolutionary Tactics (SMART) utilized both community organizations and campus units at a variety of colleges. Terry Faulkner, a Golden Gate College student in San Francisco and secretary of SMART, said that "every time there is a 'peace' march or similar demonstration by radicals, SMART hopes to hold a counterrally to show there are others with a different point of view." Their first meeting was raucously interrupted by a group of "Marxist/Maoist anarchists," and the rescheduled meeting allowed for the "silent majority" to proceed with its gathering.⁶² In Washington, D.C., a new group called the National Youth Alliance

⁶¹ "The Quiet Majority," 37.

⁶² George Lavrov, *Yokohama Gaijin* (Bloomington: AuthorHouse, 2011), 90-91.

(NYA) formed in November of 1968 by Willis Carto, head of the right-wing Liberty Lobby, to counter drugs, Black Power, SDS, and American involvement in foreign wars. NYA “vowed to stamp out anarchist campus groups by physical force if necessary.” Louis T. Byers, a national organizer for the alliance, said it already had collected several thousand members at colleges and universities by the end of the 1969 spring semester. He was determined that alliance members and supporters would eject SDS members who occupied campus buildings. And if students were molested by “black-power animals,” he added, the alliance would provide guards to protect them on their way to and from class.⁶³ The YAF itself used other SDS tactics on January 29 on Stanford’s campus. While SDS speakers were trying to get others to join in a protest demonstration, a group of conservatives of YAF moved in to break up the rally. They confronted the SDS leaders with “organized heckling, booing and signs, forcing the radicals to abandon their plans for a march to the Stanford Research Institute.” The Stanford *Observer* described it as “the most dramatic show of conservative strength yet seen on campus.”⁶⁴ Ordinary citizens were also concerned about the state of campuses in 1969. Donald L. Voorhees from Alabama wrote to Attorney General John Mitchell to express his concern over the universities, stating, “I believe that the current unrest and trouble in the universities and schools across the nation is one more nail that the communists are trying to drive into the American coffin.” He was convinced that with communists affecting SDS, they were able to take “one more step in the direction of destruction of our

⁶³ C.H. Simonds, "The Strange Story of Willis Carto - His Fronts, His Friends, His Philosophy, His 'Lobby for Patriotism'," The Nixkor Project, Accessed 5/13/2015.

<http://www.nizkor.org/ftp.cgi/people/c/carto.willis/carto.002>. “The Quiet Majority,” 36.

⁶⁴ “Conservative Youth Group Disrupts Leftist Protest,” *San Diego Union* March 8, 1969, A1, A4.

Government without their firing a shot of their own.” Expressing the sentiments of many who decided that law and order needed to be restored, he continued, “I also feel that these subversive elements must be ferreted out and stopped and punished to the fullest extent of the law which they are trying to overthrow.”⁶⁵ Paul Bartlett also agreed that law and order needed to be upheld when he also wrote Mitchell to “commend your forthright stand against campus and street violence. We hope you and other cabinet officers, and the Department of Justice will continue to speak out for respect toward our law, government, and educational institutions.” Bartlett also believed communists were to blame, as “Our students threaten to degenerate into Chinese Red Guards who take it upon themselves to destroy learning, property, and the community.” Ignoring the conservative anticommunist with hunts of Joe McCarthy, Bartlett continued, “With a hysteria like the 17th century witch hunters they scream against teachers, officials, industry, police, and their elders.” He encouraged the government to “determine who is back of the Pro Mao Club, the Third World Front, the SDS, the Black Panthers, and numerous others who threaten our American way.”⁶⁶ A. Fowke also wrote to the Attorney General to express, “Sir, I am told there are statutes on the books which will allow you to prosecute these S.D.[S]. students and others attempting to wreck our universities and colleges and schools.”⁶⁷ Extreme anti-communist feelings were alive

⁶⁵ Letter, Donald L. Voorhees to John Mitchell, 4/29/1969, folder Campus Disorder [I], Box 16, (JD/RNL).

⁶⁶ Letter from Paul Bartlett to Mr. Mitchell, 5/2/1969, folder Campus Disorder [I], Box 16, (JD/RNL).

⁶⁷ Letter from A. Fowke to Attorney General Mitchell, 4/17/1969, folder Campus Disorder [I], Box 16 (JD/RNL).

and well long after the high point of the 1950s, counter to the notion that it had become anachronistic by the late '60s.

SDS had even affected community services, as reported by Laverne Townsend, the President of the Kansas Peace Officers' Association. On April 23 in Lawrence on the Kansas University campus, a group of students purporting to be SDS audaciously interrupted a classroom "by mob force" where thirty law enforcement officers from throughout the state of Kansas were in a seminar. The students proceeded to assume control of the meeting by "disrupting the speaker, throwing his notes on the floor, and generally causing turmoil in the seminar classroom." In the classroom next door, students also disrupted the Kansas City Managers Association meeting, "generally drawing the proceedings to a halt with boisterous and threatening conduct." Townshend requested an investigation of the incident, which she believed was "a violation of the rights of citizens to assemble in a lawful manner for a legal purpose." As SDS forced ROTC and college administrators to cave to their demands on several campuses, she was concerned that "those of us in law enforcement now see an alarming trend to attack all types of patrol, enforcement, or security on college campuses."⁶⁸

Attorney General Mitchell responded to the campus protests with a statement before the Special Subcommittee on Education of the Committee on Education and Labor in the House of Representatives on May 20, 1969. He encouraged debate guaranteed by the First Amendment, but drew "the line at those actions which seriously

⁶⁸ Letter, Laverne Townsend to John N. Mitchell, 5/5/1969, folder Campus Disorder [I], Box 16 (JD/RNL).

disrupt a university and which involve a substantial denial of rights for those students who wish to pursue scholarship and civility.” The appointed Special Committee on Campus Tensions also emphasized the First Amendment in its 1970 report. The members concluded, “Students must recognize and respect the rights and privileges of their fellow students as they seek rights and privileges for themselves.” They particularly pointed out “First Amendment rights of free speech and peaceable assembly, the right to pursue without hindrance one’s course of study, and the privilege of experimenting with ways of thinking, both conventional and unconventional.” Using “threats, violence, coercive disruption of classes or lectures, and similar acts that tread upon the rights of others are intolerable.”⁶⁹

Between April 15 and May 9, 1969, twenty-five bills and two resolutions concerning disorders on campuses were introduced in Congress.⁷⁰ These proposed bills would either suspend federal funds to campuses that did not take corrective measures or amend criminal law about crimes involving campus disorders.⁷¹ Responding to those who pushed for a withdrawing of federal funds from impacted universities, Attorney General Mitchell did not recommend the addition of legislation for campus crimes, and instead advocated enforcing the laws already in place to combat disruptions.⁷²

⁶⁹ *Campus Tensions: Analysis and Recommendations, Report of the Special Committee on Campus Tensions* (Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1970), 40.

⁷⁰ S. Res 192 and H. Res 367 would have congressional committees to investigate student disorders.

⁷¹ Memo from Richard G. Kleindienst, Deputy Atty General to John W. Dean, Associate Deputy Atty General, 5/12/1969, folder Campus Disorder [I], Box 16, (JD/RNL).

⁷² Statement of Attorney General John N. Mitchell before the Special Subcommittee on Education of the Committee on Education and Labor, House of Representatives, concerning Campus Disorders, May 20, 1969.

Dr. Milton S. Eisenhower, Chairman of the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence, in his “Interim Statement on Campus Disorder,” released on June 9, 1969, seconded Mitchell’s stance on not withdrawing university funding. He acknowledged, “The majority of the American people are justifiably angry at students who engage in violent and obstructive tactics.” Yet he refuted “legislation withholding financial aid both from students who engage in disruption and from colleges and universities that fail to control them” as the appropriate outlet for this public resentment. The vast majority of the seven million college students had neither participated in nor sympathized with campus violence. Looking at the bigger picture, Eisenhower realized that “if aid is withdrawn from even a few students in a manner that the campus views as unjust, the result may be to radicalize a much larger number of students convincing them that existing governmental institutions are as inhumane as the revolutionaries claim.” He instead, like Mitchell, emphasized legislation for laws to protect First Amendment rights. And incorporating society into the college atmosphere, Eisenhower urged “the American people to recognize that the campus mirrors both the yearnings and weaknesses of the wider society.”⁷³

Those polled about campus violence verified Eisenhower’s claim that Americans were upset over violent student demonstrators. Over the summer of 1969, the Survey Research Center conducted a poll called “Justifying Violence: Attitudes of American Men Survey.” On the question about white student demonstrators and their motives, 40

⁷³ Dr. Milton S. Eisenhower, Chairman of the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence, “Interim Statement on Campus Disorder,” 6/9/1969, folder Campus Disorder [I], Box 16, (JD/RNL).

percent thought they were looking for trouble, 29 percent were neutral, and 30 percent thought they were trying to be helpful. Of those who agreed with the students, 91 percent disagreed about killing others or damaging property to achieve their ends, and 79 percent disagreed with protests that caused injury. When asked about student disturbances causing property damage, their responses about police use of clubs and guns showed that 7 percent thought it was never alright, 6 percent said hardly ever, but 49 percent said sometimes it was necessary, and a telling 38 percent said police should always use violence. In answer to the question about if police should shoot protesters, but not to kill, half said never or hardly ever, while 32 percent said sometimes and an appalling 16 percent said almost always.⁷⁴ A Harris Poll also concluded that Americans found student demonstrators to be harmful by 72 percent, while only 15 percent thought they were helpful.⁷⁵ On the other side of the gender line, Virginia Slims also polled almost 3,000 women on the issue. Women were less likely to disagree with the protesters, as 65 percent were somewhat or strongly opposed to them and 26 percent were at least somewhat in agreement, 66 percent said college presidents who were lenient on student demonstrators were more harmful; yet a stronger 85 percent were opposed to the tactics of student protesters.⁷⁶

Moderates and conservatives used the summer of 1969 to regroup and train on how to combat SDS the following year. Alan Bock, assistant editor of what he called an anti-SDS magazine at UCLA, announced, “The so-called ‘silent majority’ of college

⁷⁴ Justifying Violence: Attitudes of American Men Survey, Jun, 1969 (RCPOR).

⁷⁵ Harris Survey, Sep, 1969 (RCPOR).

⁷⁶ Virginia Slims American Women's Poll 1970, Aug, 1970 (RCPOR).

students are training to meet and best Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and other militant leftists.” The training took place at the National Leadership Conference for Young Americans in Lake Forest, Illinois, in June, sponsored by the non-profit Information Council of the Americas out of New Orleans, an organization founded to prevent communist revolutions in Latin America. An expected two hundred students were to be trained in methods to provide alternatives to SDS. Bock said many of the college campuses were “scenes of violence and turmoil because of the tyrannical aims and methods” of SDS. “If the campuses are to be kept open as places of learning rather than bases from which SDS can burn and loot on campus and in the suburbs,” he said, “then the students will have to keep them open.” He continued, “Too often there are only two forces meeting on campuses, the radicals and the establishment. When this happens the radicals have developed skilled methods of turning the non-involved students against the police by either feigned violence or propaganda.”

The leadership conference leaned conservative. Their list of speakers included William Rusher, the publisher of *National Review*; David Jones, the executive director of YAF; Ed Butler, the executive vice president of the Information Council of Americas and publisher of an anti-SDS magazine, “Westwood Village Square.” The conference’s purpose was to train college students on three main ways to counteract SDS. First, students were taught how to develop “an ability to recognize, counteract and neutralize radical agitation and leftist propaganda on campus.” Second, speakers talked about “identifying and enlisting allies among the uncommitted students on campus.” Lastly, attendees were taught how to plan “programs and settling goals at their school, including

newspapers, debates, rallies and other events.” Additionally, they were instructed on how to “communicate with the news media to present a different picture of today’s college student” and combat the challenge of press misrepresentation. “The conference is designed to instruct the students in how to beat the SDS at its own game without violence,” Bock said.⁷⁷

The National Youth Association (NYA) also used the summer of 1969 as an opportunity to garner support. Its July newsletter printed a cartoon of a right-wing student standing alone in the doorway of College Hall with his hands on his hips, confronted by an Administrator proclaiming, “You right-wingers have got to stop disrupting the educational process!!!” The administrator is backed by angry students holding signs that read, “Marx,” “SDS,” and “Burn.” Some students are shown holding alcoholic bottles, or smoking pot, or wearing earrings of peace symbols. The caption reads: “If only he had the NYA behind him!” The NYA in their publications often accused “cowardly college officials” of tacitly sanctioning “such insurrections by refusing to act” against SDS actions “to occupy buildings, intimidate students, and disrupt the educational process!” They asked their young readers, “Are you sick of anarchy? Are you going to defend your RIGHT to an education?” They proposed the NYA as the answer to SDS disorders, as their stated objective was to “restore law and order to the campuses by stamping out anarchist groups and movements such as SDS.”⁷⁸

⁷⁷ “Anti-SDS Plan Detailed at El Cajon,” *Evening Tribune*, 6/19/1969.

⁷⁸ NYA Newsletter by Louis T. Byers, National Organizer July 1969, Box 250, Folder National Youth Alliance, (GR/CUA).

The Young Republicans also critiqued the spring disruptions of '69 to create a new role within the counter movement. They referred to the report of the congressional task force, which suggested that President Nixon “should start communicating with college students before the moderate majority became as violent as the vocal minority is now.” For example, the “right-wing youths, many of them members of the Young Americans for Freedom” had found their ability to raise their voice and threatened the moderate students would join them. At several previous conventions, the YAF had led “vocal onslaughts on the [liberal] ‘Rockefeller wing,’ sometimes shouting down speakers and unplugging microphones.”⁷⁹

After the 1968-69 academic year ended, moderate faculty also began to get more involved both in their colleges and regions. In California, faculty members formed a new organization called the California Council for the Academic Community “to work for positive change through rational discussion” on campuses and “pledged to oppose the use of intimidation and violence in settling campus affairs.” Their charter listed four main goals including freedom to teach and research, impartial and open discussion of campus issues, campus decisions based on discussions of opinions, and “Freedom from intimidation and violence by any faction in all campus affairs.” Universities involved in the Council were Stanford, UC Berkeley, Santa Clara, UCLA, University of San

⁷⁹ “YR to Scan Unrest on Campuses,” *San Diego Union*, 7/6/1969, A-4. ProQuest Historical Documents.

Francisco, City College of San Francisco, Claremont Men's College, College of San Mateo, Merritt College and Scripps College.⁸⁰

On the Atlantic coast, professors also criticized faculty inaction. Robert G. Dixon, Jr., Professor of Law at George Washington University, wrote a letter to John Dean, White House Counsel to President Nixon. According to Dixon, by 1969 many liberal professors and respected political scientists with "impeccable liberal credentials" had begun to be "completely turned off by the never-ending agitation of the student radicals." He also pointed out the well-known anomaly of financial security of the radical students, backed by "a middle class parental bankbook, frequently a suburban bankbook." Dixon warned, "Future historians looking back on this era of college crisis may well wonder how near the post-war affluent parent came to subsidizing the destruction of the institution" he prized most highly, "criticizing all the while the inability of college faculty scholars to become effective policemen, and to learn to teach in a bomb shelter."⁸¹

Another new group of moderate university professors, including 500 on 250 campuses called for firm police action to control demonstrators. Headed by President Z. Michael Szaz, the newly created University Professors for Academic Order (UPAO) was "formed by professors concerned about campus disorders and dissatisfied with positions taken toward the problem by older groups, such as the big American Association of University Professors." Professor William H. Roberts, a Catholic University faculty

⁸⁰ "Faculty From 10 Colleges Form Group to Oppose Campus Strife," *San Diego Union*, 6/22/1969. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁸¹ Letter, Robert G. Dixon, Jr., Professor of Law at George Washington University, to Mr. John Dean, 9/25/1970, folder Campus Disorder [II], Box 16, (JD/RNL).

member and UPAO treasurer, said college administrators “have an obligation to call in law enforcement agencies such as the FBI, the National Guard or the local police if the public order is really disturbed. The law enforcement agencies are not to blame for shooting people who lead these violent disorders. It is the demonstrators who are to blame.”⁸²

Average Americans also wrote in their frustration with the breakdown of stability on campuses. There was a peak in letters from April 24 to May 5 protesting student demonstrations and requesting the restoration of law and order, and several of them encouraged enforcing the sedition law to halt radical protest activities. In a ten-week period, the Nixon administration received 3,340 letters against the protesters, and only 25 were in support.⁸³ On April 29, 1969, President Nixon gave a speech to the Chamber of Commerce. While he acknowledged the usefulness of dissent on campuses to keep them places of inspiration and creativity, he deplored the of violence and terror when students “rifle files, when they engage in violence, when they carry guns and knives into classrooms, then I say it is time for faculties, boards of trustees, and school administrators to have the backbone to stand up against that kind of lawlessness in our society.” He asserted that those in educational leadership “must recognize that there can be no compromise with lawlessness and no surrender to force if free education is to

⁸² “Campus Crackdown Urged,” *San Diego Union*, 10/27/1970. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁸³ Noble Melencamp, Summary of Mail Trends, April 24-July 9, 1969, Folders Begin 6/30/69 (1 and 2) and Folder Mail Reports 7/1/69-9/30/69, Box 15, WH 4-1-1 (WH/RNL).

survive in the United States of America.”⁸⁴ Again, many citizens supported Nixon on his tough stance on student demonstrators, as 90 percent of letters on his speech confirmed, commending him on his courage to take a necessary step.⁸⁵

As moderates and conservatives found successful ways to counteract SDS, the media began to notice and gave a voice to the majority of students. Like the students at Allen College raising money for their campus, other students committed to volunteer service projects at places like Michigan State University, which in the previous year had 10,000 students working through its Volunteer Programs Office. Other similar organizations were forming around the nation at Pennsylvania State, University of Kansas, University of California Irvine, Clemson, Delaware State College, University of Arizona, University of Texas, Cornell, Alabama, University of Florida, University of Maine, University of California Berkeley, University of Montana, and North Dakota State — and were getting noticed. “The rock-throwing, rioting students appear to be in the minority this fall, as the moderates have taken the quiet spotlight.”⁸⁶ As SDS disintegrated in 1969, the national attention shifted to moderate students.

That spotlight began to widen as *U.S. News & World Report* ran two articles on the Silent Majority and moderate students in June of 1970. These kinds of students expressed their mortification about campus disturbances that included firebombing and other property destruction. They expressed grief about deaths of students at Kent State

⁸⁴ Richard Nixon, "Remarks at the Annual Meeting of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States," 4/29/1969. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=2024>.

⁸⁵ Noble Melencamp, Summary of Mail Trends from 5/1/1969-5/7/1969, Folder Begin 6/30/69 (2 of 2), Box 15, WH4-1-1, (MS/RNL).

⁸⁶ Dr. Benjamin Fine, "Campus Volunteers Outnumber Protesters," *San Diego Union*, 10/18/1970, A-6.

and police at Jackson State.⁸⁷ Still, many Americans underlined the need for more college authority through discipline and control. Many community members who condemned campus violence preferred college-aged youths to be more involved in political activism rather than “raucous rebellion on campuses.”⁸⁸ With more media exposure, YAF numbers swelled to 500 chapters and 60,000 members.⁸⁹

Citizen responses to the campus crisis were similar but differed by region. In the West, average citizens were very concerned about the campus crisis, as they were close to many sites of disruption. Philip A. Gibson, a delivery-truck driver from Los Angeles contended, “These kids have had everything on a platter. They’ve never had to work for anything or fight a war. What gets me is that they never offer anything positive, just want to tear down.” He was frustrated with the financial stability of the rebelling students, “Where else could they sound off with so much freedom? They complain about repression, but they live better than most people around the world or at home.” Charles Scott, a structural-steel worker in San Francisco, agreed, “People who are working hard and paying high taxes resent these demonstrating kids who free-load.” “They should stop and think,” said Mrs. Esther Perez, of Mar Vista, California, an aerospace assembler whose husband, Donald, was a construction worker. She commented,

The students are trying to get a point across, but they aren’t going to accomplish anything by violence. They don’t know how hard we have worked to try and build up the things they are tearing down. They should stop a minute and think who they’re hurting—their parents and the rest of us, the taxpayers. Students should have a chance to speak what’s in their minds, but they must recognize that

⁸⁷ Chapter 4 on Vietnam speaks more about the Kent State shootings.

⁸⁸ “‘Silent Majority’ Speaks Out on Nixon, Agnew, War, Students: a Survey,” *U.S. News & World Report*, June 8, 1970, 34.

⁸⁹ Anderson, *Movement and the Sixties*, 109.

there are restrictions on their conduct. All of us have to face up to that. When I go to work, my employer is not going to let me do just anything I want to do. Rules have to be set up and have to be obeyed, no matter where you go or what you do.

Others in California preferred productive tactics other than force. In support of law and order, a group of about one hundred moderate students, including white athletes and fraternity members, known as “the Hayakawas,” donned armbands marked with an “H” which stood for S.I. Hayakawa, president of SFSC and a conservative-defined “hard-liner against student terrorism,” and charged a SDS picket line in February of 1970 at San Francisco State College.⁹⁰ The Cal-Berkeley SDS even had to face right-wing threats in student government. Robert Bowen, a conservative in the University of California’s Berkeley student government, experienced strong forces against his use of legal channels. Bowen realized that he had “never been hated before by so large a majority.” On three occasions, “physical force” was used to try to prevent him and two other moderate conservative senators from leaving the student senate chambers, which would have “forced a quorum call and temporarily blocked matters of interest to the controlling left.”⁹¹

The Midwest also had its share of opinions on the subject of campus confrontations and were moderates strongly against student violence, but students at Midwest universities had a harder time fighting the protesters and violence. Isadore J. Kandaras, a Chicago florist, expressed thoughts that were held by many, stating,

⁹⁰ “‘Moderate’ Students Tell Their Side of the Campus Uproar,” *U.S. News & World Report*, 6/8/1970, 73.

⁹¹ “UC Conservative Says He’s Hated,” *San Diego Union*, 6/3/1971. ProQuest Historical Documents.

“Nationally, we are in a mess with all these youngsters protesters. The students’ grievances should be heard, but they have no business rioting and burning buildings. You and I have to pay for that damage. Those who destroy should be expelled.” Vernestina Hughes, a 19-year-old black student in a Chicago junior college, denounced the violence and the forced closure of colleges. Ms. Hughes observed, “it’s fine to let people know your opinions,” but said she did not agree with “mob-rule attempts to back up those opinions.” Charles E. Ervin, a Detroit parking-lot attendant, although against the use of deadly force at Kent State and Jackson State, believed college authorities should not permit “all that window-breaking and fighting on campus.”⁹²

At the University of Wisconsin in Madison, moderate students who disagreed with campus radicals faced challenges of their own. Although the majority of college students wanted to curtail class disruptions, most had neither the urge nor the power to stop campus turmoil. Similar to the national average, many students had to work during the school year to pay their tuition or personal expenses. After class and work, most students had very little time for campus politics, which, as those involved could have attested, was very time-consuming, and was often met with apathy – or, increasingly – threats. However, many involved in the Young Americans for Freedom “seemed to revel in their working-class backgrounds: the more they could define themselves as outside the Establishment, the stronger the underdog spirit and sense of purpose that flowed through the movement.”⁹³ Gary Lachmund, a 23-year-old graduate student, and a leader

⁹² “ ‘Silent Majority’ Speaks Out,” 35.

⁹³ Schoenwald, *A Time for Choosing*, 246.

of Committee to Defend Individual Rights (CDIR), explained that in the reverse, “The left despises careers. They don’t believe persons should spend their lives in jobs. So they don’t worry much about ‘getting an education’ and focus instead on ‘making trouble’.” In interviews, many of the moderates revealed they did not want to “get involved.” The philosophy of many was, “Let George do it.” One moderate student said, “Look, I study days and work nights. I’ve got enough to do.” Another commented, “Well, isn’t it up to the university to keep order?”⁹⁴ Yet Georges stepped up to defend their campus, as in the case of Charles Yanke, 21-year-old chairman of YAF who had three jobs but a more determined spirit to stop the spread of radicalism on campus. “YAF work takes a big chunk of my time, but it’s something I think has to be done. We’ve got a great system in this country. It’s got its faults, but it’s the best thing that has come along. The majority of the student body is just apathetic.” Fred Weiss, the leader of CDIR, reported, “many people on campus favor the black demands for the admission of more Negro students, more control of black studies and other concessions, but are opposed to the tactics being used to try to get them.”⁹⁵

By 1969, SDS activities were beginning to wind down on campuses for several reasons. A.R. Tyner, Jr., Director of the National Americanism Division of the American Legion believed it was because, “At long last, the citizens of this country have reached the boiling point and their wrath is no longer being ignored.” Additionally, universities and colleges began to enforce stricter campus rules and tighter guidelines on campus

⁹⁴ “‘Moderate’ Students Tell Their Side,” 72.

⁹⁵ “‘Moderate’ Students Tell Their Side,” 74.

against dissident political activities while students filed lawsuits against universities to recover tuition for class time lost while their campus was closed by protests. Tyner “hoped that this current trend of stringency, along with some government surveillance, will put an end to the anarchistic, nihilistic, and revolutionary atmosphere which exists not only on the college and university campuses of this country but in other segments of our society.”⁹⁶ In the same vein, FBI Director Hoover’s Commission on Campus Unrest emphasized, “It is imperative that colleges and universities resist and reject all threats of confrontation and violence. The never-ending struggle to preserve democracy and to inspire succeeding generations of American youth with our heritage of freedom is deeply rooted in our educational institutions.” Hoover’s commission urged that the time was ripe and pressing to overcome “the extremist forces which now threaten to destroy these cherished values.”⁹⁷ Additionally, SDS began to unravel itself through infighting and a level of violence unacceptable to the American public.

1968 Democratic National Convention

The 1968 Democratic National Convention also created a deep rift between radical protesters and moderate Americans. After successfully opening a dialogue between students and campus administrations, many students of the New Left focused their effort on the antiwar movement. The most contentious issue of the convention was the Vietnam War, and Vice President Hubert Humphrey, the likely candidate, had

⁹⁶ *Firing Line*, Vol. XIX, No. 11, Nov 1970 (Indianapolis: National Americanism Commission), Reel 91—Series 6 (SP/UCBB).

⁹⁷ *Firing Line*, Dec 1970, Vol. XIX, No. 12 (Indianapolis: National Americanism Commission), Reel 91—Series 6 (SP/UCBB).

announced his support of Johnson's policies. Frustrated with their lack of choices for a pro-peace candidate, several SDS leaders, such as Tom Hayden and Rennie Davis, along with antiwar leaders David Dellinger, Vernon Grizzard and YIPPIES Jerry Rubin and Abbie Hoffman, planned to create mass disturbances in Chicago. Between the two groups of antiwar planners and YIPPIES, they organized an antiwar protest and a Youth Festival. Inside the convention, the keynote speaker, Senator Daniel Inouye from Hawaii, painted a grim picture of the nation "torn by dissension, and disrespect for our institutions and leaders is rife across the land," when they should be working within the established system to affect change.⁹⁸

However, physical conflicts outside the convention quickly began. First, there were nightly clashes between those the newspapers called hippies at Lincoln Park and the police and guardsmen who constantly tried to evict them at the park's closing time because the protesters did not have a permit. The police employed tear gas in the face of resistance. Secondly, the other contingent centered at Grant Park tried to storm the Conrad Hilton Hotel, the site of the convention, and one activist managed to dump a trash can full of stinking liquid in the lobby. One night, the protesters stoned police and their cars, tossed golf balls and nails in the street to puncture car tires, threw rocks at storefront windows, and partially looted a liquor store.⁹⁹ However, the first few days of conflicts between police and Yippies were relatively peaceful and low on arrests.

⁹⁸ Vincent J Burke, "Keynoter Calls on Dissenters to Work for Better America: Inouye Urges Dissenters to Build Nation," *Los Angeles Times*, 8/27/1968, 1. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁹⁹ "Dems Recess In Uproar: 800 Guardsmen Face Hippies in Park, at Hotel," *Chicago Tribune*, 8/28/1968, 1. ProQuest Historical Documents.

Conversely, that changed on the worst day of violence, Wednesday, August 28. “The Battle of Michigan Avenue” climaxed as Humphrey received votes for the presidential nomination, and over 5,000 protesters had gathered in front of the hotel, booing vociferously when a vote was announced. Although outnumbered, the defiant protesters carried various inflammatory flags, shouting, “The streets belong to our people,” “This land is our land,” “Hell no, we won’t go.” Seemingly unprovoked, the police turned on both spectators and demonstrators, beating them with billy clubs. About one hundred people were injured and 178 were arrested.¹⁰⁰ Mayor Daley, criticized for his overuse of force, backed his policemen against the “terrorists” who had invaded his city with the intent to “disrupt the national political convention and to paralyze our city,” equipped with “caustics, with helmets, and with their own brigade of medics.”¹⁰¹

Of course, many people backed Daley’s decision to employ a generous amount of police willing to use physical force to keep the convention safe. The Democratic National Committee, the American Legion of Illinois, the Greater North Michigan Avenue Association, and hundreds of Chicago citizens made their gratitude known to Daley and his city police departments.¹⁰² In fact, a poll conducted by Sindlinger & Co. during the DNC found that only 21.3 percent of respondents thought the use of police force was excessive and 71.4 percent believed Daley’s use of security measures were

¹⁰⁰ J. Anthony Lukas, “Police Battle Demonstrators In Streets: Hundred Injured 178 Are Injured as Guardsmen Join in Using Tear Gas,” *New York Times*, 1. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹⁰¹ Edward Schreiber, “Daley Backs Cops’ Action: Planned Disruption Is Cited,” *Chicago Tribune*, 8/30/1968, 1. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹⁰² Sheila Wolfe, “Police Action Draws Praise, Condemnation,” *Chicago Tribune*, 8/31/1968, <http://www.proquest.com>, 7.

justified.¹⁰³ Mail summaries also showed that although American letter writers were 80 percent against the police use of force in Chicago, half were strongly against the “general proceedings” of the protests and 41 percent offered comments; only 9 percent agreed with the protests.¹⁰⁴

The impact of Students for a Democratic Society began to wane in 1969 as SDS split between students and radical factions in the following year. The conservative T.V. show *Firing Line* in December of 1970 highlighted, “The anarchistic Students for a Democratic Society...has loudly advertised its belief of violence and, if need be, total revolution to achieve its objectives.” SDS publicized that “the leadership of this organization has openly advocated the use of sabotage and explosives and other weapons against police and authorities and has urged outright rebellion and overthrow of the ‘establishment’.”¹⁰⁵ Their leader, Mark Rudd, in December of 1969 had stated that “violence was the path to revolution” and “it would be necessary to go underground” to complete that revolution, which resulted in the Weathermen — an outright campaign of terrorism.¹⁰⁶ Taking their name from a line in a Bob Dylan song, “You don’t have to be a weatherman to tell which way the wind is blowing,” the Weathermen seemed “to exist primarily for violent acts,” leading to the accidental explosion of Greenwich Village townhouse in March 1970 and other intentional public displays of violence.¹⁰⁷ The Weathermen combined with the “Days of Rage” demonstrations at the 1968 Chicago

¹⁰³ “Poll Reports 4 In 5 Back Chicago Police,” *Los Angeles Times*, 9/1/1968, D12. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹⁰⁴ Mail Summaries from 8/30/1968-9/25/1968 (MS/LBJL).

¹⁰⁵ *Firing Line*, Dec 1970.

¹⁰⁶ *Firing Line*, Dec 1970.

¹⁰⁷ Memo, John Dean, unknown date, page 4; folder Campus Disorder [I]; Box 16; (JD/RNL).

Democratic National Convention created a large negative impact for radicals, turning average Americans against protesters.

By 1970, Americans saw the student violence issue as one that would influence the midterm election. Eighty-nine percent considered student unrest an extremely or fairly important election issue, while only three percent said not so.¹⁰⁸ Fifty-eight percent blamed radical professors for encouraging student revolt, while 74 percent blamed radical militant student groups.¹⁰⁹ Two-thirds agreed that men in public life needed to stop being permissive with student protesters.¹¹⁰ Nixon's approval rating on his approach to student protesters hovered between 27 to 35 percent between the August and November before the midterm elections, as citizens expected him to do more.¹¹¹

The press also played a large role in the creation and demise of SDS and their counterparts. John Dean, counsel to President Nixon, recognized that SDS and other similar types of organizations achieved some success “largely through the efforts of the sensation-seeking U.S. mass news media, notoriety for their calls and claims for revolution.” Those making the news were “not even supported by a majority of students. Other elements of society, i.e. workers, middle class, do not participate in and do not sympathize with the student movements.” With the help of “sensation-seeking national

¹⁰⁸ Gallup Poll, Oct, 1970 (RCPOR).

¹⁰⁹ Harris Survey, Oct, 1970 (RCPOR).

¹¹⁰ Harris Survey, Nov, 1970 (RCPOR).

¹¹¹ Harris Survey, Aug, 1970; Harris Survey, Sep, 1970; Harris Survey, Oct, 1970; Harris Survey, Nov, 1970 (RCPOR).

news media,” the grievances and activities of “small and relatively minor groups” were magnified. “The disturbances are not large; only the coverage is exhaustive.”¹¹²

Even Vice President Spiro T. Agnew, who was “often accused of taking a dim view of American young people,” called out the “misrepresentation of most young people by certain elements of the press.” He told a journalist from San Diego, “I think there is a lot of exaggeration these days on how bad American young people are. There is a tendency to play up the bad, accentuating the negative,” although “most of them are fine young citizens.” Agnew nodded to the liberal media bias in saying, “Unfortunately, insofar as the young are concerned, most of what we read comes from the opinions only of activists.” For instance, in Berkeley, “there is intimidation by a combination of left-wing students and street people. Many of the others are afraid to express opinions” and unfortunately “they are heard from all too seldom.” Agnew stated, “There seems to be tremendous press focus on the bizarre because the bizarre makes news. It is a vicious circle. The news media gives publicity to the bizarre and this generates more of the bizarre.”¹¹³ However, it was the media itself that helped bring down the SDS on campuses, for as citizens became more informed through their newspapers about violence at universities, they grew more concerned and more vocal in their objections. Both citizens and moderate students used the channels they had to put a stop to violence on campus, which included student government votes, breaking strikes, organization memberships, and cultural dissent.

¹¹² Memo, John Dean, unknown date, 4, folder Campus Disorder [I], Box 16 (JD/RNL).

¹¹³ John Pinkerman, “Agnew Cites Faith In Nation’s Youth,” *The San Diego Union*, 10/28/1971, A-1, A-6. ProQuest Historical Documents.

After a decade of campus protest, Tony Dolan, counter-folk artist, made a name for himself and conservatism. After the decline of student protests, he was recognized as a Pulitzer-Prize winning journalist in 1978 for Investigative Reporting. A few years later, Dolan became President Reagan's speechwriter for both of his terms, with the famous "Evil Empire" speech in his credits. Although SDS imploded due to its violent tendencies, moderate to conservative student intransigents held tight to Dolan's type of conservatism, which was echoed across campuses and communities across America. The conservatives were crucial for organizing and engaging the moderate students on campus. Once fed up with the disruption of student life, the Silent Majority roared into action, preferring to work through legal channels to stop liberal radicals from ruining their schools and keeping them out of classes.

CHAPTER IV

PATRIOTS FOR THE VIETNAM WAR

Inspired by the social movements of the decade and prompted to finally speak out, the Beatles in 1968 released a hit song “Revolution.” Although the singers were generally in agreement with many of the New Left movement’s aims, they disagreed with some of the tactics the protesters used. John Lennon, like the protesters, wanted to change the world, but was not about to join in on the destruction that many of the demonstrations by 1968 contained. According to Walter Everett, Lennon had antiwar feelings, but he was not anti-establishment like the radical New Left.¹ “You say you'll change the constitution / Well, you know / We all want to change your head.” He encouraged using drugs instead of blaming the institution. Most importantly, he addressed the harmfulness of invoking communist heroes in Mao Tse Tung and Che Guevara: “But if you go carrying pictures of chairman Mao / You ain't going to make it with anyone anyhow.” The song was popular, reaching number 12 on the U.S. charts, and resonated with many Americans who were tired of protests.²

More than other social activism, the movement prompted by the Vietnam War polarized Americans and categorized them. Those who were against the war were labeled doves, representing a peaceful innocence that was not necessarily true, while those who supported U.S. policy in stopping communism in Vietnam were called hawks,

¹ Walter Everett, *The Beatles as Musicians: Revolver through the Anthology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 173.

² John Lennon and Paul McCartney, “Revolution,” © 1968 by Apple.

a predatory term that was also incorrect. Yet the war divided Americans and made the populace fit into one of these two categories, creating yet another division in the country. Although the letters sent to the White House showed that most Americans who wrote in opposed the Johnson Administration's policy in Vietnam, they also mainly opposed the antiwar demonstrations until 1969 when protests began to include average Americans and not just radicals. However, as the protests mounted and Nixon took actions to start removing troops from Vietnam, many Americans sided with the official Administration policy. Three main demonstrations created a solidified response by a coalescing Silent Majority: the 1965 Moratorium, the 1967 Washington, D.C., protests, and the 1969 fall Moratoriums. The responses to these three main events led to the Victory in Vietnam Week, and organizational actions and reactions by the Silent Majority Organization, Americans For Winning the Peace, Voices in Vital America, Tell It to Hanoi, and American Youth for a Just Peace.

The perceived danger of communism appeared most clearly during the Vietnam War, yet it was articulated differently than before. Anticommunist rallies continued, such as the one that was held in Pittsburgh with speakers Dr. Billy Hargis and General Edwin Walker in March 1963. The perceived threat of communist influence on college campuses was also made evident. In August 1964, the Committee for the Prevention of Communist Speakers and the Elimination of Communist Influence at Clarion State College, chaired by Dr. W.O.H. Garman, pastor of the interdenominational Callender

Memorial Church, banned communist speakers on campus.³ America followed a foreign policy based on George Kennan's containment strategy. Articulated in the immediate post-WWII icing period of the Cold War, the domino theory proposed that communism would spread of from country to country like a row of dominoes, radiating from Russia and China. Conflicts had already occurred over this philosophy in the Korean War and Eastern Europe; Vietnam was the latest opportunity to stop its spread from penetrating all of Indochina. U.S. military forces entering Vietnam to prevent communist expansion made a lot of sense to most Americans.

On April 7, 1965, President Johnson explained his purposes for sending in American troops at Johns Hopkins University. He emphasized that Communist China was "the new face of an old enemy," and had already attacked freedom in Tibet, India, and Korea, and "the contest in Viet-Nam is part of a wider pattern of aggressive purposes." Johnson found it America's duty to keep the promise made to the South Vietnamese in 1954 to protect them, and to back away from that promise would loosen the strength of the world order and bring doubt to the other American allies relying on assistance. But the base of his argument reasoned, "We will always oppose the effort of one nation to conquer another nation. We will do this because our own security is at stake." Moreso, "our generation has a dream. It is a very old dream... of a world where disputes are settled by law and reason. And we will try to make it so."⁴ In response, 82

³ Kenneth Eskey, "Clarion College Red Speaker Ban Demanded; Minister Here Leads Drive," *Pittsburgh Press*, 8/5/1964. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁴ President Lyndon B. Johnson's Address at Johns Hopkins University: "Peace Without Conquest," 4/7/1965, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Lyndon B. Johnson, 1965*. Vol. I, entry 172, (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1966), 394-399.

percent of the letters written to the White House about LBJ's speech were strongly in favor of Johnson's articulated purpose and goals for the war in Vietnam.⁵

1965 Moratoriums

However, students of the New Left had a new purpose to demonstrate. On April 30, 1965, an article in *Life Magazine* called "Students in a Ferment" identified the growing movement of college students, and liberally displayed pictures of students on campus. After their victories on the campus of University of California Berkeley for free speech, which turned into a provocative "Filthy Speech Movement," 15,000 of them protested the war in Vietnam while in Washington, D.C., ironically under the beautiful cherry blossoms. The activists were 10 percent of the campus population, and *Life* described them as varied, as "some... are professional authority baiters, some are social outcasts, some are just fuzzy-minded." However, the solid majority was "serious and hard-headed... skeptical of any solution proposed by what they call the 'establishment'."⁶ With the addition of opposing the Vietnam War to the New Left platform, student demonstrations "multiplied rapidly, becoming increasingly more militant and violent as opposition to the Vietnam War mounted, and rapidly emerging as the dominant issue of campus extremists."⁷ Pictures of the twelve-hour teach-ins at the University of Michigan and eight-hour long stretch at Columbia University also filled

⁵ White House Central Files, Subject File: Mail Summaries ending 4/8/1965 and 4/15/1965, folder Feb-Dec-1965, Box 1, WH 5-1-1 (MS/LBJL).

⁶ "Students in a Ferment," *Life Magazine*, 4/30/1965, 26.

⁷ "Origin of Current Student Extremism" Reel 91— Series 6: The Social Protest Collection MSS 86/157 c; BANC Film 2757 (SP/UCBB).

the pages.⁸ In response, the White House staff sent out a “truth team” on a ten-day tour through a number of Midwestern campuses to explain the official side of the reasons for U.S. involvement in Vietnam to educate the students properly.⁹ Other students also responded to campus protests. In May 1965, seventy-five students of the Ad Hoc Committee in Vietnam tried to stop a ROTC award ceremony at Cornell University, but 4,000 other students showed up to jeer and throw eggs at them. The counter-protesters also pushed the antiwar students around and carried signs castigating them.¹⁰ In fact, the mail trends in May of 1965 reversed after the DC protest and the following *Life* article. In April, the majority of letters mailed to the White House about the U.S. policy in Vietnam had clearly weighed in the opposition category (in some weeks, at the rate of five to one), yet after the demonstrations, three out of five letters favored U.S. policy. It took a month for the proportions to return to the standard rate of opposition to the war.¹¹ Most Americans, even if they disagreed with the American foreign policy, opposed the demonstrations against it.

In kind, the conservative newsletter “Manion Forum” attacked the portrayal of the students in the *Life* article. It countered the students’ request for the U.S. to pull out of Vietnam with the observation that they were not also demanding that the Communists do likewise. Columnist David Lawrence argued, “The Communist influence on the campus in American universities has increased so substantially in recent months that it

⁸ “Students in a Ferment,” *Life*, 28-29.

⁹ “Manion Forum,” Weekly Broadcast No. 555, 5/23/1965, folder Academic Freedom, Box 115 (GR/CUA).

¹⁰ “4,000 at Cornell Jeer and Egg 75 Who Stage Antimilitary Sit-In,” *New York Times*, 5/18/1965.

¹¹ Mail Summaries, folder Feb-Dec 1965, Box 1 (MS/LBJL).

has now become an important factor in the organization of demonstrations.” The Communist strategy was to capture the country by subverting the educational system in a brainwashing operation known as “academic freedom,” where free speech was protected “as long as it ridicules American patriotism, undermines religious morality and attacks those who fight Communism at home or abroad.”¹²

The following October, antiwar demonstrations reached a new height. One planner in Madison, Wisconsin, Frank Emspak, said that around 100,000 demonstrators turned out for events in 60 cities, the largest marches in New York City and Berkeley.¹³ Protests without incident included marches and Vietnam teach-ins in Los Angeles and the State House steps in Salem, Oregon. However, other demonstrators faced harsh opposition. A band of 14,000 protesters marching from UC Berkeley to a teach-in at a nearby Army post, forbidden by the cities of Oakland and Berkeley, encountered a police phalanx that turned them back shortly after their start. During their second and smaller attempt the following day, a gang of Hells’ Angels attacked the group. Additionally, in New York City, 10,000 marchers, mostly students, had to dodge eggs and red paint as they made their way up Fifth Avenue. Crowds on the street also shouted, “You, traitors!” A small group of about fifty men broke through the police lines and even attacked and tackled the marchers.¹⁴

¹² “Manion Forum,” Weekly Broadcast No. 555; May 23, 1965; folder Academic Freedom, Box 115 (GR/CUA).

¹³ “LBJ Deplores ‘Peace’ March,” *Boston Globe*, 10/19/1965, 1. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹⁴ “Hoodlums--and Police--Stop US Marchers: Day of Peace Demonstrations,” *Guardian*, 10/18/1965, ProQuest Historical Documents. 1. “Peace Marches-- And Backlash: U.S. Probe,” *Newsday*, 10/18/1965, 3. ProQuest Historical Documents.

The trend in the mail reversed again in response to the protests as the Silent Majority mobilized against protesters. Before the October demonstrations, the majority of letters written to the White House had disputed official policy, whether the writers took a more “hawkish” position or “dove” position. However, in the last two weeks of October, 60 percent of the mail had turned to support Johnson’s Vietnam policy, almost matching public opinion polls. By November, the ratio was two to one in favor of U.S. policy, and even reached a height of 73 percent in mid-November. About six hundred and fifty letters, 80 percent specifically written against the protesters and draft card burners, also filled the White House mailroom for three weeks. Like the April response, letters proportionately supporting the administration again waned by the beginning of December.¹⁵

Johnson’s Administration was concerned about the image that antiwar protests propagated to the international community. The Soviet newspaper *Izvestia* published a headline “Americans Ashamed of America!” and the *Peking People’s Daily* praised the demonstrations, alarming President Johnson and his foreign relations advisers.

Undersecretary of State George Ball, echoing LBJ, said there was a “very great danger” that the demonstrations would lead to “a prolongation of the war and a further loss of life and suffering” by misleading the enemy. In response to the new draft card burners, Lt. Gen. Lewis B. Hershey, national Selective Service director, affirmed the “misguided adolescents” should be spanked or inducted, as they were only hurting themselves by angering the draft board. Several senators were also upset about the protesters, including

¹⁵ Mail Summaries, folder Feb-Dec-1965, Box 1 (MS/LBJL).

Senator Richard B. Russell (D-Georgia) and Senator Everett M. Dirksen (R-Illinois). Senator Frank Lausche (D-Ohio) told his colleagues, “these demonstrations are the product of Communist leadership,” and was sure that some of the youths involved were unaware “they were following the flag of the Reds.”¹⁶ U.S. Attorney General Katzenbach affirmed Lausche’s accusation, revealing that the Justice Department investigation into the antiwar movement had uncovered “some Communists and some persons very closely associated with Communists” working with SDS, who had spent the previous week to urge conscientious objections to the draft.¹⁷

As an answer to the October 16th antiwar protests, the New York City Council voted for a “Support Vietnam War Day” that involved the flying of American flags on public buildings and a “massive parade” down Fifth Avenue of flag-bearing veterans and marchers on Veterans Day. In Maine, the State Commissioner of Veterans Services asked residents to write letters to veterans, the AmVets in Iowa had a “Vietnam Backup” to send letters of appreciation to veterans from Iowa, and the American Legion national executive committeeman in Reno asked all veterans to wear their service caps and fly the American flag as a protest to antiwar demonstrations.¹⁸

The LBJ Administration was also concerned about the portrayal of the war on the television. As the Vietnam conflict was the first televised war, President Johnson

¹⁶ “LBJ Deplores 'Peace' March,” *Boston Globe*, 10/19/1965, 1. ProQuest Historical Documents. “President, Senators Rebuke Draft Foes: Opposition Held Aid To Reds FBI Arrests Card Burner,” *Hartford Courant*, 10/19/1965, 1A. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹⁷ “Peace Marches-- And Backlash: U.S. Probe,” *Newsday*, 10/18/1965, 3. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹⁸ “City Council Proclaims 'Support Vietnam War Day’,” *New York Times*, 10/27/1965, 2. ProQuest Historical Documents.

handled the media as he did Congress. His media policy was “maximum candor consistent with security operations,” marking the first major war since the Spanish-American War that did not censor the media. The U.S. chief information officer, Barry Zorthian, believed that the open reporting would produce an accuracy that would build support for U.S. policies. However, Johnson still expected journalists to provide a “balanced account of controversial situations,” unlike the one Morley Safer exposed in August of 1965 of Marines burning thatched huts on a search and destroy mission in Cam Ne. “A hundred and fifty homes were leveled in retaliation for a burst of gunfire,” Safer asserted. “It will take more than presidential promises” to persuade a South Vietnamese peasant “that we are on his side.” Johnson, enraged, called the network’s president, Frank Stanton, who was also a good friend, and woke him up by asking, “Are you trying to f*ck me?” White House aides unsuccessfully tried to replace Safer with someone more friendly to the administration.¹⁹

A Gallup Poll taken a year later in September of 1966 showed that a majority of those polled supported U.S. foreign policy in Vietnam. When asked about their approval of how President Johnson was handling the situation in Vietnam, 42 percent approved while 38 percent disapproved, and 20 percent had no opinion. Those who commented in the affirmative answered mainly that LBJ was trying his best or that America must contain communism or it will take over Vietnam. Out of the 38 percent who disapproved, 16 percent actually advocated a firmer stance in the war through more

¹⁹ Chester Pach, *Selling War in a Media Age: The Presidency and Public Opinion in the American Century* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2010), 173-175.

bombing or military action. The remaining 22 percent of the dissenters indicated that the war should be fought between Vietnamese people and should not involve the America. A strong 48 percent did not think that sending in a fighting force was a mistake, while 35 percent did.²⁰ A 1966 American National Election Survey produced close to the same numbers, with 43 percent in support of action and 29 percent dissenting. When asked about what the Administration should do at that point in the war, only 9 percent wanted a troop pullout, while 36 percent wished that troops in Vietnam would stop fighting but remain, while the same percentage thought the military should take a stronger stand, even if it meant invading North Vietnam.²¹

To get a closer perspective on the war, Marvin Liebman conducted his own study of Vietnam servicemen in the field. He was involved in direct-mail fundraising programs and provided public relations expertise to the conservative and anticommunist movements from 1957-1968. In fact, as a close friend of William F. Buckley, Jr., he was a co-founder of the Young Americans for Freedom and the American Conservative Union, to “help mobilize the moral, political, and intellectual leadership of the American conservative movement,” in an attempt to win sixty Republican seats in the U.S. House in the 1966 election.²² As a representative of Marvin Liebman Associates, he flew to Vietnam to hold a series of interviews with American soldiers to determine their motives and outlook on the war and its protesters. While their perspectives on the war varied,

²⁰ Gallup Poll #1966-0734: Vietnam/Communist China/Civil Rights/Presidential Election, September 8-13, 1966.

²¹ American National Election Survey, 1966 (RCPOR).

²² Press Release for 6/23/1965 by Donald C. Bruce, Chairman of the American Conservative Union, Free Society Assoc Box 58 (FSA/STH).

almost all of them believed they were helping South Vietnam both to dispel communism and build their country. According to the interview transcripts, when asked about protests in America, all interviewed GIs disagreed with the protesters.

Michael Walker, Air Force Pararescue, had dropped out of East Carolina College and joined the service with the goal to get to Vietnam. Although he thought it was a “mixed up mess” and hard to understand, he was clear on the purpose of American forces in Vietnam, “Well, we’re here to stop the aggression of Communism across a free land and it’s a national principle and that’s why we’re here.” He was convinced that communism could spread, “Well if it just stays like right in this small area, you couldn’t say it was that much of a threat. But when you figure that if it could spread here, it would spread elsewhere. Then it would become a big threat.” He did not glean his opinions from other people, and he understood that some soldiers wanted an escalation of the war to “just finish it off once and for all” but others considered “there’s a lot of humane things.” He did not pay attention to the protesters and demonstrations, but he figured they did not understand the war because they were not fighting it in the States. “We’re not over here actually as an aggression force, you know, to kill. But... we have to when it comes up sometimes...but we’re here to save lives.” He felt reassured that most Americans were behind them.

Private First Class Albert Woodard, Jr., had been in Vietnam for six months when interviewed. He expressed that he would rather pull the troops out of the war because the war was just wasting time and losing lives “milling around.” He thought if the senators and businessmen back home behind a desk would let the military actually

fight the war and move it up North, then they could win the war quickly. When asked about the riots and demonstrations in his home state of Michigan, he answered that riots were “not proving nothing... They’re just showing how ignorant they are, you know.” He believed that the “clowns” in Berkeley and Detroit only wanted to cause a scene, and should be doing it in Vietnam instead of America. He mentioned the psychological operations that the North Vietnamese were distributing with the pictures of antiwar demonstrations. “They show this to their people to show them — look at the United States. Not right...they’re having trouble between themselves. They can’t help another country.”

Two servicemen were convinced that the demonstrators were ignorant about the war. Jerry thought the war could be won with the right amount of pressure through bombing of the North. He thought that if the demonstrators “were over here, they’d know that we shouldn’t pull out because we’re here now...and I know we shouldn’t pull out...if we did pull out, Communists would definitely get in here...would set in...definitely. I think we’re doing a real good job.” Les of California enlisted in the Marines because he wanted to be the best, and unlike those drafted, he was not worried about going to Vietnam. However, he thought they ought to push more and get the war over with—fight the enemy to win, like in World War II and the Korean War, and not “pussyfoot around.” He agreed with Jerry about peace marchers, “Let them march...bring them over here and let them march through the jungles...carry their signs, if they think it’s going to do any good. And then they’ll find out the scoop over here.” He believed the majority of Americans upheld the soldiers in Vietnam, especially the

“parents of the guys that are over here are all for...all for this war...actually to get it over and done with.”

Altogether, the soldiers sensed they were endorsed by friends and family, but not by protesters or even congressmen, who restrained their ability to fight in country. It was to rectify the soldiers perceived as limited national support that the National Committee for Responsible Patriotism mustered. Its objectives were to “create grass-roots support for and pride in what our young Americans are doing in Vietnam; in doing so—albeit indirectly—help mobilize American public sentiment and support for our military action against communist aggression in Southeast Asia.”²³

1967 Marches for Peace

The organizers of the Spring Mobilization to End the War in Vietnam called their 1967 deployment “Marches for Peace.” San Francisco saw the largest West Coast peace demonstration to that point, as an estimated 40,000 protesters, predominantly college-age students, clergymen, businessmen and women with young children, with a liberal sprinkling of “flower-waving hippies,” carried signs in the march from downtown to Kezar Stadium. Along the way, spectating U.S. servicemen, civilians, and members of the American Nazi Party heckled them. The Orange County Committee to End the War in Vietnam coordinated students from five colleges to march through streets lined with people who disapproved. One dissenting man of the protest striding along the sidewalk muttered, “The damn Communists are taking over.” The rear of the march actually

²³ Memo, Marvin Liebman to Charles Wiley, 10/24/1967, Box 23 (FSA/STH).

included about fifty men supporting the U.S. efforts in Vietnam carrying banners reading “Support Our Men in Vietnam” and “Communism Is Red Fascism.”²⁴

The most notable reaction against the 1967 peace marches occurred in New York City. About 2,000 black marchers bussed in to join the antiwar demonstrations at the U.N. building were “mauled and beaten” by helmeted policemen and “nearly trampled by mounted officers” who repeatedly charged them. This group was also prevented from getting close to Martin Luther King, Jr.’s speech at the U.N., which had been orchestrated by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.²⁵ However, even the white anticommunist group called the Peter Fetcher Brigade (named after an East German man killed trying to escape through the Berlin Wall), complained of police unfairness also displayed towards them during their counter-demonstration. Kept a couple blocks away from the main antiwar protest, they sang “God Bless America,” recited “The Pledge of Allegiance,” burned a Soviet flag in Central Park, and sent patrols to infiltrate the ranks of antiwar marchers. At one point, protesting the inequity of the policemen who would not allow them closer to the U.N., the group sat in the middle of 42nd Street, closer to the protesters, but upon police request, returned to the sidewalk. The director of the conservative brigade claimed, “This is a farce. This is an injustice against America, not just against our group.” Through the use of a non-permitted loudspeaker, they propagated the themes of their signs, which read, “Coexistence Means Perpetual War,” “Why Not March on Hanoi,” and “Escalate.” At the conclusion of the

²⁴ Daryl E. Lembke, “40,000 Parade in San Francisco for Viet Peace,” *Los Angeles Times*, 4/16/1967, C40I. ProQuest Historical Documents.

²⁵ Alex Willis and McCann, Ray, “Peace March Not Peaceful as Police Beat Negroes: Local Groups Tell of Police Harassment,” *Philadelphia Tribune*, 4/18/1967, 2. ProQuest Historical Documents.

speeches at the U.N., about one hundred youths who identified themselves as Young Americans for Freedom and Young Patriots for Freedom taunted the demonstrators and denounced police as “Cossacks” and “Commies” for allowing only peaceniks to get close to the proceedings. Students over the river at the Queens campus of St. John’s University also held an all-day conference titled “Peace Without Surrender” to support the U.S. position in Vietnam.²⁶

Many citizens reading the next day’s newspapers agreed with the counter-protests. As with the response to the 1965 demonstrations, almost 900 letters were mailed in about the recent antiwar demonstrations, and 79 percent vocalized distaste with the protests.²⁷ An angry 417 Americans mailed in their wrath about anti-patriotic people burning draft cards, and another 389 disagreed with the D.C. protests, opposed to the 254 who wrote in favor.²⁸ With renewed congressional discussion about ending the war and General Westmoreland’s prediction of victory, numerous writers turned to support the administration.

In fact, in May of 1967, an eight-hour parade down Fifth Avenue in support of troops was held in New York City as a rebuttal to the march on the same street the previous month. Depending on the source, newspaper estimates wildly ranged from 75,000 to 250,000 participants that walked in between floats, like the rowboat float accompanied by the National Maritime Union members who carried a banner reading, “American seamen will keep our troops in Vietnam supplied even if we have to row.”

²⁶ Murray Schumach, “Police Keep Rein On March's Foes: Anti-Communists Held Back by Barricades at U.N.” *New York Times*, 4/16/1967, 3. ProQuest Historical Documents.

²⁷ Mail Summaries, Box 3, (MS/LBJL)

²⁸ Mail Summaries, Box 1 1967 (MS/LBJL).

Eleven Medal of Honor winners marched in the vanguard of the procession, and many groups sang “God Bless America.”²⁹

A Gallup Poll taken in July 1967 showed the beginnings of mass antiwar dissent. When Gallup asked, “Do you approve or disapprove of the way President Johnson is handling the situation in Vietnam,” 52 percent disapproved and 34 approved. But when asked if sending troops into Vietnam was a mistake, 41 percent said it was and 48 percent said it was not a mistake. Most responders, at 46 percent, thought the U.S. was standing still in Vietnam, while 34 percent still thought America was making progress and only 11 percent thought it was losing. Forty percent thought sending in more troops was necessary; 49 percent were opposed because too many men were dying or they should have a sufficient force to end the war.³⁰ However, while the country’s citizens began to turn against the war after media exposures of the realities of warfare, they certainly did not agree with the antiwar protests of 1967.

The fall demonstrations, coupled with renewed North Vietnamese aggression, stimulated an increase in letter writing from November 1967 to February 1968. For the first time, letters in support of U.S. policy passed approval ratings seen in Gallup and Harris polls. Johnson’s January 17th speech emphasized a goal of peace, but a continued use of bombing to try to achieve those ends. The battle at Khe Sahn and the NVA attacks during the Tet Offensive in January rallied “hawks” to escalate the war in retaliation.

