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The United States in Opposition: The United Nations, The Third World, and Changing American  
Visions of Global Order, 1970-1984.

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M.A., History, Emory University, 2012

B.A., History, Fordham University, 2007

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## Abstract

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*The United States in Opposition* explores American reactions to hostile world opinion, as voiced in the United Nations by representatives of the Global South, from 1970 to 1984. In the wake of the Vietnam War, Americans not only suffered self-doubt at home but searing condemnation abroad – especially in the “third” or “underdeveloped” world – becoming a focal point for criticism of the prevailing international order. This study demonstrates how this challenge from the Global South had a significant impact on U.S. policy and politics – shaping, in particular, the rise of the “New Right” and “neo-liberal” visions of the world economy. As such, it integrates developments in American political and diplomatic history with the international history of what Vijay Prashad has called the “idea” of the Third World, a project for a more equitable world order originating in the anti-colonial movements of the Global South.

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All errors, of course, are my own.

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## Introduction:

### From Delhi to Dallas

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*“It has... the actor’s power: the power to move, emotionally and morally... the United Nations makes its impression on the imagination of mankind through a spectacle presented in an auditorium with confrontations of opposing personages.”*

*- Conor Cruise O’Brien*

*“The Assembly’s debates took place in an international environment in which there are few shared ideals, common perceptions of danger, or accepted rules of the game. Each group struggles to insure that anticipated new rules will be drawn up to favor its interests. The result is confusion, and confusion encourages those striving to alter the status quo.”*

*- CIA Memo, 1975*

It was arguably the standout moment of what *New York Magazine* would call “the prime of Jeane Kirkpatrick.”<sup>1</sup> Though soon to be out of government, the U.S.

Ambassador to the United Nations was hitting the height of her national profile and popularity. Addressing the 1984 Republican National Convention in Dallas, Kirkpatrick “wowed” the delegates with her “blistering” attack on the Carter administration and the “San Francisco Democrats” supporting their new candidate, Walter Mondale.”<sup>2</sup>

Democrats, she repeatedly told to the cheering crowd, “always blame America first.”<sup>3</sup>

Her words that evening echoed the confidence and “diplomacy without apology” she had brought to the United Nations and that had won her throngs of admirers in the conservative precincts of American politics.<sup>4</sup> Though they received much of her attention, the Democrats were not Kirkpatrick’s only target that night. Peppered throughout the speech were references to her more regular sparring partners: the U.S.’s critics in the Third World. Indeed, at times it was quite difficult to distinguish whether

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Kramer, “The Prime of Jeane Kirkpatrick,” *New York Magazine* 18, no. 18, 6 May 1985, 34-84.

<sup>2</sup> Frank Jackmann and Raymond Coffee, “Women Fire Up GOP; Democrats called party of ‘promises,’” *Chicago Tribune*, 21 August 1984.

<sup>3</sup> “Text of Jeane Kirkpatrick’s Remarks at Republican Convention in Dallas,” *The New York Times*, 21 August 1984, A22.

<sup>4</sup> Allan Gerson, *The Kirkpatrick Mission: Diplomacy without Apology* (New York: 1991).



the Ambassador was speaking about America's detractors abroad, or the Democrats at home. But, by the end of the speech it seemed clear, the operative pronoun in "they always blame America first" included both. The election of Ronald Reagan, she told her audience, had signaled America's rejection of both Democratic defeatism and Third World criticism. It represented "a reaffirmation of historic American ideals" and a new "confidence in the legitimacy and success of American institutions... and in the relevance of our experience to the rest of the world." By standing up to America's critics at home and abroad, the President had brought about "the end of a dismal period of retreat and decline."<sup>5</sup> The speech was an immediate success and soon the woman that William F. Buckley wanted to "weave into the flag as the 51<sup>st</sup> star" was being mentioned as a possible Presidential candidate herself.<sup>6</sup> On the convention floor that evening was John Bolton, who would later inherit both Kirkpatrick's job and philosophy at the UN. Recalling the event in his 2007 memoir, Bolton – with typical bluntness – wrote simply "this was good stuff."<sup>7</sup>

Though the speech – and indeed the entirety of the GOP's "it's morning again in America" campaign that year – was intended to draw contrast with Reagan's Democratic predecessors and opponents, it also represented a departure from the last Republican administration. A decade earlier, President Gerald Ford's own foreign policy star in apogee, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, was talking not of resurgence, but of the inevitability of decline. In an interview with James Reston, Kissinger warned that one "has to be conscious of the fact that every civilization that has ever existed has ultimately

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<sup>5</sup> "Text of Jeane Kirkpatrick's Remarks at Republican Convention in Dallas," *The New York Times*, 21 August 1984, A22.

<sup>6</sup> William F. Buckley, "Prime Time for Kirkpatrick," *The Washington Post*, 12 July 1984, A21.

<sup>7</sup> John Bolton, *Surrender is Not an Option: Defending America at the United Nations and Abroad* (New York: 2007) 22.

collapsed” and urged Americans to recognize their nation’s “limits” in a post-Vietnam War world.<sup>8</sup> Kissinger’s comments are indicative of the profoundly different domestic and international climate of his time in office. Throughout the 1970s, confidence in the United States was relatively hard to come by. In a 1974 editorial entitled “The Decline of the West?” *The New York Times*, worried about the “malaise overtaking the Western Democracies” and the potentially “dire” position of “Western civilization.”<sup>9</sup> As the historian Hal Brands has described it, “Washington’s failure in Vietnam, the emergence of détente, the breakdown of Bretton Woods and the oil shocks of 1973-4... [all] raised the question of whether the era of U.S. and Western preeminence had come to an end.”<sup>10</sup>

In Delhi, the gloomy U.S. Ambassador to India feared that it was more than Western hegemony that was at stake. Considering what he believed to be the declining esteem for capitalism, democracy and human rights in the world, Daniel Patrick Moynihan despaired for the future of “liberty” itself. “The heart has gone out of it,” he wrote:

we no longer believe liberty will prevail. Not here [in India]. Not, I suspect, much longer in Western Europe. Not, I fear, very much longer in the United States... few persons in the camp of liberty any longer feel it possible to win over those opposed. Rather the camp is breaking up as separate peaces are concluded.<sup>11</sup>

The contrast with the atmosphere in Dallas a decade later could not have been more pronounced. Though Moynihan put his fears in global terms, there can be little doubt they were inspired by his time in India. Taking office during a particularly chilly period in the

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<sup>8</sup> Henry Kissinger, interview by James Reston, *The Department of State Bulletin* LXXI, no. 1846 (11 November 1974): 629-642.

<sup>9</sup> “The Decline of the West?” *The New York Times*, 7 October 1974, 34.

<sup>10</sup> Hal Brands, *Latin America’s Cold War* (Cambridge: 2010), 129-30.

<sup>11</sup> Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Journal Entry, 22 December 1974, Folder 7 “India Chronological File 18-22 December 1974,” Box 1:370, Daniel Patrick Moynihan Papers, Library of Congress (henceforth: Moynihan Papers).

oft-difficult relationship between the United States and the south Asian nation, the U.S. Ambassador had been forced to witness the habitual anti-American attitudes of Indian politics. For Moynihan, as for many in the 1970s, it was difficult to think of India without also considering the broader region of the Global South then regularly referred to as the “Third World.”<sup>12</sup> It is here that one can find an important clue to understanding both the despondent atmosphere of the early 1970s United States and the jubilation of the 1984 Republican Convention. For the idea of the Third World played an important, and still unappreciated, role in the formulation of these contrasting attitudes about the United States’ future and in the process that eclipsed one and brought about the other.

This dissertation studies the impact of the Third World – or more precisely, ideas about the Third World’s hostility toward the United States – on American politics and policy between 1970 and 1984 and its role in changing U.S. visions of world order. It does not offer a study or survey of Third World opinion but rather an examination of how American politicians and policy makers imagined, understood, employed, and reacted to perceptions of the U.S.’s global isolation.<sup>13</sup> This study will thus reveal how the Third

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<sup>12</sup> I too use the term “Third World,” albeit advisedly and aware that it can simplify complex realities, flatten important distinctions and even offer insult. However, I employ it (interchangeably, for stylistic purposes, with the “Global South”) in part because it was in common use during the period in question and was routinely self applied by those who hailed from the region. I also agree with Marcin Wojciech Solarz’s view that the term remains the most useful and evocative of the various potential replacements for describing the less industrialized or “developed” regions of Africa, Asia and Latin America and the idea that they make up a common socio-political group. Marcin Wojciech Solarz, “‘Third World:’ The 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of a Concept that Changed History,” *Third World Quarterly* 33, no. 9 (October 2012): 1561-73.

<sup>13</sup> Moreover this study operates on the assumption that world opinion is an intellectual construct that needed to be “imagined” rather than something that could actually be described, measured or cataloged. By using the term “imagined” I am deliberately invoking Benedict Anderson’s famed “imagined community” and placing it in a transnational context. We see throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century – and indeed, before – diplomats of various nations attempting to claim the authority of different “worlds” of nation states, whether they be the entire “community of nations” or the “free world,” the “socialist world,” the “third world,” the “non-aligned world” and various other constructs. By calling them imagined communities, I am suggesting that regardless of the “reality” that informs them, these are, as Anderson put it, “cultural artefacts” created and maintained for various political reasons including claiming legitimacy and encouraging loyalty. As Anderson points out, all communities larger than primordial villages are imagined.

World's extremely assertive, often anti-American campaign in the United Nations for a more egalitarian global economic and power structure came to have a significant influence on American life. Enhancing uncertainty about the U.S.'s global role after its failures in Vietnam, and in the face of political and economic transition at home, the Third World, and the United Nations it dominated, came to possess a heightened symbolic power for Americans in the 1970s and 80s. As this study exhibits, arguments over the proper response to the Global South's challenge became one of the ways in which different groups of Americans articulated their visions of the future U.S. role in the world. In the process, the Global South helped shape the growth and success of the "New Right" political movement and contributed to the declining political fortunes of those who championed patterns of international cooperation along the lines of the "liberal world order" that the United States had helped establish after the Second World War.<sup>14</sup> More than simply an American story, this dissertation demonstrates how political developments in the United States were intimately tied up in the history of what Vijay Prashad has called the "idea" of the Third World, namely a project for a more equitable world order originating in the anti-colonial movements of the Global South.<sup>15</sup> The impact of the transformation from Moynihan's dour pessimism to Kirkpatrick's celebration of

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These global communities are no different in that they represent another kind of constructed political grouping. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: 1991) 6.

<sup>14</sup> By "liberal world order" I am referring to the international institutions for multilateral global governance that the United States helped establish after the Second World War. Designed to regulate the political and economic relations of a world of sovereign nation states, these institutions include the United Nations and the various bodies of the Bretton Woods system, including the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund. There is a growing body of scholarship on this subject, but see in particular: Elizabeth Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World: America's Vision for Human Rights* (Cambridge, 2002); David Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission: Modernization and the Construction of an American World Order* (Princeton: 2011); Ryan Irwin, *Gordian Knot: Apartheid and the Unmaking of the Liberal World Order* (New York: 2012); Mark Mazower, *Governing the World: The History of An Idea* (New York: 2012), 191-214; Amy Staples, *The Birth of Development: How the World Bank, Food and Agriculture Organization, and World Health Organization Changed the World, 1945-1965* (Kent: 2006).

<sup>15</sup> Vijay Prashad, *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World* (New York: 2007), xv –xiv.

the American future was not felt in the United States alone. The events, personalities and policies of the U.S.'s time in "opposition" would have significant ramifications for the entirety of the world that emerged after the conclusion of the Cold War.

This study therefore explores the intersection of several important narratives in the history of both the United States and the international community in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. At its most basic level, it seeks to improve our understanding of how the decolonization of the Third World impacted the United States in particular and the international community more generally. Scholars have come to recognize over the last several decades the critical importance of the Third World to the international history of the Cold War era. Although not immediately apparent to those focused on the superpower conflict, a removal of the "Cold War lens" reveals decolonization as a story of equal importance to the second half of the twentieth century.<sup>16</sup> Announcing their emergence from colonial subjugation with the Bandung Conference of 1956 and the subsequent creation of the "Non-Aligned Movement," the growing number of independent states from the Global South became an important third force in the otherwise bilateral structure of the Cold War international system.<sup>17</sup> While often lacking access to "traditional" forms of power – primarily military and economic – the states of the Global South did possess a well of moral/ideological or "symbolic" power.<sup>18</sup> As two recent studies of the Algerian

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<sup>16</sup> Matthew Connelly, "Taking Off the Cold War Lens: Visions of North-South Conflict during the Algerian War for Independence," *The American Historical Review* 105, no. 3 (2000): 739-769.

<sup>17</sup> For scholarship on the Bandung conference and the non-aligned see: H.W. Brands, *The Specter of Neutralism: The United States and the Emergence of the Third World, 1947-60* (New York: 1990). George McTurnan Kahin, *The Asian-African Conference: Bandung, Indonesia 1955* (Ithaca: 1956). Christopher J. Lee, ed. *Making a World After Empire: The Bandung Movement and its Political Afterlives* (Athens: 2010). Prashad, *The Darker Nations*. Kathryn C. Statler and Andrew L. Johns, eds. *The Eisenhower Administration, The Third World and the Globalization of the Cold War* (New York: 2006).

<sup>18</sup> Symbolic power means simply the ability to compel human behavior through ownership of the symbols of political or moral legitimacy rather than through the use of physical force. For more on the nature of

Revolution, for example, have demonstrated, ideas about how “decolonization” represented the inevitable “tide of history” had a powerful influence on actors and events related to the Global South.<sup>19</sup> Combined with the growing power of the international media, this granted individuals and groups who could claim to be representatives of the Third World an ability to influence events separate from their actual control of military, economic or other political assets.

This symbolic power was further augmented by the Global South’s numerical dominance of a central organ of the international institutions of the liberal world order: the United Nations General Assembly. Here, leaders of the states of the Third World worked to advance and institutionalize their visions of a proper global society, effectively applying the sanction of “world opinion” to their policies and programs.<sup>20</sup> Initially these efforts, however challenging they may have been to Western conceptions of their racial, cultural and general superiority, did not fundamentally challenge the U.S.’s understanding of world order. This situation would not last forever.

As Paul Chamberlin, and other scholars, have written, the 1970s witnessed the emergence of a “transnational culture of Third World liberation” that became a global

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symbolic power see: Pierre Bordieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, ed. John Thompson. (Cambridge: 2003) 163-229.

<sup>19</sup> Todd Shepard (in his *The Invention of Decolonization: the Algerian War and the Making of France*. Ithaca: 2006.) discusses how the idea of “decolonization” was something that once “invented,” as he terms it, took on varied, but always powerful, meanings to different people in different contexts. The idea of decolonization as the future, as an inevitable result of the “tide of history” proved a remarkably powerful trope that greatly influenced how decolonization proceeded. Matthew Connelly’s *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria’s Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Order*. (New York: 2002.) explores how Algerian revolutionaries achieved their independence from France only *after* they had been essentially destroyed as a fighting force. Through expert use of the international media, and the moral power of the Global South, the leaders of the Algerian revolt brought tremendous international and domestic pressure to bear on the French government, eventually forcing a settlement.

<sup>20</sup> Similar to Shepard’s argument about the concepts related to decolonization, Jo-Anne Pemberton has identified (in *Global Metaphors: Modernity and the Quest for One World*. Sterling: 2001) similar types of power in tropes related to world government, like for example references to “international society” or talk of the supposed “unity” of humanity – language extremely common in the U.N.

“force in [its] own right,” battling the “bastions of state power in the Cold War system.”<sup>21</sup> Growing increasingly frustrated with the slow pace of global change, and running up against the Global North’s still overwhelming monopoly on traditional power, these movements resorted to terrorism, guerilla warfare, and increasingly radical diplomacy the United Nations. There, numerical advantages gave the Global South an ability to control the agenda and advance programs and resolutions challenging the international status quo. Much of this energy was spent on efforts to eliminate the last vestiges of European imperial rule, to end white supremacy in Southern Africa and to delegitimize the state of Israel – objectives rather controversially linked by the 1975 General Assembly resolution declaring Zionism to be “a form of racism and racial discrimination.”<sup>22</sup> Yet, while these programs consumed most of the General Assembly’s time, the intellectual centerpiece of the Third World’s efforts was the Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order. Passed by the Sixth Special Session of the General Assembly in May of 1974, the NIEO condemned the “existing economic order” as doomed to “perpetuat[e] inequality.” Rejecting free trade, the declaration proposed an extensive list of resource, wealth and technology transfers to developing countries along with an equally lengthy catalog of tariff and trade preferences.<sup>23</sup> While not explicitly condemnatory, the tone of the document left no doubt as to where its drafters placed the entirety of the blame for Third World poverty: in the developed world. It was thus a

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<sup>21</sup> Paul Thomas Chamberlin, *The Global Offensive: The United States, The Palestinian Liberation Organization and the Making of the Post-Cold War Order* (New York: 2012), 5-6. See also Mazower, *Governing the World*, 305-343; Irwin, *Gordian Knot*; Vijay Prashad, *The Darker Nations*.

<sup>22</sup> Records of the United Nations General Assembly “Resolution 3379: Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination,” 10 November 1975. [www.un.org](http://www.un.org).

<sup>23</sup> Resolutions Adopted by the General Assembly During the Sixth Special Session, “Resolution 3201: Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order,” 1 May 1974. [www.un.org](http://www.un.org).

direct rebuke of the West's post-World War II vision of a liberal world order and a profound challenge to the global leadership of the United States.<sup>24</sup>

The central argument of this study is that this “global offensive” in the United Nations had significant effects on evolving U.S. conceptions of world order in the 1970s and early 1980s. Emerging almost simultaneously with the apparent “unraveling of America” following the tumultuous events of 1968, the Third World’s apparent turn away from the United States added greatly to the confusion of Americans struggling to reorient themselves globally in the face of military defeat in Vietnam and economic and political transition at home.<sup>25</sup> The strong American reaction to the Global South’s apparent rejection of the liberal-capitalist vision of the world should not be seen simply as a product of more assertive diplomacy from the Global South. It was born as well from the U.S.’s own investment in the “development” of the Third World and the broader concept of a liberal world order. For the United States and the Soviet Union, largely prevented from directly confronting each other, the Third World served as a relatively “safe” place to export their contest. There, removed from many of the locations of vital interest that might spark a nuclear confrontation, the two superpowers fought by proxy, injecting new levels of violence and ideological tension into the numerous conflicts and divisions spawned by the process of decolonization.<sup>26</sup> More than a battlefield, the Global South served the superpowers as an ideological testing ground, where each attempted to

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<sup>24</sup> Mark Mazower makes a similar point about the challenge the NIEO represented to the United States. *Governing the World*, 304.

<sup>25</sup> Allen Matusow, *The Unraveling of America: A History of Liberalism in the 1960s* (New York: 1984).

<sup>26</sup> See Odd Arne Westad, ’s discussion of this in, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (New York: 2005).



demonstrate the superiority and legitimacy of their respective social systems by accumulating and “developing” client states.<sup>27</sup>

In the American case, the idea of “credibility” thus came to include more than simply a belief in the nation’s willingness to use force, but in the ability of the United States to shepherd global change in a democratic and capitalist direction.<sup>28</sup> Vietnam was therefore more than simply a military defeat. It was an ideological disaster, throwing into doubt messianic visions of the United States that had long been a central element of American self-conception.<sup>29</sup> On its own, Vietnam would have been traumatic enough, but shrouded in what appeared to be a broad global rejection of the United States, doubts about the American “mission” took on an even broader scope. Recognizing this situation, and believing that the ideological and material excesses of the liberal world order had helped create the intense domestic discord that shook the U.S. in the late 1960s, the Nixon administration began an organized retreat from the U.S.’s post-1945 global position. Hoping to restore American credibility by anchoring it to positions of strength –

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<sup>27</sup> On the ideological dimension of modernization see: Michael Latham, *Modernization as Ideology: American Social Science and Nation Building in the Kennedy Era* (Chapel Hill: 2000). Michael Latham, *The Right Kind of Revolution: Modernization, Development and U.S. Foreign Policy from the Cold War to the Present* (Ithaca: 2011). For the Soviet interest in development see, Westad, *The Global Cold War*, 39-72.

<sup>28</sup> See Frank Ninkovich, *Modernity and Power: A History of the Domino Theory in the Twentieth Century* (Chicago: 1994). And, Ninkovich, *The Wilsonian Century* (Chicago: 1999). In both studies Ninkovich convincingly argues that American policymakers in the 20<sup>th</sup> century were less concerned with concrete “interests” and more focused on international events in so far as they had a bearing upon “civilizational beliefs, whose continued coherence and solidarity was the key to checking a slide into global chaos” (*Modernity and Power*, xiv-xv). The modern world, they believed, had inherent tendencies toward anarchy and war that threatened the American way of life and thus had to be contained. The means for containing those tendencies was through the preservation of “world opinion” in favor of “civilizational values.”