²⁹ “Thousands March Backing Viet War,” *Austin American Statesman*, 5/14/1967, A1. ProQuest Historical Documents.

³⁰ Gallup Poll #1967-0748: Vietnam/Civil Rights/Presidential Election, July 13-18, 1967. (RCPOR).

Figure 1

Mail vs. Polls In Favor of LBJ's Vietnam Policies

Questions: Do you approve or disapprove of the way President Johnson is handling the situation in Vietnam? (Gallup)

How would you rate the job President (Lyndon) Johnson has done handling the war in Vietnam—excellent, pretty good, only fair, or poor? (Harris)

Percent responding approve (Gallup) or excellent or pretty good (Harris)

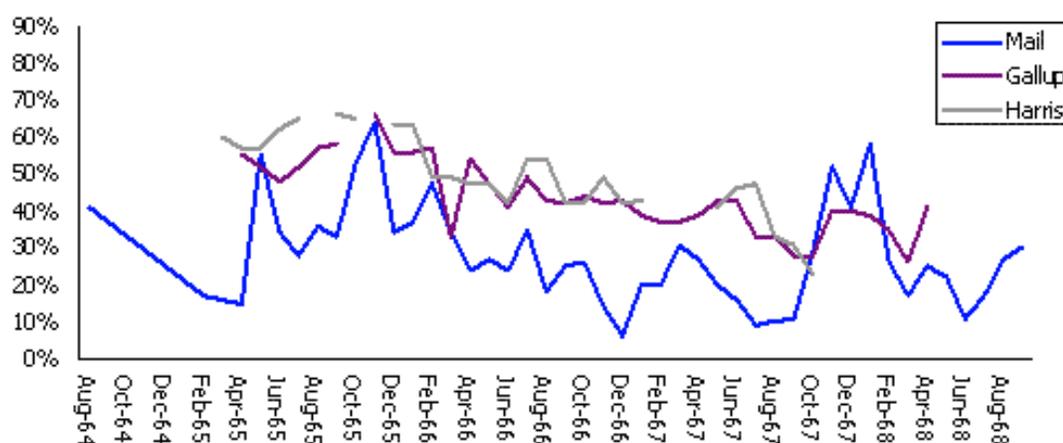


Figure 1 Mail vs. Polls In Favor of LBJ's Vietnam Policies³¹

The Tet Offensive “delivered a devastating blow to the president’s credibility” and claims of securing victory. As seen in Figure 1, the president’s rating on Vietnam dropped dramatically after Tet. Therefore, after the Tet Offensive, a discouraged President Johnson announced on March 31, 1968 that he would not seek reelection. Administration officials claimed that TV reporting of the war was inaccurate, uninformed, cynical and biased, as many journalists opposed the president or his

³¹ Brandon Rottinghaus, “Mightier than the Poll? Public Opinion Mail in the Johnson White House,” http://www.publicopinionpros.norc.org/features/2007/jul/rottinghaus_printable.asp (accessed January 14, 2015).

policies. Johnson had told his Vietnam advisers, “We need to get a better story to the American people.” Historian Chester Pach explains that it was reporters’ firsthand knowledge of the difficulties of U.S. strategy that had led to their skepticism of his policies. Pach asserts that President Johnson lost the war in American living rooms “because his optimistic rhetoric simply did not explain the harsh realities of the war in Vietnam.”³² Yet other Americans were still hopeful of winning a war that was beginning to drag out.

Victory in Vietnam Demonstrations

After the January 1968 attacks of the Tet Offensive, the National Student Committee for Victory in Vietnam (NSCVVN) also organized to counter the campus protests expected in the spring of 1968. These students paired with the Young Americans for Freedom and rallied against “the Campus Cong.”³³ In February, fifteen antiwar students had crowded into an interview room at Washington University and refused to leave, protesting the fact that Dow Chemical Co. made napalm, forcing the cancellation of on-campus interviews by a Dow recruiter. In reaction, the St. Louis Civil Liberties Committee protested the actions of liberal students to disrupt the interviews. “The right of free speech does not extend to disrupting the legitimate business of others in this way,” said committee chairman Courtney Shands.³⁴

³² Pach, *Selling War in a Media Age*, 172-173.

³³ Memo, Spring 1968, Student Committee for Victory in Vietnam, folder Victory in Vietnam, Free Society Assoc Box 15 (FSA/STH).

³⁴ “Student Protest at W.U. Is Assailed,” *St. Louis Globe Democrat*, 1/17/1968, ProQuest Historical Documents.

The NSCVVN also suggested charity projects to support the people of Vietnam and American servicemen. It proposed collecting coins for a South Vietnamese orphanage, and sending paperback books to servicemen in Vietnam. The VFW sponsored "Operation Buddy" and Westmar College in Le Mars, Iowa shared servicemen's letters in a public display called "Letters from Vietnam." For local speakers to generate warmth towards Vietnam, the NSCVVN mailer also proposed contacting veterans, the Asian Speakers Bureau, the American Conservative Union Speakers Bureau, the World Youth Crusade for Freedom, Education about Communism Through Refugees Program, All America Conference to Combat Communism, or showing the film "Why Vietnam," produced by the armed forces.

NSCVVN's biggest accomplishment was its organization of "Victory in Vietnam Week" in April and May of 1968. It requested all fifty governors to issue a proclamation announcing April 13-20 as a week to celebrate veterans and their mission to win victory in Vietnam, and Governors Dan Moore of North Carolina and Norbert T. Tiemann of Nebraska had already endorsed the broader Victory in Vietnam organization.³⁵ The association proudly announced its new endorsers: Representative Richard H. Ichord (D-Missouri), Representative Donald E. Lukens (R-Ohio), Professor John J. Kennedy (Arizona State University), Father Daniel Lyons (Free Pacific Association), and Senator Thomas J. Dodd (D-Connecticut). Victory in Vietnam Rallies were held May 4th at Brigham Young University, and in Ohio from April 28-May 4, culminating at Ohio State University. The Proclamation for Victory in Vietnam Week read that communism was a

³⁵ Memo #7, March 28, 1968, folder Victory in Vietnam, Free Society Assoc Box 15, (FSA/STH).

threat to the peace and security of America and other countries, and because South Vietnam has requested assistance from the United States, the President and Secretary of State had committed military forces to “assure the free independence of South Vietnam.” Therefore, the NSCVVN supported “a firm policy for peace through victory in this conflict between Communism and Freedom.”³⁶

Former President General Dwight D. Eisenhower also echoed the sentiments of many Americans about the antiwar protesters. In his *Reader's Digest* article titled, “Let's Close the Ranks on the Home Front,” he agreed with honorable dissent, but argued that “the current raucous confrontation” substituted “emotion for logic and facts,” going beyond noble dissension. He was especially concerned about protesters' use of force “in open defiance of the laws of the land” when trying to prevent recruiting officers or draft centers from doing their job. His suggestion was to stop them at once, for their action was “rebellion, and it verges on treason.” He believed in the purpose of U.S. policy to “save a brave little country, to which we have given our solemn promise of protection, from being swallowed by the communist tyranny,” and in the larger picture, prevent a domino collapse that he surmised as “frighteningly correct.”³⁷

The 1968 film *The Green Berets*, directed by John Wayne and Ray Kellogg, was also meant to counter the antiwar sentiment in the United States. Minimally based on the 1965 eponymous book by Robin Moore, the movie displayed Wayne's pro-war, anticommunist position. Like Marvin Liebman, John Wayne had taken a trip to Vietnam

³⁶ Memo, Spring 1968, Student Committee for Victory in Vietnam, folder Victory in Vietnam, Free Society Assoc Box 15 (FSA/STH).

³⁷ Dwight D. Eisenhower, “Let's Close Ranks on the Home Front,” *Reader's Digest*, April 1968, 49-53.

in 1965, which gave him the inspiration to pay tribute to the Special Forces deployed there. The film was meant to give a realistic portrayal of the communist forces and their fighting tactics, although it proved to be hyperpatriotic. Even though reviewers like Roger Ebert highly criticized the film as old fashioned, audiences loved it. In six months, it earned a handsome \$11 million in showings and film rentals. Its producer, Michael Wayne, John Wayne's son, said the critics and demonstrations against the film actually helped its success, "Most critics reviewed the war and not the picture, which is about people, not politics," he said. "It certainly portrays Americans as heroes and it shows that moviegoers were ready for American hero images in this war."³⁸

Vietnam was a major factor in the 1968 election. A 1968 American National Election Survey, 55 percent of non-military Americans answered that they had been following news on Vietnam.³⁹ Over half at 51 percent now believed the United States should have stayed out of Vietnam, while the number in support of action had dropped to 30 percent. Yet, when asked about what the Johnson Administration should do about the war, only 19 percent advocated a troop pullout, while 36 percent wanted to keep troops there but end the fighting and 33 percent wanted to take a stronger stance against North Vietnam. Eighty-four percent of respondents agreed the Vietnam War was an important issue that would influence their vote in the 1968 presidential election. On a Vietnam Action Scale from 1 to 7 (1 being immediate withdrawal and 7 being complete

³⁸ A. H. Weiler, "John Wayne's 'Green Berets' a Box-Office Triumph," *New York Times*, 1/3/1969, 20. ProQuest Historical Documents.

³⁹ According to the survey, 55 percent were women, but of the men, only 4 percent were in the military, and the vast majority had served, not because of the Vietnam War, but because they would have served anyway. Of immediate family that served in the military, respondents answered that only 6 percent were in the service due to the war in Vietnam.

military victory), the majority of respondents perceived LBJ and Richard Nixon to be about a 4 or 5, but viewed segregationist candidate George Wallace as a strong seven. When asked about demonstrations approved by local authorities to protest the war, respondents clearly disapproved. Only 15 percent approved of marches and protests, while 21 percent said it depended on circumstances, and a stronger 42 percent were against their use. The gap widened with the next question, which asked about refusing to obey a law that one thinks is unjust. Only 11 percent approved, 18 percent said it depends on the situation, and 47 percent disapproved. Again, the next question showed a diminished support base for sit-ins, mass meetings, and demonstrations to halt government activities. The number in support dropped to 6 percent, 14 percent said it depended, and 56 percent were against stopping the government's policy. Americans resoundingly agreed that writing letters and signing petitions through organizations or as individuals was the route that they preferred to take, as 60 percent stated this option as the best way to influence Congress. A pessimistic quarter of respondents felt that nothing they did would do any good and they just have to live with political decisions.⁴⁰

During the campaign season for the 1968 election, both political candidates needed to articulate how they would end the war since it was polled to be the most important issue facing the nation. Hubert Humphrey, LBJ's vice president, had to distance himself from his predecessor, and thus declared a "de-Americanization" of the war by ending the bombing and evacuating troops. However, this option did not satisfy those who could only see an American victory as a possibility. Richard Nixon

⁴⁰ American National Election Survey, 1968 (RCPOR).

announced a secret plan to bring about “peace with honor” to end the war and retain American prestige.⁴¹ After Nixon was elected to the presidency, he hoped to end the war in Vietnam by sending a surge of military troops and waves of bombing.

Average Americans wrote to the White House to show their support of President Nixon’s tough foreign policy in Vietnam. Edward H. Leska of California wrote President Nixon “to tell you I think you are doing a commendable job of conducting the war in Vietnam. I realize that the voices of dissent are louder than this short letter but I hope you will continue to work for a just and honorable end to the war.”⁴² Ed Arnold, also from California, agreed, “The great majority of Americans are NOT for pulling out of the Vietnam War quickly as a few vocal people seem to imply. That would be surrendering and would result in more killing than presently goes on. Don’t let the noisy ones deter you from taking a sound and sensible course.”⁴³ A Silent Majority even began identifying themselves before Nixon’s November 3 speech. Shari Smyth of Maryland encouraged Nixon, “It’s refreshing to have a leader who puts the good of his country (and ultimately the world) ahead of public opinion. Keep it up! It renews the faith of us, the silent majority (who have been silent far too long) in the ‘American Dream’!”⁴⁴

⁴¹ Anderson, *The Movement and the Sixties*, 233.

⁴² Letter; Edward H. Leska, Jr. to President Nixon; 10/6/1969, folder Mail Reports 10/1/69-11/30/69, Box 15 (WH/RNL).

⁴³ Letter, Ed Arnold of Burlingame, CA to President Nixon, 10/1/1969, folder Mail Reports 10/1/69-11/30/69, Box 15 (WH/RNL).

⁴⁴ Letter, Shari Smyth to President Nixon, 10/9/1969, folder Begin 6/30/69 (1 of 2), Box 15 (WH/RNL).

1969 Moratorium

America was strongly divided by 1969 on the war issue. *Time* ran a Time-Louis Harris poll on two groups, of leaders and the general public, that ended the day before the October Moratorium, and published their results in an article titled "Americans on the War Divided, Glum, Unwilling to Quit." The magazine's poll found that although 80 percent of respondents were simply tired of the war, it was "remarkable how much support remains for the policy of ending the war in honorable fashion." The poll concluded that President Nixon enjoyed considerable support, as a majority of respondents backed him on the current rate of troop withdrawal (75 percent) and on the matter of self-determination for South Vietnam. Seeming contradictions characterized the American mood. Four-fifths of the nation professed to be "fed up and tired of the war," while half did not want to see the U.S. "cut and run" from Southeast Asia. Nearly half of the public would favor continued withdrawal even if it meant collapse of the Saigon government, and more than 40 percent felt the small country would probably go Communist despite U.S. efforts. Yet a majority still hoped to preserve a non-Communist regime in Saigon. "The irony," said Harris, "is that the American mood is as pessimistic as it is without a Dienbienphu." Only 45 percent of the general public and 43 percent of the leaders approved Nixon's management of the negotiations with North Vietnam, while 49 percent of the public and 53 percent of the leaders gave him negative marks. The majority of Americans and their leaders favored phased withdrawals. "It's too late to suddenly just drop it," said Mrs. James A. Deines of Bird City, Kansas. "The only alternative we've got left is to end it as honorably and as quickly as possible."

Due to the length of the war, disillusioned Americans were quickly forgetting the

initial anticommunist purposes for involvement the war because of its costs.

Increasingly, interviewed citizens felt the war was a mistake and was a needless waste of lives. “The basic rationale and justification for the Vietnamese war,” according to Harris, “are rapidly fading from the consciousness of the people.” Whereas a full two years into the war in 1967, 83 percent of the public had agreed that the war was necessary to resist Communist aggression in Asia, in October 1969 only half accepted this explanation. Even fewer said that Viet Nam was crucial to U.S. interests. Only 41 percent of the public and 32 percent of the leadership agreed with the proposition that the war was necessary to guarantee national security. Nearly half (48 percent) of the public went along with the proposition that the U.S. presence in Viet Nam was a commitment not just to the Vietnamese, but also to the world. The public also rejected a government with a Communist leader at 62 percent to 21 percent.

Uncertainty about getting into the war also affected the responses about protesters and policy. Seventy percent of the polled leaders did not believe that demonstrators were radicals who did not care about America, but only half of the public agreed with them. A third of public respondents thought the antiwar sentiment played too much into Nixon’s war policy, while three-fourths of the leadership disagreed. President Nixon faced a stark contradiction going into 1970. Ninety-four percent of the public and 91 percent of the leaders said they would support Nixon if he ended the war the next year on honorable terms, a condition almost impossible to meet. Sixty percent of all polled were willing to support him whether he ended the war or not as long as he got American troops out of Viet Nam. A surprising 52 percent of the public were willing

to support him in one last-ditch attempt to gain a military victory. Sixty percent of the leaders and 67 percent of the public said that they would oppose him if the Communists took over the South Vietnamese government. “The fact that a plurality of both public and leaders believe that South Viet Nam will ultimately go Communist anyway” only highlighted the U.S. war dilemma.⁴⁵

On October 15, 1969, thousands of Americans and antiwar supporters around the globe debated, marched, and wore black buttons and armbands to show their sentiment against the war in an international Moratorium. Church bells tolled in New York City, many colleges cancelled classes, many workers and younger children stayed home, and church held special services. Large rallies were held in New York City, Boston, Philadelphia, and Minneapolis. The day concluded with thousands of Americans holding candles to pass by the White House.⁴⁶ Members of the Vietnam Moratorium Committee had planned the main events of the day “to maximize public pressure to end the war by encouraging a broad section of Americans to work against the war.” It was the largest public protest of the Vietnam War, and unique as a nationally coordinated demonstration.⁴⁷

Of course, not all Americans supported the Moratorium, least of all President Nixon. In a press conference on September 26, he stated about the imminent

⁴⁵ “Americans on the War Divided, Glum, Unwilling to Quit,” *Time* 94 no. 18, 10/31/1969, 15-19. EbscoHost.

⁴⁶ “Peace Rally Across U.S.: Thousands Mark Call To End War Hold Marches, Debates, Vigils,” *Chicago Tribune*, 10/16/1969, 1. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁴⁷ John Herbers, “Vietnam Moratorium Observed Nationwide By Foes Of The War,” *New York Times*, 10/16/1969, 1. ProQuest Historical Documents.

moratorium, "Under no circumstances will I be affected whatever by it."⁴⁸ While he may have said this to discourage the further use of psychological operations (Psy-Ops) by North Vietnam that pointed to the divisions within American society, it prompted many to act who normally would have waited for an outcome.⁴⁹ "It is now a challenge to show this Administration the outpouring of voter protest," declared Eugene Weisberg, a Denver industrialist and lifelong Republican. Some of Nixon's critics believed that his apparent disregard for public sentiment on the war might come to parallel Johnson's own. Yet *Time* acknowledged that the Nixon Administration, unfairly handed a difficult war, had taken pains to scale down the size of the war by withdrawing troops and reducing the draft, resulting in a drop in casualties. The President and his representatives had tried several times for peace negotiations with Hanoi, only to be buffeted by the "stone wall of Communist intransigence." Nixon had difficult choices to make, especially to preserve America's international standing, as "the U.S. has global responsibilities that cannot be torn up like a draft card." Yet, once Nixon admitted that the American forces were unable to win the military victory that most Americans had supported, North Vietnam no longer had an incentive to negotiate and decided to simply wait for America to give up. The Moratorium was a direct response to the raising of false

⁴⁸ President Richard Nixon, "The President's News Conference," 9/26/1969, The American Presidency Project, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=2246> (accessed 1/8/2015).

⁴⁹ A flyer dropped over South Vietnam in a Hanoi Psy-Ops propaganda push showed a picture of antiwar demonstrations to encourage the South Vietnamese to join the Viet Cong. Flyer, Marine Lt Col. William Collopy's personal collection.

hopes that Nixon provided in his election campaign, and he was incapable of simply ignoring it.⁵⁰

Before the event, several Americans were concerned about the pending Moratorium that had been widely announced. Attorney Stephen P. Smolenski of New York wrote Nixon to stay resilient, “I know that on October 15th, you will be subjected to many pressures brought by the student demonstrators and a sympathetic but misinformed press, but please do not waiver from your honorable policy.” He asked the president to “please remember you still represent the thoughts and ideals of the vast majority of the American people.”⁵¹ Pennsylvania Doctor Samuel S. Faris, also reminded Nixon that the moratorium protesters did not represent the bulk of American attitude. “That opinion, if I read my thoughtful, patriotic, God-fearing, tax-paying, perceptive fellow-citizen correctly, wants a clear-cut American decision in Viet Nam, a decision that shows our resolve as well as our mercy.”⁵²

Several others trusted Nixon’s plan over the protesters. Mrs. Philip Potthoff from New York encouraged Nixon, “I think it is about time for those of us who love this Country and want the best for it and for all the people to speak out loud and clear and protest against the ‘protestors’.” She was against the war, having a son reaching draft age, but did “not see how one can justify the throwing away of lives given to keep communism from spreading by pulling out and leaving Vietnam to be eaten up by those

⁵⁰ “Strike Against the War,” *Time* Vol. 94, Issue 16, 10/17/1969, 19-27. EbscoHost.

⁵¹ Letter, Attorney Stephen P. Smolenski to President Nixon, 10/9/1969. folder Begin 6/30/69 (1 of 2), Box 15 (WH/RNL).

⁵² Letter, Samuel S. Faris, M.D. to President Nixon, 10/9/1969, folder Begin 6/30/69 (1 of 2), Box 15 (WH/RNL).

who have taken those precious lives.” She felt those who protest, such as her Congressmen, “give comfort to our enemy and use the war as a political issue which is the lowest form of cheap politics!” She estimated that their efforts would be better used “to send a massive protest to Hanoi to indicate they stand behind their President and their Country—this would be much more constructive protest.”⁵³ J.C. Keaney, Jr. of Pennsylvania came out of his silence to reassure Nixon that his long-term plan for peace was stable, “I feel that you have more information and knowledge at your hand than have the organizers of so-called peace protest movements, and am writing to indicate to you my own support.”⁵⁴

Two weeks before the Moratorium, Nixon met with Senate minority leader Hugh Scott (R-Pennsylvania) and House minority leader Gerald Ford (R-Michigan) to discuss the Moratorium. The three rebuked those who would settle for less than a “fair peace.” Senator Scott suggested, “that those people who want to demonstrate ought to demonstrate against Hanoi,” for they were the intransigent party in the negotiations.⁵⁵ In fact, Premier Pham Van Dong in Hanoi even supported the Moratorium, wishing “great success” for the next day’s demonstration in a letter addressed to his “Dear American

⁵³ Letter, Mrs. Philip Potthoff to President Nixon, 10/9/1969, folder Begin 6/30/69 (1 of 2), Box 15 (WH/RNL).

⁵⁴ Letter, J.C. Keaney, Jr. to President Nixon, 10/22/1969, folder Begin 6/30/69 (1 of 2), Box 15, (WH/RNL).

⁵⁵ Robert B. Semple, Jr. “President Leads Attempt To Mute Criticism of War,” *New York Times*, 10/1/1969, 1. ProQuest Historical Documents.

Friends.” Vice President Agnew warned the protesters that if they did not repudiate the letter, they would be sending Hanoi the wrong message about achieving the same ends.⁵⁶

Before the Moratorium, Deputy Attorney General Richard Kleindienst met with Mike Driver, the chief coordinator for the activities. Mike Mazloff was in charge of one demonstration, and Chuck Hoffman was in charge of activities at the Sylvan Theater and march to White House. Driver assured the demonstration would be low-key and peaceful, as the interest of demonstrators coincided with the government to be peaceful. Kleindienst noted, “Driver stated that they are making a real effort to broaden this demonstration beyond the ranks of students to include ‘middle Americans’ and thereby demonstrate to the Nixon Administration that not only students are concerned with the Administration’s Viet nam policy.”⁵⁷ In fact, the vast majority of letters and telegrams addressing the October and November Moratoriums upheld the event.⁵⁸

Time Magazine ran a special article called “Strike Against the War” devoted to the activities of the Moratorium. Unlike earlier protests like the 1967 March on the Pentagon or the riots at the DNC in Chicago, which involved only “a minority of the young and the radical intelligentsia,” the 1969 Moratorium was structured to allow a larger cross-section of the country to participate. Hundreds of colleges and universities closed for the day or altered their schedule to allow for Moratorium demonstrations and

⁵⁶ Aldo Beckman, “Hanoi Hails Protest Day: Urges Rebuke On Eve of Anti-War Protest, S. Viet Nam Buries Its Dead,” *Chicago Tribune*, 10/15/1969, 1. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁵⁷ Memo, Richard G. Kleindienst to John W. Dean, III regarding Sylvan Theater — White House March, 10/10/1969. folder Demonstration 10/15/1969 Wash DC, Box 81, (JD/RNL). Civil Disturbance Group Interdivision Information Unit, “October 15, 1969 Vietnam Moratorium Demonstration,” 10/17/1969. folder Demonstration 10/15/1969 Wash DC, Box 81, (JD/RNL).

⁵⁸ Noble Melencamp, Mail Summaries from October 2-December 3, 1969, Folder Mail Reports 10/1/69-11/30/69, Box 15, WH4-1-1 (MS/RNL).

teach-ins. Although participant profiles and reasons for protesting were vastly different, *Time* reported that the unifying factor was an “exhaustion of patience with the war” and “doubt about the pace of Richard Nixon's efforts to end it.” Infighting between antiwar radicals and New Left were not welcome as part of the Moratorium. One Columbia student confessed, "It will be nice to go to a demonstration without having to swear allegiance to Chairman Mao." President Nixon’s own determination to end the war also allowed for more people to respectfully join the antiwar protests, and on many campuses, “support for the Moratorium became a matter of fashion and conformity.” The momentum of dissent was clearly building. In June, just after the President’s Midway troop-withdrawal announcement, Nixon's handling of the war was narrowly approved in a Louis Harris sampling, 47 percent to 45 percent. In mid-September, it was rejected in a Harris poll, 57 percent to 35 percent.⁵⁹

However, in direct response to the moratorium, supporters of America’s foreign policy in Vietnam flew flags and turned on their automobile headlights. Those in support of Nixon’s policy flew flags at full staff, while those in support of the Moratorium flew them at half-staff. In Texas, the moratorium was a flop, as the largest demonstration in the state was held by 6,000 students at the University of Texas; only 600 students at the University of North Texas and 300 students at Texas Tech showed for rallies. At several campuses, the Young Americans for Freedom circulated petitions in support of U.S.

⁵⁹ “Strike Against the War,” *Time* 94, no. 16, 10/17/1969, 19-27. EbscoHost.

policy.⁶⁰ The mayor of New Britain, Connecticut, ordered flags to be flown on utility poles and urged residents to do the same to “help serve notice to those who have doubts that... we remain the United States.” Counter-demonstrations were also prominent at Western Illinois University and the Edwardsville campus of Southern Illinois University, while the College Federation of Young Republicans picketed peace demonstrations at the latter.⁶¹

Reactions against the moratorium varied, but opposition was firm. Soldiers in Vietnam reacted bitterly to the national statement against the war. One G.I. from Ohio stated, “We become disgusted, and I sure think they should let the war be run by the people that are supposed to run it, and they should support the United States the way they’re supposed to.” One soldier from Desert Center, California, had been arrested for attacking antiwar demonstrators in Hollywood when he had returned home from his first tour in Vietnam, as he had believed “in fighting communism—long haired hippies and people who disagree with the war, I can’t see.”⁶² Senator Barry Goldwater (R-Arizona) spoke for the opponents of the Moratorium participants, and he said they were “playing into the hands of the people whose business it is to kill American fighting men.”⁶³ A debate ensued in the House. Previously silent Representatives Sam Steiger (R-Arizona) and Rogers C.B Morton (R-Maryland), along with twelve others, urged a sudden

⁶⁰ “M-Day for Texas Colleges Quiet With One Exception,” *Austin American Statesman* 10/16/1969, B1. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁶¹ “Peace Rally Across U. S.: Thousands Mark Call To End War Hold Marches, Debates, Vigils,” *Chicago Tribune*, 10/16/1969, 1. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁶² “GIs in Saigon Hit Planned Viet Protest,” *Chicago Tribune*, 10/15/1969, 6. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁶³ “Peace Rally Across U. S.: Thousands Mark Call To End War Hold Marches, Debates, Vigils,” *Chicago Tribune*, 10/16/1969, 1. ProQuest Historical Documents.

escalation of the war in order to end it, "We, as concerned Americans who represent constituents, are fed up with half-way measures and talk of cowardly retreat."⁶⁴ Rep.

W.R. Poage (D-Texas) said the antiwar talk in the House that night amounted to "aid and comfort to the enemy of the United States," which could "only result in the prolongation of the war and the loss of the lives of more American boys."⁶⁵

Some college students disagreed with campus closings in support of the Moratorium. A Young Americans for Freedom (YAF) leader in Honolulu went to court to seek an order compelling the University of Hawaii to show cause why it should not remain open on Moratorium day. A group called Undergraduates for a Stable America took out ads in the *Daily Princetonian* campus newspaper urging students to attend classes during the Moratorium. Faculty members at Wheaton College in Norton, Massachusetts, found unsigned flyers in their mailboxes demanding: "Defend the aims of your college; support your Government's efforts for a just peace; hold and attend classes Oct. 15."

Resistance to the Moratorium also spread from the campuses to the community at large. In California's San Joaquin Valley, the Porterville police chief denied local residents permission to march down the customary Main Street route on their peace parade; the city council backed him up, and the protesters had to settle for a route around the edge of town. Stanley Buturlia, 48, a machine-shop supervisor in North Andover, Massachusetts, had a son serving in Viet Nam, and argued, "If World War II had the

⁶⁴ John Herbers, "Vietnam Moratorium Observed Nationwide By Foes Of The War," *New York Times*, 10/16/1969, 18. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁶⁵ John H Averill, "Moratorium Criticized, Supported in Congress," *Los Angeles Times*, 10/16/1969, 26. ProQuest Historical Documents.

television coverage that this war is getting, the boys wouldn't have wanted to go. We can't pull out. There's too much involved." He suggested, "Leave the war the way it is. Keep the Communists thinking. Maybe it won't hurt us or my kid's generation; but if we pull out, it would hurt my kid's kids." Of course, anticommunist arguments also pervaded the resistance to the Moratorium. Chairman Richard Ichord (D-Missouri) of the House Internal Security Committee damned the Moratorium as "a propaganda maneuver designed and organized by Communists." *Time* reported that antiwar sentiment was not nearly so pronounced in places like Chicago and New York, where groups like the radical Weathermen soured attitudes about protests and violence.⁶⁶

In fact, a division within the antiwar movement was made visible in the conflict between the Moratorium organizers and those of the New Mobilization Committee ("New Mobe"). While the former represented moderates and politically oriented liberals, the latter was a diverse federation of organizations, such as the National Council of Churches, the Socialist Workers Party, the Communist Party of the U.S.A., the Student Mobilization Committee and the Urban Affairs Coalition. Some of them had been involved in the protests during the Democratic Convention in Chicago, and they met the previous summer in Cleveland to plan mass "Marches Against Death" for November in Washington and San Francisco. However, many Americans were wary about the dramatic tactics used by the New Mobe that attracted big-city and campus radicals, and both sets of organizers were concerned that the November march could set the "stage for

⁶⁶ "Strike Against the War," *Time* 94, no. 16, 10/17/1969, 19-27. EbscoHost.

the wild and the ultraradical,” which could “evoke a popular reaction against the entire peace movement.”⁶⁷

Vice President Agnew also opposed the Moratorium and was outspoken about the protesters, assuring the conservative right that the Administration was not going soft. In supportive company in Dallas, he criticized discontent on American campuses as the work of a "minority of pushy youngsters and middle-aged malcontents." In New Orleans, he described the October 15 Moratorium as such: “A spirit of national masochism prevails, encouraged by an effete corps of impudent snobs who characterize themselves as intellectuals.” *Time* made allusions to Agnew and the pugilistic vice presidents of both Eisenhower and Johnson, and surmised that he was enjoying his role.⁶⁸ Of the citizens who wrote in about his speech, the majority favored Agnew’s position on the protesters, as 913 letters supported him while only 195 were against his remarks.⁶⁹ A Harris Poll taken in February 1970 asked respondents if they agreed or disagreed that Agnew “has been right in wanting to see anti-Vietnam and student demonstrators cracked down on.” A whopping 69 percent agreed, while 19 percent disagreed and 12 percent were not sure.⁷⁰

Within weeks of the Moratorium, President Nixon gave his Address to the Nation on the War in Vietnam the night of November 3rd. He emphasized the concerns and frustrations that the American people had voiced through their letters, on their campuses, and in antiwar demonstrations. He acknowledged that everyone’s goal was peace, but he

⁶⁷ “Conflict in the Movement,” *Time* 94 no. 18, 10/31/1969, 18. EbscoHost.

⁶⁸ “Agnew Unleashed,” *Time* 94 no. 18, 10/31/1969, 14. EbscoHost.

⁶⁹ Noble Melencamp, Summary of Mail Trends, November 13-19, 1969. Box 15, WH 4-1-1, (WH/RNL).

⁷⁰ Harris Survey, Feb 1970 (RCPOR).

asked, "How can we win America's peace?" He claimed the easy route to avoid criticism and prevent the war from becoming his own would be to quickly withdraw troops from Vietnam, but he deduced that "for the future of peace, precipitate withdrawal would thus be a disaster of immense magnitude." For he feared a global decrease in confidence in American leadership, as the U.S. was also helping to stabilize Berlin and the Middle East. "A nation cannot remain great if it betrays its allies and lets down its friends," stated Nixon. Ironically, America's European allies did not support U.S. war efforts in Vietnam. Also, Americans would lose confidence in their own country when they saw the consequences, which would scar the public.

The president rejected the notion of immediate withdrawal and proposed a plan on several fronts. As *Time* magazine had pointed out, Hanoi refused to even discuss a peace plan, demanding instead an unconditional withdrawal of American troops, who would overthrow the government of South Vietnam in the process of leaving. Yet previous ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr., continued to press for a diplomatic solution and Nixon personally tried back channels to get the attention of the North Vietnamese leadership to negotiate. Nixon thus announced his plan for Vietnamization to gradually replace American military forces with those from South Vietnam on a scheduled but non-released timetable.

Because of the timeliness of the speech in relation to the antiwar protests, President Nixon also felt the need to directly address the antiwar protesters. He mentioned demonstrators he saw in San Francisco carrying signs reading, "Lose in Vietnam, bring the boys home" and agreed that one of the strengths of America's free

society is the ability to carry signs such as these without repercussions. But he made it very clear that he would not allow the “policy of this Nation to be dictated by the minority who hold that point of view and who try to impose it on the Nation by mounting demonstrations in the street.” He instead supported the election process that determined the political leaders to follow the will of the majority. He appeared saddened to admit, “it may not be fashionable to speak of patriotism or national destiny these days,” but he did not want historians to record “that when America was the most powerful nation in the world we passed on the other side of the road and allowed the last hopes for peace and freedom of millions of people to be suffocated by the forces of totalitarianism.”

Nixon ended his speech by rallying the Americans who supported him. He asked “the great silent majority of my fellow Americans” for their support, for “for the more divided we are at home, the less likely the enemy is to negotiate at Paris.” He encouraged citizens, “Let us be united for peace. Let us also be united against defeat.” Turning to the protesters demonstrating out his window, he addressed the threat they posed to the country, “Because let us understand: North Vietnam cannot defeat or humiliate the United States. Only Americans can do that.”⁷¹

Critics of the antiwar protesters called it a brilliant speech that awakened those who had been silent for too long out of their hiding, and they wrote en masse to express their support of the President. Mary Lee S. O’Neal of Virginia wrote, “I am just one of

⁷¹ President Richard Nixon, “Address to the Nation on the War in Vietnam,” 11/3/1969. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=2303> (accessed 1/7/2015).

the millions of ‘silent Americans’ who can no longer remain silent... The vocal minority cannot be allowed to dictate our policies.”⁷² Mary D. Rinaldi, a newlywed twenty-one year-old mother of a six-week baby in Virginia, also agreed about the protestors, as she was “most distressed and angry about the demonstrators who were so rude as to interrupt you with chanting about the Viet Nam War.” She believed it was the right of “every American to freedom of speech but I will not condone the flagrant violation of such a freedom as I witnessed tonight.”⁷³ Dennis R. Balch, President of the Student Government Association of Florence State University in Alabama sent in a SGA Resolution passed on December 15 to “convey our support of your Vietnam policy and do offer you and those men fighting in Vietnam our encouragement in your efforts to end the war as soon as possible.”⁷⁴ A teenager from Las Vegas also wanted to express her confidence in Nixon, who had “certainly restored the faith of my country once again in my heart as well as many other teenagers. We are all behind you and your Vice President Spiro Agnew... May God bless both you and your families.”⁷⁵

Many of the Silent Majority in their letters expressed indignation against the antiwar protesters. Although the majority of Americans by the end of 1969 opposed U.S. operations in Vietnam, Nixon’s speech conveyed the presupposition that the majority still believed in his peace with honor plan. Jesse D. Perkinson’s family in Maryland felt

⁷² Letter, Mary Lee S. O’Neal to President Nixon, 11/4/1969. folder Begin 6/30/69 (1 of 2), Box 15, (WH/RNL).

⁷³ Letter, Mary D. Rinaldi to President Nixon, 12/16/1969, folder Mail Reports 12/1/69-1/31/70, Box 15 (WH/RNL).

⁷⁴ Letter, Dennis R. Balch to President Nixon, 12/18/1969, folder Mail Reports 12/1/69-1/31/70, Box 15 (WH/RNL).

⁷⁵ Letter, Joy S. Jagers to President Nixon, 11/21/1969, folder Begin 6/30/69 (1 of 2); Box 15 (WH/RNL).

that Nixon's speech represented "the deep feelings of the majority of the citizens of this country." They also supported Nixon's statement that he "would not be unduly influenced by the loud minority," for he trusted that "our democratic processes were sufficient vehicles for our expression of the wishes of the majority of our citizens."⁷⁶ Another self-proclaimed member of the Silent Majority, Mrs. Lynn Beeler from Ohio, also admired Nixon for his stubborn courage and "decision to stay in Washington during the 'Moratorium' march recently." She also fully supported the president's "avowed intention to carry out your plan for withdrawal of troops in Viet Nam," although she believed the United States had a responsibility to "the South Vietnamese in the way of protection until they are better able to take care of themselves."⁷⁷

Even servicemen wrote to the White House about the Silent Majority and protests. Richard Smith, a U.S. Army first lieutenant and intelligence officer who had been in Thien Giao District for ten months, had seen Nixon's plan implemented and thus agreed with the proposal. He had seen firsthand that "the antiwar movement in the United States is proving detrimental to our cause in Vietnam." He explained that in the battlefield, "It is giving the enemy incentive, for he thinks that for the most part, the American people do not support your policy. At least that is what he is propagandizing to the South Vietnamese people, as well as our American troops." He acknowledged that "Protest in itself is of course healthy," as America was founded on a basis of protest. However, "when it becomes damaging to our country's interests, and in effect aides the

⁷⁶ Letter, Jesse D. Perkinson to President Nixon, 11/18/1969, folder Begin 6/30/69 (1 of 2); Box 15 (WH/RNL).

⁷⁷ Letter, Lynn Beeler to President Nixon, 11/18/1969, folder Begin 6/30/69 (1 of 2), Box 15 (WH/RNL).

enemy, it is no longer a healthy thing.” For the enemy was assisted by the conviction that “the American people’s desire to continue the war is fading, and will not endure. Why should he negotiate?” Smith fully believed that America could “gain an honorable settlement in Vietnam,” but that could only be achieved with the people’s support, so he was “giving you mine. Perhaps the silent majority should remain silent no longer.”⁷⁸

Many Americans who identified themselves as the Silent Majority vowed to stay silent no longer. Sophia Srcrebuiska from Baltimore wrote to Nixon, “I pledge to you that I am not going to be silent any more. I pledge to you that I will do anything and everything in my power to change the makeup of the U.S. Senate.” She was also concerned about media bias, and promised that with the awakening of the Silent Majority, “the opportunistic members in the Senate will no longer mistake the opinion of the press for that of the people.”⁷⁹ Dentist Robert J. Pinney, from Michigan had, “Up until now... been a member of the ‘Silent Majority,’ but no more! We speak up for the United States and our President.” Like others, he also supported Vice President Agnew’s views on the protesters and the media, whose “type of plain talk is long overdue. I am certain that you know that his views are shared by a vast number of Americans.”⁸⁰

Douglas R. Boff, a twenty-one year-old college senior at California State College at Hayward felt impelled by Nixon’s speech to express his feelings. “I cannot longer allow myself to be classified as a member of the ‘silent majority.’” He believed America’s

⁷⁸ Letter, 1LT Richard Smith to President Nixon, 11/20/1969, folder Begin 6/30/69 (1 of 2), Box 15 (WH/RNL).

⁷⁹ Letter, Sophia Srcrebuiska to President Nixon, 11/22/1969, folder Begin 6/30/69 (1 of 2), Box 15 (WH/RNL).

⁸⁰ Letter, Robert J. Pinney, D.D.S. to President Nixon, 11/3/1969, folder Begin 6/30/69 (1 of 2), Box 15 (WH/RNL).

“principles and prestige” were “so sacred that they must never be compromised” by losing a war.⁸¹

Many other letters reminded Nixon that they also prayed for him and guidance. James E. Craddock from Provo, Utah, assumed there were millions of Americans that would rise up to support Nixon in prayer. He reassured the president, “You are probably aware that thousands of families pray for your success and well-being, and I want you to know that mine is among them. With my best wishes for support in all that you undertake in behalf of the unity and safe-keeping of America.”⁸² Milton C.R. Carlson and his wife wrote from Minneapolis, “It is our prayer that God will bless you with wisdom, courage, and success in all your work.”⁸³ Mrs. Edgar E. Lewis from New Jersey commended Nixon on his noble attitude at a press conference in December, confiding, “We pray daily that you, Vice President Agnew and the members of your cabinet will continue to be able to withstand the slings and arrows of those hostile ultra liberals who seem to believe that this country can continue to be great without benefit of order or discipline on the part of the populace.”⁸⁴

A month after the Moratorium, Agnew gave a speech in Des Moines, Iowa, at the televised Midwest regional meeting of Republicans about TV Network News Bias. He criticized the news networks for immediately countering Nixon’s Vietnam speech, as

⁸¹ Letter, Douglas R. Boff to President Nixon, 11/4/1969, folder Begin 6/30/69 (1 of 2), Box 15 (WH/RNL).

⁸² Letter, James E. Craddock to President Nixon, 11/25/1969, folder Begin 6/30/69 (1 of 2), Box 15 (WH/RNL).

⁸³ Letter, Milton C.R. Carlson to President Nixon, 12/16/1969, folder Begin 6/30/69 (1 of 2), Box 15 (WH/RNL).

⁸⁴ Letter, Mrs. Edgar E. Lewis to President Nixon, 12/9/1969, folder Begin 6/30/69 (1 of 2), Box 15 (WH/RNL).

“the President of the United States has a right to communicate directly with the people who elected him,” and the American people “have the right to make up their own minds and form their own opinions about a Presidential address without having the President's words and thoughts characterized through the prejudices of hostile critics before they can even be digested.” He explained that the “privileged sanctuary” of television news stations wielded a heavy amount of power, and could create national issues overnight based on the events and people they chose to cover during the nightly news that reached over 40 million people. Agnew contended that the handful of news producers did not represent the majority of Americans, and were the reason for the gulf between how the citizens received Nixon’s speech and how the news anchors disputed it. He continued to criticize the news for ignoring normality, as “Bad news drives out good news. The irrational is more controversial than the rational. Concurrence can no longer compete with dissent.” For the average citizen receiving his news from television, he would assume the majority of America was composed of embittered radicals, uncaring blacks, and lawless campuses. In conclusion, Agnew challenged the television media to improve the objectivity of their news programs and Americans to demand responsible news programs.⁸⁵

Most people who wrote to the White House about Agnew’s comments agreed with his stance on the media. The White House received 1,109 letters and telegrams that stood 60 percent in appreciation for his courage to take a stand against media bias with

⁸⁵ Spiro Agnew, “Television News Coverage” Speech, Midwest Regional Republican Meeting, Des Moines, Iowa, 11/13/1969, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/spiroagnewtvnewscoverage.htm> (accessed 12/15/2014).

the risk of his negative portrayal; 730 people (40 percent) disagreed with his speech.⁸⁶ The Hegars from Texas observed, “America is stronger and more united because of the tremendous courage of the two of you. God Bless You.”⁸⁷ A letter from the McDonalds in Georgia agreed, “Our country needs more men with this kind of courage. If the two of you continue your efforts to right the wrongs in our country, we will support you now and will support you vigorously in all coming elections.”⁸⁸ In his letter to President Nixon, Joseph F. Kelly from Brooklyn identified himself as a registered Democrat but “thank God, I voted for you.” He considered Agnew a “valuable asset to your Administration” and deeply admired “the courage he has demonstrated relative to the slanted coverage by the news media” who “may very well destroy his public image. I trust that you will continue your confidence in his endeavors.”⁸⁹ William N. Berry, along with a majority of his workers and friends from New Jersey, agreed with Nixon’s decisions, but felt that Agnew was right, as “Neither the News media, weekly News magazines, nor various Polls, convey my sentiment. Due to your efforts, I am now a silent American you may depend on.”⁹⁰ Jack A. Moorhead of California wrote on behalf of his household, who were “especially pleased with the sharp comments of Mr. Agnew aimed at the idiots who are trying to burn the country down. Mr. Agnew could even go

⁸⁶ Noble Melencamp, Summary of Mail Trends November 13-19, 1969, folder Mail Reports, Box 15 (WH/RNL).

⁸⁷ Letter, Mr. and Mrs. E.L. Hegar to President Nixon, 11/15/1969, folder Begin 6/30/69 (1 of 2), Box 15 (WH/RNL).

⁸⁸ Letter, Mr. and Mrs. F.L. McDonald to President Nixon, 11/16/1969, folder Begin 6/30/69 (1 of 2), Box 15 (WH/RNL).

⁸⁹ Letter, Joseph F. Kelly to President Nixon, 11/21/1969, folder Begin 6/30/69 (1 of 2), Box 15 (WH/RNL).

⁹⁰ Letter, William N. Berry to President Nixon, 11/19/1969, folder Begin 6/30/69 (1 of 2), Box 15 (WH/RNL).

one step further in his criticism of unfair news coverage and include Time and Life. Honestly their reporting is just ridiculous in its inaccuracies.”⁹¹

Shortly after President Nixon’s speech to the Silent Majority, with the widespread support of average Americans enthusiastically identifying themselves as such, a group formed to mobilize an organization called the Silent Majority Organization (SMO). It was created as a bipartisan new council or committee of national security education based on the twelve-year-old “liberal-conservative confederation” under the American Bar Association with the purpose to present “the geopolitical, economic and military rationale for a continuing and effective U.S. presence in the world arena.” It was also to explain “through mass media and via campus and civic forums— the historical and strategic reasons why the U.S. cannot allow any totalitarian empire to consolidate either all of Europe or the heartland of Asia against the ‘free world island’.” SMO focused not on a single-issue like Vietnam or the ABM program, for “the New Left Coalition can only be offset by a persistent, sustained, multi-faceted and sophisticated program of National Security Education.” This bipartisan group of 5,000 Republicans and Democrats representing scholars, educators, lawyers, editors, businessmen, and foundation officials had worked together under the American Bar Association in cooperation with thirty universities, a number of school programs, and officials in the National Education Association and members of Congress from both parties. In parallel programs, the same members scheduled several hundred seminars on foreign policy and

⁹¹ Letter, Jack A. Moorhead to President Nixon, 3/1/1970, folder Mail Reports 2/1/70-3/31/70, Box 15 (WH/RNL).

national defense problems for Methodist clergymen, the ETV system of the Catholic Archdiocese of New York, and more than 100 editorial writers under the sponsorship of Schools of Journalism. Another 100 opinion leaders were educated in “briefing sessions” organized by the Interprofessional Council of the National Strategy Information Center and key men in the Young Presidents’ Organization, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the Steel Service Center Institute, the International Association of Insurance Counsel, the Jaycees, the CA and VA Bankers Associations, Freedom House in New York City, and the Military-Industrial Conference in Chicago.⁹²

SMO had a seven-pronged instructional attack to propagate the pro-Vietnam Victory message, with the first three concentrated on campuses. First, they informed Reserve Officers at a two-week crash course to learn the problems of Vietnam, NATO, Communist insurgency, and Soviet missile threat at the grass roots level to speak in thousands of forums across the nation. Second, the organization identified several ways to influence youth. For six years under the aegis of the ABA, thirty universities had held classes for over 10,000 high school teachers in a summer course called “Democracy vs. Communism,” which could be used to reach high school youth before they were

⁹² Some prominent members and initial planning group of the SMO included the following: William J. Casey (attorney from New York who would become the Director of the CIA), Morris I. Leibman (attorney in Chicago and civilian aide to the Secretary of the Army), Louis B. Nichols (founding member of the J. Edgar Hoover Foundation), Congressman John O. Marsh (D-Virginia), Congressman Howard H. Callaway (Democrat turned Republican-Georgia), William C. Mott (Judge Adjutant General of the Navy), Dr. Frank N. Trager (Professor of international relations at N.Y.U.'s Graduate School of Public Administration), Dr. William R. Kintner (Professor at the University of Pennsylvania and Director of the Foreign Policy Research Institute), Dr. Richard L. Walker (Professor of international relations at the University of South Carolina and founder of the Institute of International Studies), Charles West, Gene E. Bradley (launched the School to School program for the Peace Corps and president of the International Management Association), R. Daniel McMichael (on the advisory board of the National Strategy Information Center and many others), and Frank Barnett (founder and president of the National Strategy Information Center of Washington and New York).

“disoriented by SDS cadres.” This approach also recognized the use of Boys State and Girls State alumni, who were part of the Silent Center, to speak up. With the use of YAF moderation of rhetoric, they could also tap into organizations in touch with the federation, such as the Association of Student Governments (on two-hundred campuses), Freedom Leadership Foundation, Young Republican Clubs, some elements of the Intrafraternity Council, and Honor Societies of ROTC (unspecified branch), which had all expressed interest in participation. A third prong would also attack college liberals by using previous War College faculty from various locations (over 100) who were back in civilian universities to give special lectures on the war.

The next four strategies focused to educate the larger populace off campus. SMO leaders suggested a ten-day Defense Orientation Course sponsored by the Joint Chiefs of Staff for an alumni of outstanding lawyers, businessmen, and educators called Defense Orientation Conference Association (DOCA), and then the “trained” members could speak to Rotary, YMCA, women’s clubs, schools, and so forth. Intellectual support also included editorials, T.V. panel discussions, local speakers who could use studies and research conducted by the Institute for Strategic Studies in London, the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution, and Peace at Stanford, the Council on Foreign Relations of New York City, the Center from Strategic and International Studies, Russian and Far Eastern Institute, and the Institute of International Studies at the University of North Carolina. SMO also proposed tapping into the World Affairs Councils located in 40 cities and anti-communist nationality groups, like the Chinese-Americans in New York City and San Francisco.

The strategies of the Silent Majority Organization were broad in order to efficiently counter the antiwar movement. The SMO leaders argued “The New Left students (plus adult pacifists) have so saturated America with anti-war and anti-Establishment propaganda that the ‘old rules’ of American politics no longer apply.” For example, a State Department White Paper or even a Presidential Address could not by itself turn public opinion around completely. They proposed, “A speech by the President should be reinforced — over a three months’ period — by literally hundreds of petitions, ads and talks by grass roots leaders who reiterate the theme.” Otherwise, Agnew’s warning of media bias could undercut an important speech by a network “documentary” or a Senate Foreign Relations T.V. hearing, coupled with hundreds of rallies and “teach-ins” sponsored by the scores of groups who have coalesced in the “New Mobilization.” Moreover, the New Left had “a long ‘lead time’ over the Silent Majority” in control over the College Press Service and the media. SMO knew it had to mobilize “the responsible middle sector — perplexed, well-mannered, and normally fearful of ‘controversy’” and help it “shed its inhibitions and move its battalions onto the terrain of public opinion.” Otherwise, those who have studied Marxists like Mao, ‘Che,’ Lenin, and also Dr. Goebbels “will almost certainly succeed in polarizing the country and thereby paralyzing National Will.”⁹³

On April 30, 1970, President Nixon announced his plan to expand the war into Cambodia. In retaliation for increased North Vietnamese guerrilla action in the neighboring country of the war zone, Nixon decided to clear out the “major enemy

⁹³ Memo, FRB, 11/13/1969, folder Silent Majority Organization (2 of 2), Colson Box 112, (CC/RNL).

sanctuaries” on the border close to South Vietnamese cities. He explained that it had become unsafe for the troops remaining in country to continue withdrawing troops in the face of heightened communist activity. Knowing there would be a backlash against his decision, he stated, “My fellow Americans, we live in an age of anarchy, both abroad and at home. We see mindless attacks on all the great institutions which have been created by free civilizations in the last 500 years. Even here in the United States, great universities are being systematically destroyed.” Instead of asking for the traditional support of the President, he asked instead for support of the “brave men fighting tonight halfway around the world – not for territory – not for glory – but so that their younger brothers and their sons and your sons can have a chance to grow up in a world of peace and freedom and justice.”⁹⁴

While the SMO partnered with White House and military officials, the White House also had plans to expand the Citizens Committee for Peace with Freedom in Vietnam in 1970. Knowing President Nixon’s plans to extend the war into Cambodia, adviser Charles Colson knew “all hell is about to break loose on the Vietnam front and time is now of the essence.” He sent Dave Bradshaw a proposed but secret budget of \$250,000 to hire Peter White and Howard Hunt to direct the Committee, and to spend \$65,000 on specific expenses of holding seminars, mailings, printing and reproduction expenses and editorial services. They would demand “equal time” in TV networks,

⁹⁴ Richard Nixon: "Address to the Nation on the Situation in Southeast Asia," April 30, 1970. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. Accessed 1/5/2015. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=2490>.

magazines such as *Life*, and continue to publish favorable articles of Vietnamization in *Reader's Digest*, as they had already reprinted 10,000 copies of it.⁹⁵

Another organization, Tell It to Hanoi, also ramped up their efforts. Chairman William O'Hara sent out a letter to citizens reminding them of Nixon's November speech when he asked for American support as he pursued a just peace in Vietnam. In response, "The 'Silent Majority' spoke out loud and clear to let the Communists and others in world leadership — and some doubters among our own citizens — know that America will stand firm behind our President." He rallied them "at an historic moment when the President must have our support" —specifically, the Communist action in neutral Cambodia that threatens the troops which brought criticism to Nixon to counter that threat. He encouraged the reader to write or wire the president, senator or congressman their support to win victory in Vietnam.⁹⁶

There was a surge of patriotism and support of "honor in Vietnam" in 1970. Dr. Carl McIntyre, leader of the International Council of Christian Churches, hosted a March for Victory in April of 1970 down Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington DC. Prominent politicians called for a military triumph in front of the Washington Monument. Democratic Georgia Governor Lester Maddox told a cheering throng, "It is time for our nation to take off its mantle of sackcloth and assume the leadership the world expects of us." The turnout was lower than expected due to confusion between White House

⁹⁵ Memo from Charles W. Colson to Dave Bradshaw, 2/9/1970. folder Dave Bradshaw/Clem Stone, Colson Box 39, (CC/RNL).

⁹⁶ Letter, William O'Hara, Chairman of the Tell It to Hanoi Committee, to citizens, 5/5/1970, folder Tell It to Hanoi, Colson Box 116, (CC/RNL).

officials and the march organizers which turned potential demonstrators away.⁹⁷ Estimates of demonstrators ranged from 15,000 (Police Chief) to 50,000 (senior Park Police officer).⁹⁸ “The Big Four” veteran organizations (American Legion, VFW, Disabled American Veterans, and the AMVETS), with a combined membership of 5,500,000 also firmly and aggressively supported of the president, and J. Milton Patrick, National Commander of the American Legion, was committed to the cause of “peace with honor.”⁹⁹

U.S. Representative J. Herbert Burke (R- Florida) shared a petition that he had received with Congress in August. More than 4,500 petitions signed by Americans who self-identified as the Silent Majority of the 10th Congressional District of gave him “deep pride in the citizens I represent.” He read their pledge that objected to demonstrations, television bias towards protesters, and alienation of the Silent Majority.¹⁰⁰

Their petition captured the sentiment of the decade. Most Americans were tired of news that focused on protests and violence. By the end of 1970, only 13 percent agreed with the use of protest meetings and marches, while 49 percent were against them; only 6 percent approved of demonstrations while 63 percent were against activities that tried to stop the government. Although the respondents felt they had a say in government policy, 60 percent believed the appropriate way to voice it was through

⁹⁷ Paul Delaney, “March in Capital Tomorrow to Back Vietnam War, *New York Times*, 4/3/1970, 14. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁹⁸ Pro-War Demonstration Staged in Washington; Attendance Low,” *Austin American-Statesman*, Vol. 46, No. 35, 4/5/1970, 1. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁹⁹ Memo to Honorable Herbert G. Klein from Donald E. Johnson, 5/1/1970. folder Association of Student Governments (CC/RNL).

¹⁰⁰ Hon. J. Herbert Burke of Fl, Congressional Record, Extensions of Remarks, 8/14/1970, E7672. folder Americans For Winning the Peace (4 of 7), (CC/RNL).

elections, for 73 percent believed politics was too complicated to understand.¹⁰¹ Like the pro-war demonstrations, they also wanted their support of the government's policies to be heard. In February of 1970, Nixon's approval rating was a solid 55 percent (29 percent disapproval).¹⁰² Amazingly, after his Cambodian speech, his approval rating in May increased to 60 percent (with the same 20 percent disapproving).¹⁰³

Yet the Vietnam War tore apart the myth of American exceptionalism, which transferred to the home front as well. The country came to distrust a government that had promised an honorable war that would lead to a guaranteed American victory. The American identity as the policeman of the world rested on America maintaining the high ground, which was reduced with body counts as a measure of success. As President Nixon expanded the war in Cambodia, many Americans demanded an end to the war that had already damaged the character of the country. And the response to renewed protests further polarized the country on the use of demonstrations, especially the incident at Kent State.¹⁰⁴

As predicted, many students rose up in protest against the expanded war into Vietnam. On Friday, May 1 at Kent State University in Ohio, some protesters buried a copy of the U.S. Constitution in the Commons because they saw it as "dead." But trouble began off campus when several students from bars filed out to wreak havoc downtown by setting a bonfire in the street and smashing windows in several banks, a

¹⁰¹ 1970 ANES Survey (RCPOR).

¹⁰² Gallup Poll # 801, March 1970 (RCPOR).

¹⁰³ Gallup Poll # 807, May 1970, (RCPOR).

¹⁰⁴ Christian G. Appy, *American Reckoning: The Vietnam War and Our National Identity* (New York: Viking Press, 2015).

military recruiting office, and high-priced stores. Protestors collected in a larger group of about 400 to walk to campus, but met sheriff's officers armed with tear gas. The mayor of Kent declared a state of emergency a couple hours after midnight, and imposed a curfew, ordered the closing of bars and theaters, and prohibited the filling of gas containers. On Saturday, activities mounted when approximately 2,000 student demonstrators set the campus ROTC building on fire with flares. They turned toward the president's house, setting small fires on the way and smashing windows, but with the governor declaring martial law, about 600 National Guardsmen chased the students back to their dormitories with tear gas. The guardsmen again kept the curfew Sunday night and moved 500 students sitting at the edge of campus facing the line of policemen and guardsmen and arrested sixty-nine.¹⁰⁵ But the fourth day of unrest proved to be the day that would be remembered on the Kent State campus.

On May 4, the noon rally developed into a heated affair between students and guardsmen. When 1,000 students gathered in the Commons to protest the Cambodian incursion, a Guard officer drove in with a Jeep and ordered the crowd to disperse, backed by the firing of tear gas. While many students ran away, both uphill and downhill, some ran closer to the troops and threw the gas canisters back at them, screaming "Pigs off campus." A group of 500 students moved to flank the guardsmen from the rear, while those in front threw rocks at the guardsmen. The troops moved up the hill in a line, and suddenly stopped, turned, and fired upon the students. By the end

¹⁰⁵ John Kifner, "Troops Subdue Students In Ohio: Quell 3d Straight Night of Unrest at Kent State," *New York Times*, 5/4/1970, 11. ProQuest Historical Documents.

of the skirmish, four students were dead and another eight were wounded. A curfew was declared in Kent and two neighboring cities and the campus was closed with all students ordered to leave.¹⁰⁶

President Nixon, while deploring the deaths, warned the nation of the price of violent demonstrations. “This should remind us all once again that when dissent turns to violence it invites tragedy.” He hoped that this “tragic and unfortunate incident” would “strengthen the determination of all the nation’s campuses, administrators, faculty and students alike to stand firmly for the right which exists in this country of peaceful dissent and just as strongly against the resort to violence as a means of such expression.” While giving a speech at the American Retail Federation, Vice President Agnew devoted the time to deride the campus demonstrators. He referred to his previous speeches that had called attention to the “grave dangers which accompany the new politics of violence and confrontation and which have found favor on our college campuses.” Kent State, in his opinion, verified his remarks and underscored “the need that they be said.” He criticized the well-educated professional class who scorned the “traditions of civility” and “pander to the ignorance and fears of those who are all too willing to believe that the criminal who throws a bomb at a bank is a hero and the policeman who gets killed trying to stop him is a pig.”¹⁰⁷ Letter writers agreed with the national leaders, as only 12 letters showed sympathy with the students, while 40 were against the violent demonstrations.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ John Kifner, “4 Kent State Students Killed by Troops,” *New York Times*, 4/5/1970, 1. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹⁰⁷ Robert B. Semple, Jr. “Nixon Says Violence Invites Tragedy,” *New York Times*, 17. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹⁰⁸ Noble Melencamp, Summary of Mail Trends, May 7-13, 1970. Box 15, WH 4-1-1, (WH/RNL).

Many communities held Flag Day and Fourth of July ceremonies in 1970 with special pomp. In Kent, Ohio, only five weeks after the university shootings, the Jaycees ran out of home flag kits while flags lined the sidewalks. The merchant selling flags explained, “These people are saying that America isn’t so bad. They’re saying that we have faith in our political structure and system and that whether it’s hard times or not we don’t want our system overthrown.”¹⁰⁹ At Battery Park in New York City, five hundred people applauded Thomas W. Gleason, the President of the International Longshoremen’s Association, when he read a proclamation that supported Nixon’s plan to end the war “with honor.”¹¹⁰ In the Capital, the 4th was renamed Honor America Day, as approximately 350,000 people packed the reflecting pool in front of the Lincoln Memorial to cheer on Reverend Billy Graham and Bob Hope. According to the *New York Times*, most of the participants were nonpolitical, middle-class families “who supported old-fashioned faith in God and country.” While protest signs were mostly absent, some were harsh, such as the one that read “America will survive traitors, trash, and the panty-waist politicians,” while the majority agreed with the banner saying “Honor America – build don’t burn, care don’t kill.”¹¹¹

At the end of the summer, a group of college students visited Vietnam to learn about the people and the war, especially the effects of the bombing in Cambodia. The South Vietnamese government financed the fifteen-day fact-finding trip for the twelve

¹⁰⁹ John Kifner, “Regrets Are Few in Kent, Ohio,” *New York Times*, 6/13/1970, 23. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹¹⁰ “500 at Battery Honor Flag,” *New York Times*, Jun 16, 1970, 45. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹¹¹ John Herbers, “Thousands Voice Faith in America At Capital Rally,” *New York Times*, 11/5/1970, 1. ProQuest Historical Documents.

students who represented the private and non-partisan organization American Youth for a Just Peace, which was committed to “a just peace; to peace with freedom; to a peace which will not reward aggression and thereby foster future wars.” Their report showed their shock to the reality of the situation in Indochina. “We were surprised and troubled by the gap between our image of Viet Nam from reading the press before we arrived, and the reality we have seen.” They were amazed to find green country instead of a reported war-ravaged land, a wide level of good economic standing instead of poverty, and a pluralistic instead of an authoritarian society.

In talking with South Vietnam residents, the students found that the Tet Offensive of two years prior appeared to have little impact on the South Vietnamese people. The visitors concluded the communists failed to “generate a ‘general uprising’ against the government... provoke mass defections in the armed forces... [and] create an administrative collapse,” against “the strength and determination of this society to persevere in the anti-communist struggle and build enduring institutions.” The group met with sixteen students of the Vietnamese Confederation of Labor, whose attitude they described as a fierce anti-communism, “which came precisely from their devotion to the working class and to the future of organized labor in Viet Nam.” University of Hue students changed their perspective when they saw the Viet Cong massacring innocent civilians during the Tet Offensive.

When the students asked some Vietnamese about Cambodia, respondents enthusiastically praised the bombing of their neighboring nation. The villagers “hailed the Cambodian intervention as a major victory for the Allies and a crippling blow to the

enemy,” who were provided no rest and given disrupted supply lines and destroyed supplies. Students interviewed South Vietnamese who praised the intervention for having “saved Cambodia” from a major communist offensive. They claimed that Nixon’s policy of Vietnamization was working. However, the students warned, “This entire complex of mutually reinforcing programs” of land grants, tearing down of feudalism, village elections, and consumerism could be rapidly undone by a precipitous American withdrawal. By saving Cambodia, the U.S. “has served America’s highest ideals: that every nation has the right to self-determination; that every nation is entitled to peacefully pursue and fulfill its own nationhood; and that little nations must be protected from aggression.” The American students felt that if full disclosure was given to the public back home, it would have stopped protests. “We hope that this administration will continue to give Cambodia whatever support it needs in order to maintain its freedom. And that it will do so openly and affirmatively, without being defensive or apologetic about it.”¹¹²

The students found the American protests misplaced and demonstrators ignorant of the true situation abroad. “More than anything else, our visit impressed on us the remarkable difference that exists between the reality of Viet Nam and Cambodia and the impression of these countries held by most honest student protestors” who had “next to no knowledge of the Vietnamese and Cambodian people or of the nature of the war they are fighting. We are convinced that if there were more knowledge and more

¹¹² American Youth for a Just Peace, Southeast Asia and World Freedom Bulletin, Report on a Trip to Vietnam and Cambodia, August 24-September 8, 1970, folder American Youth for a Just Peace, (CC/RNL).

understanding, there would be fewer protestors.”¹¹³ The group suggested two main steps to rectify protester ignorance and alienation of the younger generation. First, they proposed more detailed education of college students and the military of the experience in Vietnam. Secondly, they proposed more media coverage on the “other war” to show nation-building activities and exchange programs.¹¹⁴

A newly established organization, Americans For Winning the Peace (AFWP), planned to fulfill this role. Under the guidance of White House adviser Chuck Colson, and led by Gene Bradley (one of the initial planners of SMO), the organization’s members formed it out of a desire to counter the multitude of peace groups and “the drift toward isolationism.” One member of the group, James M. Spiro, Chicago attorney and former executive director of the American Bar Association, claimed these vocal demonstrators had monopolized the news media, which had provided a distorted picture of the war. He believed that immediate withdrawal of the troops that the protesters were demanding would only bring a couple of peaceful days, not a lasting peace. According to Gene Bradley, the purpose of the bipartisan group, composed of “middle-of-the-road Democrats and Republicans” was “to increase public understanding of the Nixon doctrine” of Vietnamization.¹¹⁵ There was some hesitation from solid Democrats and

¹¹³ Ibid., 30.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 34-37.

¹¹⁵ Ken W. Clawson, “White House Briefs Pro-Nixon Unit,” *Washington Post*, 2/6/1971, A4. ProQuest Historical Documents.

Republicans to join out of fear of being labeled a hawk or “selling out to the war party.”¹¹⁶

The AFWP’s first mission was to coordinate a strategy and gain visibility. As Chuck Colson was the White House aide to help establish the organization to be aligned with official U.S. foreign policy, he was instrumental in advising the AFWP.¹¹⁷ In a memo to General Alexander Haig, he referenced a recent speech that House Minority Leader Gerald R. Ford had given about Vietnam, in which “we attempted to gain a national objective without employing the appropriate means and without first getting the support of the American people.” Colson blamed the Johnson administration for the credibility gap and the “abysmal failure” to explain “the basic justification for the war and to level with the American people.” Colson therefore believed an “effective campaign of information on Vietnam and Southeast Asia” could “produce a remarkable improvement in student attitudes.” Although journalists made the public believe that all

¹¹⁶ Top officials of the organization were all members of the foreign policy “establishment.” Many of the members were also part of the Citizens Committee for Peace With Freedom, formed during the 1960s under Senator Paul H. Douglas (D-Illinois). The Acting Chairman was Henry H. Fowler, former Secretary of the Treasury in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. He was joined by former ambassador Theodore C. Achilles; General Ret. Livingston T. Merchant, the executive director of the International Bank for reconstruction and Development; General Ret. Alfred M. Gruenther, past president of the American Red Cross; Mary P. Lord, former United States delegate to the United Nations Human Rights Commission; AFL-CIO President George Meany; former astronaut Frank Borman; Professor Edward Bursk, editor of the *Harvard Business Review*; Peter Clark, publisher of the *Detroit News*; Thomas W. Evans, Nixon’s former law partner; the former Secretary of Defense Nell H. McElroy; H. Ross Perot, chairman of a POW organization called United We Stand; Abbot Washburn, the ambassador to INTELSAT; and Eugene Rostow, the former deputy Under Secretary of State. Ray Gallagher, who had just completed his term as Commander-in-Chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, accepted the position as a Regional Chairman of AFWP. Other prominent members were Marlin W. Johnson, retired head of the Chicago office of the FBI; businessmen Robert W. Galvin and Edward C. Logelin; and conservative publisher Henry Regnery. They were also trying to get three honorary co-chairmen to make it a national endeavor: Mrs. Eisenhower, Mr. Truman, and Mr. Johnson.

¹¹⁷ Robert Enstad, “‘Quiet’ Voice Joins Groups for Viet Peace: This One Comes from Establishment,” *Chicago Tribune*, 9/7/1970, ProQuest Historical Documents. Memo to Chuck Colson from Gene Bradley, 8/11/1970, folder Americans For Winning the Peace (4 of 7), (CC/RNL).

demonstrators were “totally and irrevocably committed against the Administration’s policy in Southeast Asia,” Colson found during the fall Moratorium “that the minds of the demonstrators were not as closed as they were supposed to be and that serious dialogue with them was possible.” After speaking on the Georgetown University campus during a Moratorium, Colson even received a standing ovation, verifying that youth could still be educated on the issue of Vietnam.

Colson consequently proposed a massive push through advertising campaigns and speaking tours in conjunction with the State Department. He thought their greatest weapon would be a person who could speak the same language as the protesters, and put forth Dolf Droge. He had established a credible record by successfully presenting to eight hundred student Congressional interns, two thousand members of student governments, the Air Force Academy, and at a Maryland Young Republicans workshop. He stood at an impressive 6 feet, 8 inches tall with sharp Lincolnian features; his articulation, wonderful sense of humor and personal warmth enhanced his communication abilities. Colson believed Droge was “by far the most effective and knowledgeable exponent of the Administration’s position to student audiences.” In a sincere way, Droge convicted students about their “homework gap,” followed by a lecture on the history and culture of Vietnam and on the events that led up to the current war, leading them to realize “how abysmally ignorant they have been.” Colson suggested a strong TV promotion of dialogue with a preliminary advertising campaign in college newspapers and an advance appearance on another television program like David Frost or Dick Cavett. The featured show would address a live audience of half supporters

and half opponents, and make an appeal for donations for American Youth for a Just Peace.¹¹⁸

However, AFWP leaders found their first challenge was to defeat the newly proposed McGovern-Hatfield Amendment. In the summer of 1970, Senators George McGovern (D- South Dakota) and Mark Hatfield (R-Oregon) had proposed “an amendment to end the war” through the prompt end of military operations and immediate withdrawal within nine months.¹¹⁹ One journalist claimed such dangerous legislation “would certainly invite the enemy to stall any possible negotiations for peace and simply await the effective date and out own self-humiliation.”¹²⁰ Vice President Spiro Agnew characteristically attacked the amendment and said that such a pell-mell withdrawal would bring the United States its first military defeat and pave the way for a bloodbath in South East Asia. The article in the *San Diego Union* was accompanied by a political cartoon by Bob Severs of the two senators holding the amendment when a golf ball named Spiro bounced off the both of their heads while a loud “Fore!” is heard from the rear.¹²¹

Several pro-government organizations combatted the bill through advertisements. Tell It to Hanoi placed several newspaper ads about surrender in America — by misguided politicians — before the vote on the McGovern-Hatfield Amendment was

¹¹⁸ Memo from Charles W. Colson to General Haig, 8/4/1970. folder Americans For Winning the Peace (5 of 7), (CC/RNL).

¹¹⁹ Robert M. Smith, “Vote On War Curb Is Planned Today: Senate Acts on Amendment by Hatfield and McGovern, *New York Times*, 9/1/1970, 5. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹²⁰ David A. Lurensky, “The Herald Traveler’s Readers Write: McGovern-Hatfield’s Proposal ‘Dangerous’,” *Herald Traveler*, 9/1/1970, A28.

¹²¹ “Agnew Clarifies the Issue: McGovern Proposals Unwise,” *San Diego Union*, 8/21/1970, B-10. ProQuest Historical Documents.

held, overlapping Americans for Winning the Peace ads that asked, “Will you Help our Nation win the Peace?” Over fifteen prominent members rallied fundraising efforts within their cities to place full-page ads in their local newspapers to encourage voters to contact their senators to vote down the amendment.¹²² They were successful, and the amendment failed 55-39 on September 1, 1970. In fact, the VFW in a press release after the fact accused the amendment’s committee of a conflict of interest, showing connections between paid advertisements, peace organizations, and the senators in the committee. Thus ended Phase I for the AFWP; Phase II was to recruit public understanding and involvement in the issues of peace.¹²³

After the AFWP’s success overcame dovish attempts to quickly end the war, the group mobilized once again for political support of Nixon’s reelection. The day after Nixon’s speech at Kansas State University about the war, the members discussed distributing the speech widely to campus AV, TV/radio, make a film for the speech, and send the speech to the regional directors for AFWP to get more minorities and young people involved.¹²⁴ The organization even worked with the Kiwanis in Fort Lauderdale to put together a one-day event in D.C., for October 1, 1970, called “Get Involved” to demonstrate “Americanism at the Polls,” make Nixon know that “we believe in the future of America,” and “off-set the sick, negative, and extreme demonstrations that are taking place in the Capitol. Ours is a positive quest to make the ‘American Dream’ come

¹²² Memorandum to all Regional Chairmen from Americans for Winning the Peace, September 1, 1971, folder Americans for Winning the Peace (1 of 7) (CC/RNL).

¹²³ Press Release by the VFW, “V.F.W. Charges Senate Conflict of Interest,” 8/19/1970, folder Americans For Winning the Peace (5 of 7) (CC/RNL).

¹²⁴ Memo from Edward M. Norton to John L. Spafford, 9/17/1970, folder Americans For Winning the Peace (3 of 7) (CC/RNL).

true.”¹²⁵ More than four hundred Broward County residents flew in to D.C. on three charter 727 jets for a whirlwind visit to include brief tours of the White House, Capitol, State Department and a view of the city, which they deemed “one of the greatest expressions of Patriotic concern ever to come out of Broward County.”¹²⁶ Broward’s “power elite,” including Democrats, Republicans, conservatives, liberals, teenagers, retirees, managers, politicians, and businessmen took their patriotic journey “to encourage patriotism in a troubled epoch.”¹²⁷

Americans for Winning the Peace also partnered with other organizations to expand their reach. For example, in its quest to educate college students, AFWP supported Voices in Vital America (VIVA), a “Non-Political, non-profit organization formed to establish chapters on college campuses throughout the nation which will support our American form of government and our military in their stand against aggression and inform students and others as to the significance of America’s commitment to freedom.” It had several programs to get students involved. Operation Mail Call encouraged students to write letters to servicemen in Vietnam, Operation Ombudsman reassured students to contact VIVA members with legitimate grievances about campus life, and Project Education was “Designed to expose the situation that many people consider the ‘involved generation’ to be militants and revolutionaries,

¹²⁵ Untitled document, folder Americans For Winning the Peace (5 of 7) (CC/RNL).

¹²⁶ Tom McCormick, “Washington Trip to Promote Vote,” unknown newspaper. folder Americans For Winning the Peace (5 of 7) (CC/RNL).

¹²⁷ “268 Patriotic Demonstrators Return Satisfied from Capital,” *Miami Herald*, 10/2/1970.

when most students are neither.”¹²⁸ Another way to help students support soldiers was the POW-MIA bracelet that began circulating on Veterans Day, 1970, and by 1976, VIVA had distributed nearly five million bracelets.¹²⁹ Remembering POWs became more popular, and Dolf Droge released a song about POWs called “Don’t Forget the Eagles.”

The fall 1970 American National Election Survey showed that more of the American population was paying attention to the Vietnam War. Only 15 percent stated they had been paying at least some attention to the war, and 93 percent said that it was important to them. The number of people who believed that America should have stayed out of the war remained at half, while the same 30 percent felt the American intentions were good. More people advocated for a troop pullout, as the percentage since 1968 had risen from 19 to 32 percent, the number about the same for those who wanted to keep troops in Vietnam but stop the fighting, and the number of those who wanted to take a stronger stand dropped from 33 percent to 24. Yet, Americans were unsure of how to end the war. Thirty-nine percent wanted a withdrawal of troops, 34 percent wanted a military victory, and 24 percent were right in the middle.¹³⁰

In January of 1971, the AFWP held its first conference in Washington, D.C. Over two hundred leaders in business, industry and government flew in for a program conducted by Chuck Colson himself, to include foreign policy briefings by White

¹²⁸ Voices in Vital America (VIVA) Fact Sheet, folder Dave Bradshaw/Clem Stone, Colson Box 39, (CC/RNL).

¹²⁹ Carol Bates, “The Origins of the POW-MIA Bracelets,” MIA Facts Site, <http://www.miafacts.org/bracelets.htm> (accessed 12/27/2014).

¹³⁰ American National Election Survey, 1970 (RCPOR).

House, State, and Defense Departments.¹³¹ The conference wrapped up with a speech by Spiro Agnew, who articulated that their fine group represented a “desire to win a peace which is not a retreat into isolationism, but rather a responsible and just peace with a fair hope of settling and enduring through this generation and beyond.”¹³²

The message of the conference speakers worked. In surveys taken at the conference, the participants showed common concerns about winning a realistic peace that had been articulated by the administration. Almost all emphasized the negative collective attitude of the press and other media, and an absent public support due to lack of understanding of “winning” the war. These individuals distrusted the peacenik teachers and slanted information some schools, leftist organizations, and the media taught students and young people, and thought they should be re-educated properly by those within the government or by those with knowledge of the issue. Some like David H. Scott suggested using Dolf Droge to educate ignorant professors to influence more students. The group was also frustrated by a press media that Scott described as “a watchdog of the Administration in power” that was “to be constantly alert to bring out into the open any mis-deeds of the party in power.” He felt instead that the press should “report the news and not manufacture it.”¹³³

As the war wound down to its end, so did the protests and counter-protesters. By November 1972, in an American National Election Survey, 32 percent still believed the

¹³¹ Ken W. Clawson, “White House Briefs Pro-Nixon Unit,” *The Washington Post*, 2/6/1971, A4. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹³² Draft Remarks for VP Spiro Agnew for the White House reception for Americans for Wining the Peace, 1/11/1971, folder Americans for Winning the Peace (2 of 7) (CC/RNL).

¹³³ Letter, David H. Scott to Gene Bradley, January 14, 1971, folder Americans for Winning the Peace (1 of 7) (CC/RNL).

U.S. did the right thing in getting involved in Vietnam, while the number opposed had jumped to 54 percent. When asked if the U.S. should withdraw immediately or win a complete military victory, the highest response was in the middle, at 12 percent. The majority of America was tired of the war, although half of respondents still believed that Nixon would bring peace to Vietnam.¹³⁴ North Vietnam and the United States signed a cease-fire January 27, 1973 and America withdrew the remaining troops in March without any commitment from the North Vietnamese government to do the same. Two years later, in April 1975, the North Vietnamese Army completed their invasion of South Vietnam and captured its capital, Saigon. The war in Vietnam was over.

¹³⁴ American National Election Survey, 1972-1976, Merged File Survey (RCPOR).

The Vietnam War polarized American sentiment. While antiwar protests may have influenced Presidents Johnson and Nixon to make certain decisions, such as not running for re-election and drawing down the war, protests did not have a positive impact on the American public. Letters and surveys showed that demonstrations only angered those on the opposite side of the spectrum. Reactions to protests combined with Nixon's Silent Majority speech drew many out of their silence into forming organizations and into taking new roles as active citizens.

CHAPTER V

REINTEGRATING THE COUNTERCULTURE

Singer Merle Haggard upon his release from San Quentin prison in 1969 cherished the freedom that he had reclaimed. Yet, when he turned on the television, he was appalled to see Vietnam protests that had gripped the country. In an interview, he revealed his despair over “these young kids, that were free, bitching about it. There’s something wrong with that.” Instead, Haggard saw America in a “wonderful time” at its “peak” and questioned, “what the hell did these kids have to complain about?” He upheld the soldiers who “were giving up their freedom and lives to make sure others could stay free.”

To support those soldiers, Haggard and his drummer Roy Edward Burris wrote a song called “Okie from Muskogee.”¹ However, the song was more anti-hippie than pro-war, and highlighted the iconic American ideal in the small town of Muskogee, Oklahoma. A self-described “square,” he was proud to not partake in smoking marijuana or tripping on LSD. He also did not “make a party out of lovin’,” for “We don’t let our hair grow long and shaggy / Like the hippies out in San Francisco do.” Instead, in Muskogee, they were “livin’ right, and bein’ free,” and still waved “Old Glory down at the courthouse.” The students respected the college dean, wore leather boots, and played

¹ Interview with Nancy Dunham, “Merle Haggard, ‘Okie From Muskogee’ – Story behind the Lyrics,” *The Boot*, 10/11/2010, Accessed 3/5/2015. <http://theboot.com/merle-haggard-okie-from-muskogee-lyrics/>.

tough football, “And white lightning's still the biggest thrill of all.”² In an era where the counterculture had turned fashions, music, and morals upside down, Haggard’s words resonated with a large segment of American society that wished for times of yore.

As the culture of America shifted in the second half of 1960s, the Silent Majority only embraced types of culture they believed fell into the American ideal: clean and clean cut, straight, square, and family friendly. The rise of a counterculture that rejected the mainstream values embraced a differing ideal that included exploration through drugs, nudity, sexual awareness, and music. The Silent Majority rejected hippies as non-American, for the counterculture sought to remove themselves from a materialistic “establishment” society the former had fully embraced.

Rise of the Hippie

Hippies took America by storm. The change in culture was a combination of fashion, appearance, scent, music, recreation, transportation, and attitude. Morals had already been changing through fashion and entertainment, which allowed for the full takeover of culture. The surf revolution in the early Sixties had displayed in its films and music a new rebelliousness and playfulness. The British invasion of the mid-1960s had brought with it the Beatles, mod fashion, the miniskirt, and to some degree, the bikini. But by 1966, a new attitude rejecting the middle class American dream of materialism mixed with disillusionment over racial inequality and the Vietnam War, resulting in an intense feeling of alienation from the mainstream. As opposed to their politicized cousins – the

² Merle Haggard, “Okie from Muskogee,” © 1969 by Capitol Records.

New Left – true hippies chose instead to “drop out” as a contributing member of society and instead do their “own thing,” which for most involved a new genre of music, drugs, and free love.³ The counterculture made its national debut with the “Human Be-In” in San Francisco during the Summer of Love in 1967 and blossomed nationally, climaxed with Woodstock in 1969, and flourished and thrived in new ways from 1970-1973. By the end of the “long Sixties,” the counterculture faded away for two reasons: the Silent Majority had thoroughly attacked the viability of the hippies, and ironically, much of the culture itself – particularly music and fashion – had been accepted into mainstream consumerism.

In the summer of 1967, *Time* magazine ran a cover story from “the Establishment” point of view on the hippies to explain their new and divergent culture to Americans. In their descriptive term, the pre-World War II word “hep” turned into “hip” during the beatnick era of the 1950s, and was revived with the psychedelic emergence into “hippie.” According to *Time*, the immediate progenitors of the hippies were the beats of the 1950s, as both shared many of the same elements: “scorn for prevailing sexual mores, a predilection for pot and peyote, wanderlust, a penchant for Oriental mysticism on the order of Zen and the Veda.” Yet the contrasts were even more striking, especially in relational color. “San Francisco's North Beach was a study in black and

³ This is an oversimplification of a complex set of values and aspirations. Damon Bach in his dissertation, “The Rise and Fall of the American Counterculture: A History of the Hippies and Other Cultural Dissidents” (Ph.D. Diss, Texas A&M University, 2013), expands on their counterculture in ways previous historians have limited it, such as the standard description of “sex, drugs, and rock ‘n’ roll.” While these three were certainly a part of the counterculture, Bach shows that the hippies had a completely different culture based on shifting ideals in accordance with changing debates on social issues. For the purposes of this study, this chapter will focus on the Silent Majority’s response to these iconic three threads of the counterculture.

white,” the article described, but “the Haight-Ashbury is a crazy quilt of living color” that was “blindingly vivid.” Musically, “the progressive jazz of the beats was coolly cerebral; the acid rock of the hippies is as visceral as a torn intestine.”⁴

Although they varied, the hippies were predominantly white, middle class, educated youths, ranging in age from 17 to 25 who disavowed the American ideal the Silent Majority upheld so strongly. At the same time, they were “anti-intellectual, distrustful of logic, and resentful of the American educational process,” which pushed the hippie to “drop out” in search of a more satisfying world laced with love and simplicity. “The standard thing is to feel in the gut that middle-class values are all wrong,” said a West Coast hippie. “Like the way America recognizes that Communism is all wrong.” The middleclass ego, to the hippie, was “the jacket that makes society straight, and must be destroyed before freedom can be achieved.” The Silent Majority seemed “up tight” about many incongruent issues — from restrictive sex mores to the draft, college grades to thermonuclear war. In response, hippies were alienated from the American society, scorned money (called “bread”) and dropped out from an American standard that emphasized work, status, and power. Their professed aim was nothing less than “the subversion of Western society by ‘flower power’ and force of example.” If there were a hippie code, it would include these flexible guidelines: “Do your own thing, wherever you have to do it and whenever you want. > Drop out. Leave society as you have known it. Leave it utterly. > Blow the mind of every straight person you can reach.

⁴ “Hippies,” *Time* 90, no. 1, 7/7/1967, 22-31. EbscoHost.

Turn them on, if not to drugs, then to beauty, love, honesty, fun.”⁵

The exposure of counterculture began in early 1966 as the subculture drew disillusioned youth into its fold. Hippies may have numbered about 300,000 by the Summer of Love in 1967. Due to the publicity the establishment media like *Time* and *Life* gave the counterculture, “plastic” hippies joined their ranks one or two nights a week and by 1967 had flooded “the Hashbury” to the point that true hippies disavowed them and tried to start over with the “Free Men.”⁶

Instead of following the American template of success, hippies created their own cultural foundation based on many varying streams of thought. With heroes like Gandhi, Jesus, St. Francis of Assisi, and Buddha, they embraced “altruism and mysticism, honesty, joy and nonviolence,” which colored their eclectic choices. They found an “almost childish fascination in beads, blossoms and bells, blinding strobe lights and ear-shattering music, exotic clothing and erotic slogans.” Although these seemed impractical, they conveyed the “unreality that permeates hippiedom, a cult whose mystique derives essentially from the influence of hallucinogenic drugs.”⁷

Hippies believed hallucinogenic drugs like marijuana and LSD were the knives that cut out the stressors of youth. Rejecting the “drugs” of the mainstream (narcotics, barbiturates, alcohol), the counterculture instead embraced “dope” as safe, non-addictive, and mind-expanding. Most hippies smoked pot, dropped acid (lysergic acid diethylamide – LSD), or chewed peyote buttons. Psychology Professor Timothy Leary

⁵ “Hippies,” *Time* 90, no. 1, 7/7/1967, 22-31. EbscoHost.

⁶ Bach, *Rise and Fall of the American Counterculture*, 149.

⁷ “Hippies,” *Time* 90, no. 1, 7/7/1967, 22-31. Ebscohost.

became the crusader for the new chemical reaction, telling students to turn on, tune in, and drop out. Once unleashed, according to *Time*, most hippies first became “insatiable hedonists, smoking and eating whatever can turn them on in a hurry; making love, however and with whomever they can find” that felt good and arguably did not hurt anybody. These hallucinogens saturate the senses with “color and music, light and motion until, like an overloaded circuit, the mind blows into the never-never land of selflessness.” It was this sense of “intense perception” that stayed with most hippies and partly sustained their “fondness for bright colors, flowers and bells.” Hippie poet Richard Brautigan asked, “Have you ever heard yourself move?”⁸

The counterculture radiated from San Francisco’s small Haight-Ashbury district. In the Hashbury, one of the many gawking spectators could plainly see the marijuana fog cloaking the shapes of longhaired, dirty, shoeless hippies clustered in doorways, randomly “rapping,” or banging beer cans in rhythm to drifting music or Indian elephant bells. The new arrivals were given away by their suitcases and sleeping bags, but also their mod clothes consisting of “carefully tailored corduroy pants, hip-snug military jackets, snap-brimmed hats like those worn by Australian soldiers,” while the hippie veterans knew better to shelter themselves from the penetrating wet fog of the bay with Army or Navy jackets and boots. The Diggers passed out food along the Panhandle of Golden Gate Park, and operated a free grocery store composed of food grown at a commune and other goods stolen from commercial grocery stores.⁹

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ “Hippies,” *Time* 90, no. 1, 7/7/1967, 22-31. EbscoHost.

Communal living grew quickly in popularity. These intentional communities provide a refuge from the horrors of the Vietnam War, the military-industrial complex, racism, materialism, and boring routines. While proto-hippies like Ken Kesey and his Merry Pranksters had lived communally, commune building did not occur nationally until the mid-1960s. The creation of Drop City and their unique geodesic domes in Trinidad, Colorado, displayed themes seen in other communes: anarchy, pacifism, sexual freedom, drug enhancement and art.¹⁰

The establishment recognized some merits of the communards. *Time* described them as “nature-loving hippie tribesmen” looking for an escape from “the commercialization of the city” and an “attempt to build a society outside of society.”¹¹ A *Life* article highlighted the American commune as an evocation of the nation’s frontier beginnings. By 1969, many hippies had fled the cities in lieu of a more simplistic lifestyle. Many communes discouraged the use of drugs or outright banned them. While many hippies took a “broad view of sexual morality,” some couples returned in traditional monogamy practices. Ironically, the communards also had to follow policies that they were trying to leave behind, such as an orderly work routine and community health regulations. But the Silent Majority still saw them as outcasts, as local people greeted them many times with hostility or even violence, and others either came to freeload them on the weekend or gawk at their regime.¹²

Unsurprisingly, counterculture trends were commercialized for a profit. Hippie

¹⁰ Bach, *The Rise and Fall of the Counterculture*, 98-99.

¹¹ “Hippies,” *Time* 90, no. 1, 7/7/1967, 22-31. EbscoHost.

¹² “The Commune Comes to America,” *Life* 67, no. 3, 7/18/1969, 16B.

street slang entered common usage and enlivened American humor in all forms of culture. Ironically, department stores and boutiques used “psychedelic” colors and designs both in fashion and advertising that resembled animated art nouveau. The bangle shops in any hippie neighborhood exploited curious tourists, who on summer weekends often outnumbered “the local flora and fauna.” The turned-on sound of acid-rock groups like the Jefferson Airplane, the Doors, Dow Jones and the Industrials, and Moby Grape radiated through the airwaves and concert halls, undermining the very essence of the *counterculture*.¹³

Reaction to Hippies

The Silent majority’s reaction to hippies followed the cultural changes of the counterculture itself. The aversion many Americans held for hippies was made manifest in much the same ways that hippies used. Unlike the reaction to civil rights, campus revolts, and antiwar demonstrations, average Americans did not write the White House about their dissension to the counterculture, possibly because hippies posed no threat amenable to a political solution. Nor did surveys and polls focus on the sentiments about the changing culture. Rather, those who rejected the new forms of culture responded in kind: through patronizing music, movies, rallies, and spirituality.

Some social thinkers saw the changes as a positive one. Max Lerner, a controversial liberal columnist for the *New York Post* thought having “an expressive, free and imaginative society” was good, as “New values must be found, and I believe

¹³ “Hippies,” *Time* 90, no. 1, 7/7/1967, 22-31. EbscoHost.

young people are trying to find these values. That's where I place my hope."¹⁴ In agreement, senior commentator at the Westinghouse Broadcasting Company, Roderick MacLeish, in a *Reader's Digest* article, deplored the pessimism of most Americans about the current state of the country, when "the very archetype of the idealized American is right before our eyes." He argued that Americans should rejoice that "creative and responsible" young radicals were trying "to find a moral philosophy to deal with a world twitching in peril." MacLeish denied that the hippies were trying to impose communism, but were rather "trying to coax from America in its various parts the inherent American best," as the Peace Corps seemed to resemble the American ideal rather than the materialism of wealthy CEOs.¹⁵ Henry Ford II also saw the silver lining to a "terribly dangerous" trend that "loyalty to institutions and obedience to written and unwritten laws are no longer automatic." Besides looking at the problem out of sense of chaos and overbearing police, one could see the counterculture youth as "more concerned with quality of life than status/possessions, [or an] attack on tyranny." Depending on "how Americans respond to the conviction that the world is not what it should be," the "rebels could either save the nation or ruin it." Ford highlighted that businessmen and protesters had in common their top governmental priorities, which served as "a sign that it is indeed possible to for young people to find a place within the system and still be true to themselves and their ideals."¹⁶ The liberals and moderates

¹⁴ "Our 'Anything Goes' Society—Where is it Going?" *Reader's Digest*, 3/1968, 101-105. Condensed from *Newsweek*, 11/13/1967.

¹⁵ Roderick MacLeish, "Youth in Dissent: Rebellion or Renewal?" *Reader's Digest*, 5/1968, 75-80.

¹⁶ Henry Ford II, "Young People, the 'Establishment,' and the Quality of Life," *Reader's Digest*, 7/1970, 139-142. Condensed from *The Human Environment and Business*.

recognized that the American system was broken, and recognized that the ideals of the counterculture offered an opportunity to work towards a better country.

Of course, the country as a whole did not embrace hippies, and their lifestyle enraged those who could not understand it. *Time* magazine explained that one unsettling reason was the frustration that mainstream Americans found in their inability to reason with a subculture that had virtually condemned every aspect of Americanism, yet offered “no debatable alternatives.” Unlike labor unions, civil rights activists, or political dissenters, hippies had “no desire to control the machinery of society or redirect it toward new goals. They have no urge to reform the world, if only because its values seem irrelevant to them.” Further, hippies disavowed the material possessions that their predecessors worked so hard to achieve, emphasizing instead peacefulness and harmony. Arguably, hippies “led considerably more virtuous lives than the great majority of their fellow citizens,” giving Americans inspiration to reevaluate its priorities.¹⁷

At the end of 1967, *Newsweek* ran a story about the new permissive society and its effects. As the “old taboos” of America were dying, a new art expression appeared by increasing nudity in films, obscene language, outspoken songs, liberated fashions, and blunt advertising, all leading to the loss of a consensus on crucial issues. *Newsweek* highlighted the concern that many Americans held over the speed at which restraints were thrown off, and “Many citizens, psychologists and social thinkers see a dangerous

¹⁷ “Hippies,” *Time* 90 no. 1, 7/7/1967, 22-31. EbscoHost.

swing toward irresponsible hedonism and, ultimately, social decay.”¹⁸ In fact, a Harris Poll asked respondents if they thought that with the use of illegal drugs young people then were more immoral than in the past, and 60 percent responded yes, 31 percent said they were not much different, with the remaining 9 percent not sure or thought they were less immoral.¹⁹

Indeed, several citizens agreed in writing with the interpretation that the country was experiencing deterioration. K. Ross Toole, a middle-aged and self-proclaimed liberal history professor at University of Montana, declared he was “sick of Hippies, Yippies, militants, and nonsense.” He was tired of “being blamed, maimed, and contrite... of tolerance and the reaching out (which is always my function) for understanding.” He was “sick of the total irrationality of the campus ‘rebel,’ whose bearded visage, dirty hair, body odor and ‘tactics’ are childish but brutal, naïve but dangerous, and the essence of arrogant tyranny—the tyranny of spoiled brats.” As a father of seven children, Toole concluded that although the majority of youth of the new generation were “fine,” a minority was not, and he found “the trouble is that a minority threatens to tyrannize the majority and take over. I dislike that minority; I am aghast that the majority ‘takes’ it and allows itself to be used.” He asked why American society had not ostracized arrogance without the backing of accomplishment as was traditional, yet instead tolerated and dignified “arrogant slob urinating in our beliefs and defiling our premises.” He asserted that the older generation was to blame, not because of

¹⁸ “Our ‘Anything Goes’ Society—Where is it Going?” *Reader’s Digest*, 3/1968, 101-105. Condensed from *Newsweek*, 11/13/1967.

¹⁹ Harris Survey, January 1971, RCPOR.

“materialism or stupidity,” but because they failed to “keep that generation in its place” by not exercising the power they owned.²⁰

Indeed, many communities tried to keep the hippies in their place, or at least out of theirs. California, the home for hippies on the West Coast, was paradoxically one of the most aggressive in containing the rebellious youth, but was limited by legal recourse. The Topanga Chamber of Commerce launched a campaign in 1967 to drive hippies from the mountainous area, where hippies were living in abandoned cabins or caves and communes. One of the main problems stemming from the 250 known transient residents was the number of tourists who would come to see them, which spoiled the Topanga image. The chamber board decided to mail out postcards to local residents to report observed violations of health, building, and other laws.²¹ After several controversial “hippie” gatherings at Elysian and Griffith Parks in Los Angeles, a city ordinance was ruled to curb the use of sound amplification equipment and require permits for group gatherings. However, Peter Young, an attorney for the Neighborhood Legal Services office in Venice, said these restrictions may have improperly limited constitutional guarantees of freedom of speech and assembly. A commission member listening to Young’s defense at a Parks and Recreation Commission meeting, asked, “What about the rights of those who want quietude? We have to think of the rights of everyone.”²²

Further up north in Carmel, the city in 1968 had passed an ordinance prohibiting the

²⁰ K. Ross Toole, “I’m Tired of the Tyranny of Spoiled Brats,” June 1970, 129-132. Condensed from the *Billings Gazette*. 2/8/1970.

²¹ Irv Burleigh, “Topanga C of C Calls Up Reinforcements in Hippie War,” *Los Angeles Times*, 10/9/1967, SF1. ProQuest Historical Documents.

²² Eric Malnic, “‘Antihippie’ Sections of Planned Ordinance Hit,” *Los Angeles Times*, 7/4/1969, OC_A10. ProQuest Historical Documents.

sitting on public lawns to prevent hippies from loitering. However, a California Supreme Court ruling in 1971 deemed that it violated the equal protection clause in the 14th Amendment.²³

In southern California, various cities attempted to beautify the region by limiting hippie housing. A new inspection policy under the City Uniform Building Code in Hermosa began to be used in 1968 “on the theory that a lot of problems from the hippies and less productive persons in the community are caused by the substandard housing in which they live.” It allowed city inspectors to enter a dwelling if a door or window was open, without obtaining a warrant. However, when a property owner filed a lawsuit with the city and won, search warrants were thereafter required to enter a residence. Under the program, the city demolished 73 structures not up to code.²⁴ Reaction against a growing Hippie population in Laguna Beach led to the adoption of a seven-point program that was introduced in the City Council, including increased patrolmen downtown, the warning of drug consequences to youths, backing of state legislation against hitchhiking, and the formation of citizens groups to assist the police.²⁵

Pushback in New Mexico also occurred as hippies flooded the Taos area. They were drawn by the remoteness of the area that many saw as mystical, and word began to spread that the area lacked a police presence. At first, they “aroused vehement local

²³ “The State: Keep-Off-Lawn Law Voided as Anti-Hippie,” *Los Angeles Times*, 1/19/1971, 2. ProQuest Historical Documents.

²⁴ “Court Decision Trips House Inspection Drive,” *Los Angeles Times*, 7/6/1969, CS3. ProQuest Historical Documents.

²⁵ Virgil Kret, “Laguna Councilmen Weigh 7-Point Anti-Hippie Program,” *Los Angeles Times*, 4/23/1970, B1. “Laguna Adopts Proposal on Hippie Issue,” *Los Angeles Times*, 3/20/1970, C2. ProQuest Historical Documents.

resentment and distrust” due to the anti-establishment mentality of the drifters. Francis Martin, a real estate broker, commented that much of the antagonism was because “these new people have shown that they can make a go of it with very little money... and they’re not living off welfare money.” Mary Alexander, county welfare director, offered a reason for the conflict, remarking, “Some of the Spanish-American population here has had to work and slave just to get off welfare—just to have a job. Their goal in life is to have some of the material things hippies have given up.”²⁶

Even in Boston, which had initially resigned itself as a counterculture haven, city officials attempted to restrict hippie activities. By 1968, there was a hippie population of about 1,000, and another 2,000 local “weekend hippies” who came in from the suburbs to see the action. Local newspapers dubbed it “Hippieville,” as it ranked fourth in population after San Francisco’s Haight-Ashbury, the Venice Strip community, and Greenwich Village in New York. To survive financially, some hippies had gotten part-time jobs, some panhandled, and a few lived off of selling pot. It had become difficult for the city to harbor them with the “drug, disease, and crime” they had brought with them, as well as the large crowds who come to gawk at them. For ten days in the summer of ‘68, the Boston police cleared the hippies out of their encampment at the Common at 10 P.M. after the mayor imposed a curfew to prevent late-night jam sessions and sleeping in the park. Starting on a Friday night, some hippies and local toughs decided to fight the clock restriction and three bloody nights of confrontations between

²⁶ “Anti-Hippie Resentment Cools in Taos, New Mexico,” *Austin Statesman* (AP), 5/15/1969, C40. ProQuest Historical Documents.

police and hippies ensued. The conflicts eased when police became more flexible with the curfew.²⁷

Nationally, hippies became associated with poor grooming and lawmakers attempted to curb their bad habits. In 1970, Congressmen John Ashbrook (R-Ohio), Edwin D. Eshleman (R-Pennsylvania), and House Minority Leader Gerald Ford (R-Michigan) proposed a joint resolution establishing “National Good Grooming Week” in November.²⁸

Internationally, a backlash occurred to prevent the transients from moving to their countries. Hippies had flocked to Amsterdam, Rome, Vienna, Paris, Bonn, London, Geneva, Johannesburg, Tokyo, Bangkok, Ottawa, Mexico City, Santiago, and Africa to relieve their wanderlust.²⁹ However, hippies were blamed “as the relentless corrupters of Africa’s youth” as “apostles of drug taking, pornography and loose sexual morals – and, most heinous of all, unremunerative parasites.” Uganda restricted foreign travel for hippies to their country “so that they do not have the opportunity to inflict their repugnant appearance and way of life on countries in Africa and Asia.” Reaction against them also rose in Tanzania, where women were warned against the “unbecoming” nature of the miniskirt, and Kenya, where they saw the “physical presence of western degeneracy as more threatening than the copies of *Playboy*” on stands in Nairobi.³⁰

²⁷ Robert M Krim, “Occupation by Hippies Is Revolting to Boston,” *Washington Post*, 7/7/1968, A17. ProQuest Historical Documents.

²⁸ Congressional Record, CR-1970-0728, HJ Res. 1333, <http://congressional.proquest.com.lib-ezproxy.tamu.edu:2048/congressional/docview/t19.d20.cr-1970-0728?accountid=7082>.

²⁹ “Youth Unrest—What Worldwide Survey Shows,” *U.S. News and World Report*, 76-79.

³⁰ John Aubrey, “Unremunerative Parasites’: Hippies Unwanted in Africa,” *Austin Statesman*, 11/20/1971, A5. ProQuest Historical Documents.

France prepared for a new shipment of hippies with a government ban on those with “incorrect clothing” and a lack of sufficient funds for a normal visit.³¹ The government of Thailand did the same, instructing Malaysia-Singapore Airlines to turn away persons with “Beatle-type hairdos or hippie clothes.”³²

American films also showed the rejection of hippie culture as a lasting phenomenon. Capitalizing on the theme of independence, some successful late-Sixties films like *Easy Rider* (1968) and *Alice’s Restaurant* (1969) addressed the possibilities of breaking out of a consensus society. *Easy Rider* served as an open-space buddy film inspiring others to escape the confines of the establishment. Yet it ended in a massacre of the motorcycle riders as if to signify the fall of the counterculture, amidst intense redneck hostility. The latter film turned out to be a despairing narrative of the counterculture and its inflated illusion of utopia. Director Arthur Penn described *Alice’s Restaurant* as “a dream,” for he had “no illusions that this is going to endure.” He supposed that the counterculture was certainly not a revolution, assuming, “Certain changes were made but we’re going to slip back to the status quo.”³³ Ellen Willis from the *New York Review of Books* wrote in 1970 about the two films and concluded, “at this point, hate and love seem to be merging into a sense of cosmic failure, a pervasive feeling that everything is disintegrating, including the counter-culture itself, and that we really have nowhere to go.” She asks, “What went wrong?” answering with a line from

³¹ “France Preparing Anti-Hippie Moves,” *Baltimore Sun*, 1/6/1969, A2. ProQuest Historical Documents.

³² “Anti-hippie Rule,” *Austin Statesman*, 9/13/1968, 18. ProQuest Historical Documents.

³³ Gary Corwdu and Richard Porton, “Arthur Penn Interview,” *Cineaste*, December 1993, Accessed 3/11/2015. <http://www.cineaste.com/articles/the-importance-of-a-singular-guiding-vision-an-interview-with-arthur-penn-web-exclusive>.

Easy Rider, “We blew it!”³⁴ The modern western film *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* (M-1969) also portrayed an easygoing lifestyle through its idyllic scenes until their adventures come to an abrupt end in a violent shooting.

The song “Signs” also signified the negative reaction that hippies received outside counterculture bastions – particularly San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Greenwich Village. Written by Five Man Electrical Band, the song hit number twenty-four for the year 1971 on the Top 100, and it expressed the discrimination that the countercultural youth endured in trying to remain within society. One sign read, “Long-haired freaky people need not apply,” while another “sign said anybody caught trespassin' would be shot on sight.” A third rejection enforced, “You've got to have a shirt and tie to get a seat / You can't even watch, no you can't eat / You ain't supposed to be here.”³⁵

The lyrical backlash lasted for decades. The Sex Pistol’s “Who Killed Bambi” (1979) gave advice to never listen to a hippie. The short-haired band Tesla sang in 1982 in the song “Country Boy from Nashville” that they did not smoke marijuana or take LSD, and would rather “cut the balls of a long-haired hippy, and tie them up to a tree.” In the same decade as Tesla, The Dead Milkmen released “The Thing that Only Eats Hippies,” for “All the punks are gonna scream yippee / 'Cause it's the thing that only eats hippies.” The furor carried into the 2000s, with “Hippy Smell” (1990) by Ween and Primal Scream’s “Kill all Hippies” (2000).

³⁴ Albert Goldman, “‘Grab the Money and Run’?: Do They ‘Grab the Money and Run’?” *New York Times*, 2/1/1970, D23. ProQuest Historical Documents.

³⁵ Les Emmerson, “Signs,” Five Man Electrical Band, © 1971 by Lionel Records.

Reactions to Drugs

Most Americans in the 1960s did not understand the appeal of the drug culture and many were against it. Paul Revere and the Raider's song "Kicks" (1966) became the first song to air against the rising drug culture, reaching number four on the Hot 100 charts. It told the woman referenced in the song, "you don't need kicks to help you face the world each day."

On September 26, 1969, *Time* magazine ran a story on drugs, and letters written in response to the article expressed readers' sentiments on the article. John Lonero of East Hampton, New York, tried to explain why he began using pot the previous summer. Many youths rejected the alcohol that adults pushed on them because it was too much part of mainstream culture, and he thought, "Until adult society learns to respect our culture and life style and with it our intoxicant, which may very well prove to be safer than theirs, they can never earn our respect or admiration."³⁶ William Donnelly of Tulsa, Oklahoma, agreed that pot use was, in the words of the *Time* article, "the product of a complex and often frustrating society." He sympathized by writing, "Turning on, tuning out, getting high or getting stoned only reflect an inner starvation and thirst for a satisfying, fulfilling life."³⁷ Writer Michael Drury concurred that youth in search of a psychedelic fling was "much more likely seeking a self than trying to get rid of one." He claimed that when parents, regardless of their indifference or overindulgence, do not punish their children, it deprives the child of personality, for he or she does not learn

³⁶ John Lonero, "Letters," *Time* 94, no. 16, 10/17/1969, 9. ProQuest Historical Documents.

³⁷ William Donnelly, "Letters," *Time* 94, no. 16, 10/17/1969, 9. ProQuest Historical Documents.

consequences.”³⁸ In agreement, Teresa Miles of Oregon also argued it was “something more than antagonism to the system, to a governing body or to capitalism.” She feared that it bred “a kind of reckless tolerance in the adult world for youthful peccadilloes—the drug scene, the Marxist bent, the inordinate self-indulgence.”³⁹

Many Americans were afraid that marijuana would serve as a gateway drug to more serious drug use. Even the square character George in *Easy Rider* initially resisted the offered marijuana, arguing, “It leads to harder stuff.” As a former user, Bill Milliken worked for Young Life in New York City assisting high school dropouts, and a father asked him to write a letter to his son about why he no longer used marijuana. He replied that marijuana opens the door to a larger drug culture with peer pressure to go further. Milliken also needed to keep his mind usable and vibrant, for there were many things in their society that needed change, and one could not do it with clouded mind, for he was “stripping away *any* cop-out that will hold us back from the job that needs to be done.”⁴⁰ Len Sunukjian, a Youth Associate at the Mount Hermon Association in California, asserted that what he considered a baseless argument that marijuana led to heroin use would instead artificially drive up the prices for pot in an attempt to stem its use, which would attract professionals to deal pot alongside harder drugs, further increasing the latter’s dissemination. He proclaimed that it was then that the anti-drug crusaders could

³⁸ Michael Drury, “The Drug ‘Trip’—Voyage to Nowhere,” *Reader’s Digest*, 8/1969, 61-63, condensed from *Cedar Crest College Quarterly*, Spring 1969.

³⁹ Teresa Miles, “Letters: Something in the Gizzard,” *Time* 94, no. 16, 10/17/1969, 9. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁴⁰ William E. Milliken, “Why I Don’t Smoke Pot,” *Reader’s Digest*, 10/1971, 147-148.

say, "I told you so."⁴¹

A *Newsweek* article about drug use also highlighted the debate over legalizing marijuana. "When the kids who used it came from socially deprived backgrounds," noted Inspector Joseph Rinken of the San Francisco narcotics squad, "nobody gave a damn. But now it's my kids and your kids and everybody's kids." While free zones for drug use existed on some college campuses (Harvard had not had a drug bust in four years), rock festivals, and middle-class living rooms, most Americans did not embrace the possibility of legalizing pot. Several opinion polls in 1970 showed that citizens rejected that idea by 75 to 83 percent, as they were uncomfortable with the thought of altered states of consciousness.⁴² Almost two-thirds of those polled in April 1970 believed drug use was a serious problem in public schools.⁴³ Ironically, 99 percent of college students polled by Gallup thought that "a student found taking drugs like marijuana" should be expelled, while a lower 92 percent thought expulsion was justified in the case of LSD.⁴⁴

Addressing the working class backlash against hippies, the 1970 film *Joe* (1970) displayed the reaction to the excessive independence-seeking in society. The movie used class tensions between Joe Curran (Peter Boyle), a blue-collar worker, and Bill Compton (Dennis Patrick), a wealthy executive, to highlight differences in American society. One night, Bill finds Joe in a bar ranting racial stereotypes and the inequalities of welfare

⁴¹ Len Sunukjian, "Letters," *Time* 94, no. 16, 10/17/1969, 9. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁴² "The Drug Scene," *Reader's Digest*, 12/1970, 88-91. Condensed from *Newsweek*, 9/7/1970. Gallup Poll, Oct, 1970, RCPOR.

⁴³ Gallup / Kettering Poll, "Public Attitudes Toward the Public Schools 1970," 4/1970. (RCPOR).

⁴⁴ Gallup/Newsweek Poll #1969-6926: Survey of College Students, 4/4-4/30/1969. (RCPOR).

after he has accidentally killed his daughter's hippie boyfriend. Although the two characters are starkly different in demeanor, they share similar views about the pervasiveness of the counterculture and decide to find Bill's daughter, who has become extremely estranged by the generation gap between her and her parents. However, in a blind rage influenced by Joe's masculine verbal push, Bill accidentally shoots his daughter as she flees from the house, and is haunted now by *her* words, "Are you going to kill me too?" Although the film meant to display irrational rightist thought, the anti-hippie and anti-welfare message resonated with conservative audiences who agreed with Joe. An excited little old lady approached Peter Boyle, telling him, "I agree with *everything* you said, young man. Someone should have said it a long time ago." When Boyle passed construction workers on the street, they shouted, "Joe!" and greeted him like a close friend.⁴⁵ The film actually followed, but was not based on, a true-life story. Arville Garland had shot his daughter and three hippie boys in their apartment building on suspicion that the boys were sharing her in bed. While awaiting trial, parents who also detested hippies sent hundreds of supportive letters to him; he was released after only ten years in prison of his forty-year sentence.⁴⁶

Several thinkers and writers highlighted this generation gap in a flurry of articles targeted to parents, including them in the Silent Majority, and explained the positive effect parenting can have on mediating drug use and estrangement. *Time* magazine explained that homes with an absent father or overindulgent mother tended to create the

⁴⁵ Rick Perlstein, "Who's Afraid of Peter Boyle?" *In These Times*, 2/8/2007, Accessed 12/10/2010. <http://www.inthesetimes.com/article/3013>.

⁴⁶ "Crime: Joe and Arville" *Time* 96, no. 23, 12/7/1970. ProQuest Historical Documents.

Hippie mentality of alienation, causing them to flee their environment into private exile. “Children are not fighting their parents,” said author-sociologist Edgar Z. Friedenberg. “They’re abandoning them.” The article suggested that the key to being a good parent was communication; parents could make their children disciples by being a good example. The author was heartened to know that even though the media focused on protesters and potheads, America was still “full of disciple families” that served as a “counterweight to the relatively few pathological cases that get all the publicity.”⁴⁷ Doctor Walter Lehmann agreed about the importance of domestic communication to keep families from breaking apart. He understood that many youngsters would try to seek escape, when they watched nightly “the whole world’s problems... served up to them in living color—wars, riots, poverty, pollution, nuclear weapons, crime.” He prescribed educational programs in schools, churches, and civic organizations to combat alienation and drug use.⁴⁸

The Smarteens program aimed at providing that remedy. In April of 1970, teenagers from the Lincoln Intermediate School Smarteens Club in Corona del Mar, California, canvassed their neighborhoods asking for donations to fight drug use. They sold their “Happy Toes” insignia of large feet mirrored after the popular surfer’s foot emblem, printed in day-glow colors with the letters SOS for Stamp Out Stupidity on the soles, with smiling faces on the toes. By sunset on one day, they had raised \$2,300 for Lincoln and Ensign Junior High Schools to buy anti-drug films and literature and hire

⁴⁷ “The Difficult Art of Being a Parent,” *Time* 90, no. 24, 12/15/1967, ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁴⁸ Walter Lehmann, M.D., “Doctor, What About Marijuana?” *Reader’s Digest*, 4/1971, 169-176.

speakers for the Smarteens program. High school groups were called Smart Set. In three years, the anti-drug youth crusade grew from fifteen students in a suburban L.A. community to more than 300,000 in 1,200 school and other organizations across the nation. Its strength was its student-run emphasis. The program provided “what many experts feel is the most effective answer yet to a national problem that has so far defied all efforts at control.”

The founder of Smarteens and Smart Set, Robert K. Squire, wanted to target teens to prevent drug use before it occurred. He had made a small fortune as an inventor in the building trade industry, and invested in this new anti-drug program. He had identified four categories of youth and their relationship to drugs: the first two were teens who have never tried drugs or experimented, while the other two involved youth who were already users or addicts. His goal was to reach the first group who still could make a decision not to use drugs, and started a program that “makes them feel important and fashionable if they *don't* use drugs.” Squire believed, “Smart Set is anti-drugs because it is pro-life. It is a positive program that doesn't seek to curb the fun of young people or stifle their zest for trying the new and unusual. What it tries to do is help youngsters have fun and retain their ability to live life to its fullest in a happy, drug-free atmosphere.”⁴⁹

The new anti-drug organization quickly spread in popularity and coverage, reaching the majority in several ways. The T.V. show *Dagnet* made the Smart Set/Smarteens the focus of an episode, *Teen* magazine ran an article on it, and the

⁴⁹ James Sullivan, “An Anti-Drug Program that Works,” *Reader's Digest*, 3/1971, 139-142.

program spread from school to school nationally. Judge John T. McDonough in Minnesota had tried other unsuccessful drug programs, but upon hearing about Smart Set, brought the materials to Oak-Land Junior High School to try. The newly formed group showed the film *LSD—Trip or Trap?* at an all-school assembly. The gathering ended with the reading of the Smarteens/Smart Set pledge: “I have the courage and maturity to know that using drugs or narcotics of any kind is dangerous to my health and future success... In joining Smarteens, I will not use marijuana, LSD, pep pills, goof balls, heroin, glue or any kind of illegal drug or narcotic.” More than 275 students signed the pledge that day, and ultimately 750 out of 800 signed as the program gained momentum. According to a ninth-grader at another junior high school, drug use had become nearly extinct. In El Paso, Texas, where all the schools had a program, juvenile drug arrests dropped 40 percent in a year.⁵⁰ The uproar over the availability of drugs even prompted President Nixon to create the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) in 1973 to combat drug use globally.