<sup>29</sup> In addition to the other titles mentioned in this introduction, many studies, from a variety of political perspectives, have revealed the messianic impulse in American foreign policy. Some of the best general studies of the subject include: Walter Hixson, *The Myth of American Diplomacy: National Identity and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven: 2009). Michael Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven: 1987). Robert Kagan, *Dangerous Nation: American Foreign Policy from Its Earliest Days to the Dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (New York: 2006). Anders Stephanson, *Manifest Destiny: American Exceptionalism and the Empire of Right* (New York: 1996). For an excellent discussion of this in the specific context of the 20<sup>th</sup> century see Westad, *The Global Cold War*, 8-38.

battlements often manned by pro-Western, Third World dictators – Nixon and his National Security advisor, Henry Kissinger, developed global strategies that would initially do little to mitigate hostility in what they, tellingly, called the “global ghettos” of the Global South. The poor results of these efforts, combined with the administration’s attempts to minimize the role of ideology in the justification of U.S. policies, would foster political movements in the United States that rejected the administration’s “realist” approach to the rest of the world. Though Henry Kissinger, in response to the 1973 Arab Oil Embargo and the NIEO, would eventually institute policies designed to more directly address the Third World’s ideological challenge, his approach was too centrist to please any of his opponents. Kissinger’s policies thus became a target of both of President Ford’s political competitors in 1976: Republican primary challenger Ronald Reagan and Democratic Presidential candidate Jimmy Carter.

Each of these figures represented one of the two major alternative schools of thought on how the United States should respond to Third World hostility. These had been developing in distinct forms on both the left and right of American political life since the expulsion of Taiwan from the UN in 1971. The debate between the two would transform the relationship between the United States and the United Nations – or, more generally, the U.S. and multilateral visions of global governance. On one hand were those, generally associated with the various groups that would comprise the “New Right,” who pushed for more aggressive tactics in the General Assembly: a vigorous defense of American values and institutions along with threats to reduce American funding for and participation in the world body.<sup>30</sup> These tendencies would coalesce in the short-lived

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<sup>30</sup> I use “New Right” as an umbrella term to describe the various groups, ideas and individuals of what is sometimes called the modern “Conservative Movement:” a broad coalition of right-leaning politicians,

U.N. ambassadorship of Daniel Patrick Moynihan. Appointed by Gerald Ford in June of 1975, Moynihan's aggressive style made him into a national celebrity.<sup>31</sup> Targeting the illiberal nature of many of the regimes leading the Third World charge in the U.N., Moynihan argued that the U.S. needed to speak "for civil and political liberty... with enthusiasm and zeal." It was time, he wrote, for "the American spokesman [in the UN] to be feared for the truths he might tell."<sup>32</sup>

The alternative tendency – that which stressed the need for changes in American behavior rather than that of the Third World – was most prominently advanced by Andrew Young, Jimmy Carter's own controversial, high profile U.N. Ambassador. Though undecided for a time, as we shall see, this political struggle was ultimately won by those championing confrontation. As a result American attitudes toward the U.N. took on a new, deeply skeptical, character. While the United States had not always had a perfect relationship with its most prominent global offspring, this new anti-U.N. attitude

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writers and intellectuals who saw widespread political success – primarily under the auspices of the Republican Party – with, and following, Ronald Reagan's victory in the 1980 presidential election. The term, in my usage, includes both the traditional or "paleo" conservatives associated with institutions like William F. Buckley Jr.'s *National Review* and the "neo" conservatives, generally former socialists and liberals (like Irving Kristol and *Commentary* editor Norman Podhoretz), who turned to the right in the 1970s. The New Right's political program was based on three broad political concepts, economic libertarianism, merged somewhat uneasily with social conservatism and a desire for a strong, almost aggressively nationalistic, foreign policy. This study argues that the Third World's supposed hostility to the United States (and, more broadly, democratic capitalism) was an important foil in mobilizing support for the latter element. For more on the intellectual foundations of the New Right see: Patrick Allitt, *The Conservatives: Ideas and Personalities Throughout American History* (New Haven: 2009); George H. Nash, *The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America Since 1945* (Wilmington: 1998); John Ehrman, *The Rise of Neoconservatism: Intellectuals and Foreign Affairs, 1945-1994* (New Haven: 1995); Justin Vaïsse, *Neoconservatism: The Biography of a Movement*, Arthur Goldhammer trans. (Cambridge: 2010). Recent scholarship on conservative grassroots political mobilization has emphasized the first two ideas (economic libertarianism and social conservatism) as central to the New Right's political success (see footnote 34). This dissertation provides evidence as to the importance of the third – a strong foreign policy – again with an emphasis on the significance of hostile Third World opinion to such mobilizations.

<sup>31</sup> The *New York Times* reported in November of 1975, for example, that Moynihan was much too popular to be easily fired. Phillip Shabecoff, "Moynihan to Stay at Ford's Behest," *The New York Times*. 25 November 1975. The Ambassador's high profile also led to him being featured on the cover of *Time* in January of 1976 and being named a finalist for the magazine's "Man of the Year" Award in 1975. *Time* Vol. 107 Issue 4, 26 January 1976.

<sup>32</sup> Daniel Patrick Moynihan, "The United States in Opposition" *Commentary*. March 1975. 16.

was more prevalent than previous anti-UN sentiment and newly focused on the body's domination by representatives of the Global South and its "double standard" of criticism.<sup>33</sup>

Building on this, the election of Ronald Reagan, and his appointment of Jeane Kirkpatrick as U.N. Ambassador, would enshrine an utterly unapologetic worldview based on the supposedly universal and virtuous nature of the American experience. Whatever this understanding of global order may have shared with post-war liberalism's vision, it did not include a belief in the virtues of multilateralism, save as a means to advance immediate American interests. Nor did it place much stock in concrete American efforts to directly aid the economic development of the Global South. Though perhaps essential to the revitalization of U.S. nationalism described in the opening paragraph, these new attitudes would foreclose a range of alternative U.S. approaches to solving global problems for years to follow.

This study is thus also an attempt to provide another example of the permeability of "national" or domestic histories and their close relationship with the broader trends of international history. Elements of the story told here may, and have been, understood

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<sup>33</sup> It would, of course, be an exaggeration to say that the United Nations had always been fully supported by the average American. However, anti-U.N. sentiment prior to 1970 was less widespread, and of a somewhat different character, than that which came after. It was largely the product of lingering isolationist sentiment – mostly in Senator Robert Taft's anti-internationalist wing of the Republican Party – mixing with Southern Democrats' fears of possible U.N. interference with racial segregation. The greatest political success, and final defeat, of these forces was during the 1953 push to adopt the "Bricker Amendment" to the Constitution, which would have limited both the President's treaty making powers and the powers of those treaties themselves. The Bricker movement, though nearly successful, was eventually squashed by President Eisenhower (who represented the Republican Party's internationalist wing) and skillful political maneuvering by Senate Minority Leader Lyndon B. Johnson. The anti-U.N. sentiment studied in this dissertation was, as shall be seen, decidedly *not* against U.S. global involvement. In addition, while it certainly drew on some of these older ideas, it was as concerned with what the U.N. was not doing as what it might do. For more on the Bricker controversy and 1950s era fears of the United Nations see: Carol Anderson, *Eyes Off the Prize: The United Nations and the African American Struggle for Human Rights, 1944-55* (New York: 2003). Robert Caro, *The Years of Lyndon Johnson: Master of the Senate* (New York: 2002). Cathal J. Nolan, "The Last Hurrah of Conservative Isolationism: Eisenhower, Congress and the Bricker Amendment," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 22:2 (April 1992), 337-49.

almost entirely in the context of developments in American life. The collapse of the Democratic Party's post-World War II hold on American politics has been explained variously as a product of a middle class "backlash" against the welfare state, to more recent – and convincing – invocations of long term trends growing out of suburban, "sunbelt," politics.<sup>34</sup> While this dissertation should not be seen as a refutation of these domestic histories, it does seek to restore international affairs to their proper place in the narrative. In particular, I argue that U.S. political developments between 1970 and 84 cannot be understood fully without reference to a growing body of Americans who saw much of the rest of the world as hostile, illiberal, and in need of aggressive U.S. leadership. The United Nations and its Third World majority were important villains in this story. Aided, in part, by the elements of truth in some of the accusations leveled at the U.N., the politicians and activists of the New Right were able to exploit the idea of a hostile, illiberal Third World to undermine their political opponents. This was done to particular effect by Ronald Reagan's 1980 and 1984 Presidential campaigns but would also shape U.S. politics well into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

In exploring the impact of international events on the American political and policy process, this dissertation also offers a window onto the nature of the "international community" and how that community influences the behavior of individual nation states.<sup>35</sup> Though the United Nations is often derided as being powerless, the history

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<sup>34</sup> See: Joseph Crespino, *In Search of Another Country: Mississippi and the Conservative Counterrevolution* (Princeton: 2007); Matt Lassiter, *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South* (Princeton: 2005); Robert O. Self, *American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland* (Princeton: 2005); Self, *All in the Family: The Realignment of American Democracy Since the 1960s* (New York: 2012); Thomas Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton: 1997).

<sup>35</sup> Scholars have begun to investigate what constitutes the "international community" and explore how that community functions. See in particular the work of Akira Iriye. Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism and World*

described here is replete with examples of the symbolic power that resides there. The U.N. remains a central space for the formulation of narratives about the future of humanity, global progress, and world opinion. It functions much like the theater Conor Cruise O'Brien once described it as, presenting a morality play that – for much of the period studied here – was scripted by the representatives of the Third World with the United States cast as the villain. Such narratives – while devoid of any “material” power – are able to shape how people think about, understand and react to events. In doing so they can help structure what people see as decent, even moral, ways for individuals, groups and governments to behave. This power has not always been used for laudable goals. Despite the recent crop of scholarship stressing the U.S.’s central responsibility for undermining the Third World’s dreams of a more egalitarian global future, this history makes reveals that, by the 1970s, the leadership of the Global South had jettisoned much of the spirit of Bandung.<sup>36</sup>

Though the United Nations did take admirable steps to define racism, colonial oppression, environmental destruction and poverty as unacceptable affronts to our common humanity, it also made less commendable strides to undermine the legitimacy of representative government and human rights. It was these efforts, as well as American distrust of those of a more worthy sort, that helped create the impression in the mid-1970s that the United States was no longer in the global mainstream. Furthermore, by castigating Western failures in increasingly radical terms – all while generally avoiding any criticism of its own members or the Soviet Union and its clients – the Third World

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*Order*. (Baltimore: 1997). Iriye, *Global Community: The Role of International Organizations in the Making of the Contemporary World*. (Los Angeles: 2002).

<sup>36</sup> Both Mark Mazower (in *Governing the World*) and Vijay Prashad (*The Darker Nations*) place the blame for what they see as the cruelly unfair contemporary global political and economic structure on the United States.

group at the United Nations did much to undermine their credibility and that of the world body. While the subsequent American rejection of multilateralism would sunder much of what remained of the post-war dream for truly international cooperation in global governance, these U.S. actions did not happen in a vacuum. They were the result, in part, of an international atmosphere poisoned against compromise and cooperation. As the following pages will document, the historical record simply does not support the hyperbolic claims of those who argue that all the problems of the present world order can be blamed on Third World extremism *or* those who point the finger at U.S. perfidy alone.<sup>37</sup> If humanity is to make progress on the numerous problems of global scope that in some cases threaten our survival as a species we must work to abandon the international politics of opposition, sanctimony and self-righteousness. While the most powerful – in this case the United States and the other states of the “Global North” – by their nature bear the most responsibility for shaping the nature of global society, this dissertation studies a common history to be overcome by all.

*The United States in Opposition* conveys that history in essentially chronological form. The first chapter explores the Nixon administration’s organized retreat from the commitments of the liberal world order, considering its policies toward the United Nations and the Global South in the context of the radicalization of the Third World bloc at the United Nations. Chapter 2 tells the story of the U.N.’s re-emergence as a problem in American politics. It studies the explosion of outrage that followed the expulsion of the Nationalist Chinese in 1971 and how consequent fears of American decline gave rise to new conservative thinking about the U.N. and the world. In the same way that Chapter 2

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<sup>37</sup> Gil Troy’s *Moynihan’s Moment: America’s Fight Against Zionism as Racism* (New York: 2012) is a good example of a study that tends toward the former.

reviews how Third World hostility in the U.N. became an issue for American politics, Chapter 3 will discuss how it became a problem for U.S. diplomacy. It examines how the 1973 Arab oil embargo and subsequent General Assembly adoption of the NIEO gave rise to fears of an “unholy alliance” between oil producers and other Third World states. More than simply threatening to “shake down” the developed world for oil and other commodities, this alliance endangered the ideological legitimacy of global capitalism, especially in the face of an increasingly divided community of industrial democracies.

In response, Henry Kissinger would formulate policies intended to recapture the mantle of global progress from the radicals of the Third World, partly through using summit meetings to restore the unity of the “Group of 7” industrialized democracies, and partly through an attempt to reduce the intensity of the conflict in the United Nations. Chapter 4 focuses on the latter effort, how it was disrupted by the highly controversial ambassadorship of Daniel Patrick Moynihan and fed growing outrage on the American right at the Ford Administration’s supposedly weak foreign policy. Finally, the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> chapters study the two subsequent administrations and their attempts to transform the U.S. relationship with the Global South according to their radically divergent critiques of Henry Kissinger. Chapter 5 studies the failed effort of Jimmy Carter, and his U.N. ambassador Andrew Young, to restore a more cooperative relationship with multilateral institutions. Chapter 6 concludes the study with a look at the considerably more influential approach of the Reagan administration, its role in the success of the “Reagan Revolution,” and its shaping influence on subsequent U.S. relations with the United Nations and Third World.



What follows then is the story of how the U.S., and the world, got from Moynihan's gloom in Delhi to Kirkpatrick's enthusiasm in Dallas, from a widespread belief that the U.S. and the West might be in decline to a place where American self confidence seemed nearly as unassailable as the U.S.'s central role in shaping global society. It is thus also the story of how alternative models of world order failed to emerge and a consideration of what might have been lost as a result.

## Chapter 1:

“Impossible to Impose an American Design:”  
The Global South, the Nixon Administration, and the initial U.S. Retreat from Liberal  
World Order

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*“The axis of history starts in Moscow, goes to Bonn, crosses over to Washington, and then goes to Tokyo. What happens in the South is of no importance.”<sup>1</sup>*  
- Henry Kissinger to a Chilean Visitor

*“I used to support foreign aid, but I didn’t realize it would create an appetite to interfere in the affairs of foreign countries.”<sup>2</sup>*  
- Senator William F. Fulbright

In November of 1945, with the dust of World War II still settling, the American political magazine *The New Republic* printed an editorial cartoon that highlighted what, for many, was the central question raised by the conflict. The image was not of Stalin lording over a map of central Europe, nor of foreign ministers deciding the fate of a defeated Germany. Ignoring such particulars in favor of a more essential issue, the cartoon instead depicts a large, warehouse-like laboratory. Inside, along with a pair of contemplative looking scientists, are two large objects: one, a giant bomb labeled “how to kill everybody,” the other, an equally large question mark bearing the title “how to live with everybody.”<sup>3</sup> The meaning, of course, is obvious: in a world with atomic weaponry, a means to avoid future wars had to be found. Yet, more than simply a clever joke about mankind’s intractable problems, the cartoon reveals something quite telling about the trends of American thought after World War II. It was the belief of many that such a means “to live with everybody” *could*, in fact, be found. Drawing on old strains of American idealism mixed with recently developed confidence in New Deal style technocratic government and a resurgence in the ideas of Woodrow Wilson, many – both

<sup>1</sup> Seymour Hersh, *The Price of Power: Kissinger in the Nixon White House* (New York: 1983), 263.

<sup>2</sup> “Senate House Groups Vote on Foreign Aid,” *The Chicago Tribune*, 9 December 1969, 1A.

<sup>3</sup> *The New Republic* 113, no 20 (12 November 1946).

in and out of power – in the United States believed that the “broad, sunlit uplands” of a U.S. led “liberal world order” were just around the corner. Americans busied themselves constructing institutions of global governance designed to harmonize a world of sovereign nation states, trading peacefully with each other. This under the watchful eye of the United Nations and the, supposedly benevolent, world opinion it would muster against transgressors. Even as the emerging Cold War undermined many of the rosiest dreams of the future, Americans continued to believe in their ability to lead, “modernize” and democratize the “free,” non-communist, portions of the world, eventually exposing the false promises of Soviet style communism.

By the late 1960s, however, much of this dream had not only faded but seemed foolish in retrospect. As Richard Nixon entered the White House in 1969, he confronted a dramatically altered world. Decolonization, in Africa in particular, had transformed the political layout of the globe and challenged Western control of international institutions like the United Nations. The economic revival of Europe and Japan threatened American supremacy even within its own alliances. The Vietnam War had transformed the once appealing prospect of American style modernization into a horrifying neo-colonial nightmare. World opinion no longer seemed so benevolent. Indeed, many of the U.S.’s own citizens appeared to be turning against their country, as evidenced by the spectacular protests and riots that rocked the nation throughout the later part of the decade. As Richard Nixon put it in a speech to the Bohemian Club in 1967,

twenty years ago, after our great World War II victory, we were respected throughout the world. Today, hardly a day goes by when our flag is not spit upon, a library burned, an

embassy stoned... in fact you don't even have to leave the United States to find examples. This is a gloomy picture.<sup>4</sup>

But, Nixon continued, gloomy as it was, this summary did not convey the whole story. There was, he believed, a “much brighter side” as well.<sup>5</sup> Confronting what they feared was a growing isolationist spirit in the United States, Nixon, and his National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger, believed that the U.S.’s international position could be improved without a wholesale retreat from the world. What was required was a scaling back of the excesses of American commitments. The promises of previous Presidents had been too great, they had staked American credibility on objectives that could not be achieved. This was certainly the case in the Third World, where Nixon and Kissinger believed the prospects for rapid economic development were much less than their predecessors had led people to believe. The U.S. would have to abandon the role of international evangelist and focus instead on behaving more like a “normal” country by maintaining the balance of power with the Soviet Union and protecting its own economic and strategic interests throughout the world.

To many in the Global South, however, the idea that the United States had not already been looking out for its interests would have seemed absurd. In the decades following World War II politicians and intellectuals from regions as diverse as Central Africa, South Asia and Latin America had been questioning just that idea. This chapter sets the historical backdrop for the emergence of U.S.-Third World antagonism in the U.N. as a significant issue in American political life. It explores the origins of American unpopularity in the Global South and the ideas behind the Nixon administration’s

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<sup>4</sup> Richard Nixon, “Speech to the Bohemian Club,” 29 July 1967, Document 2, Volume 1, *Foreign Relations of the United States 1969-76* (henceforth *FRUS 1969-76*).

<sup>5</sup> Nixon, “Speech to the Bohemian Club,” 29 July 1967, Document 2, Volume 1, *FRUS 1969-76*.

response. Rather than seeking to win hearts and minds, Nixon would base U.S. policy in the Third World on pro-U.S. regional powers while maintaining a half-hearted commitment to existing programs for development aid and assistance. Though the Nixon administration was in some ways trying to respond to an electorate exhausted by years of “paying any price and bearing any burden in the defense of freedom,” its policies would run into strong, but incoherent, domestic opposition as different groups of Americans challenged the elements of U.S. global involvement with which they most disagreed. The combined effect of Nixon’s policies and Congressional and public unrest, would only further the bolster the emerging global narrative that the United States was uninterested in positive global change and instead attempting to maintain an unjust international status quo.

#### THE LIBERAL WORLD ORDER AND ITS DISCONTENTS

A growing collection of accomplished and nuanced scholarship has outlined the parameters of the U.S. vision for the post World War II World. Reacting to the perceived failure of the U.S. to take advantage of what Erez Manela has aptly called the “Wilsonian Moment” after World War I, and the subsequent disasters of the 1930s, Americans had come to almost universally desire that the U.S. play an active role in shaping the world after the defeat of Germany and Japan in 1945.<sup>6</sup> In the same way that this interest in world making was shaped by the perceived failures of the 1930s, so also was its implementation. The global community’s reticence in that decade to confront fascist aggression, its inability to coordinate a coherent response to the Great Depression and the

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<sup>6</sup> On the Wilsonian moment see Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anti-Colonial Nationalism* (New York: 2009). On American desire to play active international role see: Robert A. Divine, *Second Chance: The Triumph of Internationalism in America During World War II* (New York: 1967).

subsequent global decline into autarky and war were fresh in the minds of America's post-war planners. So too was the supposed success of Franklin Roosevelt's "New Deal," the moderate, democratic alternative to fascist or communist solutions to the problems of the 1930s. What emerged was, as Elizabeth Borgwardt has described it, the idea of a "New Deal" for the world, a rational, democratic and technocratic vision of global governance designed to harmonize international relations and avoid another round of economic dislocation and war.<sup>7</sup> This new world order was to be based on the establishment of several international institutions to coordinate responses to security, political, legal and economic issues. The first three groups of concerns would be handled by the United Nations and an International Court of Justice, the latter by what would become known as the "Bretton Woods" system and a planned "International Trade Organization" (ITO). In addition to the central U.S. role in the development of these institutions, Americans also became increasingly committed to the idea of the United States as a force for developing and "modernizing" the "underdeveloped" parts of the world. U.S. foreign aid and development projects would help bring the benefits of modern life to the backward societies of the globe, allowing them to participate fully in the new international society. All told, in stark contrast to 1919, the United States had strongly committed itself to building a geopolitical structure modeled on an idealized understanding of its own society and institutions.<sup>8</sup>

These American visions of world order were, of course, shot through with contradictions from the beginning. Collective security would lay stillborn thanks to the

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<sup>7</sup> Borgwardt, *New Deal For the World*.

<sup>8</sup> On the U.S. vision of the postwar world see: Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission*; Latham, *The Right Kind of Revolution*; Irwin, *Gordian Knot*; Mazower, *Governing the World*; Staples, *The Birth of Development*.