Obscenity

The youth reaction to drugs was strong, but the retort to obscenity was even greater. A byproduct of the new permissiveness was obscenity, which produced a backlash in kind from the Silent Majority. In the early 1960s, sexual flirtations hit the screen with beach movies and the controversial bikini. While skirts had been shortening since the 1950s, the miniskirt made its appearance in London in 1964, and was quickly

⁵⁰ Ibid.

embraced with the British mania of the Beatles. The Students for a Democratic Society had freely paraded the F-word on campuses purely for shock value. After Justice Potter Stewart refused to define obscenity and famously stated in 1964 that he would know pornography when he saw it, a rise in lasciviousness in popular culture occurred until the Supreme Court in 1973 gave it a definition. Approaching pornography, racy magazines with revealing cover photography hit grocery store checkout shelves. By the second half of the decade, films showed a new level of nudity never before shown on theater screens, including *I, a Woman*, *Blow-Up*, *Barbarella*, and *Portrait of Jason*. Racy books like *The Adventurers* and *The Exhibitionist* also appealed to a wider audience. Meanwhile, bands focused on sensual lyrics, like The Rolling Stones' song, "Let's Spend the Night Together." While most of the younger generation welcomed the new changes in fashion, movies, and music, many Americans abhorred the changes in displayed morals.

According to Councilman Tom Shepard, the San Fernando Valley had by 1964 assumed the name of the "Smut capital of the U.S." because so much pornographic literature was printed and distributed in the locale. "The rawest type of lascivious and lustful paperback magazines may be obtained from racks in almost any drug or liquor store and in many markets in the Valley," Shepard declared, "with much of the offensive material which features teen-age nudism disappearing rapidly from the shelves into the hands of impressionable youngsters." He charged that judicial decisions had created a lack of vigorous law enforcement of the distribution of smut, which "resulted in a renewed widespread and relentless assault on fundamental decency through the distribution of obscene and pornographic magazines." A new movement called the West

Valley Chapter of the Citizens for Decent Literature, part of a national movement that had started in 1958, scheduled a Citizens Rally on April 24, 1964, at a high school auditorium in Canoga Park to open a campaign against continued circulation of smutty material.⁵¹ Likewise, Dr. Don Cortum, Republican candidate in the 17th Congressional District of California, announced his appointment of Mrs. Rosemary Peterson of Gardena to head his Women for Decency Committee. While Cortum held the position of national co-chairman for Citizens for Decent Literature, the city of Torrance awarded him a special citation for his work on the City Council's decent literature committee.⁵²

Accessible pornography raised ire, but nudity in late-'60s films did even more so. A journalist for the *Washington Post* explored the changes on the screen, concluding that radical sex politics "advocates both a style of living and social institutions that permit people to shape their sexual activities solely on the basis of their inner needs and desires." Trends toward licentious films began in 1969 with *I am Curious (Yellow)*, "the most controversial movie in a decade of controversial movies," and *Without a Stitch*, as both depicted sexual intercourse and other acts on screen.⁵³ Human curiosity made them relatively successful films, and Scandinavian imports followed with *Censorship in Denmark* (1970) and *The Language of Love* (1969). American filmmakers also jumped on the bandwagon by including homosexuality, sodomy, lesbianism and sadism on the screen, followed by a rise in pornography theaters and peep shows. By 1970, 880

⁵¹ Al Thrasher, "Councilman Charges Smut Flooding Valley: Sales to Teen-agers Assailed," *Los Angeles Times*, 3/26/1964, G1. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁵² "Political Notes," *Los Angeles Times*, 10/2/1966, CS5. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁵³ Nicholas von Hoffman, "Radical Sex And Politics," *Washington Post*, 4/2/1969, B1. ProQuest Historical Documents.

sexploitation theaters took in approximately \$70 million at the box office. In the spring of 1971, of thirty-five Hollywood films released, only four carried the “G” rating for child viewing. Charles Keating, a member of the Congressionally established Commission on Obscenity and Pornography, said, “We have a condition in the motion-picture industry that literally constitutes a course of instruction in decadence, perversion and immorality.”⁵⁴

Unchecked movie advertising, irate parents, and an insufficient system of coding still around since the 1930s resulted in a new rating system. In the fall of 1967 Ruth Vaulman, a Chicago housewife with five children, led a letter-writing and telephone campaign against a local showing of *I, a Woman*. “Someone reminded me that Adam was nude,” said Mrs. Vaulman. “But Adam didn’t go dancing across my neighborhood screen. We mothers are concerned and don’t know what to do.” Meanwhile, many parents simply stopped taking their families to the movies until they could be sure what kind of picture they were going to see. Magazine and newspaper advertisements contained revealing pictures regardless of their adult rating, which exposed children to sex in movies even without seeing the films. Additionally, Americans complained that a movie’s rating symbol was “missing or obscured in 44 percent of 16,831 ads checked.” Writer John Reddy was hopeful that “if the improved rating system can win public confidence in its reliability, dirty pictures will be on their way out.” Congress tried to

⁵⁴ John Reddy, “Are Dirty Movies on the Way Out?” *Reader’s Digest*, 11/1971, 110. Reprinted from *PTA Magazine*.

mediate the problem, and discussed twenty-three bills on obscenity that year.⁵⁵ Pressured by public opinion and threats of government regulation, the Motion Picture Association in 1968 overhauled the rating system, making sincere efforts to clarify the new ratings, particularly the “M” (mature) rating that became the GP classification (all ages admitted, parental guidance suggested).

Total screen permissiveness seemed to be wearing off, as Americans tired of “dirty” pictures. *I am Curious (Blue)* (Not rated-1968), the sequel for *I am Curious (Yellow)*, barely broke even. More mellow films like *Airport* (G-1970), and *Hello, Dolly!* (G-1969), were box-office smashes; Disney Studios remained the most prosperous in Hollywood. Several studios, including Twentieth-Century Fox, American International Pictures and the American Broadcasting Company announced they would no longer make adult-only, X-rated pictures. Sherrill C. Corwin, chairman of a chain of forty theaters in Southern California, assumed, “I think that everyone is regaining his senses.”⁵⁶

In the midst of the sexually permissive cultural change, a conference was held in Austin on modern youth and morality. About a thousand members of the Academy of Religion and Mental Health, a 4,000 member organization of clergymen, psychiatrists and others, discussed the shift in sexual values in collaboration with the government for a 1970 White House conference on children and youth. “Contrary to popular opinion, we are not having a sexual revolution,” said Dr. William Young, a university professor from

⁵⁵ “Our ‘Anything Goes’ Society—Where is it Going?” *Reader’s Digest*, 3/1968, 101-105: condensed from *Newsweek*, 11/13/1967.

⁵⁶ John Reddy, “Are Dirty Movies on the Way Out?” *Reader’s Digest*, 11/1971, 110. Reprinted from *PTA Magazine*.

Oklahoma. Dr. David Reed, a psychiatrist at the University of Pennsylvania and assistant director of Philadelphia's Council on Marriage, agreed that claims of freewheeling sex conduct were mostly imaginary. He said statistical samplings indicate "it is unlikely that things have changed in the last generation or so" in sexual practice, although there were exceptions in the East and far West, where "the most liberal sexual views have attracted youth who will undertake premarital sexual behavior at a rate in excess of the national standard." Reverend George Hagmaier of the Paulist Institute for Religious Research in New York City commented that the newly inaugurated sex education courses in schools were under attack in at least 23 states, with the opposition headed by radical right groups. Yet, he argued, "The supposedly liberated sexual climate of our American culture is still actually far from spontaneous and free." Hagmaier concluded, "There is within our society a vein of hardcore puritanism."⁵⁷ Indeed, Billy Graham evaluated the "Permissive Society" in terms of Biblical standards and historical examples. While he acknowledged sex as a good within marriage, he warned of consequences of indulgence. "We of the Western world, on a sex binge never before equaled in modern times, should be wise enough to heed history's lessons," Graham stated. "For history conclusively teaches that the decay of a nation inevitably follows the decay of its sex standards."⁵⁸ Professor Young looked to more outspoken youthful dignity as a way to counter the image of a sexual revolution. "Much of the American youth is invisible," he said, "The

⁵⁷ George W Cornell, "Sex Attitudes," *Austin Statesman*, 4/24/1969, A4. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁵⁸ Billy Graham, "What the Bible Says About Sex," *Reader's Digest*, May 1970, 117-120.

recently heralded decency rallies are the backlash of invisible youth.”⁵⁹

Decency Rallies

To add to the growing offenses of pornography, nudity, and sexual changes on the coasts, a musician’s indiscreet action lit a fire under youth who desired a return to what many considered represented the values and virtues of the American Silent Majority. At a concert in March 1969 in Miami, Jim Morrison, the singer of The Doors and a self-proclaimed “erotic politician,” exposed himself on stage. In response, six warrants were secured against him for “lewd and lascivious behavior,” and several youngsters organized the first decency rally cheering for God, patriotism, and chastity.⁶⁰ One of the planners from a high school in Miami, Mike Levesque, 17, organized the rally to stand for decency, saying, “We want to show America and the world that we do care... It isn’t all the evil in the world that troubles me, it’s that so many good men sit back and do nothing. So we’re going to do something.” An organizing committee formed a ten-member student executive board, including several students from Notre Dame Academy, a Catholic school in Miami. Former Juvenile Court Judge Dr. Ben J. Sheppard chaired it, and the committee held the endorsements of Roman Catholic, Protestant and Jewish religious leaders, as well as both white and black leaders. Although the planners had adult leadership and guidance, the rally was importantly student led. The committee articulated five American virtues as a foundation for the

⁵⁹ George W Cornell, “Sex Attitudes,” *Austin Statesman*, 4/24/1969, A4. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁶⁰ Nicholas von Hoffman, “Radical Sex And Politics,” *Washington Post*, 4/2/1969, B1. ProQuest Historical Documents.

rally: “Belief in God and that He loves us; love of our planet and country; love of our family; reverence of one’s sexuality; and equality of all men.”⁶¹ The verbalization of the American ideals of belief in God and family resonated with a majority of citizens, especially the Silent Majority.

Although it was formed in response to Morrison’s indecent exposure, the decency rally was the first to demonstrate they were *for* something, which was a revolutionary shift in demonstrations. Unlike other protest movements from the left and right, which were phrased as anti-war, anti-abortion, anti-feminist, anti-Hippie, etc., the organizers crafted the rally to display traditional values of patriotism and family ethics. Kevin O’Connor, spokesman for the board, said they hoped “it will grow into something permanent, and we believe it will.” For, he stated, “This was not a protest rally at all. We’re not against something; we’re for decency.” Julie James, 18, a member of the executive committee, agreed, “This is not a protest rally. We’re not against something. We’re for something... Sex is definitely being exploited and it is because society has been losing its reverence for one’s sexuality.”⁶² She commented that the response to the planning of the rally “was just overwhelming.” They raised funds through children’s drives, restaurant cashier’s counters, and organizational donations, and had enough to meet expenses before the rally, and ended up with \$1,508 left over. The group was allowed free use of the Orange Bowl, and the performers donated their services. The Rev. James Briggs of Notre Dame Academy, commented, “We hope it won’t be just a

⁶¹ “Teens Organize Rally for Decency,” *Austin Statesman*, 3/23/1969, A1. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁶² “35,000 Stage Demonstration in Orange Bowl for Decency,” *Chicago Tribune*, 3/24/1969, 3.
“Entertainers Speak: Miami Teen-Agers Rally for Decency,” *Los Angeles Times*, 3/24/1969, A5. ProQuest Historical Documents.

flash in the pan. All of us would like to see it take some form of permanent organization, at least countryside. And we hope it goes beyond that.”⁶³

On Sunday, March 23, 1969, approximately 35,000 high school and college students and adults relaxed in the warm Miami sun to show their support for decency. The American Legion passed out 10,000 small American flags.⁶⁴ They heard speeches and musical numbers by Jackie Gleason, Anita Bryant (who would become a leader for the anti-gay movement), the Lettermen, the Impact of Brass, the Village Stompers, and students. The Lettermen even drove from a performance in Jacksonville all night to make it to Miami for the rally. Band member Ronnie Smith, believing the rally was needed to offset the image created by the Doors, stated, “We wanted to take part to bring back the good will that entertainment groups should have and which was lost to some extent by what happened.” Tony Butala of the Lettermen said, “I think it’s great; there should be more things like that.” Teenage speakers gave three-minute talks on God, parents, patriotism, brotherhood, and sex.”⁶⁵ Jackie Gleason believed “this kind of movement will snowball across the United States and perhaps around the world.”⁶⁶

Several northern residents wanted to add their commendations by writing letters to newspapers. Vera J. Swanson expressed her thanks for making her day a good one. “If this movement does ‘snowball across the nation’,” she had two teen-aged supporters of

⁶³ “Decency Crusade Booming,” *Austin Statesman*, 3/24/1969, 2. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁶⁴ “35,000 Stage Demonstration in Orange Bowl for Decency,” *Chicago Tribune*, 3/24/1969, 3. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁶⁵ “Decency Crusade Booming,” *Austin Statesman*, 3/24/1969, 2. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁶⁶ “Entertainers Speak: Miami Teen-Agers Rally for Decency,” *Los Angeles Times*, 3/24/1969, A5. ProQuest Historical Documents.

the crusade.⁶⁷ One gentleman from Baltimore claimed, “How refreshing to read the ‘Five virtues,’ to have it clearly stated that the rally ‘is not a protest rally’ but a rally to demonstrate ‘bring positively for something.’” The writer hoped that the youthful spirit “may fan out across our land and young people in other states will take up the crusade for simple decency” and wished “more power and success to the youth of the land.” He wished for an increase in youth participation in this movement “to restore something of moral sanity to our society.”⁶⁸ Glendon J. Meyer added his delayed support as one who had neglected his duties, commenting, “As one of many adults, I have sat back and watched our country gradually grow into a state of decay” that had grown out of “the lack of decency, the hatred among races, the thrill of killing, exploitation of sex, the use of narcotics, rape, obscenity, and everything else that eventually destroys everything worthwhile.” Like others, Meyer supposed, “I have been waiting for someone else to do something about it, for someone else to stop it from going further.” He encouraged his fellow adults to also encourage this group of young people to sustain the movement, adding, “God bless all young people, especially those from Miami, who started this.”⁶⁹ Alene S. Clawson voiced his complaint about media coverage in his local newspaper, stating, “So much is said about the wrong things that our young people do—the hippies and what have you.” He said, “And then when something good and wholesome like the Rally for Decency recently held in Miami comes along it is stuck on page 3 instead of

⁶⁷ Vera J Swanson, “Teens For Decency,” *Chicago Tribune*, 3/28/1969, 24. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁶⁸ “Fashion in Virtues,” *Baltimore Sun*, 4/4/1969, A8. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁶⁹ Glendon J. Meyer, “Rally for Decency” Letter to the Editor, *Baltimore Sun*, 4/5/1969; A14. ProQuest Historical Documents.

the front page of your newspaper.” Clawson advocated, “These young people should be given a well earned round of applause. May there be many, many more, all over the country and even the world.”⁷⁰

Support for the rally poured in for the “Clean Teens” and Mike Levesque from all over the country. One letter even came from President Nixon, who sent a letter of congratulations to Levesque, saying, “I was extremely interested to learn about the admirable initiative undertaken by you and the 30,000 other young people at the Miami teen-age Rally for Decency.” He considered “this very positive approach which focused attention on a number of critical problems confronting society” had strengthened “my belief that the younger generation is our greatest natural resource and therefore of tremendous hope for the future.” Senator John O. Pastore (D-Rhode Island) excitedly inserted into the Congressional Record an Associated Press story on the rally as printed in the *Boston Globe*, remarking, “Between the lines, the reader could find fresh confidence that the widely publicized vicious violence is but the madness of a minority,” referring to the racial riots erupting in the North.⁷¹ “Most of them are just saying, ‘Keep up the good work’,” Levesque said. “Radio stations in Boston, New York and Phoenix interviewed me on the telephone, asking how they could get things going in their own communities,” he added. “I told them how we got started here and how the thing seemed

⁷⁰ Alene S. Clawson, “Letters to The Editor,” *Washington Post*, 4/2/1969, A22. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁷¹ “Decent Turnabout: Nixon Compliments Youth Demonstration,” *Los Angeles Times*, 3/27/1969, A17. ProQuest Historical Documents.

to snowball. I sure hope the movement spreads.”⁷²

Spread it did, as plans for rallies in eleven other communities were immediately underway. Levesque was asked to help coordinate rallies in Birmingham, Minneapolis, and Phoenix, while other cities planned them independently. Baltimore Controller Hyman A. Pressman quickly jumped on the chance to hold one in his city on April 20. Arkansas was a little more insistent that the youths of the state become involved in what they considered a productive enterprise. John O’Mara, president of the uniformed Fire Officers Association also committed his organization and members to hold a rally in New York.⁷³ Two high school students in Indianapolis also planned a Rally for Decency party after public schools closed for spring vacation, with a planning session scheduled for April 13. Governor Edgar D. Whitcomb (R-Indiana) remarked, “When young people lead out with positive viewpoints about decency, adults take a new look at their own standards. These teenagers have said what we have been thinking all the time, but they took the time to speak out. I commend them highly.”⁷⁴

In Texas, an “Upsurge For Decency Rally” sponsored by a large number of Austin civic, religious, fraternal, educational and veterans groups was booked for April 7 at the Austin Municipal Auditorium. The groups coalesced in mid-February, before the Miami rally, to focus on decency in literature and films to lobby for the regulation of the

⁷² “Teens for Decency May Go National,” *Los Angeles Times*, 3/27/1969, A17. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁷³ “More Plans Afoot For Decency Rally,” *Austin Statesman*, 3/28/1969, 2. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁷⁴ “More Plans Afoot For Decency Rally,” *Austin Statesman*, 3/28/1969, 2. ProQuest Historical Documents.

production and sale of lewd films and pornographic material.⁷⁵ The advertisement published the day of the rally proclaimed it was sponsored by twenty-seven civic, religious, and educational organizations in Austin.⁷⁶ The Austin rally saw a meager audience of about 1,500 persons, perhaps because it was not marketed as a youth event.⁷⁷

The next group of rallies was held in Alabama. The first saw an estimated 16,000 people (half adults, half teenagers) pack the football stadium in Enterprise, Alabama, which is a figure almost 50 percent larger than the population of the town. The crowd saluted everything American, from the playing of the national Anthem to speeches by Governor Albert Brewer (D) and former Governor George Wallace (D) (who received a standing ovation), by waving thousands of tiny American flags. A high school senior, Ann Johnson, told the crowd, “We must be heard above the screams of revolution and the roar of anarchy. We are threatened by both extremes—the left and the right.”⁷⁸ The Silent Majority felt sandwiched between the polar extremes of the radical New Left, Black Power, and drastic feminists and the anticommunist and racially resistant conservatives. In Montgomery, more than 16,000 persons also packed Cramton Bowl on a Thursday evening two weeks after Alabama’s first rally. Former Chicago Bears quarterback Bill Wade as the keynote speaker said he was “thankful that our nation has men who will go around the moon and come back and quote from the scriptures,”

⁷⁵ “Decency Rally Slates 3 Speakers,” *Austin Statesman*, 4/3/1969, B21. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁷⁶ Display Ad 37, *Austin Statesman*, 4/6/1969, A27. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁷⁷ “Upsurge for Decency’ Rally Set To Combat Pornography,” *Austin Statesman*, 3/29/1969, 7. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁷⁸ “Youths Rally for Decency in Alabama,” *Chicago Tribune*, 4/17/1969, B18. ProQuest Historical Documents.

harping on the American ideals of theism and patriotism.⁷⁹

Meanwhile, Cincinnati, Ohio, took a firm stand against Jim Morrison's actions with its own plans for a decency rally. After hearing about the Miami imbroglio, the officials of the Cincinnati Music Hall canceled a forthcoming concert by the Doors. Frank Weikel, a columnist for the *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, issued a challenge to the city to "strike a blow for decency," a task that proved successful, not only in demonstrating for decency, but upholding the symbols of Americanism.⁸⁰ Cincinnati Gardens set the assembly date for April 20, backed by Frank Weikel and Bob Braun, a local television personality. Braun recognized the power of youth self-organization, saying, "We want young people who like decent music to do it themselves."⁸¹

On April 20, teenagers from six states (Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia), along with police and government officials, massed in Cincinnati to sing and shout for decency. The arriving youths – 10,000 strong – many wearing "Teens for Decency" shirts and buttons, participated in the rally, waving American flags, singing the "Star Spangled Banner," and saying together the Pledge of Allegiance. James Rhodes, Governor of Ohio (R), called the rally a "revival whose ambition is to lift America's moral dedication to new heights." Governor of Kentucky Louie Nunn (R) proclaimed the date "Youth for Decency Day in Kentucky." Cincinnati Mayor Eugene Ruehlman was also present and indignant about Jim Morrison's self-exposure, and commented that he entered through a window because, "I don't believe in

⁷⁹ "Alabamans Hold Rally For Decency," *Austin Statesman*, 5/2/1969, 6. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁸⁰ "Teens for Decency' Rally," *Christian Science Monitor*, 5/5/1969, 6. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁸¹ "More Plans Afoot For Decency Rally," *Austin Statesman*, 3/28/1969, 2. ProQuest Historical Documents.

doors.”⁸² The rally was even able to draw the famous T.V. personality Dick Clark of *American Bandstand* to assist Bob Braun as emcee.⁸³

Baltimore likewise enthusiastically hosted a decency rally. Joseph J. Thomas of Baltimore wrote his local newspaper, *The Sun*, to congratulate the teenagers in Miami for their rally to support decency in entertainment. He suggested that perhaps Baltimore could “come up with something similar to keep the movement rolling. These teen-agers are for something good. Let’s give them our support when it is needed.”⁸⁴ Baltimore Controller Hyman A. Pressman agreed, saying it was “the best thing that has happened in this country in a long time.” At Pressman’s suggestion, Baltimore’s Department of Recreation and Parks opened Memorial Stadium for a decency rally on April 20. “Youth groups will be invited to take the leadership and sponsor the rally,” he said, which was “an opportunity to show that the majority have a love for decency and the respect for morality which is the badge of proper upbringing in their homes.”⁸⁵

Pressman recognized the need for youth to sponsor and lead the organization of the rally as the key to its success. As one of the four main student organizers of the Miami rally, Mary Lynn Hartsock, offered advice to the Baltimore planners, stressing the importance that it must first be interdenominational. “We, in Miami, united the different faiths and beliefs through the five basic principles of our teenage philosophy.” She said that secondly, “it is a teen-age rally. It should be presented for and by the youth

⁸² “This Decency Rally a Success,” *Chicago Tribune*, 4/21/1969; 2. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁸³ “Cincinnati’s Rally Draws 2 Governors: 10,000 Young People From 6 States Back Decency,” *Baltimore Sun*, 4/21/1969, A2. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁸⁴ Letters to the Editor,” *Baltimore Sun*, 3/27/1969, A18. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁸⁵ “More Plans Afoot For Decency Rally,” *Austin Statesman*, 3/28/1969, 2. ““Rally For Decency’ Set,” *Baltimore Sun*, 3/30/1969; D18. ProQuest Historical Documents.

in order for it to be effective. It, of course, needs the complete support of adults but it should basically be a teen-age show.”⁸⁶ This advice, when not followed, resulted in unsuccessful rallies.

To stimulate interest and hype for the Sunday rally, the organizers staged a parade the prior Thursday. Oddly enough, the executive committee of the Maryland Youth for Decency Rally heard a request by the leftist and radical “White Panthers” to join with the Black Panthers in sponsoring a float in the rally’s parade on Thursday. Most likely, the Panthers were present to provide a distraction enveloped in traditional tenets. The citizens of Baltimore, desperate to heal the wounds caused by recent racial riots in the city, approved the request. Their patriotic float was to feature “beautiful girls” of both races dressed in red-white-and-blue colored clothing and distribute apple pies. However, “the committee refused to let either panther group dispense apple pies or use electrical power on the float” due to Health Department regulations and prohibitions of amplified sound. “What could be more American than apple pies?” asked David Franks, who described himself as minister of sound for the White Panthers, the same group that had also developed chapters in Detroit and Oakland. Franks, an instructor at the Maryland Institute, said the White Panthers was a pro-American group, which was “trying to give substance to the great American values.” The portrayal of American patriotism through the Panthers caused conflict with a Silent Majority that claimed a monopoly on the American image, especially when the Panthers framed those values

⁸⁶ Mary Lynn Hartsock, “Advice from Florida,” *Baltimore Sun*, 4/2/1969, A16. ProQuest Historical Documents.

much more loosely. Another instructor and the group's minister of healing, Joe Carderelli, believed some of those principles included the legalization of "pure bliss," rent controls, the absence of money, government licensing of drugs, and "relaxed restrictions on personal behavior."⁸⁷ The day of the pageant, the parade officials banned both Panther groups, but they were allowed to follow behind after police worked out a compromise. Ultimately, five hundred young men and women and thirteen high school bands marched twenty blocks through downtown Baltimore during the lunch hour. Yet some members of the planning committee got upset when Hyman Pressman began to give a speech, because he was not considered a youth, in whose hands the parade should have remained.⁸⁸

The following Sunday rally in the baseball Memorial Stadium might have been considered a success if it were not for the violence that broke out at its end. Over 40,000 teenagers showed to the rally, eclipsing the Miami rally, and focused on themes of "brotherhood, respect, responsibility and love."⁸⁹ Tony Miller from Operation Apple Pie, a group renamed from the White Panthers, marched in front of the crowd with an American flag in retaliation for being prevented to distribute apple pies at the parade. The Mark West Trio was one of the performing bands reinforcing conservative values.⁹⁰ Maryland's Junior Miss America, Jane Roberts, spoke to disprove "The idea that teen-

⁸⁷ Bruce Cutler, "Black And White Panthers To Join In Decency Parade," *Baltimore Sun*, 4/16/1969, C7. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁸⁸ "Decency March Heralds Big Rally," *Baltimore Sun*, 4/18/1969, C28. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁸⁹ "Disorder Climaxes 'Decency'," *Austin Statesman*, 4/21/1969, 2. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁹⁰ "Youth Decency Rally Turns Into Melee," *New York Times*, 4/21/1969, 34. ProQuest Historical Documents.

agers are dissenting radicals.”⁹¹ One Baltimore journalist recognized black efforts to organize the rally and their achievements as speakers at the event. The Silent Majority did involve a section of the black population, but they had expectations. Many blacks were disappointed not to hear a big-name entertainer speaker they had come to see, and it was hard to hear over the din of people with an inadequate sound system. While the majority of youth in the stands were “orderly and well-intentioned,” the day “was turned sour by the uncontrolled element that makes life miserable” at gatherings – the “utter indecency of the few who give Negro youth a bad name.”⁹² Violence once again erupted in Baltimore less than a year after racial riots hit Baltimore following the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., showing the tensions between races was still very strong.

Some of the outbursts started with boredom. Deputy Police Commissioner Wade H. Poole said the fighting apparently broke out when “some of the spectators became bored with the agenda of musical entertainment and speeches during the mild, sunny afternoon day.” The commotion began along the third base line, in the lower deck of the stadium, where approximately a thousand radical and peace group members were seated in opposition to the rally. A journalist accounted, “While most of the crowd strained to hear over a faulty public address system, the youth began tearing up seats and throwing debris at other spectators.”⁹³ Larry Young, 19, and a student at the University of Maryland and a leader of the rally said, “if national entertainers had shown up, the

⁹¹ “Maryland’s Junior Miss,” *Baltimore Sun*, 5/4/1969, SM16. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁹² “Decency Turned Sour,” *Baltimore Sun*, 4/22/1969, A12. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁹³ “88 Hurt in Decency Rally Fray,” *Chicago Tribune*, 4/21/1969, 1. ProQuest Historical Documents.

number of youngsters participating in the fighting would have been less.”⁹⁴

Violence broke out as the spectators filed out of the stadium’s exit ramps. The Associated Press reported, “Witnesses, including a Negro police officer, said Negro youths clustered around the exits began taunting, shoving and hitting whites as they passed the gates.” In an attempt to restore order, more than 500 police descended on the area.⁹⁵ A 16-year-old teenager was admitted to a hospital with a stab wound in the chest, two others were kept under observation with concussions, a policeman was under observation after a possible heart attack, and another policeman suffered a broken leg.⁹⁶ “I was pushed, pinched and yelled at, and somebody tried to grab my pocketbook,” one 27-year-old woman said. “I just closed my mind and walked quickly. I just wanted to get out of there. Why, why did they do it?” A blind student was separated from his friends and a man walked up to him and asked for a dime to go home. When the 17-year-old pulled out a handful of change, the other man grabbed the coins and punched him in the nose. The injured count reached 138, including seven policemen.⁹⁷

Even with police presence, the violence spread to downtown Baltimore, where a number of business windows were smashed. Racist clashes led to the arrests of 133 persons, and about half of those arrested downtown were adults, most of them on charges of disorderly conduct or assault.⁹⁸ All but a dozen of those arrested were black.⁹⁹

⁹⁴ Kathy Kraus, “Rows Cool Pressman Zeal On Decency Rally,” *Baltimore Sun*, 4/22/1969, C26. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁹⁵ “Disorder Climaxes 'Decency',” *Austin Statesman*, 4/21/1969, 2. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁹⁶ “88 Hurt in Decency Rally Fray,” *Chicago Tribune*, 4/21/1969, 1. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁹⁷ “Youth Decency Rally Turns Into Melee,” *New York Times*, 4/21/1969, 34. ProQuest Historical Documents.

⁹⁸ “Disorder Climaxes 'Decency',” *Austin Statesman*, 4/21/1969, 2. ProQuest Historical Documents.

Hyman A. Pressman was “distressed” that a “successful decency rally had to be marred by a small minority who want to impose their will on others through violence.” Yet citizens were pleased with police efforts to keep the peace. Mrs. Hamilton of Baltimore wrote her paper, “Through it all, once again the Baltimore police were at their best and handled themselves admirably through very trying incidents. I wish to commend these fine gentlemen in blue who maintained law and order in seeming chaos.”¹⁰⁰

Those arrested were tried the following day. The mayor called on the courts to punish “severely” those who were convicted and urged that the community “begin to ostracize these people, that we begin to zero in on them.” Eight offenders were given sentences up to eighteen months, three dozen were fined \$25-\$50, and another fifty-two juveniles faced Juvenile Court action.¹⁰¹ White Panther leader David Franks, was also arrested for disorderly conduct, said, “I associate myself absolutely with this country, but its values have lately become rhetoric. You can’t treat American history as if it didn’t happen, you can’t deny the war, or say the tax structure is good. We wanted to get the rally to admit certain things.”¹⁰² His perspective reflected the counterculture’s purpose for retreating from the institutions of American society, while the Silent Majority was trying to return to these values and give them more merit.

The same Joseph Thomas, who had written to encourage planners to bring a

⁹⁹ “Youth Rally Rows Bring 8 Jailterms,” *Baltimore Sun*, 4/22/1969, C26. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹⁰⁰ Mrs. John Hamilton, “Police Commended,” Letter to the Editor, *Baltimore Sun*, 4/23/1969, A10. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹⁰¹ “Youth Rally Rows Bring 8 Jailterms,” *Baltimore Sun*, 4/22/1969, C26. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹⁰² Kathy Kraus, “Rows Cool Pressman Zeal On Decency Rally,” *Baltimore Sun*, 4/22/1969, C26. ProQuest Historical Documents.

decency rally to Baltimore, had attended the rally but was disillusioned with the outcome. Confirming Franks' story, he wrote in a letter to the editor, "There was nothing mentioned about decency in entertainment in the speeches that I heard." While some of the speeches accentuating "religious tolerance and brotherhood of men were good, no consideration was given to decency in entertainment, the original intent of the rally," Thomas contended. He thought it was unfortunate that "Many independent idealistic groups took advantage of this rally to cause confusion as well as promote their own interests" and cautioned other cities to carefully plan their rallies "so that decency gets its rightful place."¹⁰³

Local citizens were appalled about the ironic and unfortunate takeover of a rally that stood for the Silent Majority's American virtues, and adults realized they needed to take a stronger stand to support the youth in their mission. Lynn Dorsey, a high school senior on the rally planning committee, asked, "How do you find decency after this?"¹⁰⁴ Karen Morris answered in the *Baltimore Sun*, "This minority and others not unlike it have shown in their reactions to the rally just what we have needed to know for some time now." She reasoned that if a free rally like the one held in Baltimore could not even remain sacred in "the longest standing democracy in the history of the world," then they "as world citizens" needed to make their "voices heard through the due process of law." She hoped this would exterminate or weaken "organizations such as SDS."¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ Joseph J. Thomas, "Rally's Purpose," Letter to the Editor, *Baltimore Sun*, 4/23/1969, A10. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹⁰⁴ "Disorder Climaxes 'Decency'," *Austin Statesman*, 4/21/1969, 2. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹⁰⁵ Karen Morris, "The Right Trail," Letter to the Editor, *Baltimore Sun*, 4/23/1969, A10. ProQuest Historical Documents.

Representative of the “over-thirty generation,” James H. O'Connor also submitted his apologies to his newspaper for allowing the youth of the country “to be robbed of the guidelines to responsible citizenship found in respect, religion and patriotism” by those who were trying to destroy a livable society. “The word ‘decency’ now joins the growing list of words that have taken new meanings,” he contended, adding the term to the growing lexicon of Sixties vocabulary.¹⁰⁶ The Baltimore episode reflected an overall conflict between straight citizenry encapsulated in the Silent Majority and the radicals seen in the peace and Black Power movement.

Unafraid to try again at a successful rally, Larry Young planned a second one before school let out in mid-June. He stated, “I don’t think the purposes or virtues of the rally were to blame” for the disturbances. Young did not want people to think “that Baltimore is not ready for a Decency Rally... we want to show them that we can turn our cheeks and try again.” He took away lessons from the first debacle, with the biggest takeaway being that adults still needed to be a strong part of the planning and execution. While the foundation for the appeal of the rallies was its youth-led planning and execution, it was still unwise to leave the participants unsupervised. Young planned the second rally “away from City Hall” to avoid controversy over the involvement of comptroller Pressman, who had asked one speaker to change his speech. He also recognized the need to restrict admission by inviting certain “responsible and known”

¹⁰⁶ James H. O'Connor, “Guidelines,” *Baltimore Sun*, 4/24/1969, A18. ProQuest Historical Documents.

youth groups and requiring admission through passes or a charge.¹⁰⁷

In the nation's capital, demonstrators also protested against immoral films in front of the Janus Theater on Connecticut Avenue. Eight school girls accompanied by their parochial school's director, Reverend Henry Januszkiewicz, carried signs and walked in a small circle in front of the theater where audiences watched the lascivious film *I Am Curious (Yellow)*. However, a scuffle ensued when a passerby stopped to demand that Father Januszkiewicz explain his opposition to a film he had not yet seen. A clean-shaven supporter of the reverend traded "words and then blows with a bearded opponent." Refusing to move on after an order from the police, the passerby was arrested, and the girls left. Father Januszkiewicz had planned to hold a decency rally at the Washington monument, but decided to cancel it out of fear of violence.¹⁰⁸

Further south in Houston, two teenager decency rallies, one at the Sam Houston Coliseum and the other at a high school, attracted small crowds. Approximately 1,000 to 1,599 persons attended the rally at the Coliseum while "an estimated 500 to 1,999 attended" the gathering at the high school. The Young Americans for Freedom distributed leaflets with the picture of Senator John Tower (R-Texas) at the coliseum, while an evangelistic association passed out cards to the attendants at the high school.¹⁰⁹

In New York City, teenagers also planned to rally for decency. Miami planners Alan Rosenthal and Michael Levesque flew in to help plan a massive demonstration of

¹⁰⁷ Michael K. Burns, "Decency To Get 2d Chance As Group Plans New Rally," *Baltimore Sun*, 4/23/1969, C28. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹⁰⁸ Martin Weil, "Scuffle Mars Girls' March For Decency," *Washington Post*, 4/27/1969, 23. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹⁰⁹ "Few Rally For Decency," *Austin Statesman*, 4/28/1969, 12. ProQuest Historical Documents.

100,000 teens, in association with Captain John J. O'Mara, the president of the Fire Officers Association, and Fran Garten, Miss American Teen-ager of 1968-1969. Garten and Rosenthal said the movement would be concerned not only with obscenity but also "decent living" in all aspects.¹¹⁰ Garten was a self-described member of what she called the "'decent majority' of kids who object to proliferating filth." Denying that she was a square or anti-hippie, she defended her belief in common decency, and was "convinced that most of the young people in the country" agreed with her. "We hope," she stated, "that our decency rally will show the nation that the majority of kids today are responsible. We hope it will be proof that we want many of the same things adults want." She realistically knew that the rallies were not going to quickly end smut, and did not demand its removal. Instead, she said, "All we're going to do is take a stand. We believe in decency. We believe others do, too. We are going to rally and do our thing peacefully – and then we'll just go home hoping we've done some good."¹¹¹

California demonstrations in the summer of 1969 closed the chapter on decency rallies. Decency Week in Allegheny County ended May 16 with a Youth Rally at the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall in Oakland. An editorial writer for the *New Pittsburgh Courier* commented, "I am sure that their combined hope is that people, young and old, will be inspired to make decency a lasting way of life." The motto for the week combined theological thought with American values of anticommunism and protection of the weak, proclaiming, "All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that

¹¹⁰ "Youths Cooperate With Firemen Here For Decency Rally," *New York Times*, 4/12/1969, 37. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹¹¹ Tom Tiede, "Teen Queen Keen On a Clean Scene," *Austin Statesman*, 5/1/1969, A26. ProQuest Historical Documents.

good men do nothing.” On Wednesday of the week, the YMCA held an awards luncheon with a prize for the winning thesis on “What Decency Means to Me.”¹¹² The decency movement petered out at a relatively small rally of 800 people at Balboa Park in San Diego.¹¹³

Nevertheless, the impact of the decency rallies was powerful. They showed America that its youth as a whole was not a perverse, narcissistic, rebellious generation, and demonstrated that the majority of youth still respected the American flag, loved their families, and prayed to God. A poll taken by Louis Harris and Associates showed the majority of youth ages 15 to 21 agreed with their parents’ values, had confidence in the government to solve societal problems, considered religion important, disagreed in legalizing marijuana, and only considered sex allowable if the couple was formally engaged.¹¹⁴ Fran Garten trusted, “All of a sudden decency is no longer a snicker in the nation” as a disorganized public backlash against “film nudity, staged sexuality, printed vulgarisms and pornographic perversions” was growing. She considered the demonstrations as a way to clean the image of youngsters branded and stigmatized as hippies, when most did not smoke pot or look at smutty materials. She argued, “A lot of young people you know, are growing up in commendable fashion.”¹¹⁵ The demonstrations for decency seemed to be a big opportunity to get long-neglected

¹¹² Willa Mae Rice, “From this Pew,” *New Pittsburgh Courier*, 5/17/1969; 13. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹¹³ “Rally for Decency Draws Small Crowd,” *Los Angeles Times*, 7/23/1969, A5. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹¹⁴ “Change, Yes, Upheaval, No,” *Life* 70, no. 1, 1/8/1971.

¹¹⁵ Tom Tiede, “Teen Queen Keen On a Clean Scene,” *Austin Statesman*, 5/1/1969, A26. ProQuest Historical Documents.

moderate views back into the national conversation. Many editorials were appearing in local newspapers “pleading for virtuous moderation” and people were forming “clean” clubs in scores of areas. And the youngsters involved in the conversation were also celebrated. Mike Levesque, the key planner of the Miami rally, became the youngest person to receive the George Washington Award from the conservative Freedoms Foundation, an award that previously had been awarded to President Herbert Hoover, movie mogul Walt Disney, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, and astronaut John H. Glenn, Jr.¹¹⁶

Meanwhile, the criticism flung at Jim Morrison’s sexual antics on stage very clearly changed his performance style, at least temporarily. When the group played Chicago in the summer, one music critic started his review with “Jim Morrison didn’t do it.” He did not do “it” at the Aquarius Theater either, where he played to two sold-out shows to record his new album. Sporting a new beard, he was able to send a different message to his fans. One 17-year-old commented, “It ruins his looks.” But she later added, “Before he looked like a devil. Now he looks holy. It’s all right. He’s so exciting.” The critic remarked, “By ridding himself of all the old symbols, Morrison was trying to demonstrate that he is more than a black leather freak, more than a rock sex symbol, more than a Miami incident.” Morrison’s new front as more mature and serious, shows “He wants to be recognized as an artist.” The critic thought that if he stayed with the new changes, “Morrison may prove that, far from being as bad as much of his past

¹¹⁶ “Youth Rally Founder Wins Freedom Honor,” *Los Angeles Times*, 2/22/1970, 18. ProQuest Historical Documents.

publicity would have one believe, he is as good as many of his fans have long felt he is. He took a giant strike in that direction at the Aquarius.”¹¹⁷ Although the Rolling Stones had begun as a countercultural icon rebelling against the American mainstream, they gathered criticism for “selling out” when they joined the materialistic culture. Yet with the money they had accrued from their tours, the Stones still performed with bands still considered authentic to the hippies – particularly at the Altamont rock festival.

Altamont

Woodstock. The iconic music festival in upstate New York exemplified the best that the counterculture could offer, even in the face of torrential rain and mud baths for three days, defying a material business that attempted to profit off the concert. Regardless, the producers of the eponymous film ended up making its financial due with the release of the film in 1970. The media portrayed the event in a positive fashion, seemingly condoning the suspension of rules. Many readers of the *Time* magazine article that displayed page after page of picturesque scenes at the festival criticized its depiction of the festival, believing the article itself would inevitably lead to the further descent in moral values. Woodstock gave the Silent Majority a tight exposé of the counterculture through a single weekend, contributing a symbol and myth that would define the hippie rejection of the American mainstream.

On December 6, 1969, the West Coast tried to replicate Woodstock. Whereas

¹¹⁷ Robert Hilburn, “Audience Hears a New Jim Morrison,” *Los Angeles Times*, 7/28/1969, C17. ProQuest Historical Documents.

Woodstock seemed idyllic, the Altamont music festival showed the counterculture's dark and unhealthy side. The Rolling Stones, Grateful Dead, Santana, Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young, the Jefferson Airplane, and several other rock bands helicoptered in to the Altamont Speedway in Tracy, northern California.¹¹⁸ Between 200,000-300,000 people showed, even with their kids. About 75 Oakland police officers were also hired, but did not want to break up the concert with arrests, while the Hells Angels were also hired to specifically protect the Stones.¹¹⁹ By its conclusion, a six-hour traffic jam closed the chapter on four deaths and two births (other reports state four births).¹²⁰

The concert showed the potential of what could go wrong with the counterculture. Advised by the Grateful Dead, the Stones hired for security a group of Hell's Angels, who agreed to keep order for \$500 of free beer. Fans began arriving the night before, and 300,000 were in place by the time the band took the stage.¹²¹ The crowd had become unruly even upon the Stones' arrival, and during the song "Sympathy for the Devil," one black spectator, Meredith Hunter, was high on methamphetamines and attempted to charge the stage with a .22 pistol. Hells Angel Alan Passaro, seeing Hunter and his pistol, charged him from the side, stabbing him five times. In unrelated incidences, two others were killed in a hit-and-run car accident and one other person

¹¹⁸ The Grateful Dead declined to play shortly before their performance due to mounting violence.

¹¹⁹ Robert A. Wright, "200,000 Attend Coast Rock Fete: Free Concert Causes Huge Jam Near San Francisco," *New York Times*, 12/7/1969, 85. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹²⁰ "Rock Concert's Statistics: Four Dead and Two Births," *New York Times*, 12/8/1969, 29. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹²¹ Vincent Canby, "Making Murder Pay?: 'Gimme Shelter,'" *New York Times*, 12/13/1970, 117. ProQuest Historical Documents.

drowned.¹²² One participant lamented, “There was no love, no joy. It wasn’t just the Angels. It was everybody. In 24 hours we created all the problems of our society in one place: congestion, violence, dehumanization.” The *Los Angeles Free Press* expressed its view in a “page-length caricature of Jagger with flowers in his hair and an Adolf Hitler mustache, his arm flung fraternally around a ghoulish Angel, while a crowd of long-haired kids hails the pair with a Nazi salute.”¹²³ A journalist for the *New York Times* reported, “Everything that people feared would happen (but didn’t) at Woodstock happened at Altamont, prompting the kind of observation... that if Woodstock was the dawn of an age, then Altamont, just four months later, was its sunset.” However, he rejected that notion as “sentimental nonsense,” for Woodstock and Altamont were “simply different manifestations of the same age, the same culture, like the tombs of Cheops and Chefren.”¹²⁴

The filming of the concert also brought on criticisms of the band and the counterculture in general. The film *Gimme Shelter* was a sort of documentary that was more quasi-fact than fiction. The Stones hired the Maysles brothers to make a film of their 1969 concerts and included Altamont as a bonus. *NYT* film critic Vincent Canby commented, “What might have been a straight concert film is, instead, a carefully structured little horror movie.” It showed “the chaotic preparations for the concert, some candid shots of Mick Jagger and the other Stones taking their ease and some beautifully

¹²² The Rolling Stones et al. (1970). *Gimme Shelter* (DVD released 2000). Criterion.

¹²³ Albert Goldman, “‘Grab the Money and Run’?: Do They ‘Grab the Money and Run’?,” *New York Times*, 2/1/1970, D23. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹²⁴ Vincent Canby, “Making Murder Pay?: ‘Gimme Shelter’,” *New York Times*, 12/13/1970, 117. ProQuest Historical Documents.

photographed and recorded musical numbers, all edited with an awareness of the coming murder.” It was released as a very dark and depressing film, as it shows Hunter being stabbed at the climax. The Rolling Stones, who did not need to charge for the concert because they reportedly made \$1.5 million on the road that year, “added more material to the already raunchy legends that surround the extraordinary British rock group.”¹²⁵

Even though the film revenues were earmarked for charity, several journalists accused the Stones of exploitation. One reporter, Albert Goldman of the *New York Times*, described their philosophy as “Grab the Money and Run,” as he argued the band held a contemptuous and paranoid view of America. Goldman contended, “the freebooting of these rock bandits ought to end forever the idea that the counter-culture is founded on some genuine ethical ideal, or that it marks in any significant way a break with the prevailing capitalistic system.” He asserted that when the exodus made its way out of Haight Ashbury in the summer of 1967, the Woodstock Nation had a chance to succeed. “Instead, what prevailed was apathy and drugs, petty crime, hustling, hassling, disease and madness.” By the time of the pretended “Death of the Hippie” in San Francisco, “the whole ideal of counter-culture was on the ropes and sagging. Seen in this perspective, Woodstock was merely a three-day revival.” Even more dismaying to Goldman was the “acceptance of the bubblegum mentality by even the finest rock musicians,” who dug up old 1950s genres for new songs. The later albums of rock geniuses (the Beatles, Bob Dylan) showed “an unhappy drift toward the purely commercial aspect of their music. Too much complacency, too much ego trips, too great

¹²⁵ Ibid., 117.

a facility with the tucks and pleats of current fashion” led them toward “a subtly specious music that is attractive but not compelling, enchanting but not convincing.”¹²⁶

Goldman conveyed the deterioration of the counterculture would provide a safety for Americans. He said the traditional conservatives, “J. Edgar Hoover, Spiro T. Agnew, Mayor [Richard] Daley, Judge [Julius] Hoffman and Ronald Reagan, the deans of our universities and the police and sanitation departments of the cities,” no longer had “any cause to fear an uprising from the red Maoist masses of American youth. The generation that three years ago seemed destined to uproot traditional moral values and revolutionize our culture has now begun to drift aimlessly along the lines of least resistance.” With fears of attacks on the Washington Monument or the White House demolished, he argued, “The real fear should be that a generation which rejects its inherited culture with such facility will inevitably reject or betray its own youth culture with the same jettisoning zeal. Counter-culture is largely anti-culture: one step more and it becomes non-culture.”¹²⁷

While the music counterculture became the dominant youth culture, some new bands took a turn at the end of the decade. A *Time* cover story in January 1970 highlighted a new group called The Band as “endearing, amusing, bouncy and bathetic by turns.”¹²⁸ It seemed “packaged in homespun and hominy, peddled with homilies about integrity and respect for old folks,” making it “a promo man’s dream.” As

¹²⁶ Albert Goldman, “‘Grab the Money and Run’?: Do They ‘Grab the Money and Run’?,” *New York Times*, 2/1/1970, D23. Albert Goldman, “Purity, Not Parody, in a Real Rock Revival,” *Life*, 5/9/1969, 8. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹²⁷ Albert Goldman, “‘Grab the Money and Run’?: Do They ‘Grab the Money and Run’?,” *New York Times*, 2/1/1970, D23. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹²⁸ “Music: The Band Talks Music,” *Time*, Jan 12, 1970. ProQuest Historical Documents.

naturally non-offensive, “They don’t have to be edited, cooled, controlled, or explained,” and “they fit in perfectly with the worship of mediocrity that is beginning to take the place of the old devil cults. With their twangy, pogo-stick beat... The Band is ideal for the adult bubblegum market.”¹²⁹ Their popular song “The Weight” even invoked Biblical imagery. New clean music groups resonated during the rise in spiritualism.

The Jesus Movement

In the midst of a return to decency, a spiritual fervor appeared to sweep the nation that reached hippies by the droves. A Gallup/*Newsweek* poll of male college students in 1969 revealed a perception that religion was certainly increasing in America (99 percent answered favorably).¹³⁰ This fervor smashed into a counterculture population disillusioned by drugs and seeking a way out of their lifestyle. A term to define those involved, “Jesus Freaks,” or Jesus People, began appearing in newspapers in February 1970, and spotlight on them lasted for about two years. It allowed the outcast group to retain their vibrancy and appearance and transplant their enthusiasm to a new spiritual ideal. The counterculture had explored Hinduism, Buddhism, and Taoism, and the early 1970s wave of spiritualism washed over hippies and carried them with it. While some mainstream Christians, particularly the young, embraced the Jesus Freaks as an opportunity for true spiritual growth in America, many “establishment” churches rejected the dirty hippies from their clean congregations. Seeking to fill the gap, many

¹²⁹ Albert Goldman, “‘Grab the Money and Run’?: Do They ‘Grab the Money and Run’?,” *New York Times*, 2/1/1970, D23. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹³⁰ Gallup/*Newsweek* Poll #1969-6926 (RCPOR).

straight evangelicals reached out to the counterculture to offer them guidance in the path of Christianity and a way out of the drug culture.

The Jesus movement began on the West Coast in 1967-68 and was previously called the Christian World Liberation Front. Some of the leaders were middle-aged and were previously active in campus evangelism, such as Dr. Jack Sparks, a former Pennsylvania State University professor of statistics who had moved to Berkeley to do missionary work and regularly hosted Bible studies in his home.¹³¹ But the majority of the new group was composed of youths who had already dropped out of the hippie subculture. The undertaking was termed a post-drug Fundamentalist revival with the conviction that most organized churches had become “unspiritual” in their routines and services. The Jesus Freaks maintained much of the subculture they had come to cherish: long hair, hip clothing, and communal living, but these types of communes instead followed Jesus’ teachings about breaking away from the world and establishing conventional living patterns as demonstrated by the early church. Ironically, although they looked like hippies, they rejected those ideals, but also rebuffed the values of their parents, trapped in a sort of no-man’s land.¹³² Yet the Jesus Freaks contended Christian fundamentalism freed the convert from “the painful, ambiguous uncertainty of modern life and fixes his eye on eternity.”¹³³

In June of 1971, the Jesus revolution caught the eye of *Time* magazine, which

¹³¹ George W. Cornell, “Jesus Freaks’ Make Scene On Berkeley’s Hip Campus,” *Austin Statesman*, 6/11/1970, A27. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹³² Edward B. Fiske, “Youth Groups Freaked Out on Jesus,” *New York Times*, 2/22/1970, 64. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹³³ Leroy F. Aarons, “Getting High On God,” *Washington Post*, 5/18/1970, B1-B2. ProQuest Historical Documents.

featured the story on its cover with a ten-page write-up. The article announced, “Jesus is alive and well and living in the radical spiritual fervor of a growing number of young Americans who have proclaimed an extraordinary religious revolution in His name.” Many hippies disavowed their drug-filled lifestyle for Biblical teachings that had more substance.¹³⁴ Their mission was to spread the message, and they did so in Californian cities and on campuses in North Beach, UC Berkeley, Los Angeles, Santa Ana, using street signs, individuals with pamphlets, and revivals. By mid-1970, between 300 and 400 were active at Berkeley, centered in a small office near campus that put out its underground style newspaper called “Right On.”¹³⁵

Eager to confirm the new converts, established pastors like the Reverend Chuck Smith of in Santa Ana, California baptized by the hundreds. Speaking to a crowd of about 1,000 persons on the bluffs and beaches, Rev. Smith called out, “God wants to bless you. So come, let Him zap you.” Two hundred converts were baptized in the ocean that day, which was only one of four mass baptisms to that point. Smith was the pastor of Calvary Chapel, which managed about twenty-five communes, like Blue Top House of Miracles and the House of Christian Love, inviting hippies to “get high on Jesus.” He stated that more than 5,000 youths had completely given up drugs and followed a new way of life due to the church’s efforts through communes and weekly services.¹³⁶

Churches specifically for Jesus People popped up to disciple the fervent youths

¹³⁴ “The Jesus Revolution,” *Time* 97, no. 25, 6/21/1971, 58-68. <http://www.ebscohost.com>.

¹³⁵ Edward B. Fiske, “Youth Groups Freaked Out on Jesus,” *New York Times*, 2/22/1970, 64. ProQuest Historical Documents. George W Cornell, “Jesus Freaks' Make Scene On Berkeley's Hip Campus,” *Austin Statesman*, 6/11/1970, A27. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹³⁶ Liz McGuinness, “‘Zapped’ Fundamentalists: Church Communes, Services Aim for Drug-Oriented Youth,” *Los Angeles Times*, 9/6/1970, OC1, 10. ProQuest Historical Documents.

without causing dissonance between them and the established churches. In Los Angeles, the Alamo Christian Foundation, located within steps of Sunset Strip, took a Pentecostal fire and brimstone view of sin to separate themselves from the “God Is Love” approach that Charles Manson’s breed broadcasted. The church, started by Tony and Susan Alamo, grew from nine people to 150 in the span of a year, as two-thirds slept in a dormitory and on the floor of the church.¹³⁷

Coffeehouses and havens also filled in to sustain the freaks. Arthur Blessitt, a 27-year-old Southern Baptist Evangelist, opened a black light coffeehouse off Sunset Strip and called it “His Place,” serving peanut butter sandwiches and Jesus until 4 A.M. The few that were “saved” at the café spent five weeks at the House of Disciples to dry out and receive Bible training to take on leadership roles at the café or on the Strip.¹³⁸

Blessitt was enormously popular with the kids, and when he spoke at schools, was afterwards surrounded by youth who called him “the hip preacher,” “the hippie chaplain,” or “the turned-on preacher,” in reference to his book *Turned on to Jesus*.¹³⁹ The new converts were sent out to witness and spread the word. In Los Angeles, “The God Squad” and “Jesus Freaks” witnessed every afternoon to those high on dope on the street, sometimes facing punches, insults, or even arrests for loitering or obstructing traffic.¹⁴⁰

The Jesus Freaks used underground methods to reach a Hippie audience in their

¹³⁷ Leroy F. Aarons, “Getting High On God,” *Washington Post*, 5/18/1970, B2. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 32.

¹³⁹ Earl C. Gottschalk, Jr., “Hip Cultures Discovers A New Trip,” *Wall Street Journal*, 3/2/1971, 14. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹⁴⁰ Leroy F. Aarons, “Getting High On God,” B2.

own language. One of about fifty existing underground Christian newspapers proclaimed, "Warning! He is Still At Large!" At the New Year's parade in Pasadena in 1971, Billy Graham as the grand marshal waved from his car, while dozens of students passed out a newspaper to spectators that carried the same message, but in a different vehicle that would reach hippies where they were. The newspaper included listings for Jesus Teach-ins, Bible Raps and Jesus People Centers that spread from Hawaii to Arizona. As the editor of the *Hollywood Free Paper*, Duane Pederson also organized the First Annual Jesus People Festival at the Hollywood Palladium in California, which featured sixteen gospel bands, Pat Boone, and Arthur Blessitt.¹⁴¹

True, signs showed a fad in the making, but the movement itself had a solid foundation. Converts wore spiritual shirts (JESUS IS MY LORD), Blessitt passed out cross stickers, and underground newspapers sold bumper stickers (SMILE, GOD LOVES YOU), posters, and buttons. Billy Graham said, "Even if all this is a fad, I welcome it." *Time* explained that there were also "signs that the movement is something far more lasting than a religious Woodstock." It reached across nearly all the social dividing lines, "from crew cut to long hair, right to left, rich to poor." Further, the Jesus movement showed considerable traction, as many who were in its nascent beginnings in 1967 were still leading it by 1971, as it held an ecumenical appeal, "attracting Roman Catholics and Jews, Protestants of every persuasion and many with no religion at all."¹⁴² The hippie faction of Jesus Freaks were brought in to the larger Jesus movement that

¹⁴¹ John Dart, "'Jesus People' Adopt Underground's Tactics: Free Newspaper With Circulation of 200,000 Promotes Youth Evangelism," *Los Angeles Times*, 1/2/1971, 26. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹⁴² "The Jesus Revolution," *Time* 97, no. 25, 6/21/1971, 58-68. <http://www.ebscohost.com>.

also included mainstream churches.