Great Power “veto” in the U.N. Security Council and the emerging Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union. Strategic concerns resulting from the superpower conflict would lead the U.S. toward policies that showed little regard for the sovereignty of smaller nations, a renewed tolerance of European imperialism, and a heightened skepticism toward any state that professed “neutrality” in the Cold War.<sup>9</sup> Efforts at defining political norms – including an international bill of human rights – would be undermined by U.S. and European desire to protect their domestic and imperial racial hierarchies.<sup>10</sup> Yet for all this, by the early 1960s, as Ryan Irwin puts it, the United States “had reason to view its efforts with success... the great powers had avoided a third world war and Washington still shaped the agenda of the [U.N.] General Assembly, the International Court and the various economic agencies of the Bretton Woods system.”<sup>11</sup> Moreover the United States retained a great well of economic, political and moral authority. Despite the domestic histrionics about the “missile gap” and growing Soviet military and technological capacity, the U.S. remained the inarguable center of the international system. Ironically enough, for all the attention the United State paid to communism, the challenge to this U.S. dominance would come not from the East but from the South.

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<sup>9</sup> For more on U.S.’s views of neutralism and the non-aligned movement see: H.W. Brands, *The Specter of Neutralism: The United States and the Emergence of the Third World, 1947-60*; Matthew Jones, “A Segregated Asia? Race, the Bandung Conference, and Pan-Asianist Fears in American Thought and Policy, 1954-55,” *Diplomatic History* 29:5 (November 2005): 841-68; Jason C. Parker, “Cold War II: The Eisenhower Administration, the Bandung Conference and the Reperiodization of the Postwar Era,” *Diplomatic History* 30:5 (November 2006): 12-25; Statler and Johns eds., *The Eisenhower Administration, The Third World and the Globalization of the Cold War*.

<sup>10</sup> Anderson, *Eyes Off the Prize*; Roland Burke, *Decolonization and the Evolution of International Human Rights* (Philadelphia: 2010); Mary Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton: 2000).

<sup>11</sup> Irwin, *Gordian Knot*, 11.

It was in the Global South that the contradictions of the U.S. dominated world order would most undermine its promise and claims to legitimacy. There, the inability of American policy makers to interpret global events without the restrictive intellectual crutch of the Cold War, and their seeming unwillingness take seriously complaints about global racial and economic inequality, would be most visible. By the late 1960s the states of the Global South, as a group, would all but reject U.S. moral, ideological and economic leadership, advancing an alternative vision of global order. The Vietnam War would prove a watershed event. What for Americans initially seemed a battle to protect the freedom of South Vietnam appeared to an increasing number around the world as a barbaric campaign by a technologically advanced superpower against the self-determination of an impoverished, agrarian people. In the context of the massive violence of the U.S. counterinsurgency campaign, the corresponding effort to help modernize South Vietnam appeared less the work of a beneficent ally and more an updated version of French imperialism. The war helped give credence to the idea that, rather than working to preserve and expand the “free” world the United States had merely “replaced the European colonial powers in their struggle against anticolonial radicalism.”<sup>12</sup> The conflict in Southeast Asia globalized older, regional Latin American fears of “Yankee” imperialism – a project which Cuban revolutionary leaders were more than happy to facilitate, deeply resentful of an only recently ended half century of American semi-colonial rule. When, in April of 1967, Ernesto “Che” Guevara issued his call for “one, two, three, or many Vietnams” there were many throughout the Global South who were receptive to this call. The Vietnam War helped excite worldwide networks of opposition

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<sup>12</sup> Westad, *The Global Cold War*, 110.



to U.S. hegemony – extending even to Western Europe and the United State itself.<sup>13</sup> By the early 1970s Palestinian nationalists, for example, were speaking not simply of fighting their Israeli foes but a broader imperialist front led by the United States: “the torch” wrote Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwash, “has been passed from Vietnam to us.”<sup>14</sup>

Resentment of the U.S. dominated international system was born from causes that extended beyond the Vietnam War. While the unpopularity of the American war effort may have opened the door for increased criticism of the United States, frustration was also mounting over the superpower’s role in delaying action on a number of other issues of importance to the states of the Global South. When it came to southern Africa, the Middle East and global economic system reform, the United States found itself more and more isolated over the course of the late 1950s and especially in the 1960s. The United Nations and its various subsidiary organizations were the main venues for this drama. Despite the U.N.’s origins in an agreement among the great powers, its universalistic and democratic trappings offered space for the leaders of the post-colonial world – often in concert with activist individuals and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) – to force their concerns onto the international agenda. These efforts only accelerated in the early 1960s, as the sudden and rapid decolonization of Africa transformed the world and, subsequently, the United Nations. Prior to African decolonization, the U.S. had generally controlled the agenda in the General Assembly and other majority vote institutions of the U.N. There, unencumbered by the Soviet veto, the U.S. was able to use its influence to

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<sup>13</sup> On global opposition to Vietnam see: Chamberlin, *The Global Offensive*; Lien-Hang T. Nguyen, “The Vietnam Decade: The Global Shock of the War,” *The Shock of the Global: The 1970s in Perspective*, Niall Ferguson *et. al.* eds. (Cambridge: 2010) 159-172;); Jeremi Suri, “The Cold War, Decolonization, and Global Social Awakenings: Historical Intersections,” *Cold War History* 6:3 (August, 2006): 353-363.

<sup>14</sup> Chamberlin, *Global Offensive*, 175-6.

pull together majorities based upon NATO allies and friends in Latin America and East Asia. Between 1957 and 1967, however, the U.N. added thirty-three new member states – seventeen of those in 1960 – dramatically transforming its membership. The General Assembly was now a considerably larger and more diverse institution open to a variety of new forces. Third World solidarity on issues of colonialism and white supremacy – visible since the Bandung Conference in 1955 – increasingly replaced American influence as the primary driver of Assembly activity.<sup>15</sup>

Under the guidance of its new majority, the U.N. launched an aggressive campaign to delegitimize South Africa, its “mandate” in the former German colony of South West Africa, and – after their 1965 Unilateral Declaration of Independence from Great Britain – Ian Smith’s white supremacist regime in Rhodesia. For the most part, the United States placed itself in opposition to these efforts, though not always strongly or openly. The United States had a profitable relationship with reliably anti-communist South Africa – it provided an important source of strategic raw materials like uranium and a critical trading partner for U.S. allies like Great Britain. While U.S. policy makers generally (though not always) saw apartheid as a counterproductive approach to race relations, few thought it a problem worth confronting South Africa over. For the U.S., South Africa’s peripheral relevance to the East-West conflict was usually more important than its pernicious role in global race relations. Thus by the late 1960s, the U.N. had taken few truly substantive steps toward forcing an end to South African apartheid, this despite nearly a decade of advocacy by the majority in the General Assembly.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> On the transformation of the U.S. see Edward C. Luck, *Mixed Messages: American Politics and International Organization, 1919-1999* (Washington D.C.: 1999), 105-109.

<sup>16</sup> On the U.S. and white supremacy in southern Africa in the postwar period see: Thomas Borstlemann, *Apartheid’s Reluctant Uncle: The United States and Southern Africa in the Early Cold War* (New York:

Though not as longstanding a target of U.N. enmity, the U.S. relationship with Israel had also come to make life difficult for the U.S. delegation to the United Nations. The turning point was the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. The Israeli preemptive strike on its Arab neighbors transformed the Jewish state from a tiny underdog surrounded by larger, hostile neighbors to a dominant regional power occupying huge swaths of foreign territory. The defeat, by an American client using U.S. built tanks and airplanes, embarrassed Arab leaders, particularly Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nassar, and their patrons in Moscow. Radical Palestinian leaders, like Yassir Arafat of Fatah and George Habash of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, would step into the political space created by this disaster. Their often brutal and daring terrorist attacks on Israeli military and civilian targets would capture the attention of the world. In the process, the Palestinian people would see their own image change along with that of Israel. Once a stateless people referred to vaguely in the press and U.N. resolutions as "Arab refugees," the Palestinians would very swiftly become a widely recognized "nationality" seeking liberation from foreign, colonial rule by the Israelis. The Palestinians did not accomplish this on their own. While the Palestinian Liberation Organization – an umbrella organization for the numerous militant groups operating against Israel – demonstrated real diplomatic and media savvy, the nature of Israeli reprisals, combined with their continued occupation of Arab territory, helped further develop sympathies for the Palestinian cause. The United Nations played an important role in shaping these narratives about the nature of the conflict in the Middle East. It was in the U.N. that Israel's neighbors would bring their complaints about Israeli attacks on Palestinian

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1993); Borstlemann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena* (Cambridge: 2003); Christopher Croker, *The United States and South Africa 1968-85: Constructive Engagement and Its Critics* (Durham: 1986); Irwin, *Gordian Knot*.

positions within their territory. Jordan and Lebanon in particular would protest the violations of their sovereignty and resultant civilian casualties, while the Israelis would protest that those states were doing nothing to eject the terrorists hiding in their midst. The United States, much as it had with South Africa, found itself in the awkward position of shielding an un-official ally from growing international condemnation.<sup>17</sup>

Frustration was also mounting in the U.N. over the slow pace of economic growth in the Global South. While American leadership had brought about economic miracles in places like Western Europe and Japan, development had lagged behind in the Third World. The vast promise of Bretton Woods, a plan for stable, expanding economic growth for the entire world, had failed to materialize, despite the U.N.'s designation of the 1960s as a the "decade of development." U.S. foreign aid, and large-scale modernization projects like the "Alliance for Progress" in Latin America, had done little more than raise, and then dash, expectations of a better future. The contrast of expansive economic growth in the Global North – including the former colonial powers – and slow or stalled progress in the South appeared suspicious to many. Worries that the international economic system was unbalanced, or, rather, calibrated in favor of the industrial states of the North had emerged early in the post-war period during negotiations for a temporary General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT) and the more permanent ITO. Representatives of developing countries like India, Chile and Brazil objected to the Anglo-American insistence on tariff reduction, believing that less developed states needed to protect their domestic industries in order to allow for their growth. The U.S. and British did make minor concessions to developing country demands, but on the whole they remained skeptical and hewed to their ideological

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<sup>17</sup> On the U.S. and international views of the Arab-Israeli conflict see: Chamberlin, *The Global Offensive*.

commitment to free trade. Indeed, the plan for an ITO would collapse in part because of divisions between the developed and less developed states.<sup>18</sup>

The concerns of the developing countries would receive added intellectual heft over the following decade, thanks to the pioneering work of two U.N. economists, Raul Prebisch and Hans Singer. In 1949 these two scholars, independently and almost simultaneously, arrived at what became known as the Prebisch-Singer thesis. Somewhat demure on its face, the thesis contends simply that the terms of trade for commodities would inevitably decline relative to those for manufactured goods. This was because demand elasticity for manufactured goods was less than that for raw materials – as global incomes rose, the argument went, demand for manufactured goods remained stable or increased while commodity prices tended to go down. While a commodity producer might be trading equally with an industrial country in one year, it tended to be at an increasing disadvantage over subsequent years. The implications of such a theory are obvious. It suggested that Third World nations – many of which had been transformed into monoculture raw material producers by their former imperial rulers – were perpetually stuck in a subservient economic position. The concept gave clear shape to vague feelings and ideas that many Third World leaders and economists had about their economic struggles. It thus had widespread influence. Part of the success of the Prebisch-Singer thesis could be attributed to the personality of Prebisch himself. The Argentine scholar and bureaucrat, despite having spent much of his early adulthood in isolated

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<sup>18</sup> For a discussion of these early North-South divisions see: John Toye and Richard Toye, *The U.N. and the Global Political Economy: Trade, Finance and Development* (Bloomington: 2004), 17-137. On the Alliance for Progress see: Stephen G. Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area in the World: John F. Kennedy Confronts Communist Revolution in Latin America* (Chapel Hill: 1999).

study, had a talent for public speaking, debate and organization. He became a central figure in the Global South's efforts to transform the world economy during the 1960s.<sup>19</sup>

He would do this in a new role as Secretary General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development or "UNCTAD." Established in 1963, UNCTAD represented an early breakthrough in efforts to unify the Global South in the interest of global economic system reform. The idea was born from a non-U.N. "Conference on Problems of Developing Countries" held in Cairo in 1962, attended by 36 countries from Africa, Asia and Latin America. While an Afro-Asian block had been operating in the United Nations since the Bandung Conference, the presence of the Latin Americans at Cairo was a significant development, presaging the broader Third World unity that would soon emerge on development issues. The Cairo meeting called for a broad international conference on world trade implicitly in the interest of addressing the issues raised by Singer and Prebisch. The developed countries, led by the United States, initially opposed the creation of UNCTAD, believing that existing, Western dominated, institutions like GATT, the World Bank and IMF were the appropriate place for these issues to be addressed. However, given the new dynamics of the post-1960 U.N., there was little the industrial states could do if the Global South acted in unison. The first UNCTAD conference (UNCTAD I) in Geneva in 1964 would itself feature a remarkable display of developing country unity. It marked the emergence of the "Group of 77" (G-77), a collective of 77 states from Latin America, Africa and Asia who met separately to come to common positions before any larger meeting.<sup>20</sup> Although the final act and report of

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<sup>19</sup> For more on Raul Prebisch see: Edgar Dosman, *The Life and Times of Raul Prebisch 1901-1986* (Ithaca: 2008).

<sup>20</sup> Although it would retain the name G-77, the group regularly added new members and, by the mid 1970s, consisted of well over 100 states.

UNCTAD I was moderate by the standards of later meetings, it was a clear indication of Third World unity on the need for international economic reform. Radicalization would follow swiftly enough as the decade progressed. The 1960s witnessed the popularization of more extreme versions of Singer and Prebisch's ideas – in particular their expansion into “dependency theory.” While the work of the two U.N. economists is generally considered a part of the extensive body of work on dependency, that theory's radical reputation owes much to the work of other thinkers, like the American Marxist Paul Baran.

Baran, and others, transformed Singer and Prebisch's problematic economic process into a capitalist plot. Commodity price declension was no longer simply an unfortunate development of an unbalanced global economic system but part of a structurally driven conspiracy between First and Third World capitalists to keep themselves rich and the Global South poor. Seeing the global economy as more of a “zero-sum” game, dependency theory placed the high living standards of the industrial North in a new light. No longer was that wealth simply something the South deserved or should aspire toward. Rather First World economic success was – in the current economic system – premised upon Third World poverty. Moreover traditional means to alleviate that poverty and spur economic growth in the South, like foreign aid, were actually bolstering global inequality. The global economy therefore needed structural reform whether the industrial North believed so or not. When the second UNCTAD conference convened in New Delhi in 1968, the battle lines between the “DCs” – developed countries – and “LDCs” – less developed countries – were thus already sharply drawn. In the end the conference collapsed into mutual recrimination, setting a

somber tone for what would prove to be more than a decade of additional North-South economic conflict.<sup>21</sup>

Thus by the time Richard Nixon defeated Hubert Humphrey in the presidential election in November, America's global leadership role appeared in real jeopardy. The Vietnam War was locked in a brutal stalemate that offered little prospect of any eventual American victory. The war, the ever present threat of nuclear conflict between the superpowers, and the apparent failure of American leadership to bring about the better world promised after World War II, all contributed to what Jeremi Suri has called the "global disruption" of 1968. Across the world, countries – from France to China – were consumed by protests and political chaos as various groups challenged the status quo both in their own nations and internationally.<sup>22</sup> The Central Intelligence Agency, surveying this chaos found much cause for concern. "The pace of change in the world" the spy agency warned in a National Intelligence Estimate, had "accelerated" thanks to a "marked increase in the interaction of political events in different parts of the world." As a result "conflicts or rebellions in one area encourage dissidents in others." Though the Cold War continued to be a major influence on international affairs, the superpowers and their "old ideologies [were] losing much of their impact" and "new forms of radicalism [were] appearing" in their stead. The prospect of a wave of leftist revolutions overtaking the developing world seemed a real and potentially dangerous threat. "Terrorism, guerilla

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<sup>21</sup> For discussions of UNCTAD and dependency theory see Dosman, *The Life and Times of Raul Prebisch*; Alfred Eckes and Thomas Zeiler, *Globalization and the American Century* (New York: 2003), 179-80; Giuliano Garavini, *After Empires: European Integration, Decolonization and the Challenge from the Global South 1957-86* (New York: 2012), 7-30; Stephen Krasner, *Structural Conflict: The Third World Against Global Liberalism* (Los Angeles: 1985); Mazower, *Governing the World*; Vanessa Ogle, "State's Rights Against Private Capital: The New International Economic Order and the Struggle Over Trade, Aid and Foreign Investment, 1962-81," *Humanity* (forthcoming); Vijay Prashad, *The Darker Nations*, 62-74, 189-90; Toye and Toye, *The UN and Global Political Economy*, 138-230.

<sup>22</sup> On these global protests see: Jeremi Suri, *Power and Protest: Global Revolution and the Rise of Détente* (Cambridge: 2003).



warfare and counterinsurgency” were “likely to be more common” as the “poorer nations became “the scene of considerable revolutionary activity.” While these revolutions might not always be communist in origin, the CIA worried that it would “often” be “anti-American.”<sup>23</sup>

A profound challenge to the global status quo appeared to be in the offing. The United States seemed no exception to this trend, witnessing protests and riots of an unprecedented scale – perhaps most infamously during the Democratic National Convention in Chicago in 1968. While these domestic disruptions and their challenge to the authority of the U.S. government would consume plenty of Richard Nixon’s attention, the burgeoning challenge to American leadership in the Global South would not. The new President in fact believed that the Kennedy and Johnson administrations had spent far too much energy trying to win over the people of the Third World, his administration was not about to make the same mistake.

#### NIXON AND KISSINGER’S VIEWS OF THE THIRD WORLD

Despite the appearance, and reality, of a change in America’s approach international affairs after Nixon’s inauguration in 1969, historians have rightly pointed out that there has been much exaggeration of the supposedly innovative nature of Nixon and Kissinger’s foreign policies.<sup>24</sup> Their new approach signified more a change in emphasis rather than structure: the United States would continue to contain the Soviet Union and seek to maintain its central role in international affairs. When it came to the U.S. relationship with the Global South, however, this shift in emphasis would have

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<sup>23</sup> CIA, “World Trends and Contingencies Affecting U.S. Interests,” National Intelligence Estimate, 6 June 1968, [www.foia.cia.gov](http://www.foia.cia.gov)

<sup>24</sup> Mario Del Pero makes this point particularly well in his, *The Eccentric Realist: Henry Kissinger and the Shaping of American Foreign Policy* (Ithaca: 2006) 1-11.

significant ramifications. Nixon and Kissinger would explicitly reject whatever was left of the idea of the U.S. as a state invested in bringing the LDCs into the “modern” world. They instead explicitly tied the United States to the global status quo, embracing pro-American regional powers regardless of their domestic institutions and international reputation. While the administration maintained a superficial commitment to development aid and assistance it was with little conviction. Unwilling to invest much political capital in programs meant to aid the Third World, the administration would, in some cases, quietly avoid submitting the necessary legislation or, in others, watch as Congress slowly dismantled them. Undermined by the ongoing disaster in Vietnam, once clear visions of the U.S’ role in the world had become blurred. As a result, central elements of post-1945 U.S. foreign policy came under inchoate, but sustained, assault from all walks of American political life. Even Nixon’s attempt to walk a centrist line between global involvement and global retreat would struggle in this environment. At a time when the leaders of the Global South were growing increasingly strident in their demands for American action on global issues, the United States appeared in turns both paralyzed or uninterested.

Nixon indicated his rejection of the post-World War II vision of the United States as a force for changing the Third World from very early on in his successful campaign for the presidency. In the 1967 speech to the Bohemian club mentioned in the opening, Nixon told his audience that international order had changed dramatically since 1945 and that, as a result, “many of the old institutions are obsolete and inadequate.” These older models of global governance, he continued, like “the UN, NATO, foreign aid, and [the U.S. Information Agency] were set up to deal with a world of twenty years ago.” Each of

these institutions would have to be dealt with differently as a result. The U.N., for example, was now saddled with a variety of new smaller states primarily from Africa: “today there are thirty independent countries in black Africa... fifteen... have populations less than the State of Maryland, and each has a vote in the U.N. Assembly equal to that of the United States.” Not only did these small states have an equal vote, they rarely shared American values. “No one of the thirty countries,” he opined, “has a representative government by our standards and the prospects that any will have [one] in... even a half century are remote.”<sup>25</sup>

The latter statement hints at the real message of the speech: Americans would have to accommodate themselves to a world and a foreign policy that fell a great deal short of the idealistic visions of the previous twenty years. This meant accepting and even partnering with non-democratic regimes, Nixon told the Bohemians. “It is time for us to recognize,” he encouraged, “that... American style democracy is not necessarily the best form of government for people... with entirely different backgrounds.” The U.S. approach to foreign aid needed to be amended to reflect these more modest goals. Singling out one of the landmark modernization projects of the Kennedy Administration, Nixon lambasted the Alliance for Progress as a complete failure: “nine billion dollars has been spent... with these results: the growth rate for Latin America was less than in the previous five years.” Future aid programs would have to be much more modest, targeted, and place a greater emphasis on developing agriculture rather than the previous obsession with industrialization and democratization.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Nixon, “Speech to the Bohemian Club,” 29 July 1967, Document 2, Volume 1, *FRUS 1969-76*.

<sup>26</sup> Nixon, “Speech to the Bohemian Club,” 29 July 1967, Document 2, Volume 1, *FRUS 1969-76*.