Like different types of hippies, the Jesus movement also contained three spiritual streams that reinforced one another: the Jesus people/freaks, the Straight people, and the Catholic Pentecostals. The Jesus Freaks were the most liberal in their demeanor and dress, attracting hippies with their relaxed lifestyle and communion with Jesus. The Straight people were largest group, numbering in the hundreds of thousands, clustered in a highly organized, nondenominational youth movement of established churches and on-campus organizations. Most of the members were “Middle America, campus types, neatly coiffed.” One of largest Straight associations was Campus Crusade for Christ, which Bill Bright had started twenty years before. Additionally, Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship was more intellectual, and in December of 1970 held a missionary convention at the University of Illinois that drew 12,000, which was “one of the largest college religious meetings in North American history.” Other Christian ministries included Young Life that contained 1,300 clubs and Youth for Christ, which had permeated 2,000 high schools. *Time* described the third group, the Catholic Pentecostals, as “Publicly austere but privately ecstatic in their devotion to the Holy Spirit.” While they stayed faithful to the established Catholic Church, they also unnerved some in the hierarchy who disagreed with their fervor. Some guessed their number to amount to 10,000, but some observers said they could easily be three times the given estimate.¹⁴³

Some established churches reacted to Jesus Freaks with shocked attitudes. Texan preacher John Bisagno of the Houston revival recognized, “All I know is that kids are

¹⁴³ “The Jesus Revolution,” *Time* 97, no. 25, 6/21/1971, 58-68. EbscoHost.

turning on to Jesus. My concern is that the staid, traditional churches will reject these kids and miss the most genuine revival of our lifetime.”¹⁴⁴ One group of new believers attended an Orange County church in southern California and affirmed the pastor’s sermons with shouts of “Right on, brother!” “Amen!” and “Praise the Lord,” which practically rocked the middle-class parishioners out of their seats. Many ministers admitted their initial repulsion to the appearance of the Jesus People, but were impressed by their “sincerity, the openness and the enthusiasm.”¹⁴⁵ Some parents and Bible experts even formed “deprogramming teams” to “counterbrainwash” Jesus freaks through marathon persuasion sessions and “positive” interpretations of the Bible to counter the damage that commune elders had supposedly done.¹⁴⁶

The influential mainstream minister, Norman Vincent Peale, pleaded with staid churches that had rejected the Jesus People to realize their opportunity and take advantage of the spiritual revolution. As he identified in the religious magazine *Guideposts*, the church community for a decade had “watched a spiritual vacuum growing among our young people,” exemplified by their “dissatisfaction with a materialistic and affluent society; impatience with old forms of worship; a groping for fulfillment, first in rock music, then in various kinds of mysticism, finally in drugs.” But recently, no one could “doubt that an electrifying wave of spiritual fervor is sweeping through the youth of this country,” which Peale emphasized should “be welcomed with

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Earl C. Gottschalk, Jr., “Hip Cultures Discovers A New Trip,” *Wall Street Journal*, 3/2/1971, 1, 14, ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹⁴⁶ Mike Goodman, “Parental Backlash Develops Against ‘Jesus Movement’,” *Austin Statesman*, 12/20/1972, 28. ProQuest Historical Documents.

hosannas in a country exhausted by war, domestic violence, racial anger and moral decay.” Instead, he recognized that the “reaction of many good citizens has ranged from bewilderment to uneasy disapproval to outright hostility.” Peale thought it unfortunate that if they did not like what they saw in these young converts, the church would tell them, “Go away... Take a bath. Cut your hair. Put on conventional clothes. Accept our values. *Then* come back and we’ll talk with you.” The author of “positive thinking” instead implored the church to “welcome this explosion of joy in the hearts of our young people. Let’s take the power and the love and the vitality that it offers and use them to build the Kingdom of God here on earth.”¹⁴⁷

Beyond the audience of Norman Vincent Peale, the Jesus Revolution was also made manifest in popular entertainment. The musicals *Jesus Christ, Superstar* and *Godspell* hit Broadway theaters with massive impact. According to one theater critic, the popularity of *Jesus Christ, Superstar* was not just due to its gaudy theatricality, but rather the “thousands of American youth” who found “Jesus’ anti-materialistic philosophy and revolutionary approach compatible with their own ideas.” This group of patrons included not only the Jesus freaks, of course, but also the “relatively ordinary young people who sent the record to the top of the best-seller lists and who constitute a considerable part of the... nightly audience.” *Godspell* with its story of Jesus and catchy music attracted audiences for much the same reason. But while *Superstar* was a pagan display, *Godspell* more closely resembled a Christian play, complete with verses from

¹⁴⁷ Norman Vincent Peale, “We Need Their Faith,” *Readers Digest*, 12/1971, 140.

the biblical book of Matthew.¹⁴⁸ It ran occasionally, on and off Broadway from 1971 to 2012, and went on an international tour through Pittsburgh, Los Angeles, Boston, Washington, Toronto, Chicago, London, Paris, Montevideo, Hamburg, Sydney, and Melbourne, with a film hitting theaters in 1973.¹⁴⁹

A “religious Woodstock” was even held in Dallas in 1972. Organized by Campus Crusade for Christ, Explo ‘72 drew more than 75,000 people, mostly white middle-class high school and college students, to the “largest religious camp meeting ever to take place in the United States.” Their six days were filled with evangelism classes and seminars and their nights were filled with rock bands like The Armageddon Experience, famous preachers, and well-known icons like the quarterback of the Cowboys. The “explosion” closed with an eight-hour rock festival featuring Johnny Cash.¹⁵⁰

Spiritual songs following the Jesus Revolution also rose in popularity. The first, “Spirit in the Sky,” was written and originally recorded by Norman Greenbaum as a single in late 1969. The song reached number three in April 18, 1970, stayed on the Top 40 charts for fourteen weeks, and hit #22 overall on Billboard’s 1970 Top 100 list. As of 2006, “Spirit in the Sky” had been featured in thirty-two movies, more than a dozen national television advertisements, at least fifty compilation CDs and in more than a dozen television shows, and spawned innumerable cover versions, including by the Christian band DC Talk.

¹⁴⁸ R. H. Gardner, “Return to the beginning: Christian and Pagan Elements Mingle in Broadway Show,” *Baltimore Sun*, 12/19/1971, D1. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹⁴⁹ “‘Godspell’ Set For Pittsburgh,” *New Pittsburgh Courier*, 10/14/1972, 5. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹⁵⁰ Edward B. Fiske, “A ‘Religious Woodstock’ Draws 75,000,” *New York Times*, 6/16/1972, 1. ProQuest Historical Documents.

Although Greenbaum was Jewish, his song was received as a gospel tune. According to his recounting of the night he was inspired to write the song, he had been watching T.V., and had happened upon country gospel king Porter Wagoner singing a stirring song about forgiveness and redemption. “I thought, ‘Yeah, I could do that,’ knowing nothing about gospel music,” Mr. Greenbaum remembered. “So I sat down and wrote my own gospel song. It came easy. I wrote the words in 15 minutes.” The song’s first verse set the tone for what would be Mr. Greenbaum’s reverberating message for the ages:

When I die and they lay me to rest
Gonna go to the place that’s the best
When I lay me down to die
Goin’ up to the spirit in the sky.¹⁵¹

Allmusic agreed that the song’s musical techniques radiated a gospel feel that sounded “spiritual in their celebratory anticipation of going to a spirit in the sky to rest after death.” The handclaps, riffs, and “creditably wailing backup female singers” amplified the gospel feel, “cementing the impression of a revival meeting somehow colliding with both psychedelia and the AM Top Forty.” In fact, Reprise Records was anxious about the controversy that might arise over recording with such religious-centered lyrics as:

Prepare yourself, you know it’s a must
Gotta have a friend in Jesus
So you know that when you die
He’s gonna recommend you to the spirit in the sky.¹⁵²

¹⁵¹ Tom McNichol, “A ‘Spirit’ From the ’60s That Won’t Die,” *New York Times*, 12/24/2006, Accessed 3/15/2015. http://www.nytimes.com/2006/12/24/fashion/24norman.html?pagewanted=1&_r=2.

¹⁵² Norman Greenbaum, “Spirit in the Sky.,” © 1971 by Reprise Records.

However, this fear was amply disproved. John Lennon even cited it as one of his current favorites when he was interviewed by *Rolling Stone Magazine* in the early 1970s.¹⁵³

Surprisingly, in the following year, the song “Put Your Hand in the Hand” fared even better. Written by Gene MacLellan, the song recorded by Anne Murray for her album *Honey, Wheat, and Water*; however, Ocean’s popular cover of the song peaked on the Billboard Hot 100 at number 2 and became the number 33 best seller of 1971.

Several other artists covered the song, including Elvis Presley, Randy Stonehill, Frankie Laine, Donny Hathaway, Joan Baez, the Les Humphries Signers, evangelist Garner Ted Armstrong, Sandy Lynn Anderson, and Loretta Lynn. The chorus encouraged reaching out for Jesus:

Put your hand in the hand of the man
Who stilled the water
Put your hand in the hand of the man
Who calmed the sea.”¹⁵⁴

The song could even be heard blaring on the beaches of Fort Lauderdale during Spring Break.¹⁵⁵ Spiritual songs were back in vogue, as evidenced by Judy Collins’ version of the hymn *Amazing Grace*, which hit number 80 for 1971.

By the end of the Sixties, the American music and fashion industries had incorporated elements of the counterculture into the mainstream. Even though the Silent

¹⁵³ Richie Unterberger, “Spirit in the Sky,” *Allmusic*. Accessed 2/15/2015.

<http://www.allmusic.com/song/spirit-in-the-sky-mt0026937564>

¹⁵⁴ Gene MacLellan, “Put Your Hand in the Hand,” Ocean, Back in 1969, Merle Haggard’s song “Okie from Muskogee” had highlighted the American ideal of clean living, respect for authority, and patriotism by disavowing the Hippie lifestyle of long hair, sandals, and drugs. The backlash against hippies, obscenity, and tripping could be seen in the stand for American ideals and morals, mainly expressed in decency rallies and a shift toward a Jesus-centered spiritualism. *Put Your Hand in the Hand*, © 1970 by Kama Sutra Records.

¹⁵⁵ “Jesus’ Message Mixed With Surf, Suds, Song,” *Austin Statesman*, 4/10/1971, 1. ProQuest Historical Documents.

Majority's reaction against hippies was visceral initially, youngsters found ways to incorporate them back into society by adopting their music genres and fashions to a degree, which were then designed for a mass consumer audience. Back in 1969, Merle Haggard's song "Okie from Muskogee" had highlighted the American ideal of clean living, respect for authority, and patriotism by disavowing the hippie lifestyle of long hair, sandals, and drugs. The backlash against hippies, obscenity, and tripping could be seen in the stand for American ideals and morals, mainly expressed through decency rallies and Christian revivals. The year 1970 did not end the counterculture, as hippies were energized by rising social issues like women's liberation, gay liberation, developing free universities and clinics, and especially, environmentalism. Even though this breed of counterculture lasted until 1973, the response to these issues was directed at the movements' political leaders.

While some hippies became more involved in social issues, and some hippies completely dropped out of society and rejected norms by continuing drugs, many of them reintegrated into society by again taking up jobs or returning to college. Just as the Rolling Stones were criticized for their wealth, by the 1980s, these reintegrated hippies were accused of "selling out" and once again identifying with the materialistic culture that they had rejected in the Sixties. Nevertheless, hippies had made a large impact on the nation and worked out the kinks of the counterculture in a dialogue with dissenting Americans to arrive at a middle ground that many of them shared with Merle Haggard.

CHAPTER VI

HALTING BLACK POWER

Phil Ochs, a songwriter radical left protester and a founder of the Yippies, criticized the liberals of the 1960s, exposing the sharp dividing lines between the New Left and their aging predecessors and the Silent Majority.¹ In his song “Love Me, I’m a Liberal,” he pointed out the inconsistencies between what the older liberals did and actually believed. In the album recording, he introduced the song as an indictment, “In every American community there are varying shades of political opinion. One of the shadiest of these is the liberals.” He described them as “an outspoken group on many subjects, ten degrees to the left of center in good times, ten degrees to the right of center if it affects them personally. Here, then, is a lesson in safe logic.”² He explained the transition of liberals from being sympathetic to socialism to a more centrist position, ending each verse the same way:

Sure once I was young and impulsive
I wore every conceivable pin
Even went to the socialist meetings
Learned all the old union hymns
Ah, but I've grown older and wiser
And that's why I'm turning you in
So love me, love me
Love me, I'm a liberal

¹ According to the transcript of the trial of the Chicago Seven, Phil Ochs testified that he had “helped design the party, formulate the idea of what Yippie was going to be, in the early part of 1968.” He sang and was arrested at the 1968 DNC as one of those who nominated a pig for president.

² Phil Mershon, “Phil Ochs,” *Perfect Sound Forever*, 9/2001. Accessed 3/15/2015.
<http://www.furious.com/perfect/philochs.html>.

Ochs identified the duplicity of liberals' civil rights' stance in the lyrics, "I cried when they shot Medgar Evers / Tears ran down my spine..." however, liberals disagreed with radicals, "But Malcolm X got what was coming / He got what he asked for this time." He claimed liberals "love Puerto Ricans and Negroes / As long as they don't move next door." When it came to desegregation, he claimed liberals were two-faced, singing, "But if you ask me to bus my children / I hope the cops take down your name."³ The song was increasingly popular at Phil Ochs' concerts, but relatively unknown outside of the radical left's sphere.

From a drastically different perspective, Clifford Joseph Trahan under the pseudonym "Johnny Rebel," of Louisiana, released racist songs about desegregation. His 1971 album *For Segregationists Only*, released on his own Reb Rebel label, featured singles released from 1966-1968 called "Lookin' for a Handout," and "Kajun Ku Klux Klan," "Who Likes a Nigger?" "Nigger Hatin' Me," "Still Looking for a Handout," "Move Them Niggers North," and "Nigger, Nigger," the latter which said:

They're marching for equality
They'll never be as good as me
We won't let them integrate
We must only segregate⁴

³ Phil Ochs, "Love Me, I'm a Liberal," *Phil Ochs in Concert*, © 1966 by Elektra Records.

⁴ Johnny Rebel, Lyrics Mania, Accessed 4/10/2015,
http://www.lyricsmania.com/johnny_rebel_lyrics.html.

His 1969-70 singles, “In Coon Town,” “Some Niggers Never Die (They Just Smell That Way),” and “Stay Away from Dixie” were a further cry against blacks and desegregation.⁵

These two vastly different musical artists seemed to portray a deepening chasm and growing outspokenness between the radical left and the ultra conservative right that characterized the second half of the Sixties, particularly in the issue of civil rights. Even though LBJ had signed the Civil Rights Act in 1964, implementing integration was much more difficult to achieve. Optimism soon turned to disillusionment. While much of the attention had been on blacks in the South, blacks in the North were upset that equal economic opportunities were still not realized. Trapped in a vicious cycle of substandard education, low wage jobs, and ghetto neighborhoods, distraught blacks took to the streets in urban riots to protest their lack of advancement. Whereas heralds of nonviolence like Martin Luther King, Jr., still proclaimed the need for blacks and whites to work together, radical Black Power leaders like Stokely Carmichael and Huey Newton advocated separate societies, even violence. Trying to rectify the cycle of poverty, the Supreme Court mandated school busing outside of the South, which reached even the suburbs of the North, setting off a remarkable rise in resistance to integration. The majority of Americans, both black and white, rejected the shift towards black violence and forced busing. Instead, the Silent Majority turned toward law and order, which represented their ideal of the American identity. Northern whites were afraid of violence and many Americans were appalled by urban riots; conservatives alleged the

⁵ Johnny Rebel, *For Segregationists Only*, © 1971 by Reb Rebel.

uprisings to be communist-led revolutions. Hence, the Silent Majority's reaction in the second half of the decade was against multiple factors of discord, including Black Power, the Black Panthers, required busing, and summer riots.

Urban Riots

In the summer of 1964 as Congress passed the Civil Rights Bill, riots shook America's northern cities from coast to coast. Nine uprisings occurred between middle of July and Labor Day in New York City, Rochester, New York, Jersey City, New Jersey, Elizabeth, New Jersey, Paterson, New Jersey, Dixmoor, Illinois (outside Chicago), Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Seaside, Oregon, and Hampton Beach, New Hampshire. As the newspapers, radio, and TV covered the stories, the number of rioters and looters rose. Pleas from respected Negro and other civic leaders, clergymen and public officials, made through strong public statements and personal appearances, went unheeded. According to an FBI Report, in six of the seven city riots, demonstrators "bent on destruction" escalated violence into a mob spirit, as rioters began stoning policemen and civilians.⁶ Rioting in Harlem began on July 19 after a fifteen-year-old boy tried to attack a police officer with a knife and the officer shot him after firing a warning shot. Hundreds of his classmates marched in the streets in protest police brutality. That night, Barry Goldwater received the Republican presidential nomination, and in his speech brought up the growing potency of an issue that would become important enough to

⁶ "Text of F.B.I. Report to President on Summer Riots in 9 Cities Over Country," *New York Times*, 9/27/1964, 82.

define the next election as well: law and order.⁷ He said in his acceptance speech, “The growing menace in our country tonight, to personal safety, to life, to limb and property, in homes, in churches, on the playgrounds and places of business, particularly in our great cities is the mounting concern — or should be — of every thoughtful citizen in the United States.”⁸

Lacking any systematic planning or organization, riots in Harlem and Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn, led to 480 arrests. Only vigorous police or National Guard action stopped the riots. The FBI noticed that when an outside civilian review board was present, “police were so careful to avoid accusations of improper conduct that they were virtually paralyzed.” Knowing this, rioters were “thereby emboldened to resist and completely defy the efforts of the police to restore order,” making arrests for violent conduct and looting “unfeasible.” An investigating commission concurred with the FBI findings.

The FBI Report observed how radical black leaders took advantage of the riots to further their cause. Malcolm X and other “violent agitators” advocated for a “broadly based nationalist movement” for only blacks, abandoning “the doctrine of non-violence and to organize rifle clubs ‘to protect their lives and property’.”⁹ The Progressive Labor Movement (PLM) based in New York City, a Marxist-Leninist group, was also very

⁷ Michael W. Flamm, “The Original Long, Hot Summer: The Legacy of the 1964 Harlem Riot,” *New York Times*, 7/15/2014.

⁸ “Goldwater's 1964 Acceptance Speech,” *Washington Post*, Accessed 5/9/2015, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/daily/may98/goldwaterspeech.htm>.

⁹ One would expect more of an outcry against Malcolm X for his violent stance, but according to a Survey Research Service Amalgam poll in April 1963, 61 percent (11 percent of respondents were black) had never even heard of him. However, of those who had, only 6 percent had a favorable disposition toward him.

involved in the riots. They had distributed handbills with a photograph of the police officer who shot the teenager with the headline, “Wanted for Murder,” announcing a demonstration for July 25 to demand the arrest and prosecution of the officer. Another more revolutionary individual claimed that he and his followers “were going to kill cops and judges,” for “no revolution can be won by peaceful means” and the state must be smashed “totally and completely.” Although the FBI did not blame the Communist Party U.S.A. for officially instigating the riots, it ascertained that some involved individuals were leaders of the PLM.¹⁰ William Epton, vice chairman of PLM, was found guilty on three counts of conspiracy and criminal anarchy for his actions during the Harlem riots.¹¹

Conservatives categorized the riots as communist-planned. Dan Smoot in his newsletter argued, “Negro insurrections occur, not because of poverty, but because of communists, high officials, and other leading liberals, have agitated about mistreatment of negroes for a generation. Now, a generation of negroes, deliberately taught to hate whites, are giving vent to their hatred.” Bircher Robert Welch also discussed two revolutions that were directed to convert the southern states into a black Soviet republic using the cover of civil rights, which would create lawless disorder to allow communists to rise to power.¹²

¹⁰ “Text of F.B.I. Report to President on Summer Riots in 9 Cities Over Country,” *New York Times*, 9/27/1964, 82 ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

¹¹ “Epton Guilty Of Anarchy, Conspiracy: Harlem Riot Case Exposes Marxist To Ten-Year Term,” *Chicago Daily Defender*, 12/21/1965, 1. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

¹² The Dan Smoot Report 11, no. 34, Broadcast 522, 8/23/1965. folder “Civil Rights – General,” Box 491 (GR/CUA).

Voting Rights Act

The federal Voting Rights Act (VRA) followed on the heels of the signing of the 1964 Civil Rights Act in the midst of violence. It upheld the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments by outlawing all forms of discrimination in voting, including the literacy tests and poll taxes widely used in the South. The marches in Selma, Alabama, and the national exposure of “Bloody Sunday” propelled voting rights into the spotlight. After four months in front of the Congress, President Johnson signed the VRA into law on August 6, 1965. On the event of signing the bill into law, the president remarked that the bill was “nothing less than granting every American Negro his freedom to enter the mainstream of American life: not the conformity that blurs enriching differences of culture and tradition, but rather the opportunity that gives each a chance to choose.”¹³

Many more people supported the second act than the first. While securing black voting rights was the priority for letter writers, they mobilized as the bill was introduced and passed in Congress, from March to May of 1965. Out of 1,423 letters received at the White House from March 19 to April 14, a vast majority at 72 percent supported the bill, and an overwhelming amount of the 2,345 letters (95 percent) following President Johnson’s speech on the occasion endorsed his perspective.¹⁴ Still, the majority of Americans who were not writing letters expressed more ambivalence about the voting bill. In a Harris Survey taken in April 1965, only 53 percent favored the bill though 33

¹³ Lyndon B. Johnson, “Remarks on the Signing of the Voting Rights Act,” 8/6/1965, Miller Center, Accessed 4/12/2015. <http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/speech-4034>.

¹⁴ Box 1, folder Feb-Dec-1965, (WH/LBJ).

percent were opposed.¹⁵ By that December, the number in favor had increased to as astonishing 95 percent.¹⁶

Nevertheless, dissent against the VRA was still strong. For example, the *Wall Street Journal* pointed out inconsistencies with the 1965 bill. It stated that the 17th Amendment “should be impartially applied among all citizens.” Instead, in the *Journal*’s perspective, the bill proposed a “double standard,” for “Some states would be permitted to keep their literacy requirement. Others would not.” The author found the paradox in that, “The illiterate citizen, Negro or otherwise, would find himself with more ‘rights’ in Alabama and her five outcast sister states than in the great state of New York.”¹⁷ Further, David Lawrence writing in *U.S. News and World Report* observed that President Johnson, who “virtually ordered Congress to pass” the bill, was “pressured by street demonstrations, violent and nonviolent, sit-ins and lie-ins in many parts of the country” that were “designed to stampede the Chief Executive and Congress to brush aside the Constitution and to accept the extremist doctrine that ‘the ends justifies the means.’” Once again, Lawrence resurrected the argument based on states rights and constitutionalism that characterized the fight against the CRA. He asserted that discrimination in some areas made it “permissible now to diminish the rights of the States themselves.” Lawrence was disappointed to witness national “organized

¹⁵ Harris Survey, April 1965 (RCPOR).

¹⁶ Harris Survey, December 1965 (RCPOR).

¹⁷ “An Immoral Law,” *The Wall Street Journal*, 3/22/1965, 14. folder “Civil Rights – General,” Box 491 (GR/CUA).

incitement to violence,” for to “yield to such demonstrations is to weaken the whole fabric of democracy and to encourage mobocracy.”¹⁸

In fact, violence continued to spread in 1965, particularly through the neighborhood of Watts in Los Angeles, California. From August 11-17, 1965, mob violence broke out following the arrest of a drunken young black man. Upwards of 10,000 black people took to the streets from Thursday to Saturday, looting stores, setting fires, exchanging gunfire with policemen, and stoning and shooting at firemen attempting to put out fires. By the end of the six-day eruption, thirty-four people were killed, 1,032 more were injured, property damage had reached \$40 million, and 3,952 people had been arrested. The investigating commission, requested by Governor Edmund G. Brown and chaired by John A. McCone, determined that the precipitating causes and the committee’s recommendations were linked. To remedy the “devastating spiral of failure,” they suggested employment and related job training for blacks to resolve the idleness that leads to distressing problems; revamping the educational system for black children to prevent apathy that leads to unemployment; and an improved system of law enforcement in crime prevention to remedy the hostility between blacks and police.¹⁹

The public outcry about this new set of lootings and burnings rang loudly. Letters to the White House expressed deep concern over the Watts riots, as the White House

¹⁸ David Lawrence, “[Illegible] to the New Extremists,” *U.S. News & World Report*, March 29, 1965, 112-folder “Civil Rights – General,” Box 491 (GR/CUA).

¹⁹ *Violence in the City—An End or a Beginning?: A Report by the Governor's Commission on the Los Angeles Riots, 1965*, University of Southern California. Retrieved 3/25/2015. <http://www.usc.edu/libraries/archives/cityinstress/mccone/part3.html>.

received over 3,300 letters in the four weeks after the incident.²⁰ A Harris Survey in August 1965 asked if the recent riots had helped or hurt the cause for civil rights, and 90 percent answered it hurt the cause. It also asked for the top two to three reasons the respondents believed triggered the outbreak in riots in Los Angeles and Chicago, and the top response at 22 percent was “young punks, hoodlums on the loose,” whereas the other top answers were “unemployment, poverty” at 16 percent and “communist inspired” at 15 percent.²¹

Unsurprisingly, conservatives rallied around communist redbaiting to argue that the riots were revolutionary. The *American Opinion* published a flyer that propagated that communists were creating a civil war. It argued that the civil rights movement “with all of its bitterness, and insidious steps towards the appearance of a civil war,” was not just infiltrated by the communists, but had been “deliberately and almost wholly *created* by the Communists, patiently building up to this present stage for more than forty years” to create an anti-colonial “Negro Revolutionary Movement.”²² The American Conservative Union sent in a press release in mid-August blaming the communists for the violence. Fred Schwartz included the headline “REDS, RACE, RIOTS, AND REVOLUTION” in his August 24th CACC letter. David Lawrence also featured this line of thinking in the *Star* on August 27.²³ Dan Smoot devoted his August 23 broadcast to

²⁰ The mail summary for 9/9/1965 is missing, thus, this number represents the mail summaries from 8/19/1965-9/16/1965. Box 1, folder Feb-Dec-1965, (WH/LBJL).

²¹ Harris Survey, August 1965 (RCPOR).

²² Flyer “What’s Wrong With Civil Rights?,” published by *American Opinion*, 9/22/1965. folder Civil Rights – General, Box 491 (GR/CUA).

²³ folder Civil Rights – General, Box 491 (GR/CUA).

“the horror now upon us,” and Gerald Smith fanned the flames with a huge poster headlining “BLACK REVOLUTION LAUNCHED.”²⁴

The John Birch Society countered the perceived communist threat by supporting law enforcement. Wesley McCune, Director of Group Research, Inc., in his report on conservative activities explained that the John Birch Society had already organized a subsidiary called TACT (Truth About Civil Turmoil Committees) shortly before the Watts riots. As a follow-up, the August Bulletin to JBS members included a flyer headed “What’s Wrong With Civil Rights?” which also appeared in many newspapers as an advertisement. One of the answers was that the movement “has been deliberately and almost wholly created by the Communists.”²⁵ JBS outright supported policemen and police department action, specifically black policemen. The group Constructive Action, in association with the John Birch Society, released a documentary-style film about the Watts riots, which the Lansing, Michigan, Police Department showed in 1966. Students in Dallas, Texas, were also required to watch it at a school rally. However, Democrats decried the film for being racist and accusatory of communism.²⁶ In an effort to reach out to the black community, JBS added conservative blacks to their lineup of speakers, including Julia Brown and journalist George Schuyler, who was a member of the Conservative Party of New York.

George Schuyler, who had written pieces for several black newspapers and magazines for forty years, blamed civil rights leaders for the rise in racial violence. In an

²⁴ Wesley McCune (Director of Group Research, Inc.), “The American Right Wing During 1965” folder McCune, Wesley, Reports on the American Right Wing 1962-1966, Box 491 (GR/CUA).

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ folder Civil Riots USA: The Watts Story, Group Research Box 80 (GR/CUA).

article published in *Human Events*, he accused a white minister of advising Selma marchers “to leave their guns, knucks, bottles, black jacks, in the church... stating they might need them later.” He charged that Martin Luther King, Jr. had made the declaration, “We will destroy them,” which thus “threatened the lives of all Americans in this Communistic statement. This borders on Treason. Surely right thinking Americans can no longer support such a one.”²⁷ He believed most black people “deplore the bad reputation they have been given by the excesses of the agitational [sic] and criminal elements of their so-called race” and wanted police to be tougher on violent blacks. Parroting the McCone Commission, he agreed that civilian review boards restrained the police from doing their jobs, which “emboldened the Negro criminal element and lowered its respect for and fear of the police.” Dissenting blacks in disagreement with their violent neighbors were afraid of being called “Uncle Toms.” Schuyler also criticized the role of the media in publicizing civil rights leaders and propagating a “one-sided presentation.” He had hoped that the passage of the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act would have put an end to demonstrations and vandalism, “But these evils are easier started than stopped, and they just don’t go away because another law is on the books.”²⁸

Other conservatives in turn blamed the U.S. government for its lax attitude towards protesters, thus encouraging more violence. Dean Manion quoted LBJ’s speech, given on August 5, as he said, “I am proud this morning to salute you as fellow

²⁷ Letter, Revolution & Mrs. P.J. Patterson of Tampa, FL to Senator Lee Metcalf and Senator Mike Mansfield, 1965. folder Civil Rights – General, Box 491 Group Research, Columbia University Archives.

²⁸ George S. Schuyler, Civil Rights Leaders Should Blame Themselves for Riots,” *Human Events*, 8/28/1965, 6. folder Civil Rights – General, Box 491 (GR/CUA).

revolutionaries. Neither you nor I are willing to accept the tyranny of poverty, nor the dictatorship of ignorance nor the despotism of ill health, nor the oppression of bias and prejudice and bigotry. We want change. We want progress.” Congressman James D. Martin (R-Alabama), when asked for the reasons lawlessness was breaking out in America, blamed the “government’s attitude... toward crime.” He saw the beginning of unruliness start during the Freedom Rides, which “told people that they could break those laws with which they were in disagreement.” When Attorney General Kennedy “said this was ‘good,’ this was ‘fine,’ ‘I back you’—it gave leeway then for people not only to commit crime in those areas, but to broaden the scope.” Martin blamed the Watts riots on both “an accumulation of discontent” that had been built up by “the pressure of statements of the press and with the Administration’s attitude of ‘If you don’t like the law, break it’.” The hate in Los Angeles “gave way to rioting with such terrible statements as ‘get your white brother,’ or ‘get whitey.’” Ultimately, Martin accused Martin Luther King, Jr., for damaging the civil rights movement and President Johnson for inciting more riots.²⁹ In many ways, Ronald Reagan’s firm response to the riots upheld the law and order that many Americans craved and helped win him the governor’s seat in 1966 against two-term incumbent Edmund “Pat” Brown. The issue of law and order became even more important as Black Power flourished and violence against white policemen rose.

²⁹ “Political Exploitation of Civil Rights Issue Fosters Lawlessness and Violence,” *Manion Forum*, No 572, 9/19/1965. folder Civil Rights – General, Box 491 (GR/CUA).

Black Power

The civil rights movement began to fragment as separationists split from non-violent factions of the movement. Stokely Carmichael, who had been involved in SNCC since the Freedom Rides, became its chairman in 1966 and articulated the need to turn the organization in a sharply different direction from the non-violent tactics that had characterized the fight for equal rights. In his 1967 book, *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation in America*, Carmichael described the need for blacks to identify themselves and break away from a white definition of them, and then move on to a process of “political modernization” to question old values and institutions and include more people in different forms of political structures. One step toward Black Power, therefore, was the black community consolidating behind black politicians. He explained that “the goal of black self-determination and black self-identity—Black Power—is full participation in the decision-making processes affecting the lives of black people, and recognition of the virtues in themselves as black people.”³⁰ Carmichael became even more controversial as the leader of the Black Panthers starting in 1967, with a philosophy that agreed with Malcolm X. The division between the emerging radical faction and the older non-violent leaders was evident. For example, Whitney Young of the National Urban League would not commit his organization to the June 1966 Mississippi march unless

³⁰ Stokely Carmichael & Charles V. Hamilton, *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation in America* (New York: Random House, 1992), 39-47.

the planning organizations came together in unity and upheld King's version of marching, rather than the extremism of Stokely Carmichael.³¹

As the word spread about the increasing radicalism of Black Power, the Silent Majority feared its result. A Gallup Poll in September 1966 asked Americans their opinions of Black Power. A quarter of respondents had not even heard the term, but of those who had heard of it, the majority of the listed answers at 28 percent was against black power, while only 7 percent approved.³² The next month, a Harris Survey asked, "All in all, do you feel the demonstrations by Negroes on civil rights have helped more or hurt more in the advancement of Negro rights?" 85 percent said it hurt, though 15 percent said it helped. When it came to the Black Power slogan, 77 percent said it hurt, whereas only 5 percent thought it helped civil rights.³³ In January 1967, an Amalgam survey on "Credit Problems" and a "Religion And Civil Rights" survey both concluded that 57 percent of respondents still disagreed with the civil rights movement, whilst 43 percent agreed with it.³⁴ That summer would further push Americans away from the cities as more violence rocked the North.

Newark and Detroit Riots

In Newark, New Jersey, on July 12, 1967, the arrest of a black cab driver led to five days of riots. Blacks across the street in a housing project witnessed the unloading of the unconscious cabbie, assumed he had been beaten, and marched on city hall as

³¹ "Urban League Deplores Extremism," *Washington Post*, 6/16/1966. ProQuest Historical Documents.

³² Gallup Poll, September 1966 (RCPOR).

³³ Harris Survey, October 1966 (RCPOR).

³⁴ Amalgam survey, "Credit Problems," and "Religion And Civil Rights" survey, January 1967 (RCPOR).

others threw rocks from the projects. After some destruction of public and private property that night, peace mostly resumed, and the National Guard arrived in the city. Still, rumors of snipers in buildings led to more chaos, and the shooting of a black woman in her home set off the worst of the riots, which left twenty-six people dead, 725 injured, almost 1,500 arrested, and nearly \$10 million in property damage.³⁵

In the early morning hours on July 23, 1967, a police raid on an unlicensed bar in Detroit, Michigan, led to one of the most destructive riots in United States history. As the policemen detained the individuals inside the tavern, the son of the bar owner threw a bottle at a policeman, inciting violence with the gathering mob below on the street. Widespread looting began as the police drove away, and lasted throughout the day. The first fire started at a grocery store and the mob kept firefighters from putting out the fire. Over the next several days, clashes between police and the mob increased, along with reports of arson and snipers. Police were unable to make arrests due to the sheer size of the mob, and had to request additional help. Ultimately, Governor George W. Romney sent in the National Guard and President Johnson deployed the U.S. Army to quell the riots. The destruction left forty-three people dead, 1,189 injured, over 7,200 arrested, and more than 2,000 destroyed buildings.³⁶

In both riot cases, rumors played a large role in elevating violence. In his report to the Secretary of Defense, Cyrus Vance emphasized, “At a time of rioting, rumors are rampant and tend to grow as exhaustion sets in. Tensions rise and incidents tend to be

³⁵ *Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders*, Accessed 4/7/2015.

<http://www.blackpast.org/primary/national-advisory-commission-civil-disorders-kerner-report-1967>.

³⁶ Sidney Fine, *Violence in the Model City: The Cavanagh Administration, Race Relations, and the Detroit Riot Of 1967* (Ann Arbor: Michigan State University Press, 2007), 230-245.

exaggerated by overreaction. These rumors can have serious effects.” He made several suggestions to prevent further riots that he expected may occur, arguing, “Authoritative sources of information,” such as “senior civilian and military officials” must hold regular news conferences; if they do not, “the press will follow the sensational reports and fan the rumors.” Vance suggested allowing members of the press, as was feasible, to accompany senior officials on their rounds of the riot areas, and “to share in their evaluations in order to provide the facts to the public quickly and authoritatively.”³⁷

Americans were furious about the July riots and demanded law and order. They wrote letters to the White House during the event itself, and continued to press for federal action until the end of January 1968. Out of the 11,263 individual letters written to request additional action be taken to prevent riots, 84 percent were in favor of intervention, and a mere half of one percent was against federal action. In mid-September, an additional 4,727 mailed opinion ballots also voiced support for the government to take punitive action.³⁸ A Gallup Poll in August 1967 asked what could be done to prevent riots from developing, and the highest response after “I Don’t Know” was to institute stronger repressive measures at 17 percent. The second highest was to punish the agitators and groups responsible at 14 percent, and only 11 percent answered making education and job opportunities available.

President Johnson gave two speeches regarding the Detroit riots, and both were well received by the Silent Majority. In the latter, he announced the development of the

³⁷ *Final Report of Cyrus R. Vance, Special Assistant to the Secretary Of Defense, Concerning the Detroit Riots, July 23 through August 2, 1967.* LBJ Library. Accessed 4/10/2015.

<http://www.lbjlib.utexas.edu/johnson/archives.hom/oralhistory.hom/Vance-C/DetroitReport.asp#LL>.

³⁸ Box 1, 1967; folder Compilations & Summaries January 1968-October 1968, Box 1 1968 (WH/LBJL).

Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, nicknamed the Kerner Commission after Chairman Governor Otto Kerner (Democrat-Illinois), to investigate the origins of the riots in Detroit and other cities. He took a hard line against the rioters, whom he called criminals -- not part of the civil rights movement -- and insisted they must be punished. He also stated that law enforcement needed to be respected, and reinforced a training program on riot control for the National Guard. At the same time, he disparaged those in Congress who did not pass his bills for urban reform that he assumed would rectify the situation.³⁹ As half of respondents supported LBJ's July 24th address, 54 percent agreed with his July 27th address.⁴⁰

Many people associated the riots in Detroit and elsewhere with Stokely Carmichael. The White House received 964 letters in 1967 regarding the Black Power leader, and all but five letters stood against him or his tactics.⁴¹ Based on Carmichael's inflammatory rhetoric about violence and dodging the draft, former Supreme Court Associate Justice Charles Whittaker wrote in *Human Events*, "I have no doubt whatever that Mr. Carmichael has thereby violated existing federal statutes and, of course, such violations constitute a basis for his prosecution under those statutes so violated." He claimed the U.S. Criminal Code of the Sedition Act of World War I provided for the imprisonment of "whoever incites, sets on foot, assists, or engages in rebellion or insurrection against the authority of the United States or the laws thereof, or gives aid or comfort thereto." Further, Title 18, Section 2385 of the U.S. Code makes it a federal

³⁹ Lyndon B. Johnson, Speech to the Nation on Civil Disorders, 7/27/1967. Miller Center. Accessed 4/7/2015. <http://millercenter.org/president/lbjohnson/speeches/speech-4040>

⁴⁰ Box 1, 1967, WH/LBJ.

⁴¹ "Recapitulation for 1967," Box 1, 1967, WH/LBJ.

crime to “advocate, abet or advise overthrowing or destroying the U.S. government or any political subdivision thereof by force or violence.” But the Justice Department was slow to act. One spokesman quoted in *Human Events* said they were “giving the matter careful consideration.”⁴²

Professor William E. Griffith, a historian and political scientist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, also railed against Stokely Carmichael and the media coverage of radicals. He wrote in *Reader’s Digest*, “People like Carmichael have been little more than propagandists. Any influence that they may have had has been due to the enormous overplaying given them by the mass media.” Unlike conservatives, he did not argue for a conspiracy or the threat of a revolution, instead seeing the riots as “fundamentally spontaneous, arising out of the accumulation of emotional frustration and hatred among the Negro masses.” Like the McCone Commission, he asserted that disappointed and alienated black youths in northern cities had no hope for economic progress, producing a “great urge to assert their manhood, to prove that they can do something, no matter how violent, to improve their condition.” Griffith suggested job training to rectify the gap between blacks and whites and put blacks on the same footing to compete for similar skilled jobs. He also recommended government aid, but to a smaller degree than Johnson’s plan.

Griffith suggested a revitalization of the inner cities and the development of ethnic pride. When it came to education, he fully agreed with integrating schools, but it was “clearly unrealistic to talk of transporting all the students or even half the students in

⁴² *Human Events* XXVII, no. 51, 12/23/1967, 1,4. folder Human Events, Box 8 (FP/STH).

the ghetto to white schools. The practical solution is to improve the schools in the ghettos themselves.” Though he disagreed with the violent type of Black Power preached by H. Rap Brown and Stokely Carmichael, he believed the positive side of Black Power was “entirely within the traditional framework of American politics and of the way in which ethnic minorities tend to become integrated in our society.”

Responsible civil rights leaders gave the black community “a sense of tradition, of pride in their African origin, pride in their leaders and the stability that comes from acting as a group,” which offered an economic base, a history, and a culture to rectify their emptiness since leaving their southern communities. Griffith concluded that to prevent riots, organized black teams with leaders able to work with the city administration, were needed to “cool the ghetto.” The “deflation of stored-up frustration and fury is the only fundamental solution.” He predicted that if black inner city areas were not rehabilitated, racial violence would ensue and expand, and whites would fight back, as evidenced by the formation of two white organizations set up for counter-violence in Newark and Detroit.⁴³

The report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (Kerner Commission) was released in March 1968, and outlined its findings on why the Newark and Detroit riots had occurred and what could be done to prevent a reoccurrence. Commission members came to the conclusion that “Our nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white—separate and unequal.” The commission agreed,

⁴³ William E. Griffith, “City Riots: Why? And Where do We Go from Here?” *Reader’s Digest*, 7/1968, 83-88.

“Disruption and disorder nourish repression, not justice. They strike at the freedom of every citizen. The community cannot—it will not—tolerate coercion and mob rule.” The report outlined a recommended course of action that put racial programs at the forefront of national attention and the priority for the Johnson administration, regardless of the high amount of funding and performance required.⁴⁴ As half of correspondents had supported LBJ’s plan for an investigation into the matter of riots, they also agreed with the findings of the Kerner Commission. Of letter writers, 66 percent supported the recommendations of the report and urged quick implementation, and only 18 percent disagreed.⁴⁵ Shortly after the report was released in 1968, Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated as he preparing for another march in Memphis, Tennessee.

Although Americans were sympathetic about the assassination, the letters expressed a disinterest with his planned Poor People’s March on Washington scheduled for June 1968. In the 2,243 letters addressed to the White House from the end of April 1968 to the 4th of July, only 29 percent supported the march while 56 percent opposed it; the rest were uncategorized comments. Later in the summer of 1969, 61 percent of those polled still thought blacks were pushing civil rights too fast.⁴⁶ Almost two-thirds (60 percent) polled answered that civil rights demonstrators harmed more than helped their cause.⁴⁷ Americans were also unhappy about President Nixon’s handling of “race and civil rights questions,” as only 32 percent were favorable but 57 percent were

⁴⁴ Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, Accessed 4/7/2015.

<http://www.blackpast.org/primary/national-advisory-commission-civil-disorders-kerner-report-1967>.

⁴⁵ folder Compilations & Summaries January 1968-October 1968. Box 1 1968 (WH/LBJ).

⁴⁶ Nixon Poll, July 1969 (RCPOR).

⁴⁷ Harris Survey, September 1969 (RCPOR).

unfavorable.⁴⁸ Many Americans wanted the federal government to take greater action to heal the country through law and order, which seemed futile as the Black Panthers launched a new fight against law enforcement.

Black Panthers

CORE and SNCC had declined by 1966, but the “Black Power” turmoil inspired by black nationalist rhetoric increased. Stokely Carmichael as chairman of SNCC, William Epton as head of the Harlem branch of the Progressive Labor Party, and Max Stanford, the leader of the newly-organized Black Panther group in Harlem, came together at a SNCC rally to unite and take over their own communities, calling for violence. Stanford told the crowd that black men must unite and overthrow their white “oppressors,” like panthers, “striking by night and sparing no one.” He said the U.S. “could be brought down to its knees with a rag and some gasoline and a bottle,” referring to the basic ingredients of a fire bomb.⁴⁹ Black Power organizations and speakers like the Afro-American Association, Malcolm X, the Soul Students Advisory Council and the Revolutionary Action Movement, stimulated Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale to form the official group in October 1966 in Oakland, California, to directly challenge police brutality and establish community service programs for blacks. Adopting Carmichael’s symbol of a black panther that he had used for the Lowndes County Freedom Organization in Alabama, Newton and Seale assembled the Black Panther

⁴⁸ Harris Survey, July 1969 (RCPOR).

⁴⁹ “Black Panther Group Vows To Spare No One: Black Panthers Open Harlem Drive,” *New York Amsterdam News*, 9/3/1966, 1. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

Party for Self Defense, complete with a uniform of blue shirt, black pants, black leather jackets, and black berets. Other radicals, such as Eldridge Cleaver, Robert Williams, and Bobby Hutton stood out as prominent members. After researching California gun carry laws, Newton decided to organize outwardly armed black patrols to follow policemen around Oakland's neighborhoods.⁵⁰

The Panthers made their name and mission known to the world on May 2, 1967. They protested the California State Assembly's discussion of the "Mulford Act" which would make the public carrying of loaded firearms illegal, thus prohibiting the Panthers' armed displays. About thirty members entered the assembly carrying weapons, terrifying those in the capital and around the nation. Seale and five others were arrested on misdemeanor charges of disrupting a legislative session.⁵¹ Two weeks following the assembly incident, the *Black Panther Newspaper* outlined a multi-point program, "What We Want Now!" It included freedom for the black community, full employment, the end of robbery of the community, decent housing, truthful and inclusive education, military exemption for African Americans, end of police brutality, the release of all black prisoners, and ending court trials. Panthers called for "land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice, and peace."⁵²

Although initially formed on a broad definition of black self-defense, the development of the Black Panthers became focused on the advocacy of violence. Like

⁵⁰ Joshua Bloom and Waldo E. Martin, Jr., *Black against Empire: The History and Politics of the Black Panther Party* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 11, 30-39.

⁵¹ "Armed Negroes Protest Gun Bill: 30 Black Panthers Invade Sacramento Legislature Lawmakers," *New York Times*, 5/3/1967, 23. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

⁵² "What We Want Now!" *Black Panther Newspaper*, 5/15/1967, 3.

the media portrayal of radical liberalism in other social movements, the media again focused on the dangerous side of the Panthers. The blatant open carrying of pistols, rifles, and shotguns, the wearing of bandoliers of gun shells, along with their chants against cops solidified the Black Panther reputation as a violent organization. New recruits were introduced to readings that included communists, nationalists, and revolutionaries like Malcolm X, W.E.B. DuBois, Marcus Garvey, and Mao Tse-tung. At a rally in San Francisco, Newton told blacks to arm themselves, for, “Every time you go execute a white racist Gestapo cop, you are defending yourself.” Bobby Seale added that a couple of blacks could surprise a policeman on his coffee break with a 12-gauge shotgun—“vroom, vroom”—and “righteous power.”⁵³

FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover took direct action to stop the threat of the Panthers. On August 25, 1967, the FBI established a new program titled COINTELPRO—BLACK HATE to “expose, disrupt, misdirect, discredit, or otherwise neutralize the activities” of any “black nationalist, hate-type organizations and groupings, their leadership, spokesmen, membership, and supporters, and counter their propensity for violence and civil disorder.” The Bureau particularly targeted SNCC, SCLC, RAM, the Deacons for Defense and Justice, CORE, and of most interest, the Nation of Islam, along with leaders Stokely Carmichael, H. Rap Brown, Elijah Mohammad, and Maxwell Stanford.⁵⁴

⁵³ Sol Stern, “The Call Of the Black Panthers,” *New York Times*, Aug 6, 1967, 186. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

⁵⁴ Memo, FBI Director to All Offices, “Counterintelligence Program Black Nationalist – hate groups,” FBI Vault. Accessed 4/8/2015. <http://vault.fbi.gov/cointel-pro/cointel-pro-black-extremists/cointelpro-black-extremists-part-01-of/view>.

The FBI belatedly identified a weakness in the association of black organizations that were stuck in a power struggle. In July 1968, the Black Panthers and SNCC had announced that since February, they developed a working arrangement in their unification “against the mounting forces of repression, such as the arming of white citizens and the assassinating of black leaders.” This merger was not surprising, since many SNCC members had taken over leadership positions within the Panthers.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, the alliance was short-lived, as violence between the two groups erupted in September. Carmichael was expelled from SNCC in August, and the SNCC office in September reported a series of three attacks over the course of a couple days, where bullets were fired. Lester McKinney, Washington Director of SNCC, blamed the attacks on the Black Panthers and Carmichael, alleging, “if the Black Panthers took over SNCC it would give them tremendous strength in the ghetto.”⁵⁶ However, FBI memos did not fully evaluate the Black Panthers until October 1968, when agents noticed gaps in Panther security that allowed for penetration of the membership. The New York Panther branch also exhibited a fear of factionalism and retaliation by other black radicals that made them close their New York office.⁵⁷ The FBI goal then was to discredit the Black Panthers in the eyes of both whites and blacks and prevent them from forming alliances with other black organizations.

⁵⁵ “Black Panthers, SNCC Join,” *New York Amsterdam News*, 8/3/1968, 3. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

⁵⁶ “Black Panthers Attacked SNCC's Office Charged,” *Chicago Daily Defender*, 9/9/1968, 5. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

⁵⁷ Memo, FBI Director Hoover to SAC, New York, “Field Guidance,” 11/7/1968. FBI Vault. Accessed 4/8/2015. <http://vault.fbi.gov/cointel-pro/cointel-pro-black-extremists/cointelpro-black-extremists-part-07-of-1/view>.

The Black Panthers in California also clashed with police over a series of violent incidents. In October 1967 in Oakland, Huey Newton was pulled over by a policeman. The episode ended with a dead policeman, John Frey, another policeman shot three times, and Newton critically wounded.⁵⁸ The latter's imprisonment over the incident led to loud outcries to "Free Huey." During Newton's trial, a black military column marched in from of the Alameda County courthouse, proclaiming, "Pigs go home."⁵⁹ Newton was found guilty of involuntary manslaughter, a verdict the Panthers rejected, leading to their threats of war. The Panther field marshal argued, "It was a racist decision by a racist court."⁶⁰ Additionally, in April 1968, Panther Bobby Hutton was killed as he was walking to the police with his hands over his head during a shootout between Panthers and police. Officers also arrested Eldridge Cleaver and eight others in the incident. Two policemen and Cleaver were injured.⁶¹ In August 1968 in Los Angeles, a battle between fifteen policemen and a dozen blacks ensued after policemen in two cars investigated a series of insults hurled at them from two cars carrying black individuals within. Reinforcements for both sides expanded the shootout. Casualties included three Black Panthers killed, and two policemen wounded.⁶²

⁵⁸ "Oakland Officer Slain in Black Panther Clash," *Los Angeles Times*, 10/29/1967, EB. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

⁵⁹ "Oakland Militants: Black Panthers Fight Back," *The Austin Statesman*, 7/18/1968, B18. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

⁶⁰ Earl Caldwell, "Angry Panthers Talk of War and Unwrap Weapons," *New York Times*, 9/10/1968, 30. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

⁶¹ Lawrence E. Davies, "Black Panthers Denounce Policemen," *New York Times*, 4/13/1968, 12. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

⁶² "5 Black Panthers Held In Gun Fight," *New York Times*, 8/10/1968, 28. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

In October 1968, the San Francisco area experienced other clashes, including more gunfights between police and Panthers. After a gas station holdup, police halted a truck emblazoned “Black Panther Community News Service.” At least one of the blacks in the truck fired, injuring three policemen; eight suspects were arrested for robbery and assault with intent to murder.⁶³ In November in Berkeley, police pulled over three black men (two were Panthers) who shot at the officer, resulting in injuries to both the driver and the policemen.⁶⁴

Across the continent, violence in New York also took over headlines. On August 2, 1968 in Brooklyn, three Black Panthers ambushed two policemen responding to a false report of help.⁶⁵ In retaliation, a group of about 200 off-duty police officers, members of the Law Enforcement Group, attacked a group of Black Panthers and SDS members in the hallway of the Brooklyn criminal courts building where the hearing was scheduled for the three Panthers.⁶⁶ After an investigation requested by Mayor John Lindsay into the matter, the Civil Review Board members recommended no arrests or charges against the offending police officers.⁶⁷

Violent incidents erupted between the Black Panthers and police in New Jersey and elsewhere. In Jersey City on November 30, 1968, four black males associated with

⁶³ “3 Cops Hurt In Gun Battle With Negroes: Truck Bears Sign of Black Panthers,” *Chicago Tribune*, 11/20/1968, 27. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

⁶⁴ “California Panthers In Third Shoot-Out With Police,” *New Pittsburgh Courier*, 11/30/1968, 4. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

⁶⁵ David Burnham, “Black Panthers Sought in West In Ambush of Brooklyn Police,” *New York Times*, 9/4/1968, 38. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

⁶⁶ Thomas Powers, “N.Y. Cops in Civvys Attack Black Panthers,” *Chicago Daily Defender*, 9/5/1968, 4. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

⁶⁷ “N.Y. Mayor, Police Chief Rap 150, Including Off-Duty Cops,” *New Pittsburgh Courier*, 9/14/1968, 1. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

the Panthers sprayed the Fifth Precinct station with machinegun fire.⁶⁸ In retaliation, a couple of Newark police officers threw firebombs into the Panther headquarters, injuring seven.⁶⁹ In hopes of deflating the situation, the Newark Panthers tried to improve their image by abandoning their black uniforms and necklaces of bullets.⁷⁰ But relations between police and the Panthers in Jersey deteriorated in December as the two groups battled in five separate clashes.⁷¹ Two gunfights in Robbins, outside Chicago, left six wounded and five Panthers arrested.⁷²

The discovery of an alleged Panther plot to bomb several areas in New York City dominated the racial headlines for months. In April 1969, twenty-one members of the party were arrested and indicted on charges of conspiracy to murder, arson, and possession of weapons and explosives. Their plot evidently involved planting bombs at Macy's, Alexander's, Bloomingdale's, Korvette's, and Abercrombie & Fitch at the height of the Easter shopping season. They also planned to dynamite the tracks of the New Haven branch of the Penn Central station and the police station at Third Avenue and 160th Street in the Bronx. The conspirators had already detonated bombs at a police station and a school district headquarters the previous November. Undercover agents had foiled several plots, including one on the Statue of Liberty, and a plan to begin guerilla

⁶⁸ "Panthers Linked To Case In Jersey: Arrest of 7 Tied to Shooting of a Police Station," *New York Times*, 12/1/1968, 70. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

⁶⁹ "7 Hurt in N. J. Panther HQ Firebombing," *Chicago Tribune*, 12/2/1968, A2. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

⁷⁰ Sal Giuffre, "Black Panthers Improving Their Image In N.J." *Chicago Daily Defender*, 12/11/1968, 10. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

⁷¹ "Panthers, Jersey Police In 5 Separate Clashes," *New York Amsterdam News*, 12/21/1968, 58. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

⁷² Henry Wood, "6 in Robbins Are Wounded In Gun Melees: 5 Black Panthers Are Held in Incidents," *Chicago Tribune*, 4/3/1969, 10. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

warfare in New York.⁷³ In May 1969, eight Panthers were arrested and charged with the murder of a Panther member whom they suspected to be an informant. Those indicted were accused of torturing Alex Rackley, killing him, and dumping his body in the Coginchaug River. New York City Police Chief James F. Athern claimed there was a “direct link” between the assassination and the bomb conspirators.⁷⁴ The following month in Chicago, sixteen Panthers were indicted for kidnapping and torturing a man and a woman suspected to be informants.⁷⁵

The Black Panther Party began to unravel in mid-1969 after reaching its height. It may have enrolled as many as 5,000 members, but it was beset by internal power struggles, clashes with other revolutionary groups, financial problems, and attempts to redefine its ideology.⁷⁶ As Huey Newton was serving jail time for his crime, the leadership turned toward Bobby Seale and David Hilliard. Stunning information came from two Panther defectors testifying in a U.S. Senate Permanent Investigations Committee hearing. Seale devolved to being “drugged day by day by scotch.” Hilliard directed a shift toward robberies of ghetto business owners, and distributing coloring books to kids in their breakfast program that depicted blacks using violence against police. One defector claimed, “a lot of teenage girls are used by the Party members” for

⁷³ Morris Kaplan, “Bomb Plot Is Laid To 21 Panthers,” *New York Times*, 4/3/1969, 1. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

⁷⁴ John Darnton, “8 Black Panthers Seized in Torture-Murder Case,” *New York Times*, 5/23/1969, 24. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

⁷⁵ “16 Black Panthers Indicted in Kidnaping of Man, Woman,” *Chicago Tribune*, 6/11/1969, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, 3.

⁷⁶ Guy Halverson, ‘Someone ... is Firing at us’: Panther-Police Clashes,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 12/8/1969, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, 7.

their own “sexual satisfaction.” She added that she frequently saw mail and phone calls from China and Cuba come into the Panther headquarters.⁷⁷ Richard Shaw, a staff investigator for the House Internal Security Committee, attested he had never before seen such “repression of the Negro community more than the Panthers do.”⁷⁸ Stokely Carmichael quit as the Panthers’ “honorary prime minister” in July, calling the Panther methods to purge those in disagreement with new Party ideals “dishonest and vicious,” a damning statement indeed. He left the country to work on a pan-African unification.⁷⁹ FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover said that of all black extremist groups, “the Black Panther Party, without question, represents the greatest threat to the internal security of the country.”⁸⁰

Even as the organization unraveled, the last few months of 1969 saw a rise in Panther violence. A gun battle in Chicago led to the wounding of a policeman and the arrest of seven Panthers.⁸¹ On December 4, a shootout between fourteen law enforcement officers with a search warrant and a group of Panthers in an apartment flat left two party members dead and seven arrested.⁸² Four days later, three policemen and six Panthers were wounded in an epic four-hour gun battle in Los Angeles after one

⁷⁷ George Lardner Jr., “Panthers: A Recital of Fear and Crime,” *Washington Post*, 6/19/1969, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, A1. “Panthers Withdraw Book,” *New York Times*, 6/25/1969, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, 23.

⁷⁸ William Kling, “Panthers Repressive to Negroes, Congress Told,” *Chicago Tribune*, 3/11/1970; ProQuest Historical Newspapers, 1.1

⁷⁹ Robert C. Maynard, “Carmichael Assails Black Panthers, Quits as ‘Honorary Prime Minister,’” *Washington Post*, 7/4/1969, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, A1.

⁸⁰ “Panthers Sizzling At Cops,” *New York Amsterdam News*, 8/2/1969, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, 1.

⁸¹ “Policeman Hurt In Battle With Black Panthers,” *Washington Post*, 10/5/1969, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, 19.

⁸² Guy Halverson, ‘Someone ... is Firing at us’: Panther-Police Clashes,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 12/8/1969, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, 7.

policeman had gone to the Panther headquarters to request a lower volume for their loudspeakers. Two Panthers confronted them, giving the policemen three seconds to leave on pain of death. Police returned with a search warrant ten days later to search for hidden guns. Four officers met with immediate gunfire as Panthers fired at them behind sandbags, armed with gas masks, homemade grenades, and machine guns. A battle ensued. 250 police had amassed on the scene and had sealed off a 16-block radius. Police arrested 19 persons, and reported a stockpile of weapons including rifles, pistols, a machine gun, and thirty Molotov cocktails. LAPD Inspector Howe said, "The Panthers have power beyond their size because they are so fanatical and they create fear. They are increasing in their troublemaking ability." In Chicago, the same thing happened when police raided a domicile with a search warrant; the Panthers fired upon them with shotguns. The Panthers' December 6th weekly newspaper printed a drawing of dead pigs wearing stars to represent police officers, with a black man standing over them, captioned, "One gun in the hands of a guerilla is the seat of a revolution."⁸³

The issue of hate between blacks and police officers, particularly black defiance of policemen, angered the Silent Majority. One officer in a *U.S. News and World Report*, in response to a question about black youths calling cops "pigs," replied, "Well, this is disrespect for law. And if you don't respect the law, then you have no law enforcement, and if you have no law enforcement, you have chaotic conditions." He argued that this treatment was considered disorderly conduct and should be treated as such, "But nobody

⁸³ Dial Torgerson, "Police Seize Panther Fortress in 4-Hour Gunfight, Arrest 13," *Los Angeles Times*, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, 1. "A Close Look at 'Black Panther' Shootout," *U.S. News and World Report*, 12/22/1969, 25-26.

seems to want the law enforced.” As a policeman, he asserted, “Police wanted the respect of the people.” But it was hard to recruit police to put their lives on the line for little pay and no respect.⁸⁴

Black policemen did not have an easier job either. A *Reader’s Digest* article pointed out that they were “subjected to discrimination by his white superiors,” and “scorned by militants in his own neighborhood.” Out of the nation’s 400,000 policemen, an estimated 15,000-20,000 were black, and they faced discrimination from the stations and white policemen as well. Even though some were seen as “brothers” in the community, others were perceived as “Toms” and “tools” of the “white oppressors.” In New Orleans and New York, militants especially targeted black cops for assassination.⁸⁵

The Black Panther Party reputation also threatened a fair trial of arrested Panther members. The “Chicago Eight” arrested for disrupting the Democratic National Convention in 1968, were put on trial in October 1969. However, two jurors received letters stating, “You are being watched,” signed, “The Black Panthers,” leading to the jury’s sequester.⁸⁶ In February 1970, the trial of the thirteen indicted Panthers for the New York City bomb plot was laced with sensationalism that also endangered the case. The defendants threatened to walk out of their own trial during their pretrial hearing, even erupting in a chorus of oinks.⁸⁷ The home of Judge John Murtagh, who was

⁸⁴ “Curbing Crime: A Policeman Speaks Out,” *U.S. News and World Report*, 12/22/1969, Condensed in *Reader’s Digest*, 12/1971, 202-208.