Nixon did not want foreign aid to be abandoned entirely; on the contrary, he believed that it had to be maintained in order for the U.S. to continue to have the necessary amount of influence in the world. A “new spirit of isolationism” was not the answer. While the United States needed to leave behind was the immodesty of its earlier approach to world leadership, the superpower could not abandon its position entirely. Unlike the Republican administration that would follow in 1981, Nixon did not resort entirely to the rhetoric of the free market when discussing global poverty. While he referred to the importance of privileging private over government investment, Nixon was comfortable encouraging his readers to remember that, as he wrote in an October 1967 article for *Foreign Affairs*, “the oceans provide no sanctuaries for the rich.” There could be no safety for any nation, he wrote, “in a world of boiling resentment and magnified envy.”<sup>27</sup> The United States, he implied, would have to make at least some effort to address the problems afflicting the impoverished regions of the world.

Henry Kissinger highlighted similar themes in his pre-administration writing on foreign policy. Like Nixon, he argued that, while the Third World could not be entirely ignored, the U.S. needed to abandon the idea of promoting revolutionary change. The United States, he felt, had based twenty years of foreign policy on the mistaken:

assumption that technology plus managerial skills gave [the U.S.] the ability to shape the international system and to bring about domestic transformations in ‘emerging countries.’ This direct ‘operational’ concept of international order has proved too simple. Political multiplicity makes it impossible to impose an American design.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Richard M. Nixon, “Asia After Vietnam,” 1 October 1976, Document 3, Volume 1, *FRUS 1969-76*.

<sup>28</sup> Henry A. Kissinger, *American Foreign Policy: Three Essays* (New York: 1969), 57-8.

The U.S. had to recognize, as he would later put it in his memoirs, that its power – though vast – had limits.<sup>29</sup> Like Nixon, Kissinger believed that Americans would have to accommodate themselves to less idealistic foreign policies. The United States needed to be firm, protect its interests and look to promote stability in the Global South rather than constantly seeking to turn the new nations into liberal democracies.

Kissinger thus advocated treating the “Non-Aligned” states of the Global South in a more determined fashion. “Our role,” he wrote in his 1960 study *The Necessity for Choice*, “in relation to the new countries is much more complicated than engaging in a popularity contest for their favor.” Though Americans might want to be popular, Kissinger argued, “we cannot undermine our security for illusory propaganda victories.”<sup>30</sup> Displays of strength and a willingness to act without the Global South’s approval would not only ensure American security but might also earn greater respect for the United States. A Third World leader, he argued, “may well prefer a clear and firm United States position which gives him an opportunity to demonstrate his neutrality both internationally and at home.”<sup>31</sup> The United States needed to provide aid to the Third World, and an example of the virtues of democracy and freedom, but it could not otherwise tailor its actions to the whims and desires of the new nations.

Nixon and Kissinger thus viewed the issues of most concern to the Global South almost exclusively through the lens of what they construed as the essential “interests” of the United States. Those interests being, primarily, events with direct relation to the superpower conflict, the economy of the developed world and the effort to find “peace

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<sup>29</sup> Henry A. Kissinger, *White House Years* (Boston: 1979) 57.

<sup>30</sup> Henry A. Kissinger, *The Necessity for Choice: Prospects of American Foreign Policy* (New York: 1961), 338.

<sup>31</sup> Kissinger, *The Necessity for Choice*, 336.

with honor” in Vietnam. Problems like global economic inequality, white minority rule in southern Africa, and U.S. isolation in the U.N. simply did not rank high on the new President’s initial list of concerns. Nixon, made this explicit in a 1970 memo. The President outlined five main areas that were worthy of his attention (East West relations, relations with the Soviet Union and China, and relations with East and West Europe) and a couple of secondary issues (Vietnam and the Mid-East conflict). All other subjects, the memo instructed, were not to be “submitted [to the President] unless they require Presidential decision and can only be handled at the Presidential level.” He said that this policy would “require subtle handling on Kissinger’s part” to make sure that “members of the establishment and the various departments [did not] think that [he] did ‘not care’ about the underdeveloped world.” Nixon insisted that he did care about the Global South but felt that “what happen[ed] in those parts of the world [was] not, in the final analysis, going to have any significant effect on the success of [U.S.] foreign policy.”<sup>32</sup>

What emerged from these ideas as the policy basis for the administration’s approach to the Global South was the “Nixon Doctrine.” The doctrine was first promulgated during a July 1969 press “backgrounder” briefing on Guam and articulated as part of a discussion of Nixon’s views on U.S. policy in Asia after the Vietnam War. It drew on Nixon’s belief that the U.S. could show more restraint internationally without withdrawing completely for world affairs. Asia was too important to be left entirely on its own, said Nixon during the briefing, but the U.S. needed to “play a part that is appropriate to the conditions we will find” in a region. Washington therefore needed to “assist, but... not dictate” to avoid “policy that will make countries... so dependent upon

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<sup>32</sup> Memorandum, President Nixon to H.R. Haldeman *et al*, 2 March 1970, Document 61, *FRUS 1969-76*.

us that we will be dragged into conflicts such as the one we have in Vietnam.”<sup>33</sup> Rather than “rushing in our own men” as White House Chief of Staff H.R. Haldeman described it, the United States would “supply arms and assistance only to those nations willing to supply their own manpower to defend themselves.”<sup>34</sup> Such nations would of course be required to have governments that were reliably pro-American and willing to demonstrate their partiality toward the West. The Nixon Doctrine would thus lead to the American embrace of regional powers regardless of their domestic policies or international reputation focusing more on whether they were reliably pro-Western and anti-communist. South Vietnam, Iran, Israel and South Africa would benefit from this new American approach.

The possibility that closer relations with such regimes could harm the U.S.’s image was not something that bothered an administration that looked with disdain on those “illusory propaganda victories” Kissinger had derided before entering office. The National Security Council’s (NSC) initial review of the situation in South Africa is a startling example of the administration’s preference for strategic rather than symbolic concerns. The administration considered a variety of different options ranging from complete disengagement with the white regimes, to essentially accepting them and hoping for the best. Henry Kissinger appeared particularly invested in the latter option and wanted to be sure it received “non-absurd” – or fair – treatment by the NSC.<sup>35</sup> Called the Acheson option at the time – so named for a memo from the former Secretary of State

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<sup>33</sup> Richard Nixon, "Informal Remarks in Guam With Newsmen," July 25, 1969, *The American Presidency Project*. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu> (henceforth *American Presidency Project*).

<sup>34</sup> H.R. Haldeman, *The Haldeman Diaries: Inside the Nixon White House* (New York: 1994), 75.

<sup>35</sup> Memorandum, Jeanne W. Davis to Henry Kissinger, “Minutes of the Review Group Meeting on Southern Africa,” *Kissinger Transcripts*, KT00069, *The Digital National Security Archive*, [www.nsarchive.chadwyck.com](http://www.nsarchive.chadwyck.com) (henceforth: DNSA).

urging the policy – Kissinger believed that it had not received reasonable evaluation in an initial NSC interdepartmental review.<sup>36</sup>

The document, the National Security Advisor told his staff, mistakenly characterized Acheson as calling for expanded relations with the white regimes when, in fact, he simply recommended not “giving up U.S. economic and strategic interests... for the sake of illusory gains with the black states.”<sup>37</sup> Kissinger’s fondness for the Acheson approach may have been due to that critical job skill for a government official: anticipating a supervisor’s wishes. At a National Security Council Meeting in December of 1969, Nixon indicated that his general attitude toward southern Africa was similar to Acheson’s. “I think we need to be realistic,” he told the group, “it is obvious we must avoid the colonialist label but we must analyze where our national interest lies and not worry too much about other people’s domestic policies.” There was general agreement with this position; Secretary of State Rogers felt that, as far as the United States was concerned, there was no “moral” issue to be addressed. “If we could do anything [about white minority rule] then we would have a moral responsibility,” he opined, “but since we cant do anything there is no responsibility.”<sup>38</sup>

The only real dissenter at the meeting was Charles Yost, the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. A career diplomat, Yost had served in the U.S. Mission as deputy ambassador to Adlai Stevenson and Arthur Goldberg in the first half of the 1960s before retiring to the Council on Foreign Relations. Recalled to the service by Nixon in 1969,

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<sup>36</sup> Memo, Roger Morris to Henry Kissinger, “Procedures for NSC Meeting on Southern Africa,” 8 December 1969, Folder 7, Box H-025, National Security Council Institutional Files: Meeting Files (1969-74), Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, California (henceforth: Nixon Library).

<sup>37</sup> Memorandum, Jeanne W. Davis to Henry Kissinger, “Minutes of the Review Group Meeting on Southern Africa,” *Kissinger Transcripts*, KT00069, DNSA.

<sup>38</sup> “Minutes of the NSC Meeting on Southern Africa,” 17 December 1969, Box H-025, National Security Council Institutional Files: Meeting Files (1969-74), Nixon Library.



Yost's experience had shown him the importance of southern Africa to the U.N. majority. "African ambassadors would often ask me" he later wrote, "whether violence and bloodshed was the only way they could attract and hold our attention" on the problems in the southern part of the continent.<sup>39</sup> Prior to the NSC meeting, Yost submitted a memo to the Secretary of State and Kissinger recommending disassociation with the white regimes in South Africa and Rhodesia and a limited relationship with the Portuguese colonies. He argued that this move was essential for placing the United States on the right side of an issue with "world-wide moral and psychological repercussions." The "drive for racial equality" he warned, "is a worldwide phenomenon" and yet U.S. policy had not demonstrated "our good faith concerning the human rights of the non-white majority in southern Africa." This position was bound to store "up trouble for us with that majority and all who identify with it." At stake was also "the political viability of the United Nations, and the [U.S.] position in the U.N." Increasing frustration in the General Assembly was doing damage to the institution itself, Yost argued, as the majority turned to "unenforceable resolutions, violations of rules of procedure and due process, and reprisals against the U.S. on issues of importance to [it]." Moves to disassociate from the "unregenerate white minority regimes" would do much to arrest this worrisome trend.<sup>40</sup>

Yost's warning went largely unheeded. After he told the President that Southwest Africa and Rhodesia were major issues in the United Nations that could not be ignored, Nixon dismissed his concerns and told the Ambassador to just "roll with the punch."<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Charles Yost, *The Conduct and Misconduct of Foreign Affairs: Reflections on U.S. Foreign Policy Since World War II* (New York: 1972), 133.

<sup>40</sup> Memo, Charles Yost to the Secretary of State, "Southern Africa," 13 December 1969, Box H-025, National Security Council Institutional Files: Meeting Files (1969-74), Nixon Library.

<sup>41</sup> "Minutes of the NSC Meeting on Southern Africa," 17 December 1969, Box H-025, National Security Council Institutional Files: Meeting Files (1969-74), Nixon Library.