⁸⁵ Trevor Armbrister, “The Lonely Struggle of the Black Cop,” *Reader’s Digest*, 3/1971, 123-127.

⁸⁶ J. Anthony Lukas, “Threats Against 2 ‘Chicago 8’ Jurors Reported,” *New York Times*, 10/1/1969, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, 34.

⁸⁷ Karl E. Meyer, “N.Y. Panther Hearing Ends in Uproar,” *Washington Post*, 2/10/1970, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, A3.

presiding over the case, was bombed, with “Free the Panther 21” and “Vietcong Have Won” scrawled on the sidewalk.⁸⁸ In May 1970, Yale University President Kingman Brewster stated he was skeptical about the possibility of black militants receiving a fair trial. Former Supreme Court Chief Justice Earl Warren also warned about prejudices in the courtroom.⁸⁹

Conservatives were also concerned about a fair trial, but were apprehensive about the threat of the Panthers on the hearings themselves. *Life Line* magazine reported on the quick decisions made by juries that the author decided were pressured. For example, twelve Black Panthers in criminal court in New Orleans for attempted murder in the September 1970 shoot-out with police were found innocent by unanimous vote after only a 30-minute deliberation. The newsletter argued, “They are figuratively and literally getting away with murder. In case after case the Black Panthers on trial are acquitted, or there is a hung jury, or they are able to escape punishment on some technicality.” Assistant District Attorney Numa Bertel told the jury that the Black Panthers made their own law, saying, “You must decide whether it is their law or the law you and I live by is the right one.” Writer Melvin Munn speculated that the jurors were afraid to declare neighborhood members guilty out of fear of violent retaliation. “As so many of us have continually reported,” he claimed, “the Black Panthers are part of a national conspiracy to overthrow our government by violence.” Bobby Seale and Ericka Huggins, who were accused of murdering a police informant, were released after a hung

⁸⁸ Emanuel Perlmutter, “Justice Murtagh's Home Target of 3 Fire Bombs: Judge's Home Target of Fire Bombs,” *New York Times*, 2/22/1970, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, 1.

⁸⁹ “Is A Fair Trial Possible?” *New York Amsterdam News*, 5/9/1970, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, 1.

jury. The judge said they couldn't get a fair trial even after giving 1,500 interviews to find a jury, and two of them even cheered for Bobby Seale. *Life Line* asserted, "The Black Panthers and their followers must be laughing. But for the rest of America, it isn't funny."⁹⁰ In July 1970, a juror claimed illness, resulting in a mistrial after the 19-week trial of the three Black Panthers accused of machine-gunning a Jersey City police station.⁹¹ The state agreed not to start a new trial, and the three agreed to lesser charges.⁹² The seven Panthers in Chicago arrested in the December 4 shootout with policemen were also freed after the State Attorney Edward V. Hanrahan cited lack of sufficient proof legally obtained, even though the police were on the premises with a warrant to search for weapons. County Judge Saul A. Epton argued the case dismissal was "an answer to the president of Yale University."⁹³

Average Americans and the Silent Majority found their voice regarding the Chicago Black Panther case. In December 1969, several citizens of Illinois wrote to the *Chicago Tribune* about the recent Panther events and trials. Even if several individuals sympathized with those killed in the shootout, the majority sided with law and order. Maurice H. Duncan from Stokie, Illinois, wrote of his disgust with the "left-wing press, demagogues, and rabble-rousers to fit the cloak of martyrdom to Fred Hampton," one of those killed in the Chicago police shootout. He argued that Hampton had promoted

⁹⁰ "Black Panthers and Juries," *Life Line*, No. 15, 11/11/1971, folder Black Panthers, Frank L. Price, Box 12, Hoover.

⁹¹ "Juror Ill, 3 Panthers Get Mistrial," *Washington Post*, 7/11/1970, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, A4.

⁹² "Panthers Sentenced On Lesser Charges," *Washington Post*, 10/10/1970, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, C3.

⁹³ Seth S. King, "7 Panthers Freed In Chicago Clash," *New York Times*, 5/9/1970, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, 1.

“subversion, terrorism, and revolution,” and was known to be armed and dangerous. He regretted that the Panthers had not been “put out of business years ago,” which would have prevented much bloodshed. In the same opinion article, H. E. Mullan of Sterling, Illinois, pointed out the inconsistencies between the releasing of information from the police or the accused from prejudicing a jury, as it seemed the radicals could “build an image of the police as gun-happy murderers.” Edward F. Lewis of Tinley Park, Illinois, also shared his revulsion with “supposedly intelligent citizens [who] make wild statements and accusations about the Black Panther killings,” reminding the readers that the raided apartment was “loaded with unregistered firearms.” Both Mullan and Lewis reiterated the revolutionary goal of the Panthers.⁹⁴

The following week, the *Chicago Tribune* also carried letters reaction to Fred Hampton and the dismissed case. Richard Faris called the recent editorials that sympathized with the Panthers “a weird and dangerous philosophy.” He asserted, “The doctrine of permissiveness and fear appears to advocate a course of appeasement of the black community” because the black community was outraged and “filled with tension.” Nonetheless, he argued, the mere fact of outrage cannot be allowed to influence the investigation or the course of law enforcement. Paul C. Bryan, attacking one editorial that addressed the fear of a law-abiding citizen of the police, turned the argument to Fred Hampton, who had stated in court his support of armed revolution. Bryan instead upheld his city policemen who were willing to put their lives on the line, as two officers silently

⁹⁴ Lionel Snodgrass, Maurice H. Duncan, Walter Oleksy, H. E. Mullan, et al, “Voice Of The People: Black Panthers,” *Chicago Tribune*, 12/13/1969, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, N12.

did on November 13. Margaret Amton also pointed out those officers' deaths and asked where the indignation was about their fate.⁹⁵

Of course, the BPP and other black radicals were censured for their communist influences. This was easy with their promotion of revolutionary readings like those by Ho Chi Minh, Malcolm X, and Mao Tse-tung. Two journalists writing for the *Austin Statesman* penned a 1970 article about an unpublicized Panther meeting at Malcolm X University in Chicago, asserting that the real purpose of the meeting was to “open the way for the communists to set up fronts to enable them to gain control of the Panthers and other black extremists.” Communists present were Charlene Mitchell (the CP presidential candidate in 1968), William Patterson, Claude Lightfoot, and Ishmael Flory, and 500 others were registered attendees from twenty-three known communist and leftist organizations.⁹⁶ A column in the *Los Angeles Times* exposed the BPP's close ties with communist parties in other countries who had funded the Panthers.⁹⁷ In Los Angeles, Panthers who called themselves the vanguard of the “peoples' revolution,” trained about one hundred young men and women in “guerilla warfare, including sabotage, handling machine guns, hand grenades and other weapons.” It resulted in two assassinated police officers sitting in their car. According to the *Los Angeles Times*, several members

⁹⁵ Richard Faris, Paul C. Bryan, Margaret Amton, Paul Moore, et al, “Voice Of The People: Black Panthers,”

Chicago Tribune, 12/19/1969, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, 24.

⁹⁶ Robert S. Allen and John A. Goldsmith, “U.S. Communist Front: Party Seeks Control of Panthers, Other Extremists,” *The Austin Statesman*, 3/26/1970, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, A4.

⁹⁷ Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, “Red-and-Black Panthers,” *Los Angeles Times*, 1/15/1970, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, C7.

revealed the plan to form an alliance with the Chinese, North Vietnamese, North Koreans, Africans, and others, mainly coordinated by Eldridge Cleaver.⁹⁸

Still, the popularity of the radicals was short-lived. A *Newsweek* article in the beginning of 1970 commented that the trendiness of radicals was already waning. The journalist had noticed that even the mention in conversation of radicals, rage and alienation, or women's liberation resulted in a "glazing of the eyeballs." Tom Wolfe had first coined the term "radical chic" in a set of *New York* magazine articles, which became his book *Radical Chic & Mau-Mauing the Flak Catchers*. He described liberal composer Leonard Bernstein's famous fundraising party for the Black Panthers, including white South American servants, leather-clad black men and women with real Afros, and decadent foods. Don Cox, Field Marshal of the Black Panther Party and one of the "Panther 21," those arrested for conspiracy of bombing in New York, gave a speech to the high-class liberals, an act referred to as "mau mauing." Cox articulated the Panther Ten-Point program in hopes of raising funds to pay jail bonds for those still incarcerated. However, the throwing of social parties by the elite for the Panthers quickly fizzled, for, "Radical Chic, after all, is only radical in style; in its heart it is part of Society and its traditions."⁹⁹ A guest editorial in the *Chicago Tribune* called Bernstein's soiree a mockery of Martin Luther King, Jr.¹⁰⁰ *Newsweek* agreed that radical

⁹⁸ Roy Haynes, "Panthers vs. Police: Where They Stand Today: Panthers Follow Mao Teachings in Training,"

Los Angeles Times, 6/21/1970, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, A1.

⁹⁹ Tom Wolfe, "Radical Chic: That Party at Lenny's," *New York Magazine*, 6/8/1970. Accessed 4/8/2015. <http://nymag.com/news/features/46170/>

¹⁰⁰ "Guest Editorials: False Note On Black Panthers," *Chicago Tribune*, 1/17/1970; ProQuest Historical Newspapers, A10.

chic “was essentially a fad, and all fads die. They occupy the obsessive attention of the nation for a time. Then they become a bore, and they die, utterly, overnight.”¹⁰¹

Likewise, the obsession with the Panthers as an oppressed advocate for the black community cooled soon as court cases condemned Panther violence and Americans pushed for law and order. Even the portrayal of the Panthers in the blaxploitation film *Shaft* (1971) grappled with black revolutionaries. In one scene, Shaft and Ben Buford hide in an old lady’s apartment to evade their assassin. After the danger had passed, Buford grabbed a pair of sharp scissors with the intent of stabbing Shaft for the situation he was in. But the old lady interrupted him, imploring, “Young man, please, don’t do that.” Buford debated following through, but ultimately tossed the scissors on the couch and left with Shaft. Huey Newton did not like the film’s treatment of black revolutionaries. “They leave revolution out,” he said, “or if it’s in, they make it look stupid and naive. I think it’s part of a conspiracy.”¹⁰² He was essentially correct, for the film depicts Buford as effeminate, subordinate, and weak in comparison to the detective Shaft, who is always in control of the situation, the police, and women.

Richard Nixon’s solidified the problem as a political one. In his Republican National Convention acceptance speech in August 1968, he focused on the issue of law

¹⁰¹ Stewart Alsop, “Radical Chic is Dead,” *Newsweek*, 12/14/1970, condensed in *Reader’s Digest*, 2/1971, 103-104.

¹⁰² Joe Bob Briggs, “Who Dat Man?: Shaft and the Blaxploitation Genre,” *Cinéaste* 28, no. 2, Spring 2003, 24-29.

and order. He articulated, "If we are to have respect for law in America, we must have laws that deserve respect."¹⁰³

A Harris Poll in May 1970 showed a polarization of races on the issue of racial violence, but both groups certainly did not side with the Panthers. Out of the polled white population, 81 percent to 7 percent believed that shootings of Black Panthers were mainly "the result of violence" started by the Black Panthers themselves rather than a "systematic effort on the part of law enforcement officers to wipe out the Panthers," as some had charged. Sixty-two percent also agreed that the Black Panthers were an "extremist group which wants to destroy America and cannot be tolerated," while 57 percent agreed that the BPP "should be put out of existence." In the black community, only 25 percent agreed with the Black Panther philosophy, of which 43 percent of teenagers were in agreement. However, two-thirds felt the BPP had given them "a sense of pride." On the question whether the BPP was a "serious menace," 66 percent of whites agreed, and only 21 percent of blacks did. When answering if they were "annoying but not serious," 24 percent of whites and 19 percent of blacks agreed. Remarkably, 34 percent of blacks thought the BPP was a force for good, though only 3 percent of whites did. A full third of responding blacks were not sure on the subject.¹⁰⁴

The Black Panther Party further divided themselves from the black community and the majority of America as it again redefined its ideology at the end of 1970. It also

¹⁰³ Richard Nixon, "Address Accepting the Presidential Nomination at the Republican National Convention in Miami Beach, Florida," 8/8/1968. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=25968>.

¹⁰⁴ Louis Harris, "Harris Survey: Panther Issue Stirs Up Unrest," *Chicago Tribune*, 5/11/1970, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, A1.

worked against the progress that the civil rights movement had made in the previous sixteen years as Panthers denounced integration in favor of *re-segregation*. At a joint convention with CORE in Philadelphia in September, they advocating abolishing the Constitution, create black states, and using “community councils” instead of courts—an imitation of the Maoist “People’s Courts.” They supported Communist movements in Southeast Asia and called for an end to “Zionist colonialism.” The Panthers called for the right of minorities to “integrate, segregate, federate, secede or do whatever they wish, so long as no group oppresses any other group.”¹⁰⁵ These radical notions led to the nadir of the BPP and a strong Silent Majority voice against them.

Black Silent Majority

Clay Claiborne, an African American Republican repelled by the negative image radical groups like the Panthers gave the black population, created a new organization to represent the other side. He took a personal tour of black communities around America and found “thousands of black Americans working hard – and making giant strides” who would “like the truth to be told.” Like fellow white Americans, this identified “Black Silent Majority” also felt “isolated, frustrated, sometimes abandoned.” This group of “distinguished blacks” had the aim “to show Americans, white and black, that Negroes can progress, and are progressing, under President Nixon’s policies.”¹⁰⁶ Claiborne set out to prove that “the vast majority of America’s twenty-two million blacks are not

¹⁰⁵ “Guest Editorial: The New Segregationists,” *Chicago Tribune*, 9/28/1970, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, 18.

¹⁰⁶ “National Black Silent Majority Director Meets with Gary Branch Leaders,” folder The Black Silent Majority Committee, Box 88 (CC/NL).

represented by the violent black minority who advocate militant action” against American establishments. “We believe that black revolutionaries and militants, upon whom some segments of the news media seem to date, are not dedicated to progress for our people,” contended Claiborne. “Blacks don’t want to burn America down. We want to build America—and, like all patriotic Americans, earn enough money to own part of this great nation.”

Claiborne became one of the organizers and spokesmen for a black national committee, serving as national director of the new group called the Black Silent Majority Committee (BSMC). The group was founded on July 4, 1970, in Washington, D.C., with an executive committee that consisted of prominent members from twenty-two states. He claimed that unless the organization’s story was heard, 85 to 90 percent of blacks would still vote Democratic and stay in the cycle of despair, allowing “radicals like Angela Davis, Huey Newton, S.D.S., and the Black Panthers” to turn desolation into revolution. The BSMC put together a high-power “Flying Squad” of black leaders who had become “sick and tired of self-styled revolutionaries” and a “violent handful of black militants and radicals” from garnering all the attention in the news. Ready to speak out against their agitation, these “Black patriots,” who were also avid Republicans, urged black citizens on a national tour to “support Constitutional Government, stand up for law and order, and cooperate with police efforts to maintain safe streets.”¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁷ National Black Silent Majority Committee Letter Mailing, circa June 1971, folder The National Black Silent Majority, Box 233 (GR/CUA).

The BSMC's Statement of Beliefs was widely mailed out to black citizens and organizations. It detailed their belief that "progressive, upstanding but silent citizens" were being "shouted down by a handful of militants who do not represent us." These "revolutionaries" were committed more to "their own aggrandizement and to violent overthrow of the American way of life" than true progress for their race. Therefore, the BSMC offered to help raise "the voice of patriotism and responsibility" and mandate their portion of media attention, "using the press, television, radio, newsletter and all other means available in this bountiful land." They advocated the teaching of the principles of constitutional government to and by blacks to disrupt the "welfare-liberalism' stranglehold that has bound too many blacks for too long." The BSMC thus urged blacks to participate in the electoral process and instead of mindlessly voting the Democratic ticket, support "only candidates who adhere to the principles of constitutional government, law, order, and justice."¹⁰⁸ The BSMC asserted, "while no nation is perfect, America is by far the finest nation available to blacks."¹⁰⁹

National Director Clay Claiborne received supportive letters from Presidents Nixon, Ford, and Reagan for his efforts. Nixon commended the Committee's efforts to "make all Americans aware of how profoundly the majority of our Black fellow citizens contribute daily to the progress and prosperity of our communities and country; and how

¹⁰⁸ "The Black Silent Majority Committee Statement of Beliefs," folder The National Black Silent Majority, Box 233 (GR/CUA).

¹⁰⁹ "National Black Silent Majority Director Meets with Gary Branch Leaders," folder The Black Silent Majority Committee, Box 88 (CC/RNL).

committed they are to our precious heritage.”¹¹⁰ On July 9, 1970, Senator Strom Thurmond (R-South Carolina) even entered their formation into the Senate Record.¹¹¹ Nonetheless, Nixon’s aide, George Bell, recommended that Nixon hold off meeting with Claiborne. The latter had served as Special Assistant to three Chairmen of the Republican National Committee (1962-66), with the Nixon/Lodge Volunteers 1960 campaign, as well as a Special Consultant to the Congressional Committee for several months from 1969-1970. Although Claiborne was a strong supporter and loyal to Nixon, Bell advised that meeting with him at that point was premature.¹¹² The group still made Nixon an honorary member.¹¹³

In 1971, the BSMC took to national outreach to spread their message. By 1971, the organization had 9,000 members.¹¹⁴ In a news conference, the BSMC announced an eight-person tour to 78 cities comprised of at least 30 percent black people to “restore a positive image to black America.”¹¹⁵ Claiborne reemphasized, “Riots, looting, and burning are not the solution to black problems.”¹¹⁶ In 1975, they launched a 16,000-mile Crusade for Black Patriotism to “urge black citizens to repudiate violence and to close ranks with authorities in preventing bloody upheavals such as the nation suffered in the

¹¹⁰ Letter, President Nixon to Clay Claiborne, 10/7/1970, folder The National Black Silent Majority, Box 233 (GR/CUA).

¹¹¹ *Congressional Record*, Vol. 116, No. 115, 7/9/1970.

¹¹² Memo, George T. Bell to Charles W. Colson, 7/22/1970, Colson Box 88 folder National Black Silent Majority, (CC/RN).

¹¹³ Certificate of honorary membership, folder National Black Silent Majority, Box 88 (CC/RNL).

¹¹⁴ “Black Group’s Director Raps ‘Violent Few,’” *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, 7/29/1971.

¹¹⁵ Philip Shandler, “Black Silent Majority Plans Crusade,” *The Evening Star*, 5/13/1971, A-5.

¹¹⁶ “Black Group’s Director Raps ‘Violent Few,’” *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, 7/29/1971.

1960s.”¹¹⁷ However, the division between blacks and whites would once again be reopened as “forced” integration of schools was carried out through any means necessary, including busing.

Busing for Integration

By 1970, several civil rights leaders had all but given up on integrating public schools. CORE director Roy Innes decided that integration was a trap to keep blacks under white domination, and therefore only supported mixed schools if attended on a voluntary basis. Otherwise, he believed schools should be strictly segregated and controlled by race. Reverend Jesse Jackson, a leader of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, also declared his lack of patience with integration at a meeting of the “Congress of African People” in Chicago. He announced, “The time for integration is past,” and also supported calls for the creation of a separate black state.¹¹⁸ A surprising 41 percent of women polled in 1970 (89 percent white) also supported blacks creating their own society.¹¹⁹

Americans were still deeply divided on integration and how to achieve it. In the bi-annual American National Election Studies survey, citizens showed their uncertainty about desegregation. The number of those who supported desegregation increased from 32 to 44 percent from 1964 to 1970—desegregation’s climax—while segregationists

¹¹⁷ “Capitol Hill News Conference by the National Black Silent Majority Committee,” folder The National Black Silent Majority, Box 23 (GR/CUA).

¹¹⁸ “Guest Editorial: The New Segregationists,” *Chicago Tribune*, 9/28/1970, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, 18.

¹¹⁹ Virginia Slims American Women's Poll, August 1970 (RCPOR).

declined from 23 to 13 in those same years. Still, the majority, those who were in-between, wavered from 41 to 47 percent in support of desegregation, and increased continuously until 1978, topping at 54 percent.¹²⁰ When respondents were asked about how fast civil rights leaders were pushing for integration, between 63 and 65 percent of Americans polled from 1964 to 1968 rated the pace of civil rights leaders' action "too fast," as 19 to 27 percent in those years found it "about right." Moreover, in 1970, the numbers started to shift toward increasing the speed, as 35 percent of respondents found the pace about right, the number who found it too fast had dropped to 49 percent, and the amount who considered it too slow increased from 7 to 12 percent. In 1972 after a few years of busing, the balance reversed again, as more respondents believed busing had pushed integration too fast, as reflected in the 46 percent versus the previous 41 percent of those who answered "about right." Even so, from 1974 to 1992, the trend of those who considered the speed of integration as about right remained dominant over those who found it too fast, even if they were only a few points in separation (like 1974).¹²¹

More telling were the polled results about federal intervention. Between 37 to 49 percent supported white and black children attending the same school, with a high in 1970 and its low in 1972. There was more of a range for those who thought the government should stay out of integration, as its trough reached 31 percent in 1970 to mirror the optimism of integration, but also hit its crest at 45 percent two years later after

¹²⁰ Favor Desegregation or Segregation 1964-1978, ANES, RCPOR.

¹²¹ Pace of Civil Rights Leaders' Action 1964-1992, The ANES Guide To Public Opinion And Electoral Behavior (RCPOR).

busing had been enforced.¹²² These percentages backed the findings of the ANES busing survey, which revealed the majority of respondents did not want children bused out of their neighborhoods. Respondents were given a scale of 1-7 on which to place their view on personal busing, 1 being to bus children, and 7 to keep students in their own neighborhood. In 1972, only 5 percent placed themselves at a 1, and 70 percent placed themselves at a 7. The percentage of people against busing somewhat decreased by 1976, but only to 61 percent, retaining the majority against busing.¹²³

Letters written to President Nixon and his staff represented politically motivated moderates and conservatives who detested the process of busing. From 1969 to 1970, the White House received a burdening 61,050 letters about desegregation policies, almost unanimously standing for freedom of choice in schools; 99 percent supported the side of choice. By far, it was the most popular topic of writers during the summer of 1969, as new school guidelines were announced July 3. As school started that fall, letters waned in volume, but once again flared up in opposition to the movement of teachers and students mid-term to achieve racial balance, especially in the South. Letters continued on the topic almost through the end of the 1969-70 school year.¹²⁴ That August, a Virginia Slims poll of women revealed that 51 percent of women would be upset if black children would be bused into their neighborhood; 45 percent responded they would not be.¹²⁵

¹²² Federal Government Ensure School Integration 1962-2000, The ANES Guide To Public Opinion And Electoral Behavior (RCPOR).

¹²³ Busing to Achieve School Integration 1972-1984, The ANES Guide To Public Opinion And Electoral Behavior (RCPOR).

¹²⁴ Box 15 (WH/RN).

¹²⁵ Virginia Slims American Women's Poll 1970, Aug, 1970 (RCPOR).

When the Supreme Court made a decision on busing on April 20, 1971, in the case *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*, the backlash was immediate. In a review of the 1968 *Green v. County School Board* case, the Burger Court ruled that busing students as a “tool of school desegregation” was allowable up to the point of harming the health of the students or impinging on the educational process.¹²⁶ This decision would stand for the next three years, and would create a firestorm of dissent. Although busing had been applied to school districts in the South, the court decision brought a mandated integration through busing North. The busing cases determined two main outcomes: busing was allowed for integrating schools, but not from one district to another.

The Silent Majority mobilized a new voice to the issue that hit so close to home. In response, 251 oppositional telegrams hit the White House telegraph within a matter of days. Correspondence stayed steady for a whole year, and out of a received 104,564 letters and telegrams, 103,000 or 98.5 percent were against busing. Ten times as many people wrote the president about busing as they did about the Detroit riots. The weekly number peaked in August 1971 before school started, in September 1971 when classes resumed, and reached a nadir in the first week of March 1972 after school boycotts in Augusta, Georgia and Richmond, Virginia.¹²⁷ A 1971 Gallup Poll found 77 percent national opposition to busing. Blacks surprisingly split almost evenly on the subject.¹²⁸

¹²⁶ *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education* (No. 281), 402 U.S. 1 (1971). Accessed 3/25/2015.

<https://www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/402/1>

¹²⁷ Mail Summaries, Box 16 (WH/RN).

¹²⁸ <http://library.cqpress.com/cqalmanac/document.php?id=cqal72-1250143>

The racial conflict over segregated neighborhoods reached back to earlier economic origins of southern integration.¹²⁹

President Nixon gave two statements regarding busing in August of 1971. He announced the government's decision to appeal, on limited constitutional grounds, the case of the *United States v. Austin Independent School District*.¹³⁰ He also restated his position on the issue, proclaiming, "I am against busing as that term is commonly used in school desegregation cases. I have consistently opposed the busing of our Nation's schoolchildren to achieve a racial balance, and I am opposed to the busing of children simply for the sake of busing." While the executive branch would still uphold the Supreme Court's ruling, he instructed the Attorney General and the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare to only enforce the minimum required by law.¹³¹ Writers, although initially empathetic, turned against him within a few weeks. Some 71 percent of the first two weeks of letters (780) were pro-speech, but a wave of 4,624 letters, of which 99 percent were against Nixon's standpoint, flooded in from August 25 to September 9.¹³²

James Nathan Miller, a roving editor for *Reader's Digest*, put forth an article in October 1971 to analyze what would happen after busing started in the North. The Supreme Court had mandated that students could be bused only within the same school

¹²⁹ Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1996). Robert O. Self, *American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2003).

¹³⁰ "Minimum Busing Plan Is Appealed: Nixon Tells His Position," *The Austin American*, 8/4/1971.

¹³¹ Richard Nixon: "Statement About the Busing of Schoolchildren," 8/3/1971. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. Accessed 4/1/2015. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=3098>.

¹³² Folder Mail Reports 1/1/71-12/30/72 (2 of 3), Box 16 (WH/RNL).

district. It addressed schools with *de jure* segregation, which was mainly those in the South, but courts in Denver, San Francisco, Pontiac, and L.A. ordered busing also in *de facto* cases. This hotly debated issue revealed two main sides. On the one hand, only by exchanging students would desegregation be achieved. On the other hand, Americans feared busing would “lower the quality of education, increase the potential for violence in the schools, accelerate white flight to the suburbs, and widen the chasm between whites and blacks.” The article addressed the three main fears to busing. First, whites feared a wide reduction in educational standards for white students. But Meyer Weinberg’s study findings in *Desegregation Research: An Appraisal* showed that while the educational gap had only closed 20 to 25 percent between white and black students, black students had improved and white students had not declined in performance.

Secondly, Americans dreaded an increase in violence associated with integration, particularly in schools. However, the author argued community protests were on the decline; the Southern Regional Council in their 1970-71 survey found a “grudging adjustment of whites who now accept desegregation as an inevitable fact of life.” A 1970 Gallup poll showed 43 percent of white Southerners opposed sending their children to schools with enrollment as much as half black, which was down from 78 percent in 1963. When Berkeley, California, started busing, the community reaction was outspoken. A recall election almost fired the school board members for their desegregation plan, but cooperation between white and black leaders was by then at a high.

Lastly, proponents of desegregation feared the effects of white flight and resegregation. Sometimes, when a school population reached 50 percent black, a “tipping point” occurred when whites moved out of the neighborhood and blacks moved in, thus resegregating the school. The proposed solution for inner cities was to extend the *Swann* decision to instead bus students *across district boundaries* to reflect the composition of the whole community and not just a neighborhood. Other plans included building “magnet schools” with black neighborhoods, replace existing schools with large educational complexes at the divide between city and suburb, or to divide school districts like a pie to incorporate the inner city and suburbs.

A fourth parental fear not addressed in *Reader’s Digest* involved the spreading nature of urban crime culture. A *Time* article pointed out that parents were afraid that the buses destined for the suburbs brought with them the corrosive nature of the ghettos, especially in light of the Detroit riots. The article asserted that white parents feared that “their children will be exposed to what blacks have learned to hate—the rapes, ripoffs, robberies and dope addiction that have turned all too many inner-city schools into blackboard jungles where learning is less important than learning how to survive.” In addition, white suburban parents resented the fact that “courts they have never seen and judges they did not elect” were telling them that their children cannot use the schools they opted for. “I don’t see any reason why they’ve got a right to come in here and tell me my kids can’t use the school I bought and paid for,” says Mrs. Mary Jane Marcozzi of Madison Heights, Michigan, a Detroit suburb. She and her family planned to move if busing was brought to their community. “My kids may be riding a bus,” she says, “but it

won't be to Detroit.... [where] there's more dope, more robberies, more rapes, more of everything." Douglas Easter of Boston's Jamaica Plain, when he was informed that his children would have to attend a school three miles away, proclaimed he would instead "lay my body in front of any bus. I'll chain myself to the school doors."¹³³

A wide spectrum of people favored a different argument to put money into improving ghetto schools, called "compensatory education." This majority included black leaders who believed "the best hope for negro education lies in promoting minority pride and motivation by giving minority groups control over their own affairs." It also included white segregationists trying to escape forced integration, and "those who genuinely want integration but feel that to enforce it by court order will merely make matters worse by accelerating white flight and resegregation." Critics of compensatory education either attacked the idea for providing a sense of inferiority to the children who were isolated from the rest of the majority, or for harming white children by separating them from a vital group vital to America's history, culture and economy. Furthermore, critics argued the white power structure would never vote for enough funds for segregated schools regardless.¹³⁴ There was some merit in the last analysis, for the backlash against busing was clearly made manifest through legal approaches.

A 1971 document crafted by Stanley J. Pottinger, Director of Civil Rights in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, discussed the stream of legislative anti-bussing proposals, state laws, and court decisions. Between January 22, 1971 and

¹³³ "The Agony of Busing Moves North." *Time* 98, no. 20, 11/15/1971, 87. EbscoHost.

¹³⁴ James Nathan Miller, "What Happens After Busing Starts," *Reader's Digest*, 10/1971, 86-90.

September 30, 1971, 68 proposals were introduced in Congress about student assignment to schools, including 47 proposed constitutional amendments and 21 bills. These amendments could be classified into two categories: those who saw freedom of choice as a constitutional right, and those who disallowed the use of race for school assignments. Proposed bills covered four types: freedom of choice bills, neighborhood school bills, bills limiting jurisdiction of federal courts, and bills calling for equal application of desegregation law throughout the nation. Two states, New York and North Carolina, attempted anti-bussing statutes, but these were overturned by federal courts, while Georgia, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Alabama retained their statutes.

Pottinger pointed out the benefits and drawbacks of the recent proposed statutes and constitutional amendments. On one hand, the proposed attempts to stop busing supported the President's stated opposition and the position of the majority of citizens who opposed excessive bussing, as well as potentially serving as the only way to stop "the courts from going too far." Regardless, there were several drawbacks to the amendments. As the Burger Court had stated in *Swann v. Board of Education*, "When school authorities present a district court with a 'loaded game board,' affirmative action in the form of remedial altering of attendance zones is proper to achieve truly non-discriminatory assignments." Although the 14th Amendment was the basic constitutional protection for minorities, history had demonstrated that protection of desegregation was needed. If the White House supported constitutional amendments to limit busing, it would most likely "escalate the controversy and further divide the nation." Additionally, the bills would "interfere with local control of the schools," as they should have access

to “a wide range of techniques, including student assignment, to meet and solve the problem of unequal educational opportunities.”¹³⁵

Pottinger further discussed the heated debate about free choice. He recognized that “freedom of individual action is one of the basic concepts of the democratic system” and “should be supported and expended wherever possible.” Conversely, the central problem with the proposed free choice constitutional amendments is that “they would tend to require a free choice system of student assignment throughout the nation,” which would devoid the process of desegregation. Nonetheless, many blacks had shifted to the position of wanting separate schools for black children, as the concept of “cultural pluralism,” was gaining a growing acceptance.¹³⁶

The white reaction against proposed busing, particularly in places like Michigan, was fierce. The National Committee Against Forced Busing based in Warren, Michigan, sent out a mailing that referred to busing as the “systematic destruction” of neighborhood schools. The committee argued that even though opinion polls had shown opposition to busing, the “liberal oligarchy” used this act of tyranny against the American people. They sent out petitions to send to Congress to let them know the “true feelings” of the American people.¹³⁷ In Michigan, ten school buses were firebombed on the eve of the start of the new school year. The National Action Group organized a boycott of the schools, and the absentee rate stood at 24 percent even by the end of the

¹³⁵ J. Stanley Pottinger, Untitled Document, 10/25/1971, folder 233- Anti-Busing Amendment, Box 17 (JSP/GF).

¹³⁶ J. Stanley Pottinger, Untitled Document, 10/25/1971, folder 233- Anti-Busing Amendment, Box 17 (JSP/GF).

¹³⁷ Mailing, folder National Committee Against Forced Busing, Box 233, (GR/CUA).

first week. One antibusing poster in November in Pontiac read, “We're fighting for our civil rights now!”¹³⁸

Other places in the nation protested busing. In Nashville, Tennessee, mayoral candidate Casey Jenkins told 20,000 at an antibusing rally that “Communism is creeping into the city,” urging parents to write their representatives to end busing.¹³⁹ Boston had been a hot seat of desegregation since 1965, and in 1971 became the first city in the North found in violation of the Civil Rights Act to have its federal funding revoked.¹⁴⁰ Protests were even loud in San Francisco, that bastion of liberalism, especially by Chinese residents; in Rochester, New York, voters elected out a school board set on two-way busing. A Gallup Poll near the end of 1971 showed that 76 percent of respondents were firmly against busing.¹⁴¹ An October 1971 Harris Poll confirmed a 78 percent response rate in opposition to “forced racial neighborhood quotas.” The majority of respondents held the Supreme Court (36 percent) and local school officials responsible.¹⁴² Of course, racist groups in the South also fought the new busing mandates, such as the National White Americans Party, National White People’s Party in Asheville, Rights of White People, and the National Youth Alliance.¹⁴³

The response in Richmond, Virginia served as an example of the larger retort. A U.S. District Court Judge in Richmond who ordered the consolidation of school districts

¹³⁸ “The Agony of Busing Moves North,” *Time* 98, no. 20, 11/15/1971, 87. EbscoHost.

¹³⁹ “Busing (Contd.).” *Time* 98, no. 12, 9/20/1971, 28. Academic Search Complete, EbscoHost.

¹⁴⁰ “U.S. to Cite Boston on Imbalance,” *Boston Herald Traveler*, 11/30/1971 1, 6. EbscoHost.

¹⁴¹ “The Agony of Busing Moves North,” *Time* 98, no. 20, 11/15/1971, 87. EbscoHost.

¹⁴² Harris Poll, October 1971, folder A Study of the Issues of Concern to the American People, Box 375 (HH/RN).

¹⁴³ Folder National White Americans Party, folder National White People’s Party, folder National Youth Alliance, Box 250 (GR/CUA).

to desegregate schools received threats to his life. A *Life* article called compulsory busing “the nation’s dominant issue” that had “reached into everyone’s home—North, South, city suburban.” *Life*’s article showed a picture of Michael and Mary McGee, who had plans to move beyond the area affected by the new court order, stating, “Integration’s not the issue. It’s busing the kids from their homes to a slum area.” In fact, 3,300 Richmond whites drove to D.C. to protest forced busing, and suburbanites staged a mock funeral protesting the “death” of neighborhood schools.

The 1972 presidential candidates were also at odds with one another on the issue, even within the Democratic Party. Senator Edmund S. Muskie (Maine), New York Mayor John V. Lindsay, Senator George McGovern (South Dakota), Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm (New York *and* African American), and former congressman Eugene McCarthy (Minnesota) supported busing to achieve desegregation. However, Alabama Governor George C. Wallace, Los Angeles Mayor Sam Yorty, Senator Hubert Humphrey (Minnesota), Senator Henry M. Jackson (Washington), Congressman Paul N. McCloskey, Jr. (California), Congressman Wilbur D. Mills (Arkansas), and Senator Vance Hartke (Indiana) believed busing did not work and argued for different methods of integration.¹⁴⁴

Members of Congress also tried to halt busing with limitations of court interpretations and constitutional amendments in 1972. From February to August, the House Judiciary Subcommittee No. 5 held hearings on more than fifty anti-busing resolutions. The 92nd Congress reacted to busing antipathy by approving its strongest

¹⁴⁴ “Busing in an Angry Glare,” *Life* 72, no. 8, 26-31.

anti-busing language in the Higher Education Bill (S 659—PL 92-318). The House antibusing amendments delayed transportation of students until all appeals had been exhausted, limited use of federal education funds for busing to desegregate schools, barred busing that would send a student to an inferior school, and prevented federal pressure for the use of state or local funds for busing. The bill passed August 18, 1972.¹⁴⁵ The most popular resolution, articulated because PL 92-318 did not go far enough for some, was proposed not by a southerner, but by Rep. Norman F. Lent of New York. H J Res 620 read, “No public school student shall, because of race, creed or color, be assigned to or be required to attend a particular school.” Yet it was never scheduled for a floor vote. President Nixon also submitted a moratorium proposal, known as the Student Transportation Moratorium Act (HR 13916—S 3388), which would have stopped the implementation of new court-ordered busing until July 1, 1973, or until the approval of his Equal Educational Opportunities Act. His moratorium was not heard in Senate hearings.¹⁴⁶ The majority of Americans who wrote to the White House about the proposed anti-busing amendments were in favor of them. From February 1972 to April, 6,253 letters and telegrams were sent in, 97 percent for the amendments.

The 1974 Supreme Court case *Milliken v. Bradley* was the death knell for “compulsory” busing in the cause for desegregation. In 1970, the NAACP had filed suit against Michigan state officials, including Governor William Milliken (Republican), for intentionally segregating schools, particularly in Detroit. The Sixth Circuit Court ruled in

¹⁴⁵ "Congressional Anti-Busing Sentiment Mounts in 1972." *CQ Almanac 1972*, 28th ed. (Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly, 1973). <http://library.cqpress.com/cqalmanac/cqal72-1250143>.

¹⁴⁶ "Busing Constitutional Amendment." *CQ Almanac 1972*, 28th ed., 03-682-03-690 (Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly, 1973). <http://library.cqpress.com/cqalmanac/cqal72-1251640>.

1971 that it was indeed the state's responsibility to integrate schools across the metropolitan area. Michigan appealed the case to the Supreme Court, which heard the case in 1974. In a 5-to-4 decision, it concluded, "that the relief ordered by the District Court and affirmed by the Court of Appeals was based upon an erroneous standard and was unsupported by record evidence that acts of the outlying districts effected the discrimination found to exist in the schools of Detroit."¹⁴⁷ Essentially, the Supreme Court overturned the District Court ruling for insufficient evidence of intentional segregation, and thus removed the mandate of including white suburbs in the busing schedule. Violence and resistance in Boston to busing notwithstanding, integration proceeded through the 1970s and '80s, and the heat of the issue faded away.

Urban riots, Black Panthers, and busing deeply concerned both white and black Americans in the latter half of the decade. Violence in the South had become frequent, but the expansion of civil rights that also affected the North brought resistance. As radical blacks took a step to the left towards violence and Black Power, the conservative right and middle America took a step to the right towards law and order. The courts and both the Johnson and Nixon administration hammered on the cycle of despair that had kept blacks in underfunded, inferior schools, resulting in lower-paid unskilled jobs, which restricted them economically from better neighborhoods, thus limiting their educational opportunities. Although advocates on both side of the race line considered keeping the duality of American society, as the Kerner Commission had found, the

¹⁴⁷ *Milliken v. Bradley*, 418 U.S. 717 (1974). Find Law, Accessed 4/11/2015. <http://laws.findlaw.com/us/418/717.html>.

process of integration still moved forward, and while it took decades, began to achieve some success. The next line of resistance was against affirmative action as blacks tried to take their equal position in society by perceived racial quotas. Yet white citizens saw an image of America that was being forcefully changed by federal courts from a nation of free choice that had protected white privilege, to one that for the first time protected black freedoms, even if the forced process did not appear to the majority to be “American” in nature.

CHAPTER VII

FIGHTING WOMEN'S LIBERATION

In late 1968, country singer Tammy Wynette was launched to superstar status by her hit song, "Stand by Your Man." Released as a single in September, it hit number one on the country music charts for three weeks and even peaked at number nineteen in the U.S. pop charts.¹ The song became so popular that it became her signature song and a necessity for concerts. It also reached number one in 1975 on the UK Singles Chart, the Irish Singles Chart, the Dutch Top 40, the Belgian Top 30, and thirty-one on the New Zealand Singles Chart. At a time when radical feminists were calling for women to withdraw from sex with men, Wynette was singing:

Stand by your man
Give him two arms to cling to
And something warm to come to
When nights are cold and lonely
Stand by your man

Even though a man could be "hard to understand," Wynette sang, "if you'll love him you'll forgive him" and "be proud of him."² She had to defend herself from feminist slings that derided the song, focusing on overlooking a man's faults if a woman really loves him. The song became so "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant" that the National Recording Registry in 2010 added it to their list.³ The song made such an

¹ Joel Whitburn, *The Billboard Book Of Top 40 Country Hits: 1944-2006, Second edition* (Menomonee Falls, WI: Record Research, 2004), 399.

² Tammy Wynette, "Stand by Your Man," © Epic, 1968.

³ "The National Recording Registry 2010". Library of Congress. Retrieved 4/10/2015, <http://www.loc.gov/rr/record/nrpb/registry/nrpb-2010reg.html>

impact that rapper LL Cool J released his version of the song in 1993, reversing the lyrics to request his woman stand by him:

I need someone who can roll with my arrangement
The reap reducer factor and
The Queen of the Universe, not an actor and
Standin' by her man till the end
Not only as a lover but a friend

For having faith in him, the rapper promised, “As long as I live on this earth / Anything you want is what your loyalty’s worth.”⁴ As both Tammy Wynette and LL Cool J pointed out, a woman’s role was to stand by her man, but that definition began to change in the 1960s as discussions of women’s equality to men and a woman’s control over her own body were raised.

Daniel Monyihan, Nixon’s Counselor for Urban Affairs, predicted that female equality would be a major cultural and political force in the 1970s. He claimed that the split in SDS beginning at the 1968 Democratic National Convention was due in part to the division between the dominant strand that gave the floor to the Black Panthers, who addressed the group in terms of “male chauvinism,” and those who instead were willing to engage in deliberations on women’s liberation. The Panthers, struggling to break out of their “lower class matriarchy” by exerting their dominance over women, caused friction with their white supporters resentful of their exclusion of women from serious matters. Later serving as U.S. Senator (D-New York), Monyihan exposed the “essential fact” that women in America had been educated in equality, but the country had yet to

⁴ LL Cool J, “Stand By Your Man,” *14 Shots to the Dome*, © Def Jam Recordings, 1993.

make them equal, as particularly seen in the lack of women on university faculties. Monyihan suggested that Nixon could take advantage of the opportunity for creative political leadership and initiative by appointing women to the executive branch and supporting them in official pronouncements.⁵

Monyihan was indeed correct, as the nation was shifting towards a more inclusive equality for all of its citizens, including women. The women's movement, which budded in 1963 with the book *The Feminist Mystique*, blossomed in the late-'60s and produced fruit with Supreme Court decisions upholding the right to privacy a decade later. As the Vietnam War and its polarizing nature came to a close, the national focus turned toward the last demographic issue yet to be addressed by the movement: women's rights. While discussion about a woman's right to vote and make decisions over her body date back to the 19th century, another strong push in the 1960s and '70s finally granted women further control. Although long-standing efforts to achieve an Equal Rights Amendment fell short of ratification, the Supreme Court provided women with access to birth control and abortion. However, not all Americans supported these changes, as radical feminists who advocated these changes repelled many. A frequent retort to feminism relied on an image of America that was highlighted in the 1950s that revolved around the nuclear family: women took care of the children at home, only had sex in the bonds of marriage, and protected life in the womb.

⁵ Memo, Daniel Monyihan to President Nixon, folder HU 2-5 Women Beginning 12/31/69, Box 21 (HU/RNL).

Yet women were being awakened out of their placid reverie of the Fifties. The publication of Betty Friedan's remarkable bestseller *The Feminine Mystique* made women talk about the "problem that had no name" that plagued suburban housewives who asked themselves, "Is this all there is?"⁶ Women started talking, both with each other and in consciousness-raising groups, realizing they were not the only ones who wanted more than just a husband, children, and a well decorated home. Historian Ruth Rosen described her first experience with a Women's Liberation consciousness-raising group at UC Berkeley in 1967 as an adventure that made her world begin "to turn upside down."⁷

After facing discrimination from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission itself, Betty Friedan and three other prominent women formed the National Organization for Women (NOW) in 1966. Its mission was to bring both sexes into a state of equality and partnership. Addressing the discussions about women's status in society in the early half of the Sixties, NOW asserted in its 1966 Statement of Purpose that women's position in employment and education had actually been declining, even with the passage of the Civil Rights Act that was also applicable to women. They rejected "current assumptions that a man must carry the sole burden of supporting himself, his wife, and family, and that a woman is automatically entitled to lifelong support by a man upon her marriage," believing instead in an "equitable sharing of the

⁶ Betty Friedan, *The Feminist Mystique* (New York: Norton, 1963).

⁷ Ruth Rosen, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America* (New York: Penguin Books, 2006), 2.

responsibilities of home and children and of the economic burdens of their support.”⁸ Because of this stance, housewives and their husbands content with the existing configuration at home lashed out at the seemingly radical overhauling of the family structure that had meant so much to the American identity. NOW’s 1968 stated Bill of Rights for Women demanded equal opportunities for women in education and employment, welfare, federally-funded childcare centers, and maternity leave. It set forth two main political issues that would be pursued for several decades: the Equal Rights Amendment and “basic right of every woman to control her reproductive life” through sex education, birth control, and abortion.⁹ Wishing to avoid these issues, a conservative group separated from NOW and called themselves Women’s Equity Action League (WEAL). The stated position of NOW set the foundation for the heated debates about the Equal Rights Amendment and ignited a Silent Majority backlash against feminism.

Birth Control

In the first half of the Sixties, Americans generally believed women should have access to information on birth control. The federal Comstock Act, passed by Congress in 1873, had made it illegal to distribute “obscene” information, including material on birth control. Yet Americans believed the time had come to make birth control available. In

⁸ The National Organization for Women’s 1966 Statement of Purpose, NOW website, Accessed 5/4/2015, <http://now.org/about/history/statement-of-purpose/>

⁹ Press Release–NOW’s adoption of Bill of Rights, 11/20/1968, NOW website, Accessed 5/4/2015, <https://350fem.blogs.brynmawr.edu/1968/11/20/press-release-nows-adoption-of-bill-of-rights/>

Gallup polls from 1961 to 1964, the percentage of those who agreed with providing women with access to contraception information ranged from 72 to 81 percent.¹⁰ An Attitudes of American Women survey in June of 1962 also showed that both married and unmarried women by 76 percent approved of the use of birth control.¹¹

After the Supreme Court had declined to hear cases in 1943 and 1961 on birth control, the Court finally accepted the issue for debate in 1965. C. Lee Buxton, a gynecologist and chairman of Yale Medical School's Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, had attempted to bring the plight of his patients to the land's highest court but was turned away due to lack of prosecution of his clients for there was no controversy for the court to resolve. So he and Estelle Griswold opened a birth control clinic in Connecticut against its standing law. Shortly after its opening, the two were arrested and found guilty, a ruling upheld by the Appellate Division of the Circuit Court and the Connecticut Supreme Court. Buxton and Griswold appealed their case to the Supreme Court, arguing a violation of the 14th Amendment. The historic decision read in 1965 endorsed the "right of marital privacy which is within the penumbra of specific guarantees of the Bill of Rights."¹² By invalidating the Comstock Act, the judgment allowed birth control to be freely available to married women. Historian Ruth Rosen asserts that while the sexual revolution had simmered before the Sixties, the growing use

¹⁰ Gallup Poll, Mar 1961; Gallup Poll, Aug 1962; Gallup Poll, Nov 1964 (RCPOR).

¹¹ Attitudes of American Women, Jun 1962 (RCPOR).

¹² Griswold v. Connecticut, 381 U.S. 479, Legal Information Institute, Accessed 5/4/2015, <https://www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/381/479>.

of birth control further “ruptured the historic tie between sex and procreation,” as more men expected more sex.¹³

While most Americans did not outright support sexual activities outside of marriage that would warrant the use of birth control, many agreed it should be made available. A Gallup Poll in December 1966 asked if “all women on relief of child-bearing age” should be given “free” birth control, and almost two-thirds (62 percent) of respondents replied “yes,” while 28 percent said, “no.”¹⁴ Gallup followed up three years later, and asked the same question about “free” birth control, and a larger 69 percent of respondents replied “yes,” while 27 percent still said, “no.”¹⁵ In July 1969, a Gallup Poll asked if the respondent thought it was “wrong for a man and woman to have sex before marriage.” More than two-thirds (68 percent) still thought premarital sex was wrong, and only 21 percent thought it was acceptable.¹⁶ The 1970 Virginia Slims poll of women showed that women were in line with the national average, as 65 percent of women also thought pre-marital sex was immoral.¹⁷ While a vast majority of Americans favored the availability of birth control information, a lower 59 percent approved of the dissemination of such information in high school programs. Only 40 percent approved of giving high school teenage girls birth control, and 53 percent disapproved.¹⁸

Life magazine at the end of 1970 polled students aged fifteen to twenty-one on a broad range of social questions, concluding that the majority of America’s youth was not

¹³ Rosen, *The World Split Open*, 18.

¹⁴ Gallup Poll, Dec 1966, (RCPOR).

¹⁵ Gallup Poll, Oct 1969 (RCPOR). The polls did not state what they meant by “free.”

¹⁶ Gallup Poll, Jul 1969 (RCPOR).

¹⁷ Virginia Slims American Women's Poll 1970, Aug 1970, (RCPOR).

¹⁸ Gallup Poll, Oct 1969 (RCPOR).

willing to entirely overturn old mores and institutions. The poll broke out the respondents in particular age groups that showed a difference in maturity regarding sex. Sixty-two percent agreed that the availability of the pill allowed girls to worry less about pregnancy, but only 46 percent believed a girl should be allowed to have an abortion. Half of teenagers polled believed men still considered a woman's virginity important. And sexual relations before marriage for the majority of those polled was not all right unless the couple was formally engaged and in college. A strong three-quarters of students also thought it was wrong to put children in daycare centers while their mother worked.¹⁹ Teenagers were reconsidering these topics in years after the 1970 poll, as feminists raised issues of women's status in society.

Women's Liberation

Women's rights groups actively sought national attention through demonstrations. In 1968, some female activists led by the Jeanette Rankin Brigade and Women's Strike for Peace held the first all-female antiwar protest in Washington, D.C. The same year, the feminist branch of the movement under New York Radical Women challenged the objectification of women through beauty pageants. At the 1968 Miss America Beauty Pageant in Atlantic City, they demonstrated with the display of "The Degrading Mindless-Boob-Girlie Symbol" and a "Freedom Trash Can," into which

¹⁹ "Change, Yes, Upheaval, No," *Life* Vol. 70, No. 1, 1/8/1971, 22-27.

women threw their restricting beauty devices.²⁰ In 1970, NOW held a national Women's Strike for Equality to commemorate the Fiftieth Anniversary of suffrage and point out inequalities still existing between the sexes.²¹

A radical sect of feminists broke away from mainstream moderates. Not only did they oppose traditional gender norms, but they also called for a radical restructuring of society by overthrowing patriarchy, which they argued served as the root of women's oppression. In 1969, Ti-Grace Atkinson led The Feminists split from NOW and Ellen Willis and Shulamith Firestone headed the creation of Redstockings faction out of the New York Radical Women organization.²² While the former eschewed homosexuality, the latter embraced it.²³ As a member of the organization Radicalesbians, Kate Millett's 1969 controversial book *Sexual Politics* analyzed male writings to discuss sex as a patriarchal form of control over the topic, and argued that sex was a frequently neglected political aspect.²⁴ The result of the visibility of radical liberationists was a counterattack by both men and women who disavowed these feminists of any intellectual standing.

Many Americans did not agree that women were oppressed by a male patriarchy. A series of Gallup polls asked respondents which gender they thought had an "easier life

²⁰ Robin Morgan, "No More Miss America," Redstockings Press Release, 8/22/1968. Accessed 4/1/2015. <http://www.redstockings.org/index.php/miss-america-protest-1968?id=65>.

²¹ There are many excellent books on the subject of second-wave feminism by authors who lived through the movement, such as Sara Evans' *Personal Politics: The Roots of Women's Liberation in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left* (1979), Ruth Rosen's *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America* (New York: Penguin Books, 2000), and Alice Echols' *Daring to be Bad: Radical Feminism from 1967-1975* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989).

²² Ellen Willis, *No More Nice Girls: Countercultural Essays* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1992), 117–150.

²³ For more information on the purpose of lesbianism to overcome male patriarchy, see Germaine Greer, *The Female Eunuch* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1970).

²⁴ Kate Millett, *Sexual Politics* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1969).

in the U.S.” In July 1970, a quarter of those surveyed thought men did while almost half (49 percent) believed women had it easier. Over two-thirds at 68 percent also believed that women got “as good a break as men,” while only 30 percent disagreed.²⁵ In a 1970 *Reader’s Digest’s* “Laughter, the Best Medicine,” James Dent in Charleston, West Virginia, submitted a joke that may well have resonated with its readers. It read: “A woman received a telephone call from a friend who invited her to attend a Women’s Liberation meeting in her home. ‘You’re going to have a Women’s Liberation meeting?’ the woman, asked, surprised. ‘Yes,’ said her friend, ‘Oh, it’s all right. I’ve got my husband’s permission.’”²⁶

The bi-annual Virginia Slims American Women’s polls, conducted by Louis Harris & Associates, collected data on the perception of women’s issues in 1970, 1972, 1974, 1980, 1985, 1990, 1995, and 2000. Men polled in 1970 agreed by 40 percent that women were looked upon with more respect than ten years previously, while a quarter said less respect and one third said about the same respect; percentages for the polled women were nearly identical. Seventy percent agreed that a double moral standard existed between men and women, but a full three quarters did not feel that women were oppressed. Two-thirds did not think that women were stuck doing menial chores that kept them from doing really important things, as 85 percent agreed that a woman could have a career and stay feminine at the same time.

²⁵ Gallup Poll, Jul 1970 (RCPOR).

²⁶ James Dent, “Laughter, the Best Medicine,” *Reader’s Digest*, 12/1970, 209.

When it came to women's role in society, the majority of men were united. Two-thirds of men concurred that women had as much to contribute to business and public life, but at the same time, also thought raising children for women was more rewarding than having a job. When it came to politics, 52 percent of men disagreed that the country would be better off if women had more say about politics, and 65 percent agreed that it would be a long time until a woman became president (and that is probably just as well), for 68 percent believed women were more emotional than men. Perhaps for this reason, 68 percent of both men *and women* also believed that a woman needed a man around to be happy; only 22 percent of men and 27 percent of women disagreed. Moreover, men gave women credit for their gender differences. When men were asked if women had more power than credited because they know how to work behind the scenes, 79 percent agreed, and 88 percent felt a woman generally knew how to get something when she wanted it; 54 percent versus 38 percent of men agreed that because women were the weaker sex, they had to be more clever than men.

Men also did not think that women were discriminated against in most instances. In getting a college education, 90 percent saw no discrimination, nor did they see it in divorce (82 percent), in developing intellectual interests (80 percent), or in supporting themselves independently (65 percent). Men were more conflicted on discrimination found elsewhere, as only 38 percent believed women were recognized for their charms instead of their mind (versus 51 percent), and 40 percent saw discrimination in leadership responsibilities (versus 52 percent).

Both men and women also had a clear perspective on the women's movement. When men were asked what they thought about when they heard the phrase "women's liberation," 28 percent of men offered positive connotations, such as women wanting better jobs or pay, more social latitude for women, or liberation from housework or child rearing. Notably, a large majority at 77 percent of men and 64 percent of women offered negative implications, the highest being that women were trying to get freedom that they already had; they also visualized a "Bunch of frustrated, insecure, angry hysterical, masculine-type women" who were trying to get a lot of attention and were causing trouble. In the same way, half of both men and women agreed that the leaders of women's organizations were "trying to turn women into men, and that won't work," while 42 percent disagreed. Moreover, 44 percent of men thought these organizations were helping the cause to change women's status in society, and 39 percent believed some organizations were helping. In both 1970 and 1971, men also agreed by 56 percent and women by 60 percent that protesting women were setting a bad example for children with their undignified and unwomanly behavior. Men were evenly split 43 to 42 percent on a woman's justification of unhappiness, but they felt women should not be protesting; women only leaned a couple of points more towards agreeing. Only 36 percent of men and 39 percent of women agreed that it was time for women to protest the injustices they had faced for years, while the majority at 56 percent disagreed. Nevertheless, they also agreed by 69 percent that women needed to speak up about their problems or nothing would be done about them.

Women also revealed their contented perspectives on a woman's role in society. Only 7 percent of the 71 percent of non-working women respondents planned to take a job in the future. While 75 percent of men did not think that women were oppressed, two-thirds of women agreed and only 22 percent of women were oppressed. Women were comfortable with their homemaking lifestyle, as 71 percent of women viewed raising children as more rewarding than a job (men were two-thirds), 79 percent stated they were sexually fulfilled in their marriages, and 81 percent had not talked to other women about their status in America. A full 79 percent of women were "hardly annoyed" by the Miss America Beauty Pageant and "how it patronizes women," while only 17 percent were annoyed or somewhat annoyed. And while 61 percent of women believed they were treated as equals to men, more of them supported the efforts to make changes in their status. Yet men seemed more sympathetic to the aims of the women's movement than women. Men had responded at 44 percent in favor of efforts to strengthen women's status, but only 40 percent of women supported them while 42 percent opposed those efforts; significantly, 18 percent of women were still unsure of the issue.²⁷ The Silent Majority – both male and female – was content with women's roles in society. Yet leaders of the women's movement who disagreed pushed for equalization of the sexes, even if that meant the revamping of gender roles.

²⁷ Virginia Slims American Women's Poll 1970, Aug 1970 (RCPOR).

The Equal Rights Amendment

Campaigns for the Equal Rights Amendment were longstanding. Suffragists Alice Paul and Crystal Eastman of the National Women's Party (NWP) had first proposed such an amendment in 1923. The wording read, "equality of rights under the laws shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state on account of sex." Every President since Truman was on record as having endorsed the amendment, including every Republican Party Platform since 1940 and every Democratic Party Platform since 1944.²⁸ But momentum to actually add it to the Constitution did not come until the 1960s when an eye towards equality searched for those who still needed it. In 1960, Senator John F. Kennedy sent a letter to the current Chairman of the NWP, stating, "discrimination in any form is contrary to the American philosophy of government." He assured her he would use concrete actions to ensure full equality of women, including an Equal Rights Amendment.²⁹ As President, he began to carry out his promise by appointing women to positions in his administration and establishing the President's Commission on the Status of Women to investigate sex discrimination. The commission helped win the passage of the Equal Pay Act in 1963 which banned sex discrimination in several professions, and Kennedy signed an Executive Order which prohibited discrimination based on sex in civil service. However, the Commission did not at the time support an Equal Rights Amendment, as many members, including Esther Peterson as the highest-ranking woman in Kennedy's Administration as Assistant Director of

²⁸ Memo, John D. Erlichman to President Nixon, May 1970, folder HU 2-5 Women Beginning 12/31/69, Box 21, (HU/RNL).

²⁹ Letter, John F. Kennedy to Emma Guffey Miller, 10/7/1960, folder HU 2-5 Women 1/1/70-12/31/70, Box 21, (HU/RNL).

Labor, feared the amendment would weaken protective labor legislation.³⁰ President Johnson also moved the issue of equality forward. The 1964 Civil Rights Act had also included sex when it came to barring discrimination. Yet the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission was slower to respond to claims of discrimination based on sex as they were about race due to the rising backlog, and these claims only applied to employment.³¹

President Nixon had also taken a positive stance on the ERA. In 1951 as a senator, he actually co-sponsored the amendment. He also supported the position the Republican National Convention had taken in 1960, declaring, “Congress should submit a Constitutional amendment providing equal rights for women.”³² He released essentially the same statement eight years later as a presidential candidate, expressing his hope “that there will be widespread support for the Equal Rights for Women Amendment,” to equalize the sexes in freedoms and liberties.³³ Even the man who would become Nixon’s conservative vice president, Spiro Agnew, sent a telegram to Alice Paul who had fought so hard for women’s suffrage to express his support of the amendment. While the two sexes had made “a great deal of progress toward the goal of equality”

³⁰ Hearings, 473.

³¹ Memo, John D. Erlichman to President Nixon, May 1970, folder HU 2-5 Women Beginning 12/31/69, Box 21, (HU/RNL).

³² Statement by the Vice President on the Equal Rights Amendment, 9/2/1960. folder HU 2-5 Women Beginning 12/31/69, Box 21, (HU/RNL).

³³ Statement by former Vice President on the Equal Rights for Women Amendment, 7/1968. folder HU 2-5 Women Beginning 12/31/69, Box 21, (HU/RNL).

since the 1960s, he pledged his support to a “continued concerted effort to make this principle a reality.”³⁴

The Presidential Task Force on Women’s Rights and Responsibilities under Nixon submitted their report on December 15, 1969. It recommended “the President urge passage of the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution.” Women’s groups heavily pressured the task force to release their findings, but they hesitated to do so until President Nixon had a chance to take a position on how he would stand on the amendment. However, they brought attention to the matter that all laws and governmental practices that discriminate on the basis of sex would also be affected, including protective laws, university admissions, alimony and custody laws, juvenile laws, jury selection exemptions, and the Selective Service Act. The AFL-CIO were particularly concerned about protective labor laws for women that established limits on weights and hours worked, as elimination of these laws would purportedly result in the “wholesale exploitation of women workers.” As Nixon had previously supported an amendment on equal rights for women, his aide John Erlichman recommended that he support it and respond briefly to House Minority Leader Gerald Ford, which he did.³⁵ Nevertheless, by July 1971, the presidential administration still had not taken a public stance on the matter, prompting suspicions and rumors that they were behind Republican-proposed alterations to the bill.

³⁴ Telegram, Spiro Agnew to Alice Paul, 10/24/1968, folder HU 2-5 Women Beginning 12/31/69, Box 21, (HU/RNL).

³⁵ Memo, John D. Erlichman to President Nixon, May 1970, folder HU 2-5 Women Beginning 12/31/69, Box 21, (HU/RNL).

Once again, Nixon's aides recommended that he openly support the ERA, as not doing so could lose him a large demographic in votes in the next election.³⁶ From November 19, 1971, to February 10, 1972, 1,404 Americans wrote to the White House about the ERA, putting additional pressure on Nixon to craft a statement on whether he opposed or supported it.³⁷ In response to Senate Minority Leader Hugh Scott's letter asking his opinion on the matter, Nixon reiterated his non-changing stance since 1951, stating, "I have not altered my belief that equal rights for women warrant a Constitutional guarantee—and I therefore continue to favor the enactment of the Constitutional Amendment to achieve this goal."³⁸ In 1972, he established the Advisory Committee on the Economic Role of Women to identify and alleviate economic barriers to women. But Nixon did not include the issue in a speech until February 1973 in his State of the Union address, when he advocated for the employment opportunities afforded by the Equal Rights Amendment.³⁹

Barbara A. Brown, Thomas I. Emerson, Gail Falk and Ann E. Freedman published an article called "The Equal Rights Amendment: A Constitutional Basis for Equal Rights for Women" in the April 1971 *Yale Law Journal* which served as the legal authority for both ERA proponents and opponents. It was so thorough in its analysis that

³⁶ Memo, Fred Malek to John Erlichman, 7/14/1971, folder HU 2-5 Women 1/1/70-12/31/70, Box 21, (HU/RNL).

³⁷ Mail Summaries, folder Mail reports 1/1/71-12/30/72 (3 of 3) Box 16 (WH/RNL).

³⁸ Richard Nixon: "Letter to the Senate Minority Leader About the Proposed Constitutional Amendment on Equal Rights for Men and Women," 3/18/1972. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=3777>.

³⁹ Richard Nixon: "State of the Union Message to the Congress on the Economy," 2/22/1973. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=4112>.

Congresswoman Martha Griffiths (D-Michigan) gave a copy of it to each member of Congress, and Senator Birch Bayh (D-Indiana) entered it into the Congressional Record. The authors affirmed the long-standing discrimination and subordination of women, and asserted, “Our legal structure will continue to support and command an inferior status for women so long as it permits any differentiation in legal treatment on the basis of sex.” They laid forth their justification for a constitutional amendment, and explored the possible ramifications of the resolution on protective labor legislation, domestic relations law, criminal law, and the military. However, challengers of the Equal Rights Amendment that would rise up against its ratification used the same arguments listed herein as talking points on the destructiveness of the amendment on the family structure and protections of women.

The article concluded that women would be held as responsible as men in the family and the military. In the case of family support, “courts would have to strike down nonsupport laws which impose the duty of support on men only.” In essence, this would remove the requirement for a husband to provide sole financial stability to the family unit. Additionally, the standing law that a woman could divorce her husband for “nonsupport,” the writers determined, “nonsupport would have to be eliminated as a ground for divorce against husbands only,” allowing a husband to divorce his wife if she did not financially support him or the family. As the husband under the ERA would have access to custody of the children, the burden of alimony and child support could also shift to the wife to be “available equally to husbands and wives.” Moreover, the article revealed that under the ERA, women would have to be drafted into military

service to alleviate sex discrimination against men. Inevitably, “courts would construe the Amendment to excise the word ‘male’ from the two main sections of the [Selective Service] Act, dealing with registration and induction, thereby subjecting all citizens to these duties. A woman will register for the draft at the age of eighteen, as a man now does.”

The article also contended that the ERA would allow legislators to reconsider the restrictions on holding men liable in rape and statutory rape laws. “If invalidated, some of the laws, such as the seduction laws, which derive from outdated standards of courting and morality, would probably not be resuscitated.” Furthermore, the ERA could alter or eliminate laws regarding prostitution, either voluntary or forced. The Mann Act (1910) had prohibited the inducement of a woman into prostitution and crossing state lines, particularly “women too weak to resist.” Some courts might consider extending protection to men under the law. However, when the courts would consider the legal justification to the Mann Act, the justices could decide that the extension would expand “criminal liability further than Congress intended.” As with other criminal laws, “a court would probably resolve doubts about congressional intent by striking down the law,” thereby removing protections covering women forced into prostitution. While the ERA would provide sex equality, it would also completely disrupt many other legal processes as the amendment would be interpreted and implemented by the courts.⁴⁰

Paul A. Freund refuted the amendment based on its means, not the ends. His

⁴⁰ Barbara A. Brown, Thomas I. Emerson, Gail Falk and Ann E. Freedman, “The Equal Rights Amendment: A Constitutional Basis for Equal Rights for Women,” *The Yale Law Journal* 80, no. 5 (April, 1971), 873-874, 945, 951-953, 958, 965 970-971. The Yale Law Journal Company, Inc., <http://www.jstor.org.lib-ezproxy.tamu.edu:2048/stable/795228>.

article, “The Equal Rights Amendment Is Not the Way,” was published in a roundtable *Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review* almost the same time as the *Yale* commentary. In the twenty-five years that he had studied the proposed amendment, Freund had seen various laws passed to serve judicial redress for women’s grievances. He argued, “Congressional power under the commerce clause, as the civil-rights legislation shows, is adequate to deal with discrimination.” Freund also asserted that the passing of the ERA in the Congress and states was redirecting energy from revising the laws themselves, as the interpretation of the amendment within the courts would provide the direction of the resolution. He believed Congress should tackle the individual issues themselves, as each subject raised in the *Yale Law Journal* (such as the drafting of women) was substantial enough to merit full discussion and should not be only implied in an amendment to be interpreted by the courts. The 1970 Report of the President's Task Force on Women's Rights and Responsibilities urged modification of Titles II, IV, VII and IX of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, extension of the jurisdiction of the Civil Rights Commission to include discrimination based on sex, alteration of the wording in the Fair Labor Standards Act regarding equal pay, and the setting aside of federal provisions for child care. With this, Freund agreed, for these were specific changes that would provide the equality women’s activists wanted. He asserted, “The real issue is not the legal status of women. The issue is the integrity and responsibility of the law-making process itself,” warning of the “dangers” unforeseen within the ambiguous amendment.⁴¹

⁴¹ Paul A. Freund, “The Equal Rights Amendment Is Not the Way,” *Harvard C.R.-C.L. L. 6 Rev.* 234 (1970-1971), 234-242.

Yet Congress passed the ERA relatively easily. Representative Martha Griffiths introduced House Joint Resolution No. 208 in 1970. On October 12, 1971, the House easily passed the Equal Rights Amendment, which still read, “Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex” with a vote of 354 yeas, 24 nays and 51 not voting. In the Senate, Birch Bayh proposed the amendment. Senator Sam Ervin (R-North Carolina) attempted to alter the bill with an exemption from drafting women, but NOW threatened to remove the bill from consideration if the modification was made. Senator Ervin further asserted that prevention of discrimination had already been accomplished through the recent interpretations of the Fourteenth Amendment, the Fair Labor Standards Act, and the 1964 Civil Rights Act.⁴² Regardless, the Senate adopted the bill on March 22, 1972, with a vote of 84 yeas, 8 nays and 7 not voting.⁴³

Ratification of the amendment, which required the approval of 38 states, seemed sure as it sailed through state legislatures easily in the first year. Hawaii was the first to endorse the amendment, followed by Delaware, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Idaho and Iowa in the next couple of days.⁴⁴ By the end of the year, twenty-two states had ratified the measure. Naturally, most were states that would normally lean towards a bill of this sort.

In 1972, attitudes on gender roles had not changed significantly from previous years. In August, more women and men voiced “support of women’s efforts to change

⁴² Jenkin Lloyd Jones, “Faltering Equal Rights Amendment,” *Washington Star-News*, 1/27/1973.

⁴³ David Frum, *How We Got Here: The '70s* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), 245–248.

⁴⁴ Bruce Schulman, *The Seventies: The Great Shift in American Culture, Society, and Politics* (Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 2001), 169. Critchlow, *Phyllis Schlafly*, 218.

and strengthen their role in society.” But half of all women were still “unsympathetic” towards the aims of women’s liberation groups. While the majority of women were aware of the problems and injustices that they faced as women, they still seemed to be pretty satisfied with their lives.⁴⁵ A 1972 State of the Nation Poll asked if women with school age children should feel free to take full-time jobs if they wanted to, and only 52 percent approved of a full-time job while 39 percent still thought women should stay at home, even when their children were at school.⁴⁶ Reflecting a national debate over gender titles, a 1972 Gallup poll showed that 60 percent opposed the movement to call women “Ms.” instead of the reference of marriage with “Mrs.” or “Miss,” while only 22 percent favored the change.⁴⁷ The issue of a woman’s right over her pregnancy was also controversial and would polarize the nation in the 1970s.

Abortion

At the beginning of the 1960s, the majority of Americans supported abortion only for specific circumstances. For example, 77 percent would allow it if the health of the mother was in danger. Barely more than half of respondents believed abortion was right in the case of a possible deformed child. But three-quarters of respondents did not agree with abortion as a form of birth control, as 74 percent thought a family with insufficient money to support another child should not have an abortion.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ The 1972 Virginia Slims American Women’s Opinion Poll (summary), Louis Harris and Associates, August 1972, folder HU 2-5 Women 4/1/72-12/31/72, Box 21 (HU/RNL).

⁴⁶ State Of The Nation 1972 (Form C), May 1972 (RCPOR).

⁴⁷ Gallup Poll, Nov 1972 (RCPOR).

⁴⁸ Gallup Poll, Aug 1962 (RCPOR).

By the end of the decade, views on abortion had not changed significantly. In a 1969 Gallup Poll, 80 percent of respondents believed in abortion to save the mother, only a three percent increase over seven years. The number of those who would allow an abortion of a deformed child rose from 55 percent to 63 percent. The number of those who disagreed with abortion for a family who could not afford another child dropped seven points but held the majority at 67 percent; for those who just did not want additional children, disapproval was a high 79 percent.⁴⁹

Between 1967-1970, individual states began to loosen their abortion laws. Colorado, California, Oregon, and North Carolina decriminalized abortion in the event of rape, incest, or injury to the health of the mother. Hawaii became the first state to legalize abortion if a woman requested it in 1970.⁵⁰ New York followed with a new statute that allowed abortions up to twenty-four weeks of gestation, replicated in Alaska and Washington. In April 1970, a Harris Survey also asked about views on illegal abortions. One question stated, “As long as women are going to have abortions illegally, they may as well legalize them, so they can be performed by good doctors in hospitals.” Over two-thirds at 68 percent agreed with the statement, while 25 percent disagreed. Respondents leaned that way due to their belief that women who went to a “quack doctor” for an abortion was endangered, for almost 80 percent concurred.⁵¹

In April 1971, President Nixon set a new protocol for abortion. Overturning liberalized rules on abortions at military hospitals, he relinquished the authority over the

⁴⁹ Gallup Poll, Sep 1969 (RCPOR).

⁵⁰ A.A. Smyser, “Hawaii’s Abortion Law 30 Years Old,” *Honolulu Star Bulletin*, 3/21/2000.

⁵¹ Harris Survey, Apr 1970 (RCPOR).

regulation of abortion on military bases to the state in which it each was located. He also articulated his personal views that “abortion on demand” and abortion used for population control went against his “belief in the sanctity of human life.”⁵² Out of 2,142 letters mailed in a five-week period, 1197 respected Nixon’s speech and 879 were opposed, an approval rate of nearly 56 percent, reflecting the nation’s approval rate on abortion.⁵³

The Rockefeller Commission on Population Growth a year later released their report. Among other considerations, the commission recommended the “elimination of legal restrictions on access to contraceptive information and services” to also include minors, and the “liberalization of state abortion laws along the lines of the New York State statute,” although some commission members refused the latter proposition.⁵⁴ The American public in their letters rejected these proposals, however, as only 33 percent of letters mailed to the White House on the subject were in favor.⁵⁵

A monumental Supreme Court decision the following year would ultimately rule on whether abortion would be widely available.

⁵² Richard Nixon: "Statement About Policy on Abortions at Military Base Hospitals in the United States," April 3, 1971. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=2963>.

⁵³ Mail Summaries, folder Mail Reports 1/1/71-12/30/72 (1 of 3) Box 16, (WH/RNL). One week was missing from the records, thus skewing the correct figures.

⁵⁴ *The Report of the Commission on Population Growth and the American Future*, 3/27/1972, The Center for Research on Population and Security, Accessed 5/4/2015, http://www.population-security.org/rockefeller/001_population_growth_and_the_american_future.htm#TOC.

⁵⁵ April 19-25, 1972, folder Mail reports 1/1/71-12/30/72 (3 of 3), Box 16, (WH/RNL).

Roe v. Wade

On January 22, 1973, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled on a historic case. Heard as a companion case to the less known *Doe v. Bolton* out of Georgia regarding the health of the mother, *Roe v. Wade* stemmed from a Texas trial over alleged rape.⁵⁶ The justices acknowledged their “awareness of the sensitive and emotional nature of the abortion controversy, of the vigorous opposing views, even among physicians, and of the deep and seemingly absolute convictions that the subject inspires.” Using medical legal history as a guide, the Supreme Court determined 7-2 that under the Fourteenth Amendment, the “right of personal privacy includes the abortion decision, but that this right is not unqualified, and must be considered against important state interests in regulation.” They ruled that a woman and her doctor were free to decide upon the need for abortion up to the “compelling point” of the end of the first trimester; after that time, the states were left to decide on the availability of abortion procedures as it “reasonably relates to the preservation and protection of maternal health.”⁵⁷

Unsurprisingly, the number of abortions rose after the Supreme Court case. Three organizations—the Population Council, The Alan Guttmacher Institute and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)—collaborated to gather data by conducting what became known as abortion surveillance. But numbers were more complete for the Guttmacher Institute, a private organization that contacts abortion providers directly,

⁵⁶ In her book *I Am Roe: My Life, Roe V. Wade, and Freedom of Choice* (2004), Norma McCorvey admitted that she only claimed to be raped to eliminate her third pregnancy, even though Texas did not allow abortions in the case of rape.

⁵⁷ *Roe v. Wade*, 410 U.S. 113 (1973), Justia, Accessed 5/4/2015, <https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/410/113/case.html>. The trimester structure was later replaced with the timeline of the viability of the fetus.

perhaps due to more inclusive or lower pressure reporting, as some states declined to provide their numbers. A previous report documented a large discrepancy of approximately 12 percent.⁵⁸ From the legalization of abortion in New York State in 1970 to the Supreme Court ruling in 1973, the annual number of legally induced abortions increased dramatically, especially in New York City and California.

For example, 586,760 legal abortions were performed in 1972—more than 20 times the number reported three years earlier; in 1973, the number increased to 616,000 abortions.⁵⁹ The ratio of abortions to live births swelled from almost 20 percent in 1973 (according to the lower CDC figures) to a peak of 35 percent in 1985. As seen in Figure 2, the proportion of women having abortions who were nonwhite also increased between 1972 and 1999 (from 23 percent to 44 percent), as did the proportion of those who were unmarried (from 70 percent to 81 percent).⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Lilo T. Strauss, Sonya B. Gamble, Wilda Y. Parker, Douglas A. Cook, Suzanne B. Zane, Saeed Hamdan, Abortion Surveillance -- United States, 2004, *National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR), Surveillance Summaries*, November 23, 2007 / 56(SS09), 1-33, <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/ss5609a1.htm>.

⁵⁹ *Abortion Surveillance, 1975*, CDC (Atlanta: CDC, 1977).

⁶⁰ Willard Cates, Jr., David A. Grimes and Kenneth F. Schulz, "The Public Health Impact of Legal Abortion: 30 Years Later," *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health* 35, no. 1, January/February 2003. Accessed 5/5/2015, <http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/journals/3502503.html>.

Table 12 (page 1 of 2). Legal abortions and legal abortion ratios, by selected patient characteristics: United States, selected years 1973–2007

Updated data when available, Excel, PDF, and more data years: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/hus/contents2011.htm#012>.

[Data are based on reporting by state health departments and by hospitals and other medical facilities]

Characteristic	1973	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000 ²	2005 ⁴	2006 ⁴	2007 ⁵
Number of legal abortions reported in thousands										
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)	616	855	1,298	1,329	1,430	1,211	857	820	852	828
Guttmacher Institute ⁶	745	1,034	1,554	1,589	1,609	1,359	1,313	1,206	1,242	1,210
Abortions per 1,000 live births ⁷										
Total CDC	196	272	359	354	344	311	245	233	236	231
Age ⁸										
Under 15 years	1,237	1,193	1,397	1,376	844	667	708	764	754	768
15–19 years	539	542	714	688	515	399	361	358	351	335
20–24 years	294	289	395	386	377	349	300	283	280	273
25–29 years	207	192	237	217	220	221	198	187	188	182
30–34 years	280	250	237	199	191	165	145	140	140	137
35–39 years	451	422	410	336	273	224	181	168	170	169
40 years and over	684	668	807	623	501	387	301	278	276	277
Race ⁸										
White ⁹	326	277	332	277	258	204	167	158	162	159
Black or African American ¹⁰	420	476	543	472	521	534	503	467	459	447
Hispanic origin ⁸										
Hispanic or Latina	---	---	---	---	---	265	225	205	200	193
Not Hispanic or Latina	---	---	---	---	---	280	233	223	224	222
Marital status ⁸										
Married	76	96	105	80	89	76	65	58	---	---
Unmarried	1,398	1,610	1,476	1,174	879	650	570	485	---	---

Figure 2 Legal abortions and legal abortion ratios⁶¹

Americans of the Silent Majority against abortion made their negative reactions to the ruling clearly known. The Archbishop of Philadelphia wrote President Nixon a letter to protest the *Roe v. Wade* case. He claimed a “whole new militancy has galvanized the Catholic people,” who were now “up in arms” over the decision “in favor of materialism and against the beautiful gift of life.” The adverse reaction was not just limited to Catholics, as a Gallup poll showed that 40 percent of Americans also strongly opposed abortion under any circumstances, and the Archbishop was sure that number

⁶¹ Legal abortions and legal abortion ratios, by selected patient characteristics: United States, selected years 1973–2007, Center for Disease Control, Accessed 5/5/2015, <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/hus/contents2011.htm#012>.

would grow. He threatened future Catholic outbursts to the promised “carnage.” He therefore pleaded with Nixon to promptly file a Petition for Rehearing.⁶²

One issue that opponents raised regarded the effect of abortion on teenage girls. Many states put into place more restrictive regulations on abortion, specifically on parental notification in the case of a pregnant teenage girl seeking an abortion. In fact, in May 1973, a Gallup Kettering Poll of Public Attitudes Toward the Public Schools revealed that the American public was still opposed to teenage sex. Only 33 percent considered it acceptable to make even birth control pills available to teenage girls, while 48 percent disagreed and 19 percent was unsure. Half of respondents still believed that birth control pills were harmful to one’s health.⁶³ The antifeminist organization Happiness Of Women (HOW) immediately held a Requiem for Innocence to protest teenage birth control and abortions without parental knowledge or consent.⁶⁴

Reacting to controversies, many in the Silent Majority began to take action. On October 21, 1973, the Missouri Citizens for Life held a rally in St. Louis, and the 30,000 pro-lifers made national news. They staged it at the city’s Old Court House, where the *Dred Scott* decision of 1857 had ruled that slaves were not legal persons, and they compared that injustice to the minimal rights of a fetus. They advocated for a constitutional amendment that would instead protect human life, “including the unborn,

⁶² Letter, Archbishop John Cardinal Krol to President Nixon, 2/8/1973, folder Abortions, Box 11, Dean Collection, Nixon.

⁶³ Gallup/Kettering Poll of Public Attitudes Toward the Public Schools 1973, May, 1973

⁶⁴ Alan Stang, “The Ladies: Those Fascinating Conservative Women,” *American Opinion*, 4/1973, 1-14, folder Equal Rights Amendment, Box 120, CUA.

the ill, the aged or incapacitated, from conception to natural death.”⁶⁵ Indeed, thousands of pro-lifers join the March for Life in Washington, D.C., the following January, which has been staged every year on the anniversary of the *Roe v. Wade* decision since 1974. The growing association claims approximately 20,000 Americans joined them in their first “Circle of Life” march on the Capitol, with a peak in 1998 of 225,000 marchers.⁶⁶ That first year, the Rose Committee for the National March for Life sent a beautiful bouquet “on behalf of the unborn child” to Vice President Ford.⁶⁷

Polls revealed that an American public was more sympathetic towards abortions if needed to avoid the mother’s death or performed in the first trimester. Shortly after the decision, a Harris poll in March of 1973 showed a larger percentage than the 1970 poll in agreement at 76 percent to allow a woman a legal abortion to prevent illegal abortions that would result in the mother’s death.⁶⁸ In the following March, a Gallup Poll asked about approval of abortions per trimester. Out of a sampling that was composed of twice as many Democrats than Republicans (42 to 21 percent), the responses were very close on the issue of the first trimester. When asked about sentiments on the Supreme Court ruling allowing abortions in the first trimester, 47 percent favored the decision while a close 44 percent opposed it; 9 percent had no opinion.⁶⁹

⁶⁵ Letter, Missouri Citizens for Life to Members of the Congress, 2/20/1974, folder Abortion, Box 10 (VP/GFL).

⁶⁶ History of the March for Life, March for Life, Accessed 5/5/2015, <http://marchforlife.org/history-of-the-march-for-life/>.

⁶⁷ Letter, Lulu Sheldon to VP Ford, 12/4/1973, folder Abortion, VP Papers, Issues File, Box 10 (VP/GFL).

⁶⁸ Harris Poll, Mar 1973 (RCPOR).

⁶⁹ Gallup Poll, Mar 1974 (RCPOR). Democrats statistically favored abortion more than their republican counterparts.

Polls of the American public disclosed divergent American sentiment on abortion. Pollsters were very careful about the questions they asked, focusing on contingencies or trimesters, never tackling the issue head-on by asking, “Do you approve of abortion?” As seen in Figure 3, this makes analysis of the American people’s allowance for an abortion contingent on the circumstance. One cannot simply add up the percentages of approval rates for differing circumstances (reaching over one hundred percent), as not every respondent approved of all circumstances, or could answer to more than one instance. It should be noted that Americans agreed more on allowing an abortion if a woman would die from seeking out an illegal abortion. Even through 1980, those in favor of allowing abortion never reached even a simple majority, even if the health of the mother was endangered. Only a quarter of Americans supported a woman’s right to choose in *any* instance – reaching a mere 27 percent by 1980. As opposed to other polls on the ERA or a woman’s role in society, individuals generally had a strong opinion on abortion, and these opinions remained steadfast through the 1970s.

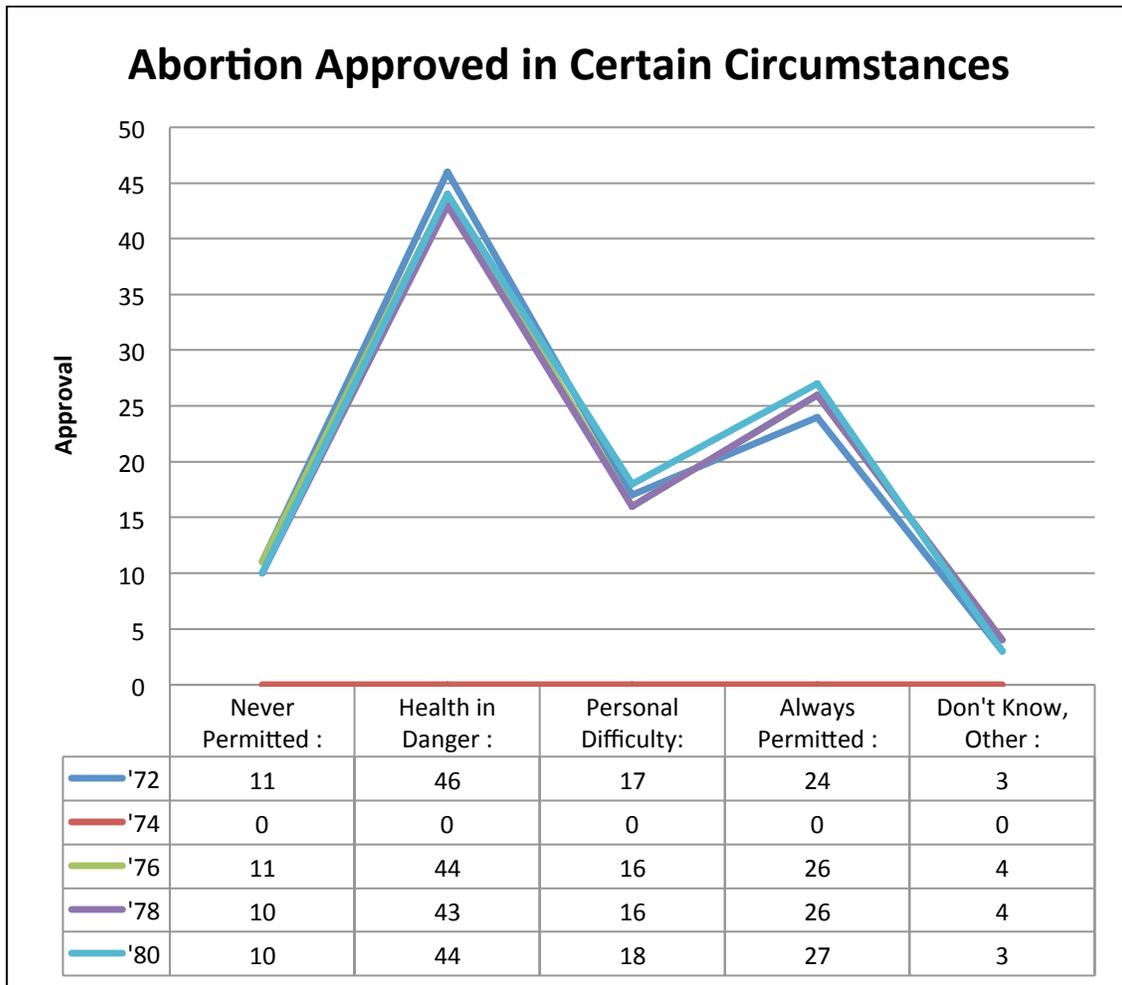


Figure 3 Abortion Approved in Certain Circumstances, 1972-1980⁷⁰

As the Supreme Court had declined to take up the discussion regarding the beginning of human life, Senators James Buckley and Jesse Helms introduced a pro-life constitutional Human Life Amendment to guarantee the right to life of the unborn. James L. Buckley’s (R-New York) proposed Senate Joint Resolution 119 would give the constitutional right to life to the unborn except when “reasonable medical certainty

⁷⁰ ANES Survey, Table 4C.2a (RCPOR) http://www.electionstudies.org/nesguide/text/tab4c_2a.txt.

exists that continuation of the pregnancy will cause the death of the mother.” Senate Joint Resolution 130, offered by Jesse A. Helms (R- North Carolina), would give the right to life to all human beings from the moment of conception without exception.⁷¹ Many pro-lifers agreed with these proposed amendments and lobbied for them through demonstrations and correspondence.

Besides pro-life rallies, anti-abortion Americans wrote to the White House about their concern.⁷² Americans young and old, male and female, Christians and nonbelievers, North and South, East and West were all represented in the diverse assortment of mail. Letters from Kentucky were particularly high due to the successful efforts of the Kentucky Right to Life Association in Louisville, a local branch of the national organization that was founded in 1968. Even though they had started their small campaign in 1970 after the legalization of limited abortion, their visibility spread in 1974 after the Supreme Court decision. On the one-year anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, they published a two-page memorial spread with signatures in the statewide newspaper *Courier-Journal*. They also held their first banquet that year, which featured Mildred Jefferson, M.D., the first black woman to graduate from Harvard Medical School and a pioneer of the National Right to Life Committee.⁷³ Archived letters were almost all anti-abortion or for a pro-life amendment, and covered a range of topics, including reference

⁷¹ "Hearings Air Abortion Controversy," *CQ Almanac 1974*, 30th ed. (Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly, 1975), 429-31. <http://library.cqpress.com/cqalmanac/cqal74-1225384>.

⁷² While the President Nixon Library has mail summaries available, most of the bulk mail is still uncategorized. However, the Gerald Ford Library has accessible both his presidential and vice presidential mail for perusal, which is where the annotated letters were found.

⁷³ Margie Montgomery, "One Chapter's Experience," National Right to Life Convention, Accessed 5/5/2015, <http://www.nrlc.org/archive/news/2002/NRL01/margi.html>.

to the American identity, constitutional rights, Biblical or religious opposition, abortion as murder, a fetus' right to life, comparisons to the World War II exterminations, and communist accusations.

Citizens were very concerned about how abortion did not fit their description of the American identity. A wife from South Dakota urged Ford to support the Human Life Amendment, which will be for “all Americans, whether they are white, black, red, poor, rich, crippled, healthy, you, old, or unborn and even politicians! We need a pro-life nation in order to protect our American heritage.”⁷⁴ Multiple residents of New York strongly suggested “we begin regaining our status” as a country “by passing a ‘Human Life Amendment’ to protect our unborn and stop abortions.”⁷⁵ A married couple in New York declared, “There is a Supreme Being and hopefully Our Nations Leaders will be enlightened to the Moral obligation to the citizens of this beautiful free Country of ours and not take away the privilege of LIFE in any stage.”⁷⁶ On the other coast in Portland, Oregon, a married woman railed against her senator Bob Packwood (R-Oregon) and his strong pro-abortion stand, which was in “direct opposition to the God-given gift of life, the constitutional guarantee of life and the traditional American respect for life.” She asserted, “The killing of one group of people to solve a social problem leads instead to even greater social problems. It is a form of national suicide.”⁷⁷ Additionally, thirty-four citizens from Michigan sent a petition in support of the proposed human life

⁷⁴ Letter, Becky Grant to VP Ford, 7/16/1974, folder F15 Abortion, Box 10 (VP/GFL).

⁷⁵ Multiple Letters from New York, Joan Ferrara, Julia A. Riepe, Mrs. L. Maresca, June Kenney, to VP Ford, 2/22/1974, folder F15 Abortion, Box 10 (VP/GFL).

⁷⁶ Letter, Mr. and Mrs. Louis M. Hezing to VP Ford, 4/19/1974, folder F15 Abortion, Box 10 (VP/GFL).

⁷⁷ Letter, Mrs. K.K. Klein to VP Ford, 3/14/1974, folder F15 Abortion, Box 10 (VP/GFL).

amendments, which they considered were “vital and absolutely necessary if our Country is to survive under God.”⁷⁸

These references to God were supplemented with letters including scripture verses from the Bible. A small organization of both men and women in Oxford, Ohio, demanded an amendment to protect babies from conception to prevent the destruction of America. The members found it “hard to imagine that a nation, ‘dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal,’ would even have to consider such a beastial law that allows the slaughtering of defenseless babies!” Citing Biblical stories, they agreed, “The fireworks of Sodom and Gomorrah would be our just dessert on July 4, 1976, if we have not erased from our statutes the Herodian decree calling for the murder of the ‘innocents.’”⁷⁹ One young woman quoted Psalms 138:13 as proof of fetal life, for it read, “You have formed my inmost being, you put me together in my mother’s womb.” She asserted that this “pleasure mad world with its artificial laughter and dirty edged and soiled liberties needs God’s help.” She asked Ford to turn to God in prayer, for she believed, “He is our only answer & hope.”⁸⁰

Other Christians abhorred the legalization of abortion and took measures against it. One woman from Washington State representing the Puyallup-Sumner Voters for Life sent a letter to their elected congressmen and senators. She opened her message with a verse from Jeremiah 4:31: “My soul is wearied because of them who are slain.” The organization threatened that both American voters and God would hold the legislators

⁷⁸ Petition, Thirty-four citizens from Michigan to VP Ford, 4/1974, folder F15 Abortion, Box 10 (VP/GFL).

⁷⁹ Letter, Southwest Ohio Voters for Life to VP Ford, 7/1974, folder F15 Abortion, Box 10 (VP/GFL).

⁸⁰ Letter, Ms. Chappelle to VP Ford, 6/6/1974, folder F15 Abortion, Box 10 (VP/GFL).

responsible for the “million and a half” murders that had taken place over the previous year. They contrasted the Fourteenth Amendment that rectified the injustice of the Dred Scott decision with the *Roe v. Wade* decision, which they also saw a transgression against the unborn. She also wrote to Ford that “our unborn sons and daughters” were being “slaughtered by the millions,” but were deserving of life “just like the rest of us.”⁸¹ A gentleman from Pennsylvania also believed it was “a sin to kill innocent babies,” and was 100 percent against abortion.⁸² In Indiana, a Catholic gathering in Fort Wayne brought together 31,800 Catholics who expressed concern about abortion. Charles Sive, Jr., alleged Nixon and the Burger Court had issued a “death order” on the same level as the World War II Jewish extermination.⁸³

Several medical professionals were also opposed to abortion for its contradictory nature to preserving health. Frank D. Kerns from Boise, Idaho, identified himself as one of the Silent Majority. As a Registered Medical Technologist at a hospital, he provided his opinion based not on religion, but rather his four-year experience in the profession. He also equated abortion with the atrocities of World War II, for he had watched the occurrence of abortion “double,” and it was growing to become “a monster in our society.” He claimed only two doctors in Boise would even perform abortions, as all others had refused.⁸⁴ A 21-year old medical student from New York told Ford he was an answer to her prayers as a Christian leader, supporting Ford’s position against abortion; a registered nurse and mother from Michigan also asked Ford to support Pro-life

⁸¹ Letter, Annette Murphy to VP Ford, 7/4/1974, folder F15 Abortion, Box 10 (VP/GFL).

⁸² Letter, Victor S. Ecklund to VP Ford, 11/30/1973, folder F15 Abortion, Box 10 (VP/GFL).

⁸³ Letter, Charles Sive, Jr. to VP Ford, 7/22/1974, folder F15 Abortion, Box 10 (VP/GFL).

⁸⁴ Letter, Frank D. Kerns to VP Ford, 6/7/1974, folder F15 Abortion, Box 10 (VP/GFL).

issues.⁸⁵ A nurse from the Middlesex County Right to Life Committee in New Jersey also supported a pro-life amendment, for she was taught to save lives, not end them.⁸⁶ Many letter writers also included arguments against euthanasia in their messages about abortion, as they upheld the sanctity of life at any stage.

Numerous individuals also disagreed with the Supreme Court ruling that did not afford an unborn child citizen's rights. The Central Pro-Life Voters Organization advocated for the Human Life Amendment for its "protection of the unborn from the first moment of conception." They saw Congress' duty was to preserve the "inalienable right to life."⁸⁷ A young lady agreed that even unborn children had the right to live their lives as fully as possible. She believed, "Human life is so precious and it seems to me that this is slowly being taken away."⁸⁸ Two teenage girls from Kentucky articulated, "Life is for Everyone." One found it hard to believe "that our own nation can have such little respect for life," and blamed the problem on a "World full of unfeeling rebels."⁸⁹ Another young lady questioned, "Are we a nation for all this? What are we coming too! The people are going wild."⁹⁰ One gentleman from College Station, Texas, was dismayed that although he had written his congressmen, they "basically say they're not really interested." He asserted, "And ALL we're asking for is what's supposed to be

⁸⁵ Letter, Karen R. Hempel to VP Ford, 7/1974; Letter, Patricia Billings to VP Ford, 12/11/1973, folder Abortion, Box 10 (VP/GFL).

⁸⁶ Letter, Middlesex County Right to Life Committee to VP Ford, 5/30/1974, folder F15 Abortion, Box 10 (VP/GFL).

⁸⁷ Letter, Central Pro-Life Voters Organization to President Nixon and VP Ford, August 1974, folder F15 Abortion, Box 10 (VP/GFL).

⁸⁸ Letter, Karen Schlosser to VP Ford, 6/1974, folder F15 Abortion, Box 10 (VP/GFL).

⁸⁹ Letter, Kathleen McLaughen to VP Ford, 4/24/1974; Letter, Donna Merkle to VP Ford, 6/1974, folder F15 Abortion, Box 10 (VP/GFL).

⁹⁰ Mary Elizabeth Nieder to VP Ford, 4/25/1974, folder F15 Abortion, Box 10 (VP/GFL).

guaranteed in the first amendment” – protection of a pre-born child as human life from conception.⁹¹

Others argued that abortion equated to murder. A married couple from New York, two young people from Kentucky, and a lady from Iowa all described abortion as “murder.”⁹² A lady from New York wrote her sentiment that protecting the most defenseless members of our human race, the unborn, makes them civilized rather than barbaric. She said that state and federal government laws regulating abortion both resulted in the “destruction of life,” and she asked VP Ford to assist in the fight for life.⁹³ Of course, this social issue had to be accused of having communist roots. A gentleman from Iowa asked Ford to both publicly and privately “outlaw the legalized murder going on in the country.” He sent along a page from *Divine Love* magazine about how America was committing national suicide over abortion, which was causing celebration in communist circles.⁹⁴

After holding a discussion on abortion, a middle school class wished to speak out to the government. A sixth grade teacher, Sister Mary Joel, at St. Bruno Catholic School in Pinckneyville, Illinois, sent in twenty-three letters that her class asked to write to someone in Washington to who could something on the abortion issue. One little girl could not comprehend why someone could be jailed for accidentally killing someone, but not for “killing... a baby.” One little boy wrote, “some of the babies being aborted

⁹¹ Letter, John M. Reylend to VP Ford, 7/1974, folder F15 Abortion, Box 10 (VP/GFL).

⁹² Letter, Sally Velten to VP Ford, 4/22/1974. Letter, Mr. and Mrs. Reynolds to VP Ford, 6/8/1974; Letter, Tony Kelly to VP Ford, 5/30/1974. Letter, Julie Meylor to VP Ford, 8/1974. Letter, Becky Wright to VP Ford, 1974, folder F15 Abortion, Box 10 (VP/GFL).

⁹³ Letter, Martha Alperete to VP Ford, 3/5/1974, folder F15 Abortion, Box 10 (VP/GFL).

⁹⁴ Letter, Richard C. Wagner to VP Ford, 6/11/1974. folder F15 Abortion, Box 10 (VP/GFL).

might have been president of the U.S. someday.” The children maintained a consensus that they were glad their parents did not abort them, or given the chance for another mom to adopt them as a baby. They asked Vice President Ford to speak out against abortion and to write back if he could.⁹⁵ Honoring the students’ request, Vice President Ford responded to their letters, conveying his appreciation for their written concern. He reiterated the decision he made while Minority Leader of the House, which supported an amendment that would leave the regulation of abortions to the states.⁹⁶

Many people writing to the administration confused the *Roe v. Wade* decision as a constitutional amendment. One woman decided that abortion is “unconstitutional since it is violating the rights of the unborn human.” She asked Ford to do everything he could to have “this deleterious amendment repealed.”⁹⁷ Another woman from Kentucky recommended that the young generation needed to be informed in schools, universities, and churches about the impact of abortion. She argued, “This needless killing is a disgrace to the human being and can only be stopped by passing a Pro-Life Amendment.”⁹⁸ Another older lady from Kentucky also urged Ford to support the Pro-Life Amendment, for she believed would-be grandparents would support their daughter against an abortion if only the pregnant mother would reveal her problem.⁹⁹ A married couple from Montana, a state where letters do not usually generate, wrote in their

⁹⁵ Class Letters to VP Ford, 2/28/1974, folder F15 Abortion, Box 10 (VP/GFL).

⁹⁶ Letter, VP Ford to Sister Mary Joel, 4/4/1974, folder F15 Abortion, Box 10 (VP/GFL).

⁹⁷ Letter, Judy Kling to VP Ford, 4/24/1974, folder F15 Abortion, Box 10 (VP/GFL).

⁹⁸ Letter, Rhonda Schilling to VP Ford, 4/24/1974, folder F15 Abortion, Box 10 (VP/GFL).

⁹⁹ Letter, Karen Poe to VP Ford, 6/6/1974, folder F15 Abortion, Box 10 (VP/GFL).

support of the Human Life Amendment “to throw out the Constitution statement that allows the killing of unborn babies.”¹⁰⁰

The abortion ruling had far-reaching consequences that affected the efforts of the women’s liberation movement. Afraid a constitutional amendment regarding equality of the sexes would bring upon the country more pain than abortion, both men and women were awakened to the consequences of the ERA. For if the Supreme Court, which had construed the Constitution to provide for abortion, it could also interpret the new amendment in unforeseen and detrimental ways.

Opposition Arises to the Equal Rights Amendment

After the *Roe v. Wade* decision polarized Americans, organized opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment mounted and quick progress on the ratification process stymied. The first grassroots challengers of the amendment contested it on two main grounds: that women would be drafted and a husband’s duty to provide for his family would be removed. More complex arguments would be used later in the fight. Organizations like STOP ERA, Happiness of Women (HOW), Women Who Want to be Women (WWWW), and American Women are Richly Endowed (AWARE) formed and advocated for the femininity of housewives who wanted to have a choice to remain at home as wives and mothers. They mobilized the Silent Majority to write and lobby their state legislators to either vote against the ERA, or in the cases where states had quickly ratified it, to request a rescission of the approval.

¹⁰⁰ Letter, Anna Belle & Ray Lincoln to VP Ford, 5/9/1974. folder F15 Abortion, Box 10 (VP/GFL).

While organizations structured around stopping the ERA ratification were diverse regionally and in representation, the unmistakable face of the movement was Phyllis Schlafly. During World War II, she had paid her college tuition by working in a munitions factory as a test-firer of ammunition. She was a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Washington University with a master's degree from Radcliffe. She was married to Fred Schlafly, attorney in Alton, Illinois, and a prominent conservative. He was the counsel and custodian of America Wake Up, Incorporated in 1962 "to present public forums, panels, lectures, seminars and schools, stressing the evils of atheistic Communism and its threat to American freedoms." He was on the faculty for Fred Schwartz's anticommunism seminars in 1960 and 1961 and a speaker for the 1968 the John Birch Society annual God, Family and Country Rally. Her sister-in-law was the Executive Director of the Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation, a regular exhibitor at the John Birch Society's annual God, Family and Country Rally, and she had even moderated a session in 1969.

Although she was proud of her role as a housewife and mother, Schlafly stayed very busy in public circles. She was 48 years old in 1973, mother of six children (the youngest aged eight), and author of a half-dozen books. In 1963, she was the President of the Illinois Federation of Republican Women. She published her first book in 1964, *A Choice Not an Echo*, which described the nation's messy political process, and was designed to promote Barry Goldwater's candidacy. It dovetailed nicely with Ronald Reagan's 1964 "A Time for Choosing" speech supporting Goldwater that spoke of the nation's choice that was not "left or right," but "up or down." Both Schlafly's book and

Reagan's speech launched them both into the conservative spotlight. Three of her books were co-written with Admiral Chester Ward, U.S.N., Ret., about nuclear weaponry and strategy, and she even testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee against the U.S.-Soviet test ban treaty.¹⁰¹

She began her own brand with the newsletter *Phyllis Schlafly Report* in 1967. By 1968, she had become vice president of the National Federation of Republican Women. When she fell short of reaching the presidency due to her right-wing views, she launched her own ultra-conservative women's organization called The Eagles Are Flying, and began its newsletter, the Eagle Forum. Schlafly had served in the Ninian Chapter of Daughters of the American Revolution as Chapter regent, Illinois Chairman of National Defense, Illinois State Recording Secretary and editor of the state yearbook. She broadcast twice weekly on the CBS radio network Spectrum series, plus an additional broadcast every other week on WBBM in Chicago. She certainly fulfilled DAR's motto of "Home and country."¹⁰²

She was also engaged politically and had a long list of involvements. In 1970, she ran for Congress a second time and came within 14,000 votes (46 percent of the vote) of unseating six-term incumbent Representative George Shipley (D-Illinois). Like her husband, she was active in conservative circles, serving on the campaign trail for John Ashbrook's (R-Ohio) bid for the 1968 presidency as keynote speaker at a fundraising dinner in San Diego. She also provided speaker services at many meetings

¹⁰¹ Don Critchlow, *Phyllis Schlafly and Grassroots Conservatism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

¹⁰² Phyllis Schlafly, *Daughters of the American Revolution* magazine, October 1975, 1050. folder Phyllis Schlafly, Box 294 (GR/CUA).

for the Young Americans for Freedom, the 1971 meeting of the United Republicans of California, and the 1969 assembly of the American Conservative Union. She had been the President of the Illinois Federation of Republican Women, a state central committeewoman, state convention keynoter and national convention delegate, and organized the Midwest Regional Seminar on the Techniques of Communism. According to one critic, she had the “poise and presence of a professional entertainer.”¹⁰³

Using her background as a woman, a housewife, and political activist, she formed STOP ERA in 1972 to counter the ratification of the amendment on women’s equality. The acronym stood for Stop Taking Away Our Privileges, as she firmly believed that the measure would deny rights to a sector of women not represented by the bill. She ran the organization without any dues, no paid staff, and no financial support other than her husband and honorariums at her speaking engagements.

With very little editorializing, Schlafly sent her *Report* to legislators in February 1973 to point out the differences in the amendment they were ratifying versus the recommendations the House Committee on the Judiciary had made on the bill before passing it. She reprinted straight from the House Report. The committee had proposed adding a section to the amendment about the draft, which stated, “This article shall not impair the validity of any law of the United States which exempts a person from compulsory military service or any other law of the United States or of any State which reasonably promotes the health and safety of the people.” She also reprinted the

¹⁰³ Charles Baker, editor, Institute of American Democracy Newsletter, Vol VII, no. 2, February 1973, folder Equal Rights Amendment, Box 120, (GR/CUA).

warnings the committee provided regarding the original wording of the resolution. The members explained that disagreements on the legal effects of the amendment “are so great as to create a substantial danger of judicial chaos if the original text is enacted.” The committee recognized that the original language did indeed provide for the conscription of women, the invalidation of “work protective laws,” and even going as far as relieving “fathers of the primary responsibility for the support of even infant children, as well as the support of the mothers of such children and cast doubt on the validity of the millions of support decrees presently in existence.”¹⁰⁴ The Senate Judiciary Committee in Senate Report No. 92-689 also came to conclusion that women would be drafted, and even serve in combat roles, in the unaltered version passed by the House. Schlafly asserted that the congressmen who had not heard the pro and con testimony “caved in to the women’s liberation lobbyists” and struck out proposed modifications, like the Wiggins Amendment, which would have not only exempted military draft of women, but also preserved other laws “which reasonably promote the health and safety of the people.”¹⁰⁵

The brochure for STOP ERA claimed the amendment would also destroy the American family. It declared the amendment would make women equally support their families financially, force men to pay double Social Security for a women’s value of her services in the home, mandate taxpayer child care centers for all children, allow

¹⁰⁴ House Committee on the Judiciary, Equal Rights for Men and Women, Report 92-359, 7/14/1971, <http://www.archives.gov/legislative/features/griffiths/committee-report.pdf>.

¹⁰⁵ “Dear State Legislator: The Buck Stops With You,” *Phyllis Schlafly Report* Vol. 6, no. 7, Feb 1973. Washington State Historical Society, <http://digitum.washingtonhistory.org/cdm/compoundobject/collection/wsaera/id/63, 1>.

abortions on demand, and legalize homosexual marriages and adoptions. The brochure asserted the ERA transferred the jurisdiction over marriage and family matters to the federal government and courts. Other implications included drafting women, eliminating single-sex schools and fraternities/sororities, and ordination of women in all churches. The brochure asserted that the amendment would also harm both sexes, as women would lose legal protections in the workforce, qualified male police applicants would be passed over in lieu of female candidates under a new system without physical requirements, and women's preferential life and automobile insurance rates would be eliminated. The amendment was also assumed to remove separate bathrooms, hospitals, prisons, and gender-separated reform schools, as well as integrate the sexes in "coed nonsense" sports, as Pennsylvania courts had already mandated. Provisions for women in equal pay, educational opportunities, and credit were already given in the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972 and 1974 and the Educational Amendments of 1972, thus negating the need for a nebulous and multifarious amendment.

The brochure also posted a long list of those who opposed the ERA, which proved to be diverse. This included military organizations like the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the New York American Legion. Religious organizations also opposed it, such as the National Council of Catholic Women, the Catholic Daughters of America, the Missouri Lutheran Church, General Association of Regular Baptist Churches, the Mormon Church, dozens of Church of Christ churches, Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations, Knights of Columbus, and the Union of Orthodox Rabbis. For schools, the Illinois and Texas PTAs and the National School Boards Association openly stood

against it. Several state women's clubs also resisted it, such as the federation of Women's Clubs in Illinois, Florida, New York, and Virginia, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, and the Daughters of the American Revolution. Some Republican and conservative groups like the Conservative Party of New York, the Young Americans for Freedom, and the Young Republican National Federation were also against it. Legislative groups including Women for Responsible Legislation, American Legislative Exchange Council, and the League of Men Voters dissented. And while the AFL-CIO was initially against the amendment, they decided to support it, but the Women in Industry association remained in opposition.¹⁰⁶ Evelyn Dubrow of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union also worried in the erasure of protective labor laws and segregated bathrooms. The National Council of Catholic Laity also stood against the ERA, as the executive director, Margaret Mealey, explained, "We feel that ERA puts into jeopardy family support laws and wipes out protection for women. Protective labor legislation built up over the years also would go."¹⁰⁷

Phyllis Schlafly was a powerful force who made both her allies and foes respect her, even if they attacked her stance. Both supporters and adversaries of the amendment believed the other side was a traitor to her sex, and Schlafly certainly disagreed with "women's libbers." One journalist for the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* admired her effectiveness as she "battles with mailed fist and velvet voice." By April 1973, Schlafly had already addressed ten state legislatures, and seven had voted it down or shelved the

¹⁰⁶ STOP ERA Brochure, folder Phyllis Schlafly, Box 294 (GR/CUA).

¹⁰⁷ Judy Flander, "Equality Now? It's Not Every Woman's Cup of Tea," *Washington Star-News*, 3/11/1973, D-1, D-14.

vote. Because of her “smile and modulated tone, the careful avoidance of the strident or raucous,” she never looked “the militant gunslinger” of her World War II job as a test-firer of ammunition. She had “the poise and looks of an Ingrid Bergman, the political philosophy of a Barry Goldwater and the savvy of a Harry Truman.” While Schlafly believed the sole supporters of the ERA were “way out liberationists,” she could also conscientiously support the amendment if the Hayden Rider, which was denied by National Women’s Party in 1958, had remained. It stated, “The provisions of this article shall not be construed to impair any rights, benefits or exemptions conferred by law upon persons of the female sex.” Without that modification, Schlafly stood against the ERA for taking away the rights of the other women it did not represent.¹⁰⁸ In a telephone interview, Schlafly stated, “If we got an adequate public debate whereby the issues were presented, I think it would be defeated.” She recognized the amount of work it took to defeat the “women’s libbers,” who were “people who like to agitate,” as conversely, “the women I deal with are not the kind who normally like to make themselves obnoxious.” Additionally, the housewives who supported her were unable to take time off from their motherly tasks to speak publicly against the amendment like professional women could.¹⁰⁹ She definitely attempted to represent the Silent Majority, who was in this case, composed of feminine housewives.

Schlafly’s Eagle Forum for God, Home, and Country served as “The alternative to women’s lib.” The stated purpose of the organization in the brochure read, “We

¹⁰⁸ Mary Kimbrough, “Phyllis Schlafly Wages War on Equal Rights Amendment,” *St. Louis Globe Democrat*, 4/4/1973, 14A.

¹⁰⁹ Eileen Shanahan, “Opposition Rises to Amendment on Equal Rights,” *New York Times*, 1/15/1973, 1, 12.

support the Declaration of Independence and its fundamental doctrine that we owe our existence to a Creator who has endowed each of us with inalienable rights; and we support the United States Constitution as the instrument of securing those God-given rights.” She turned to “the Holy Scriptures as providing the best code of moral conduct yet devised,” quoting Isaiah 40:31 as the theme verse: “They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not be faint.” The brochure also stated that the Eagle Forum supported women’s rights, including the “right of a woman to be a full-time wife and mother,” but also supported existing governmental protections for women laborers. Therefore, the organization opposed ratification of the ERA “because it is inconsistent with at least ten of the rights of women, families, and individuals spelled out in this statement.” It also supported the family structure, with mothers providing preschool care. Schlafly believed that schools should allow voluntary prayer, religious freedom in textbooks, and separate sex and gym education classes. Additionally, the organization insisted on permitting “children to attend school in their own neighborhood.” It also stood for law and order, a strong national defense, different roles in religious bodies, and the right to life at conception.¹¹⁰

The debate between emerging rivals to the amendment and feminist organizations was volatile. Charles Baker, editor of the Institute of American Democracy newsletter, ran a detailed piece on the response to the ERA, providing Phyllis Schlafly’s history and digging for financial connections to the John Birch Society. Baker explained

¹¹⁰ Eagle Forum Brochure, folder Phyllis Schlafly, Box 294 (GR/CUA).

that arguments made on both sides to catch legislators' attention were emotional, not sophisticated. Both parties objectified the other, as proponents of the resolution painted those opposed as rightwing – admitting much of it was not – and opponents of the amendment characterized the supporters as avant-garde women's libbers, when much of the support came from established groups.¹¹¹

Both sides verified his argument, as they in turn attacked each other, calling each other a betrayer of their sex. Phyllis Schlafly responded to his newsletter by writing him a letter about his personal attack on her. She denied any membership in the Birch Society, stating that she did not receive any funding from conservative groups. She pointed instead to the blatant associations between the ERA, NOW, and lesbians, suggesting he should turn his attention to who was indeed supporting the amendment.¹¹² On a radio broadcast in Bloomington, Illinois, Betty Friedan of NOW remarked to Schlafly, "I consider you a traitor to your sex, an Aunt Tom." Schlafly replied that Miss Friedan had "resorted to abusing opponents and hurling epithets at them and making false and phony charges." Friedan answered, "I'd like to burn you at the stake, as far as that is concerned." To which Mrs. Schlafly said, "I'm glad you said that because it shows the intemperate nature of proponents of E.R.A."¹¹³

The left and the right had vastly different definitions of what equal opportunities meant for a woman. The left considered it from an economic standpoint, particularly for women who were working; the right saw it as the choice of a woman to stay home. In a

¹¹¹ Charles Baker, editor, *Institute of American Democracy* Newsletter Vol VII, no. 2, February 1973, folder Equal Rights Amendment, Box 120, (GR/CUA).

¹¹² Letter, Phyllis Schlafly to Charles R. Baker, 3/21/1973, folder Phyllis Schlafly, Box 294, (GR/CUA).

¹¹³ Untitled article, *New York Times*, 5/3/1973, folder Phyllis Schlafly, Box 294, (GR/CUA).

televised debate with Representative Patricia Schroeder (D-Colorado), who favored the amendment, Schlafly said the ERA would be a “constitutional millstone” around the necks of women, specifically in the drafting of women and the removal of a husband’s provision. Addressing ERA proponents who accused her of being a Bircher, she remarked, “I don’t propose to fight the battle on the basis of who’s for it and who’s against it,” denying that she had ever been a member of JBS nor had she ever taken money from right-wing groups.¹¹⁴

Mrs. Schlafly quickly made her name known nationally for assailing the ERA and its feminist proponents. A *Washington Post* article indicated she was “known variously as the sweetheart of the silent majority, the sex symbol of the right wing, the darling of the John Birch Society’s annual God, Family, and Country Rally, the standard bearer for those women who want to remain on their pedestal, and the anathema of the women’s movement.” Schlafly did not believe the women’s movement “has been beneficial in any way,” for women’s libbers’ “objectives are radical and do not relate to the true facts about women.” While some women who had been discriminated against were attracted to the message, as a whole, she considered the movement as “detrimental to women and is counterproductive and degrading.” She called herself “fully liberated” by the time saving devices in her home, which allowed her to travel to make speeches. Yet the article labeled her a “walking contradiction,” fully feminine in her polite sneezes, courteous conversation, and attendance to her appearance, but when she took

¹¹⁴ Robert Adams, “Rights Plan a Millstone, Mrs. Schlafly Says,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 2/26/1973. ProQuest Historical Documents.

the podium, she resembled a “female George Wallace” in her tough and aggressive stance.¹¹⁵

The anti-ERA movement gathered momentum at the beginning of 1973. The STOP ERA organization already had several thousand members in twenty-six states, and held the strongest in Arizona, Florida, Illinois, Louisiana, Missouri, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Virginia. Other oppositional states to the ERA were known to be Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Indiana, Minnesota, Washington and Wyoming.¹¹⁶ Jacquie Davidson, author of the book *I Am a Housewife*, formed the prescribed antidote to NOW with an organization called the Happiness of Womanhood (HOW). She and a few friends in Kingman, Arizona, had formed the group in 1970 to counter feminists, and used it to oppose the ERA, and they wore a button that read “I Know H.O.W.” Davidson was particularly against the ERA for its possibility of drafting her two daughters. It included an offshoot to serve as a men’s counterpart called Defenders of American Womanhood.¹¹⁷ There were 10,000 members between HOW and its offshoot, the League of Housewives, in every state.¹¹⁸ On the East Coast, AWARE (American Women Are Richly Endowed) was also active.

Of course, conservatives and members of the John Birch Society (JBS) were also firmly against the ERA and mobilized to stop ratification. JBS member Reba Lazenby of

¹¹⁵ Sally Quinn, “Phyllis Schlafly: Sweetheart of the Silent Majority,” *Washington Post*, 7/11/1974, D1, D10. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹¹⁶ Eileen Shanahan, “Opposition Rises to Amendment on Equal Rights,” *New York Times*, 1/15/1973, 1, 12. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹¹⁷ Alan Stang, “The Ladies: Those Fascinating Conservative Women,” *American Opinion*, 4/1973, 1-14, folder Equal Rights Amendment, Box 120 (GR/CUA).

¹¹⁸ Eileen Shanahan, “Opposition Rises to Amendment on Equal Rights,” *New York Times*, 1/15/1973, 1, 12. ProQuest Historical Documents.

Aurora, Utah, was so disturbed that the ERA could draft women and invalidate separate bathrooms that she worked with Dr. L. S. Brown of JBS to arrange a meeting of fifty-seven people to form an organization called HOTDOG (Humanitarians Opposed to Degrading Our Girls), claiming that the ERA claims to offer beefsteak but in actuality offers only a spoiled hotdog.¹¹⁹ Billy James Hargis in his Christian Crusade booklet “Women’s Lib, One Way Street to Bondage, the Communist Effort to Subvert Women” was also included in opposition material. Schlafly made appearances on Hargis’ T.V. show, as well as the Dean Manion Forum. Liberty Lobby took a poll of its board members in December 1972 and with their anti-sex education standpoint, voted against the ERA too. Unsurprisingly, the same organizations that stood against sex education in schools were also against the ERA. The conservative *Human Events* publication ran an article against it on February 10, 1973. The radio station WIYN in New York was the first to be fined by the FCC under the Personal Attack provisions of the Fairness Doctrine (HF Sept. ’71) for its anti-amendment propagations. Charles Shiflett, Dr. Mary Calderone of Sexuality Information and Education Council of the U.S. (SEICUS) and the Rome, New York AFL-CIO filed the complaints that the state advances JBS views without providing “contrasting fare.” It was fined \$1,000.¹²⁰

The KKK also took a stance against the amendment. Its newsletter, *Thunderbolt* – purported to provide “news suppressed by the daily press” – argued the amendment would “take women down off the pedestal they now enjoy and degrade them by

¹¹⁹ Alan Stang, “The Ladies: Those Fascinating Conservative Women,” *American Opinion*, 4/1973, 1-14, folder Equal Rights Amendment, Box 120 (GR/CUA).

¹²⁰ Charles Baker, editor, *Institute of American Democracy* Newsletter Vol VII, no. 2, February 1973, folder Equal Rights Amendment, Box 120 (GR/CUA).

stripping women of the special status they deserve in a Christian society.” The Klan opposed the ERA on five main grounds: it would subject women to the draft, take away a husband’s financial obligation to his family, remove separate bathrooms and prison cells, and negate protective legislation. “Our way of life in America will be drastically changed and we will never again return to the ‘Golden Age of Chivalry’ if we allow this degrading monstrosity to become part of our U.S. Constitution.”¹²¹

Around the country, regional grassroots opposition groups also formed. This included the Provo Women for Maintaining the Difference Between the Sexes, Preserving the Family and Opposed to the Equal Rights Amendment, which held a meeting at Brigham Young University for the public to discuss the ERA. The Utah House of Representatives voted against it fifty-one to twenty after the women of Utah spread the word about it, even though rumor was that it was going to pass it five to one.¹²² Up North, Wyoming Women for Privacy and Women for Maintaining the Difference Between the Sexes and Against the Equal Rights Amendment used the same verbiage that Senator George Schmitz (R-California) used in the November 1972 issue of *American Opinion*.¹²³

Housewives around the country mobilized in their states to defeat the ratification. In *Washington Star-News*, Judy Flander reported such efforts in the first months of 1973. In Ohio, housewives baked homemade bread for legislators, which may have proved

¹²¹ “Lib Amendment Means Marxist Equally, *Thunderbolt*, March 1973, folder Equal Rights Amendment, Box 120 (GR/CUA).

¹²² Alan Stang, “The Ladies: Those Fascinating Conservative Women,” *American Opinion*, 4/1973, 1-14, folder Equal Rights Amendment, Box 120 (GR/CUA).

¹²³ Charles Baker, *Institute of American Democracy* Newsletter Vol VII, no. 2, February 1973, folder Equal Rights Amendment, Box 120 (GR/CUA).

influential, for the Ohio Senate Elections Committee decided 6 to 3 not to send it to the floor for a vote.¹²⁴ In Georgia, the National States Rights Party urged lawmakers to “Vote No on Women’s Lib Amendment—Defend Motherhood,” and warned that the “ERA would force women to share the same cells in jails and prisons with men and with black bucks.” HOW members fasted for twenty-four hours and prayed for “God’s help and grace in defeating this attack on His great plan for mankind.” The Northeast Miami Women’s Club also resolved to oppose the ERA, perceiving it as a “refutation of the traditional concept of male and female relationships, within and without the marriage relationship and in the scriptures of both the Old and the New Testaments.” Flander, the author of the *Star-News* article, remarked, “God, motherhood, and apple pie are being aligned against the ERA.” Although the feminist opposition blamed the Birchers for influencing the turn in voting, there was also “a sizable group of middle-American housewives who are beginning to believe that ERA is against their best interests.” For Schlafly had warned them that the measure would remove the responsibility of the husband to his family, taking away the legal right of a wife to be a full-time wife and mother.¹²⁵

In Virginia, a thousand women representing both sides showed for the legislative hearings on the ERA ratification. One legislator claimed he had received over 500 letters, telegrams, and petitions about the amendment, as just part of the thousands of efforts to win over Virginia legislators. Opponents included the Virginia Federation of

¹²⁴ “Equal Rights Move Set Back by Ohio,” *Washington Post*, 4/19/1973. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹²⁵ Judy Flander, “Equality Now? It’s Not Every Woman’s Cup of Tea,” *Washington Star-News*, 3/11/1973, D-1, D-14. ProQuest Historical Documents.

Women's Clubs, the Council of Catholic Women, the Daughters of the American Revolution, and also some labor union officials. Idele Clark of Richmond, who was involved in the pre-World War I suffrage movement, even testified against the amendment.¹²⁶ Ultimately, the amendment was not ratified in Virginia, and much of the credit was given to Phyllis Schlafly for her influential speech in Richmond.

On February 7, 1973, the Senate Committee in the Missouri Senate voted seven to three (three Democrats and four Republicans) not to send the amendment to the floor. Invited by Democratic Senator Mary Gant, the first woman elected to the Missouri Senate, Schlafly spoke during the hearings of the "wonderful right" of a wife to be supported by her husband.¹²⁷ That brought the tally by February 1973 to twenty-eight states that ratified the amendment, as five had rejected it (Arkansas, Mississippi, Missouri, Utah, Virginia), four were reconsidering (Connecticut, Montana, North Dakota, Oklahoma), and it was still pending in fourteen states.

President Nixon addressed the Equal Rights Amendment, but carefully and only in regards to its economic benefits. In his February 22, 1973 State of the Union Message to the Congress on the Economy, he upheld the role of women in the American economy, asserting the country would not be able "to achieve its full economic potential unless every woman who wants to work can find a job that provides fair compensation and equal opportunity for advancement." He reaffirmed the Administration's support of

¹²⁶ Helen Dewar, "Women's Rights Measures in Trouble," *Washington Post*, 2/2/1973, C1, C9. ProQuest Historical Documents.

¹²⁷ Dana Spitzer, "Senate Committee Kills Women's Rights Bill," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 2/8/1973, 1, 18.

the ERA in promoting the goal of equal economic chances for both genders.¹²⁸ Yet he was very cautious not to address the criticisms of the resolution or its social impacts. A week later on March 1, Nixon reiterated this idea in his State of the Union Address to Congress on Human Resources. He affirmed reinforcement of the ERA more broadly, stating his goal that “American women – not a minority group but a majority of the whole population – need never again be denied equal opportunity.”¹²⁹

The United Press International dispatch, *Review of the News*, challenged the President’s speech by pointing out the unspoken effects of the amendment. Like Schlafly, the article referred to the assessments made by more prominent members who had studied the ERA. It mentioned the article that Harvard Professor Paul Freund, an acknowledged expert on the ERA, had published in the March 1971 issue of *Harvard Civil Rights and Civil Liberties Law Review* to restate his earlier research. He had stated, “In comparing the problem of choice twenty-five years ago and today, I concluded that so far from the case for the amendment being strengthened, the choice of the alternative course was even more strongly indicated.” Professor Charles E. Rice of the University of Notre Dame School also warned, “To use a constitutional amendment to cure existing improper sexual discrimination, whether in employment, jury service or whatever, would be like using a sledgehammer to swat a housefly.” He asserted, “The chance of hitting the fly would be minimal but you would certainly break the furniture and this would be

¹²⁸ Richard Nixon: "State of the Union Message to the Congress on the Economy," 2/22/1973. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=4112>.

¹²⁹ Richard Nixon: "State of the Union Message to the Congress on Human Resources," 3/1/1973. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=4121>.

the effect of the Equal Rights Amendment.” Additionally, the House Judiciary Committee’s Report No. 92-359 on House Resolution 208 had also concluded that the amendment would provide a series of undesirable results. “For example, not only would women, including mothers, be subject to the draft but the military would be compelled to place them in combat units alongside of men.” Further, the committee had cautioned, “the protective work laws reasonably designed to protect the health and safety of women be invalidated,” and it could even possibly “relieve the fathers of primary responsibility for the support of even infant children, as well as the support of mothers of such children and cast doubt on the validity of millions of support decrees currently in existence.”¹³⁰

Conservative criticism of the amendment as a communist plot was inevitable. Following Billy James Hargis’ line of reasoning, Alan Stang followed suit in a *JBS American Opinion* article. He was a business editor for Prentice-Hall, Inc., a television writer, producer, consultant, and had authored the Western Islands bestsellers. After upholding the beauty and purpose of women, Stang highlighted the “totalitarian fraud known as the Women’s Totalitarian Movement,” which in his opinion was “working to remove women from their homes and make them virtually the property of the federal government – and is doing so, typically, in the name of ‘equal rights’.” The “phony” feminist movement had caused damage, he claimed, as women’s lib had created confusion between the sexes, making men into sex symbols. He contended, “We want to be wanted and valued for ourselves – for our own hopes, feelings, ambitions and

¹³⁰ “Correction, Please!” United Press International dispatch, *Review of the News*, 3/1/1973, 29, folder Equal Rights Amendment, Box 120 (GR/CUA).

characters.” In response to the threat of women’s lib, Stang became a founder and National Vice Commander of the Men’s Liberation Front, Incorporated, and they demanded “Justice Now” for the “oppressed masculine minority.”

Stang also made the connection between women’s lib and communism. He wrote that “feminoids” had been around since the 1848 convention, alluding that the women’s movement arose the same year as the publication of Karl Marx’s *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. He asserted that Lenin himself had declared that petty housework degraded women, and they would only be liberated when a communist struggle is begun against this “petty domestic economy.” Both Lenin and the recent “feminoids” aimed to “get women out of the homes in order to destroy the families, and, most important, in order to transfer control of the children from the parents to the state.”¹³¹ While the Communist Party stood for women’s rights, they also opposed the ERA on the grounds that it would remove protective legislation for women workers.¹³² The Freedom Socialist Party agreed with the CP that the ERA “will destroy the protective legislation covering women workers that has been won by women and organized labor over a century of class struggle.” This “cynical maneuver” would increase the exploitation of women and “drive a wedge between professional women and organized workers.”¹³³

Historian Don Critchlow confirmed that communism and religion played very large roles in Schlafly's organization and mobilization. Catholics and evangelical

¹³¹ Alan Stang, “The Ladies: Those Fascinating Conservative Women,” *American Opinion*, 4/1973, 1-14, folder Equal Rights Amendment, Box 120, CUA.

¹³² Statement of the National Women’s Commission of the C.P.U.S.A. on the Equal Rights Amendment, folder Equal Rights Amendment—General (1), Box 9, Lindh Holm/ GFL.

¹³³ Letter, Freedom Socialist Party to readers, 10/12/1971, folder Equal Rights Amendment—General (1), Box 9 (PLJH/GFL).

Protestants had united to spread the anti-communist gospel, and their ecumenism echoed loudly in the ERA battle as well. Critchlow argues that one of the most extraordinary achievements of grassroots conservatism is that Protestants and Catholics overcame age-old animosities to battle common enemies: Communists and liberals.¹³⁴

Regardless of real communist infiltration, fears of losing a specific American identity were sharp and clearly conveyed through correspondences. Letters opposing the Equal Rights Amendment showed contempt with “women libbers” and a fear of the destruction of the American ideal family. Eunice Smith from Birmingham, Alabama, professed her distress over Nixon’s advocating of the Equal Rights Amendment. She wrote, “After extensive study and debate, I am convinced that ERA can do no concrete good for women that is not already available or could not be better provided under specific legislation.” Instead, she was “convinced that ERA would prove very detrimental to the family, the basic unit of our society, and would open a ‘Pandora’s Box’ of legislation through its prohibiting any differentiation in law on the basis of sex.” She was overjoyed that her state overwhelmingly voted down the ERA, for they were “realizing increasingly that it is a ‘wolf in sheep’s clothing’.”¹³⁵

Dorothy Brewster of the North Fulton County Republican Women’s Club in Atlanta, Georgia, wrote of her perspective of the American family as the bedrock of the country’s identity. The Georgia Federation stood opposed to the ERA, for it would eventually “destroy the family, the basic element of our society.” In disagreement with

¹³⁴ Critchlow, *Phyllis Schlafly*, 66-68.

¹³⁵ Letter, Eunice Smith to President Nixon, 8/22/1973, folder HU 2-5 Women 1/1/73-12/31/73, Box 22 (HU/RNL).

the amendment, she argued past the bathrooms and military draft problems and asked about the “direct attack on and challenge to our basic culture – the American family.” She made a lot of her judgment not on the proposal itself, but rather on the radical feminists with whom she associated the bill. “I feel no kinship with the loud, contentious, disgruntled element in the forefront of this battle, and I find their browbeating, intimidating tactics especially obnoxious.”¹³⁶

State Senator Trudy Camping (R-Arizona) agreed about the perceived nature of feminists. Believing the state of Arizona had already eliminated all discrimination against women, the Arizona State Senate resisted giving any more power to the federal government and thus decided to not ratify the ERA. Camping wrote to Vice President Ford that while the goal of “equal rights” was a worthy ideal, she believed the ERA was “nothing more than a ‘women’s lib amendment’.” She had been persuaded by her mail, which was 90 percent against the amendment as a “threat to the nation and to our homes.” She asked for Ford’s stance on the ERA, praying “the Lord has not allowed you to be intimidated by these vociferous women as some of our congressmen have.

A flyer created by Women Who Want to Be Women (WWWW) began making its rounds through PTAs and schools in 1974. “Too long we have been the ‘Silent Majority.’ It’s time to speak up! Let your voice be strong and clear!” Specifically, it encouraged its readers to write their state legislators to oppose the ERA. Equating a feminist word with Cuban revolutionaries, it asked “Are you sure you want to be

¹³⁶ Letter, Dorothy B. Brewster to Connie Armitage, 9/16/1973, folder HU 2-5 Women 1/1/73-12/31/73, Box 22 (HU/RNL).

liberated?” Although God created women as beautiful with an exalted place, a “tiny minority of dissatisfied, highly vocal, militant women insists that you are being exploited as a ‘domestic drudge’ and a ‘pretty toy’.” Quoting Senator Sam Ervin, who called the ERA “the most drastic measure in Senate history,” the mailer asserted the amendment “strikes at the very foundation of family life.” It warned that it would take away a woman’s right to choose to stay home, force children to go to day care centers, take away a paternal surname, and “desexigrate” all facilities. It would also take away a woman’s right not to be drafted and her protective work legislation. The argument that the ERA would provide equal pay for equal work was only a “smokescreen.”¹³⁷

Based in Fort Worth, the WWWW gathered allies across Texas and beyond. 120 representatives (about 30 percent male) from across the state held a weekend strategy session at a church in Fort Worth to get the Texas legislature to rescind its vote on the ERA. They did not want their views publicized, and did not allow reporters; the one who did write an article paid membership dues to attend the conference. The keynoter, Representative Larry Vick of Houston, accused the women’s rights movement as “the most vicious, conniving, deceiving movement this country has ever seen next to communism.” One attendant from Waco, an insurance adjuster, contended the ERA would have the same effect that school busing had created. His strategy, to put NOW and COW (Commissions on Women) into the acronym “KOMA,” was to “know your

¹³⁷ Mailer, Women Who Want to be Women (WWWW), 1974, folder Equal Rights Amendment – Printed Material (2) (PLJH/GFL).

facts,” organize in every county, raise money for a full-time lawyer, and use aggressive action to counter their opponents.¹³⁸

In January of 1975, the Virginia Senate shelved the ERA after a strong push against it. The Senate Commission had sent the ratification resolution to the Senate floor, where it was voted to send it to the Privileges and Elections Committee. After receiving additional input from members not present during the first vote, the committee changed its vote within a week to kill the proposed ERA ratification. Mrs. Paul O’Neill of Mount Vernon, co-chairperson of STOP ERA in Virginia, stated that as a housewife, “I represent the silent, unorganized majority of women in Virginia.” “While those militant women proponents were lobbying for the ERA in Richmond,” she said, “we were home feeding our children and minding our own business. We wrote our letters and mail-ograms, though. I feel very strongly that we’re wasting the taxpayers’ money rehashing this thing year after year.”¹³⁹

The next month, the Missouri legislature followed likewise. The Missouri Stop ERA ran an effective newspaper campaign, as it was rumored that the outcome in the Senate could be affected by a single vote. They listed a series of situations that they warned would occur if the ERA was ratified, including women assigned to military combat and warships, homosexual marriages and adoptions, and senior women deprived

¹³⁸ Barbara Richardson, “Anti-Amendment: Women Who Want to be Women Plan Strategy,” *Dallas Times Herald*, 11/26/1974.

¹³⁹ Helen Dewar and Janis Johnson, “Equal Rights Amendment Killed in Va.,” *Washington Post*, 1/25/1975.

of their rights as a housewife.¹⁴⁰ After the House in Missouri approved ratification, sending the measure to the Senate, a barrage of hundreds of letters, phone calls and buttonholing at the Senate offices, “all of it in opposition—the likes of which the Senate has rarely seen,” flooded legislators’ offices. Senator Jasper M. Brancato, who was on the receiving end of the onslaught, was reconsidering his support of the amendment, asking, “Where are all these letters coming from? I think it must be the Baptists. But they sure have the housewives stirred up.” Senator James F. Conway of St. Louis was planning to support the vote, but remarked, “Boy, am I taking the heat on this. Some of my best people back home are telling me to back off. I walked out of church Sunday morning, and I got clobbered.”

Women and youth alike believed that women should be afforded the right to stay a housewife if they so desired. One housewife from Springfield who visited Senators’ offices told them, “We’re women who want to be women.” Her opposition sprung from her religious beliefs, as “The Bible says the husband should be the leader in a family.” Another wife from St. Charles argued the measure would be “a wedge for the federal Government to take away women’s rights.” Additionally, a group of teenagers from the St. Louis area called Youth for Responsible Legislation passed out pink cookies in the shape of a heart to the senators with the note reading, “Please don’t break our hearts. Vote against the ERA.” A chaperone said of their efforts, “They studied the issue, and

¹⁴⁰ Seth Kantor, “From HOTDOG to WWW: Militant Women Unite to Head Off Approval of Rights Amendment,” *Detroit News*, 4/27/1975. 1, A6.

they want it stopped. They feel that a woman's highest calling is to be a wife and a mother.”¹⁴¹

In Oklahoma, a state expected to ratify the amendment, STOP ERA also made a large impact. In 1972, the Senate had approved it by voice vote. But when it came before the House in 1975, advertisements in a Bartlesville newspaper warned of the “legalization of rape” and “homosexual acts” to come with its passing, pushing, “If you don't want to be subjected to the Marxist pressures and abuses inherent in the ERA, then contact your congressmen today.”¹⁴² The Oklahoma House of Representatives never brought the measure to a vote.

Correspondence addressed to Mrs. Ford also criticized her approval of the amendment. The letters written to the First Lady ran three to one against her outspoken support of the passage of the amendment. Her press secretary, Sheila Weidenfeld, said that Mrs. Ford had received 360 letters in praise of her efforts and 1,128 against. Betty Ford assumed that those who were for the amendment silently commended her from home while those against the ERA were writing. One letter read, “The ERA is being forced upon us by subversive organizations, subversive people and now you.”¹⁴³

By the end of 1975, polls showed a beginning of a shift in perspectives on gender roles and the ERA. Whereas almost half of men and women in 1971 thought women should leave the running of the country up to men, that number dropped to 35 percent, as

¹⁴¹ Dana Spitzer, “ERA Slowed in Senate,” *St. Louis Dispatch*, 2/12/1975.

¹⁴² Seth Kantor, “From HOTDOG to WWW: Militant Women Unite to Head Off Approval of Rights Amendment,” *Detroit News*, 4/27/1975. 1, A6.

¹⁴³ “Mrs. Ford Scored on Equality Plan,” *New York Times*, 2/21/1975. ProQuest Historical Documents.

63 percent now disagreed that women should only take care of their homes.¹⁴⁴ Additionally, 59 percent of those polled now favored efforts to strengthen women's status in society, and 28 percent still opposed them. While 40 percent of respondents still agreed that the ERA would take away protective laws for women, 45 percent also disagreed. A slim majority also supported the ERA by 51 percent, while 36 percent still disagreed (13 percent were unsure). Oddly enough, that number jumped to 70 percent six months later when asked if they agreed with Mrs. Betty Ford's favorable support of the passage of the ERA.¹⁴⁵ In December, a Roper Poll presented both sides of the argument for the ratification of the ERA, as it would provide rights for women that they did not currently have, but the criticism of the act argued that women would also lose a lot of privileges with its passage. In this instance, only 52 percent favored the ERA, 26 percent were opposed, 18 confessed they had mixed feelings, and 4 percent could not decide.¹⁴⁶ Three months later, the number in favor increased to 57 percent versus 24 percent in dissent.¹⁴⁷

Indiana was the last state to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment. In January 1977, the Indiana Senate was deadlocked twenty-five to twenty-five, and Senator Birch Bayh telephoned the White House for assistance. First lady Rosalynn Carter called Senator Wayne Townshend (D-Indiana) and persuaded him to switch his vote. Indiana

¹⁴⁴ General Social Survey 1975, Feb 1975 (RCPOR).

¹⁴⁵ Harris Survey, Apr 1975 (RCPOR).

¹⁴⁶ Roper Report 76-1, Dec 1975 (RCPOR).

¹⁴⁷ Gallup Poll, Mar 1976 (RCPOR).

became the thirty-fifth, and last state, to ratify the amendment.¹⁴⁸ By 1977, the support for women's rights and the ERA remained stagnant.

International Women's Year Conference

In 1975, the United Nations had declared the year International Women's Year (IWY), and President Ford's commission on IWY recommended a national conference. Congress allotted \$5 million of taxpayer money toward a conference of women delegates. Each state and territory was allowed to submit their own delegates, and the conference planners were allowed to supplement their number with delegates at-large.

Objections to the conference were swift. Phyllis Schlafly in her *Report* in January 1976 urged readers to write their congressmen to object the appropriated \$5 million to fund a conference that was "a front for radicals and lesbians."¹⁴⁹ STOP ERA activists also opposed the conference's "National Plan of Action," targeting resolutions for the ERA, abortion, government funded daycare centers, sex education, and gay rights. At state conventions, feminists were surprised to see antifeminists also present to elect delegates. Combined with Mormon efforts in several states, antifeminists were able to elect a majority in fourteen state delegations, but this only represented one quarter of the elected delegates.¹⁵⁰

Before the event was even held, a *Los Angeles Times* article printed protestations over the use of taxpayer money to host the conference. Rosemary Thompson, a

¹⁴⁸ Don Critchlow, *Phyllis Schlafly*, 244.

¹⁴⁹ Schlafly and ERA, 1/1976, folder Phyllis Schlafly, Box 294 (GR/CUA).

¹⁵⁰ Don Critchlow, *Phyllis Schlafly*, 245.

convention delegate from Morton, Illinois, was furious that taxpayers were footing the bill to pay to push the Equal Rights Amendment, which still could not get full ratification, “and for the cause of lesbianism.” Conference organizers were also under fire for frivolously using the money to pay for all expenses for the women. The Public Law 94-167 adopted to finance the conference allotted the financial assistance for delegates unable to pay their own expenses. But planners instead allocated airfare and a \$50 per day per diem for all 1,442 delegates, many of the 400 at-large, and their alternates. This depleted their funding pool for conference items like childcare and entertainment, requiring fundraising from skeptical corporations and individuals.¹⁵¹

One lady wrote her complaint of the conference to her local Austin newspaper. She attended the conference as one of hundreds of women who were “opposed to feminist issues” and “denied a voice because of the way the conference was run.” She was irate for receiving a mailed solicitation for money to pass the ERA, even though the conference was funded by a \$5 million government grant. She asked, “Why should taxpayers’ money be spent to try to get a law passed which many Americans are opposed to?” She accused liberal women for having “no respect for their opposition and will use the government as much as they can for their own end.”¹⁵²

The National Women's Conference was held in Houston from November 18-22, 1977. Three main leaders of the conference were nationally recognized for their stance for women’s liberation: Gloria Steinem, Bella Abzug, Koryne Horbal. The vast majority

¹⁵¹ Nicholas C. Chriss, “Women's Conference Stirs Controversy: Furore Boiling Over Expenditure of Taxpayers' Money,” *Los Angeles Times*, 11/11/1977, D1. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

¹⁵² Marianne Mason, “Letters to the Editor: Feminists Exploit Taxpayer Money,” *The Austin American Statesman*, 11/9/1977, A12. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

of the delegates were considered profeminist, with only 15 percent being antifeminist, including anti-abortionists, conservatives, and members of the Total Woman movement. The International Women's Year (IWY) Commission drafted twenty-six proposals with an allotted fifteen minutes of discussion for each topic. First ladies Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Ford, and Mrs. Carter were also present to push the ERA through the last needed three states before the March 1979 ratification deadline.¹⁵³ The conference overwhelmingly passed the resolution, although antifeminist leaders complained they were railroaded by never given a chance to introduce their resolution opposing the amendment.¹⁵⁴ As the *Washington Post* confirmed, the one-sidedness of the ERA vote also reflected a political imbalance among the delegates chosen by their state conventions that skewed the tone of the whole convention.¹⁵⁵ The National Women's Conference ended with an approved 25-point platform, with the only proposal not sanctioned involving a Cabinet-level women's department; the chair refused to accept a minority report of the sentiments of the antifeminists. In the closing minutes, Indiana state Senator Joan Gubbins led about three hundred delegates, who were self-described as pro-life and pro-family and opposed to most of the agenda, walked off the convention floor singing "God Bless America."¹⁵⁶

Phyllis Schlafly, sweetheart of the Silent Majority and the main antifeminist, also claimed to be shut out of the conference. "They've got their delegates, the IWY, and

¹⁵³ William Endicott, "Women Opening Historic Meeting," *Los Angeles Times*, 11/18/1977, B1. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

¹⁵⁴ William Endicott, "Women's Parley Sends Message: Ratify the ERA," *Los Angeles Times*, 11/20/1977, 1. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

¹⁵⁵ David S. Broder, "Assessing the Impact: After the Euphoria, Impact of Women's Meeting Is Unclear," *Washington Post*, 11/22/1977, A1. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

¹⁵⁶ Anna Quindlen, "Women End Parley With Plan for Rights: Women End Meeting in Houston With a 25-Point Age," *New York Times*, 11/22/1977, 1. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

they planned them,” she said. “They saw to it that they were elected, and they put in their own at-large delegates... Our side has been completely frozen out.” Kathryn Clarenbach, executive director of the International Women’s year secretariat, confirmed that the organizers named women “who has made particular contributions to the advancement of women’s rights and women who have contributed to the purposes for which this conference is being called.” Instead, Schlafly planned a “pro-family” rally on November 19 in Houston.¹⁵⁷ Lottie Beth Hobbs, an organizer for WWW, became the principal organizer for the Pro-Family Rally, which was held at the Astro-Arena. While the IWY Conference drew 1,000 delegates and 10,000 spectators, the Pro Family rally drew 20,000 women, some who had driven all night to attend. Most were middle-aged, white, Christian women. Speakers berated the ERA, abortion, homosexuality, and women’s libbers.

Although the purpose of the conference was to extend their reach into Middle America to gain support for the ERA, its accomplishments were mixed. It did mark a victory for gay rights, as even Betty Friedan, traditionally non-supportive of the lesbians that had cause a rift in NOW, turned to give her acceptance of the gay resolution. For this, Schlafly declared the death of the ERA and the demise of women’s lib, stating, “The Women’s Lib movement has sealed its own doom by deliberately hanging around

¹⁵⁷ Marlene Cmons, “Phyllis Schlafly Heads for Houston: Balks at Being Shut Out of Women's Conference,” *Los Angeles Times*, 11/11/1977, H1. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

its own neck the albatross of abortion, lesbianism, pornography, and Federal control.” The combined weight of the feminist resolutions buffered antifeminist arguments.¹⁵⁸

A Harris Poll taken in December of 1977 appeared to show that support of the ERA and its goals was waning, as only 48 percent of respondents agreed with the resolution passed at the conference that upheld the ERA. The percentage of those who agreed with passage of the ERA decreased from a peak of 56 percent to 51 percent, while 34 percent opposed it and 15 percent were still not sure. The number of those who disagreed that the act would remove special protections for women dropped from 46 to 42 percent, as 18 percent were now unsure. Respondents also felt more strongly against women protesters, as the number who believed that women’s libbers were changing traditional roles now pulled ahead at 44 percent versus the 37 who rejected that thought. Americans became more divided over whether women needed legal equality to be treated equally in their day-to-day lives, as the percentage who agreed with this dropped from 48 to 45 while the same 44 percent disagreed, closing the gap.¹⁵⁹

A “vast majority” of Americans did not support the ERA through the 1960s or even the ‘70s. When the National Federation of Business & Professional Women conducted a poll through Louis Harris & Associates in November of 1979, some 56 percent of respondents favored the amendment, while 36 percent still opposed it.¹⁶⁰ Figure 4 shows that opposition to the ERA continued to oppose it, while more women made a choice on the matter.

¹⁵⁸ Critchlow, *Phyllis Schlafly*, 247-248.

¹⁵⁹ Harris Survey, Dec 1977 (RCPOR).

¹⁶⁰ Equal Rights Amendment Survey, Nov 1979 (RCPOR).

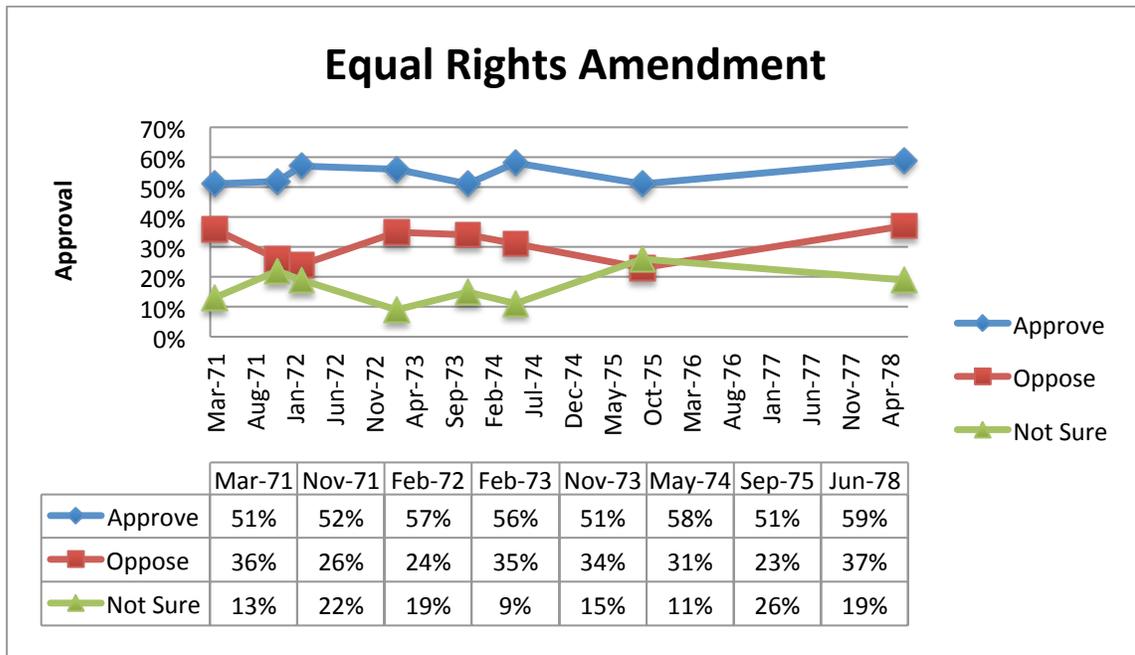


Figure 4 Equal Rights Amendment Approval.
Harris and Gallup Polls, “Do you favor or oppose the Equal Rights Amendment?”
1975-1982¹⁶¹

The IWY Conference had no bearing on the Equal Rights Amendment, which quietly faded from national importance. In 1978, Georgia, Alabama, and South Carolina voted “No” on the resolution, and Florida announced it would not vote on it. In 1977, Representative Elizabeth Holtzman (D-New York) introduced a resolution to extend the ERA ratification by another seven years, followed by a march of 100,000 people on D.C. and an intensive lobbying campaign. Congress approved a thirty-nine-month extension to June 30, 1982, but not a further single state approved it.¹⁶²

¹⁶¹ Due to the high variance of other types of polls that ranged from 52 percent approval (Virginia Slims, 1979) to 72 percent (Third Annual Tax Study, May, 1979), only numbers reported by Harris and Gallup Surveys were reported in this chart. (RCPOR)

¹⁶² Critchlow, *Phyllis Schlafly*, 248.

The women's movement had a strong chance to have equal rights under the law extended to women, but the window was short and insufficient. The last crusade of the decade found Americans tired of protests and resistant to changing the perspective of the American identity promulgated through the nuclear family. The nation had endured civil rights activism, campus protests, antiwar demonstrations, city riots and citizens wanted to return to a nostalgic form of America. While most people agreed that women could and should be equal to men, they disagreed about how far that should reach, and affirmed the familial ideal of a female homemaker. Radical feminists soured the perception that many held of a woman equal in society, and the Silent Majority rejected their inclusion of lesbianism and abortion, making the fight for the more moderate women's movement much more difficult. Into the twenty-first century, women achieved more social, economic, and political equality. Although ERA advocates later realized many of their goals, the nation affirmed some gender differences still would be recognized.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSIONS

Popular artist Billy Joel reflected on the protest culture that had fizzled out by the mid-1970s. In 1976, he released his album *Turnstyles* that features the song “Angry Young Man.” Although Joel was sympathetic to the social movements, the song provides a sardonic critique of a young generation that resisted changing tactics despite failure:

I believe I've passed the age of consciousness and righteous rage
I found that just surviving was a noble fight
I once believed in causes too
I had my pointless point of view
And life went on no matter who was wrong or right

And there's always a place for the angry young man
With his fist in the air and his head in the sand
And he's never been able to learn from mistakes
So he can't understand why his heart always breaks¹

By the end of the “long Sixties,” Americans were tired of the protest culture. Liberalism was on the wane as the New Left dissolved, black nationalists were silenced or chose to move out of the country, hippie culture was consumerized, and the antiwar movement lost its purpose when the Vietnam War ended in 1973 and Saigon fell to the communists. Historian Allen Matusow took a pessimistic view of the decade, arguing that the movement had “convulsed the nation and assured the repudiation of the Democrats in the 1968 election.” At the end of the Sixties, as Matusow reckoned,

¹ Billy Joel, “Angry Young Man,” *Turnstyles*, © 1976 by Columbia Records.

“optimism vanished, fundamental differences in values emerged to divide the country, social cohesion rapidly declined, and the unraveling of America began.”² Tom Wolfe coined the following era the “Me Decade,” as it turned toward narcissism, selfishness, and the personal rather than the political. The Silent Majority wanted to reverse the upheavals of the previous decade and a return to a traditional (and perhaps nostalgic) time of patriotism and pride in American values, although the perspective on the last now had new connotations. The nation instead faced a humiliating defeat in Vietnam, a long and frustrating energy crisis, questions over détente with Russia, and furious ideological battles inside both major political parties.³

The Silent Majority response to integration in the first half of the 1960s had revealed their perception of an American identity. The romanticization of the South through popular culture played a large part in the embrace of southern ideals that propagated nationally. White southerners accepted some integration of public facilities and schools, but many held firm to their conviction that these matters, in accordance with the Constitution, should be left up to the states. Large numbers of Anglos resented federal intervention in events such as the Freedom Rides and the enrollment of James Meredith at Ole Miss. The Silent Majority supported the southern resistance, advocating the need for a law to come from elected representatives and not an appointed Supreme Court. When Congress passed the Civil Rights Act in 1964 and the Voting Rights Act in 1965, much of the defiance relaxed under these representative-approved laws.

² Allen Matusow, *The Unraveling of America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1984), xiv.

³ Bruce J. Schulman, *The Seventies: The Great Shift in American Culture, Society, and Politics* (New York: Free Press, 2001), 145; Laura Kalman, *Right Star Rising: A New Politics, 1974-1980* (New York: Norton, 2010).

Yet the rise of Black Power and racial riots in the latter half of the decade reignited the rightist response, this time in the North. The destruction of the Watts, Newark, and Detroit riots showed a frustration in the black community with discrimination outside the South, as blacks remained economically and educationally inferior. The eruption of the violence led by the Black Panthers, who advocated a separate black society, generated strong concern about the future of race relations. The Silent Majority demanded law and order from local police enforcement as well as political leaders. The 1968 election of Richard Nixon, who ran on a platform of law and order after hearing the majority's cries for justice, confirms the power of a concerned and motivated electorate. While Nixon won by a slim margin of the popular vote over Democrat Hubert Humphrey, he carried thirty-two states. Independent (and segregationist) George Wallace, in the strongest third party effort since Teddy Roosevelt's 1912 bid to regain the presidency, carried five states of the Deep South and 13.5 percent of the vote. The election of the Republican signified the collapse of the New Deal Coalition that had dominated presidential politics for thirty-six years. However, the Supreme Court also heeded the black need for full equality, and provided controversial court rulings that allowed for school busing. White flight to the suburbs was a clear rejection of integration, and had proved effective in previous years. Northern whites felt busing mandates removed their economic choice of neighborhood, and thus, their schools.

Epilogue

The federal government made a discernible shift away from a commitment to integration in the 1970s. Busing generated such controversial and vituperative reactions in the North that cities including Boston, Denver, and New York exploded in violent disputes. Following the white flight to the suburbs and the resentment of the Silent Majority over federal intervention, the Supreme Court in 1974 handed down a ruling in the case *Milliken v. Bradley* that limited busing across district lines. As seen with the rise of Black Power, the integrationist ideal declined with the concomitant rise of the concept of diversity. Equally powerful was the argument against governmental social programs established under LBJ's Great Society that were perceived as beneficial to blacks: welfare, job training, and urban renewal. Further, the Silent Majority backlash to affirmative action as a preferential plan for minorities (both racial and gender) argued that white males were now the objects of discrimination.⁴

The women's movement also argued that discrimination applied to them, although many housewives disagreed. Even with the Equal Pay Act and the Civil Rights Act, women still did not receive equal wages and educational opportunities, and alternate gender identifications were not recognized. The Supreme Court provided important changes for women to control their own reproduction by legalizing birth control and a limited version of abortion. The Equal Rights Amendment was also approved in Congress, but faced resistance in state ratifications. Led by Phyllis Schlafly,

⁴ Schulman, *The Seventies*, 114; Terry H. Anderson, *The Pursuit of Fairness: A History of Affirmative Action* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

grassroots women's organizations, representing housewives and women of the Silent Majority, contented with American gender roles, fervently railed against what they perceived as the moral degradation of society through the liberation of sex, murder of the unborn, and lesbianism.

Feminism and the battles over women's roles and abortion definitely affected the following decades. Some scholars have connected the antifeminism of the 1970s to a broader political framework, suggesting that ideas about gender shaped visions of the state, economic regulation, anticommunism, and the proper role of government. The rise of anti-feminist conservatism grew out of the grassroots political efforts of people such as the suburban housewives who lived in Orange County and the women who were drawn to Phyllis Schlafly in the Midwest. STOP-ERA effectively completed its mission, with assistance from the shrill voices from the radical feminist and homosexual factions of the gender movement that turned moderates away. After successfully defeating the ERA, Schlafly remained an elder stateswoman in the GOP, directing her energy toward the attainment of traditional values through social conservatism.⁵

The protests of leftist radicals against college conservatism and the Vietnam War further divided the country. College liberals sought a shared role in the governance of the university and advocated the right of free speech. But the radicalism of the New Left

⁵ Treatments of the activism of conservative women and its contributions to the movement include Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Michelle Nickerson, "Women, Domesticity, and Postwar Conservatism," *OAH Magazine of History* 17 (Jan. 2003), 17–21; Ronnee Schreiber, *Righting Feminism: Conservative Women and American Politics* (New York: Oxford, 2008); and Donald T. Critchlow, *Phyllis Schlafly and Grassroots Conservatism: A Woman's Crusade* (Princeton, 2005); Catherine E. Rymph, *Republican Women: Feminism and Conservatism from Suffrage to the New Right* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2006).

at Columbia University and the Democratic National Convention infuriated a Silent Majority that respected political tradition and hierarchy. Conservatives and politicians like Spiro Agnew attacked the portrayals of the radicals in the news, and accused reporters of media bias. The Vietnam War also proved to be an extremely polarizing issue between antiwar protesters and a Silent Majority who claimed ownership of American patriotism. While a majority of the population increasingly did not agree with U.S. policy on the war, they also outright rejected antiwar protests and Moratorium demonstrations. Grassroots organizations to support the war, the American soldiers, or the anticommunist doctrine flourished, and pro-war rallies spread nationally to uphold the traditional American stance as the policeman of the world.

The Vietnam War forever changed the way Americans perceive war. Desert Storm, the 100-hour war in Kuwait under President George H.W. Bush, proved that America could once again protect another country without becoming entangled in a quagmire, helping the nation to overcome “the Vietnam syndrome.” Yet Americans still needed a well-defined purpose to go to war. When Al-Qaeda terrorists attacked New York’s World Trade Center on 9/11/2001, not only America, but also countries internationally, stood behind President George W. Bush in his mission to find and execute those responsible, reflected in his high approval rating. However, doubts arose over the invasion of Iraq in search of weapons of mass destruction. President G. H. W. Bush had declined to depose Saddam Hussein in the face of a long occupation, but his son found it necessary to establish a democracy in Iraq. Once again, a war was protracted over several presidencies, and American opposition continued to rise as the

duration extended. Another legacy of the Vietnam War was manifest in the elimination of the draft, a step allowing the majority of the nation to remain detached from the Iraq and Afghanistan wars except through unfiltered news, which was also first allowed in wartime during the 1960s. The Silent Majority has continued to support the military, regardless of the presidential commander in chief.

Sixties counterculture disavowed traditional values in search for an alternate idealism. They opposed the Silent Majority's respect for the American ideals of hard work, consumerism, and anticommunism, and the right responded by alienating Hippies further. Grassroots groups mobilized against obscenity and drugs to affirm values of clean living. The integration of the counterculture into the mainstream through the commercialization of hippie music and fashion proved it was safe enough for middle America to consume, and a sanitized counterculture likewise became the culture. The Silent Majority also sought to reincorporate the drugged-out hippies back into a clean environment, and used religion through the Jesus movement as the gateway to provide them a way out of the counterculture.

Ultimately, the majority of Hippies reintegrated back into American society. Huey Lewis & The News described this latter process in the 1986 popular song "Hip To Be Square":

I used to be a renegade, I used to fool around
But I couldn't take the punishment, and had to settle down
Now I'm playing it real straight, and yes I cut my hair
You might think I'm crazy, but I don't even care

Because I can tell what's going on
It's hip to be square⁶

The song features Pro Football Hall of Famers and then-San Francisco 49ers' Joe Montana and Ronnie Lott singing backup vocals. The single reached number three on the *Billboard* Hot 100, and many Americans agreed that it was hip to be square. First lady Nancy Reagan launched her campaign to "Just Say No" to drugs, further expanding on the clean message. Although it was not a successful program, it did appeal to Reagan's supporters.

The movement via a conservative backlash overall also had a positive impact on religion. Historically, Christians had placed emphasis on personal responsibility and stewardship, themes the Silent Majority certainly avowed in their perception of the American ideal. Rather than "dropping out," many Americans continued to "plug in" during the seventies, trying to reshape their world into a better place based on a traditional idealism. As the Sunbelt rose in population and popularity, evangelical ministers such as Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell led a revival based on the excitement of the Jesus movement. Falwell established the Moral Majority in 1979 against the IRS when it moved to abolish tax exemptions for religious schools that allowed for racial discrimination. This caused a Silent Majority counterattack through the mail, and ignited

⁶ William Scott Gibson, Sean Thomas Hopper, Huey Lewis, "Hip To Be Square," © Warner/Chappell Music, Inc., 1986.

the spark for conservative Christians to blend religion and politics in the 1980s and beyond.⁷

Concurrent with the backlash against the rights revolution and the dismantling of a Democratic presidential hegemony, a newer brand of populism filled the void. Conservatives, while supporting a strong federal government in times of foreign conflicts, were also very suspicious of federal authority in social issues, preferring the decisions on social matters be left to state authority. In the 1970s and '80s, grassroots organizations represented the Silent Majority, or the “ordinary man.” California tax revolt catalyst Howard Jarvis, the Moral Majority founder Jerry Falwell, the anti–Equal Rights Amendment crusader Phyllis Schlafly, and the anti–gay rights activist Anita Bryant amassed followers and influence by tapping into the discontent of the Silent Majority. Jimmy Carter used the anti-establishment mood brilliantly in 1976, exercising antigovernment rhetoric and populist appeal as he described himself as a Washington outsider. Carter’s emphasis on a new age of limits as harbingers of a more conservative direction reached its apotheosis under Reagan, who became the real master of a new populism.⁸

These changes also signified a shift in the balance of political power to the Sunbelt states, as certain southern standpoints were embraced nationally in the 1970s.

⁷ Bruce J. Schulman, *The Seventies: The Great Shift in American Culture, Society, and Politics* (New York: Free Press, 2001); Darren Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt: Plain-Folk Religion, Grassroots Politics, and the Rise of Evangelical Conservatism* (New York: Norton, 2011).

⁸ Dominic Sandbrook, *Mad As Hell: The Crisis of the 1970s and the Rise of the Populist Right*. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011); William Berman, *America's Right Turn: From Nixon to Clinton* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998); Michael Schaller, *Right Turn: American Life in the Reagan-Bush Era, 1980-1992* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

The Christianity exemplified in the Bible Belt, skepticism of the centralized state, and economic prosperity spread during the “southernization” of the United States. The preference for free-market individualism as the means for personal liberation and cultural revolution provided fertile soil for companies like Wal-Mart. The South itself became a dynamic region for job growth and production, luring businesses and factories with its nonunion policies, enabling larger numbers of southern politicians into the political sphere of Congress. In fact, the Sunbelt kept control of the White House from LBJ until the election of President Obama – forty-four years. Conservative Christians saw no tension between believing in Christ and the free market, for mainstream religion reinforced their commitment to small government, local autonomy, and the primacy of business in public life. Southern culture also represented America in what historian Bruce Schulman called the “reddening” of the country, displayed through popular culture such as motorcycle daredevil Evel Knievel, country music (Loretta Lynn, Hank Williams, Jr., the band Alabama) and football, including the promotion of the Dallas Cowboys as “America's team.” Reagan's ability to tap a host of increasingly well-funded and organized interest groups, such as the religious right, neoconservatives alienated by detente, corporate-funded conservative think tanks, and political action committees located in the Sunbelt guaranteed a motivated voting base and a strong foundation for his supply-side economics.⁹

⁹ Berman, *America's Right Turn*; Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt*; Schaller, *Right Turn*; Schulman, *The Seventies*.

Concluding Remarks

The Silent Majority emerged from the Sixties and thrived in the following decades. Once President Nixon gave them an identity, they promised to never again be silent. However, they rejected liberal tactics of demonstrating in the streets in lieu of what they considered was an American procedure by using and pressuring their elected representatives. With furor and confidence, the Silent Majority mobilized grassroots organizations and individually addressed the president, vice president, first lady, U.S. Congressmen, or state representatives. They knew that even if the media kept them out of the spotlight, their perspective could be heard through the weight of their collective letters.

Certain themes in citizens' correspondence persisted throughout the Sixties. Overwhelmingly, the Silent Majority maintained a clear perspective of the American identity that was passed down from the 1950s generation. This included a romanticization of the South and its customs, a strict interpretation of the Constitution, and a repulsion of communism. Many Americans assumed if an issue such as women's rights and federal mandates of integration were not stated in the Constitution, then under the Tenth Amendment, the matter should be left to the states to determine. Yet these Americans misunderstood the role of the Supreme Court and rebuffed court decisions in lieu of a Congress-approved law – a compelling, if incorrect, perception. This allowed them to use legally-based justifications to maintain their way of life without appearing racially-motivated. Conservatives also propagated a superannuated philosophy of

anticommunism through *every* social movement that leaked into the Silent Majority's consciousness on these issues.

So who won? Liberal movements of the 1960s won in some respects, for activists made great progress in their endeavors and left lasting legacies. Black men and women were no longer segregated or kept out of the voting process. Colleges opened up to more open discourse, extending to community and online discussions about controversial issues. Americans continued to question the purpose of wars more openly and critically. The pay gap between women and men shrunk, and discrimination against women almost disappeared.¹⁰ Gay rights made significant progress in society and the military. Democrats dominated the legislative branch from 1968 to 2008, as they held the Senate for twenty-two years versus the Republican's sixteen, and the House for twenty-seven years versus the GOP's twelve.

Yet the Silent Majority in some ways also won out in the end. Court-ordered busing slowed to a trickle as the government backed away from a commitment to racial equality. The ERA stalled in the ratification process and was never passed. Hippies reintegrated back into society and became productive members of the culture. After all, five Republicans dominated the executive branch from Richard Nixon to George W. Bush, with only Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton – both from the Sunbelt – to break up the continuity. With Presidents Reagan and H. W. Bush, America won the ideological battle against communism in the Cold War when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991. Yet the

¹⁰ Of course, equality for races and women arguably will never be fully complete, but great strides have been made in kind against discrimination.

Silent Majority concerns of the 1960s and '70s were still part of the “culture wars” for decades to follow. These conservative versus liberal debates over homosexuality, immigration, separation of church and state, and other national matters existed essentially as a legacy from the polarization of the Sixties.¹¹

Forty years after the end of the movement and the creation of the Silent Majority, its identity morphed. The conservative ideology transformed greatly from its more moderate appeal in the 1950s to a 1960s Silent Majority that leaned right but included conservatives, moderates, and disheartened New Deal liberals concerned about conventional morality. They became the “forgotten middle class” in the 1970s. Through the decades, the philosophy changed to a neo-conservatism of the 1980s, when were both “angry white males,” and a triumphant majority, full of confidence and hope for the future. They were redefined by gender as “soccer moms” representing middle-class suburban women in the 1990s, and “NASCAR dads” signifying middle-class and lower-class white southern men in the 2000s.¹² The conservative thought shifted to a stronger traditionalism, less government assistance, and “compassionate conservatism” to remedy society’s poverty and health care problems in conjunction with private businesses and charities (rather than government) in the post-2000 political arena.

Increasingly, the American public became more polarized on both politics and social issues, diminishing a majority on almost any topic. In 1992, the largest self-

¹¹ James David Hunter coined this term in his 1991 book *Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America*, and described this conflict between traditionalist or conservative values and liberal or progressive principles stemming from the debates of the 1960s.

¹² Frank I. Luntz, *Words That Work: It's Not What You Say, It's What People Hear* (New York: Hyperion, 2007), 199–200.

identified group was moderates, which was surpassed by conservatives at President George W. Bush's re-election; the middle has dwindled ever since. Yet the group who self-identifies as liberals also has grown over the two decades, even if conservatives are fourteen-points higher in self-identification polls. The term "liberal" developed into a pejorative term beginning in the 1970s, and in the early twenty-first century, political liberals made an effort to distance themselves by calling themselves "progressives," which harkens back to a more positively remembered epoch in America's history. The terms "conservative," "liberal," and "moderate" have also become further intertwined with the political parties that use the terms. Yet the country was divided almost in half between the two dominant political parties — with a thin strip of independents up for grabs.¹³

In 1996, Congress passed the Telecommunications Act that de-regulated the media industry and allowed for network bias. The act essentially overturned the FCC Fairness Doctrine that kept liberal and conservative television and radio programs to a balanced standard in the 1960s; this had raised much ire from televangelists and conservative news programs that accused the networks of broadcasting from the left. The stated goal of the '90s act was "to provide for a pro-competitive, de-regulatory national policy framework designed to accelerate rapidly private sector deployment of advanced information technologies and services to all Americans by opening all

¹³ Lydia Saad, "U.S. Liberals at Record 24%, but Still Trail Conservatives," Gallup, 1/9/2015. Accessed 5/10/2015, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/180452/liberals-record-trail-conservatives.aspx>

telecommunications markets to competition.”¹⁴ In between its congressional passage and President Bill Clinton’s signing it into law, Rupert Murdoch announced the launch of a new 24-hour news channel as an alternative to CNN: FOX News. Conservatives and moderates now had a choice of news reporting.

Media bias is still of prime concern for moderates and conservatives alike. In the current polarized political atmosphere, Americans tend to follow – on television, primarily – news reporting representative of their perspectives: for Democrats, that primarily includes CNN, ABC, CBS, NBC, and NPR; for Republicans, it is FOX News or Drudge Report. In lieu of more moderate options for the right, conservative demagogues like Rush Limbaugh, Sean Hannity, and Glenn Beck provide traditionalist perspectives. Indeed, media bias was confirmed in a scientific study of the news reporting of quotes. Scientists developed an algorithm that, after examining quotes from 275 news outlets, discovered ideological bias in their quote choice that accurately reflects the political leanings of the outlets.¹⁵

The American culture wars over race, gender, war, and identity have been at the forefront of national discussion since 1960. The nation still tried to come to a consensus of what the American image and identity really are – and what they should be. While the

¹⁴ Conference Report, Telecommunications Act of 1996, House of Representatives, 104th Congress, 2d Session, H.Rept, 1.

¹⁵ Pamela Engel, “Here's How Liberal Or Conservative Major News Sources Really Are,” Business Insider, 10/21/2014. Accessed 5/11/2015, <http://www.businessinsider.com/what-your-preferred-news-outlet-says-about-your-political-ideology-2014-10>. Rachel Ehrenberg, “Unbiased computer confirms media bias: Quote selection alone reveals political leanings,” Science News, 4/17/2015. Accessed 5/11/2015, <https://www.sciencenews.org/blog/culture-beaker/unbiased-computer-confirms-media-bias>.

Silent Majority was no longer silent after 1969, nor a majority, its spirit lived on through ongoing debates about American society.

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