Yost did manage to make some headway on the issue of closing the U.S. consulate in Rhodesia, thanks largely to help of Rodgers. The Secretary had found the consulate to be a major issue in his talks with African ministers, many of whom saw it as indication that the U.S. approved of the Rhodesian minority government. He told the President that it was a touchy issue “for both world opinion and our relations with the United Kingdom” (which technically retained sovereignty over, and thus responsibility for, the breakaway colony). Nixon, however, dismissed world opinion, claiming that U.S. “relations with the British [were] the overwhelming thing.” The President was also more worried about the political damage he might suffer at home from maintaining the U.N. sanctions on Rhodesia than he was about complaints from African governments.<sup>42</sup>

The policy that emerged the following month – January of 1970 – from the review and NSC meeting was thus one that essentially endorsed the status quo in southern Africa by taking as few firm positions as possible. The U.S. consulate in Rhodesia was to remain open for the time being, pending further developments in negotiations between the Rhodesian government and the United Kingdom (it would be closed in March at British request).<sup>43</sup> Other policy decisions on Southwest Africa and Rhodesia were deferred pending further study. Although in the latter two cases the Nixon administration would eventually choose to stay barely within the global mainstream (by ordering further dissociation between the U.S. and interests in Southwest Africa and by choosing to

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<sup>42</sup> “Minutes of the NSC Meeting on Southern Africa,” 17 December 1969, Box H-025, National Security Council Institutional Files: Meeting Files (1969-74), Nixon Library. Instituted in 1966, the Rhodesia sanctions were becoming increasingly unpopular on the American right.

<sup>43</sup> For a summary of the initial decisions on southern Africa see: Memo, “National Security Decision Memorandum 38: United States Policy Toward Southern Africa,” 28 January 1970, National Security Decision Memoranda, Nixon Digital Library, <http://www.nixonlibrary.gov/virtuallibrary/index.php> (henceforth NDL). For the subsequent decision to close the consulate see: Memo, “National Security Decision Memorandum 47: U.S. Policy Toward Rhodesia,” 9 March 1970, National Security Decision Memoranda, NDL.

maintain the sanctions with Rhodesia) the fact that the alternative was even considered reveals much about Nixon's limited concern for Third World opinion.<sup>44</sup>

Much as Yost had predicted, American inaction was followed almost immediately by harsher resolutions, and further U.S. isolation, in the U.N. In March 1970, the United States would cast its first veto in the Security Council. So complete had been American control of the organization that, for nearly thirty years and despite regular vetos from the Soviets, the United States had not been compelled to exercise its veto power. The resolution in question condemned the British government for not taking military action against the Smith government. It was obviously a non-starter, no British government could undertake such an operation in Africa, but it reflected the deep well of African anger at the situation. The blow of the first U.S. veto was cushioned somewhat by the fact that it was cast in concert with the U.K.'s own no-vote, but it was an important moment regardless and the first of many vetoes to follow.<sup>45</sup>

#### DOMESTIC OPPOSITION TO NIXON'S POLICIES

As the President had predicted, on the other hand, even these tepid moves angered many U.S. conservatives. For conservatives, Ian Smith's Rhodesian government was not an illegitimate, international pariah but something on the order of either a misunderstood group in a difficult situation or a noble last redoubt of Western Civilization. Conservative newspapers and journals advocated these positions while grassroots political action

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<sup>44</sup> On Southwest Africa see: Memo, "National Security Decision Memorandum 55: South West Africa," 17 April 1970, National Security Decision Memoranda, NDL. On Rhodesian sanctions see: Memo, "National Security Decision Memorandum 75: Rhodesia Sanctions," 7 August 1970, National Security Decision Memoranda, NDL.

<sup>45</sup> On the Nixon Administration's view of the African Amendment see: Memo, Henry Kissinger to the President, "Rhodesia in the United Nations," 17 March 1970, Folder 10, Box 16, National Security Council Files: Kissinger Office Files, Nixon Library. On the veto see: "The First American Veto," *The New York Times*, 21 March 1970, 27.

groups – like the “Liberty Lobby” – organized “goodwill tours” for American citizens to bolster the image of the white regime.<sup>46</sup> William F. Buckley Jr.’s conservative magazine *National Review* stood on the more moderate side, acknowledging that the new Rhodesian constitution, promulgated in 1969, was overtly racist and immoral. But, the magazine countered, what were the whites supposed to do in the face of international isolation and a black majority that, the editors felt, was “manifestly unfit” to rule?<sup>47</sup> *National Review* also ran articles that were somewhat less hesitant in their praise of Rhodesia. John Phillips, in “a letter from Salisbury,” took readers on a tour of Rhodesia’s economic success, despite the U.N. sanctions, and concluded by favorably comparing Israel and Rhodesia. Both, he wrote, were “white enclaves” with “strong enemies” aided by “Communists” and both appeared “to be destined for a crucial role in the history of Western civilization.”<sup>48</sup> The *Chicago Tribune* generally held more to the latter sentiment, comparing the Rhodesian’s UDI to the 13 Anglo-American colonies declaring independence in 1776.<sup>49</sup> The right’s fondness for Rhodesia was based partly on this romanticized notion of the regime as a group of rugged individualists bringing “civilization” to the wilds of Africa while struggling against the British, communist African liberation leaders, and the U.N. It also, clearly, had a close relationship to views on race. Some of the key advocates for Rhodesia, including *National Review*’s editor and the syndicated columnist James Kilpatrick, had supported segregation in the U.S. south during the early 1960s.

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<sup>46</sup> “Liberty Lobbyists Touring Rhodesia: 67 American Visitors Back Stand of Smith Regime,” *The New York Times*, 16 November 1969, 11.

<sup>47</sup> “Closing the Doors” *National Review* 21:23 (17 June 1969), 578.

<sup>48</sup> John Phillips, “How it Goes in Rhodesia: A Letter from Salisbury,” *National Review* 22:33 (25 August 1970), 894-5.

<sup>49</sup> “Salute to Rhodesia,” *Chicago Tribune*, 3 March 1970, 12.

The intellectual centerpiece – and primary claim on mainstream respectability – of their arguments, however, was the supposed “double standard” of the U.N. and the international community. The problems of the U.N.’s double standard would – as we shall see – become a regular target of U.S. critics of the United Nations. In this case, the argument was that, while Rhodesia’s government was not truly representative, very few of the U.N.’s members were. Kilpatrick called it “purblind hypocrisy” and a “naked double standard” that reduced the U.N. to imbecility and contempt.” Most governments in Africa, he wrote, were under minority rule, the only difference in Rhodesia was “that the ruling minority [there] is white and the ruling minorities elsewhere are black.”<sup>50</sup> *National Review*’s in house poet and humorist, W. H. Von Dreele expressed, in verse, a similar sentiment: “furious liberals at the UN/ ... why do they have such a passion to flog/ people in Salisbury rather than Prague.”<sup>51</sup> This double standard was not only hurting the Rhodesians, they argued, but the United States as well. Prior to the institution of U.N. sanctions in 1966, Rhodesia had been the U.S.’s primary supplier of chromium, a metal essential to a wide variety of industrial products and processes. After sanctions however, the U.S. was forced to import the metal from the Soviet Union, aiding America’s strategic nemesis and leading to a spike in prices in the process.<sup>52</sup> While the U.S. was busy being “more moral” – as Phillips mockingly put it – the Soviet Union was gaining a strategic advantage.<sup>53</sup> Although these complaints had limited effect in 1969 and 70, the

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<sup>50</sup> That the Rhodesians were a white minority ruling a black majority on account of their race was something that apparently escaped Kilpatrick’s attention. James J. Kilpatrick, “Hypocrisy toward Africa” *Los Angeles Times*, 13 November 1969, d7.

<sup>51</sup> W. H. Von Dreele, “Rhodesia, Rampant” *National Review* 21:27 (15 July 1969), 686.

<sup>52</sup> Willard Edwards, “Capitol Views: U.S. Trapped between U.N., Chromium Need,” *Chicago Tribune*, 15 April 1969, B20.

<sup>53</sup> Phillips even conveyed rumors that the Soviet Union was secretly violating the U.N. sanctions and importing Rhodesian chrome while selling its own inferior version to the United States. John Phillips, “How it Goes in Rhodesia: A Letter from Salisbury,” *National Review* 22:33 (25 August 1970), 894-5.

problem of Rhodesian chrome would linger and subsequently become a major issue in U.S. – U.N. relations (see the next chapter).

The one area where the administration would show a commitment to policies with the potential to burnish the U.S.'s image in the Global South – foreign aid and development assistance – encountered significant public and Congressional opposition. The U.S. foreign aid program had been under sustained assault in the late 1960s, as U.S. globalism grew increasingly unpopular thanks to the Vietnam War. In March of 1969 Kissinger characterized the program as in “major crisis” with public support for aid expenditures having “virtually disappeared.” President Johnson’s last two aid requests (submitted to Congress annually) had been cut by 25 and 50% respectively and there was little prospect for improvement. Kissinger believed it essential that the administration “reverse the sharply downward trend of appropriations for AID.” The program was essential to U.S. policy in a number of key regions, he informed the President.<sup>54</sup> Nixon agreed, indicating so in a decision memorandum circulated after a March 26<sup>th</sup> National Security Council meeting on the subject. The President, cynically directed that the “humanitarian aspect” of the program be “emphasized” in public in order to pass it through an “increasingly isolationist” Congress.<sup>55</sup> For the Nixon administration, maintaining the foreign aid program was as much about preserving the President’s ability to conduct foreign policy and shape geopolitics as anything else. An interdepartmental review of aid policy, for example, stressed these factors over the humanitarian concerns. Foreign aid was primarily, the memo suggested, a means to “contribute to U.S. national

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<sup>54</sup> Memo, Henry Kissinger to the President, “NSC Meeting on Foreign Aid,” Folder 3, Box H-021, National Security Council Institutional Files: Meeting Files (1969-74), Nixon Library.

<sup>55</sup> Memo, Henry Kissinger to the Secretary of Defense, *et. al.*, “NSC Meeting of March 26 1969, on Foreign Aid,” 3 April 1969, Folder 3, Box H-021, National Security Council Institutional Files: Meeting Files (1969-74), Nixon Library.

security through support of the military strength and economies of countries in which we have strategic interests.” It was also a valuable tool for showing “support or disapproval... for foreign governments or their policies.” Humanitarian concerns, accelerating “development in the Third World,” and the like, were listed as a distant third purpose for aid expenditures.<sup>56</sup>

In the end, it didn’t matter which angle the administration chose to stress, as its foreign aid plan faced hostility from all sides. Announced in May of 1969, Nixon’s \$224 million proposal was already the lowest since the program began after World War II and yet it was met with word from Congress that it was not whether the bill would be cut, but by how much.<sup>57</sup> Republicans and conservative – generally southern – Democrats were anxious to trim federal spending and saw an opportunity with foreign aid money. Many were tired of the program believing that it gave money to ungrateful foreign countries that then acted against American interests. Representative William Broomfield, a Michigan Republican, for example, tried and failed during House Foreign Affairs Committee negotiations to have a provision added that halted aid for any country that recognized North Vietnam. Broomfield was concerned by reports that India – one of the primary destinations for American aid money – was about to recognize the communist state. “I think the American people would take a decidedly dim view,” he said, “of any neutral nation that extended its recognition to North Vietnam at this time.”<sup>58</sup> The biggest cuts in the House, however, came at the hands of Otto Passman of Louisiana, the Democratic chairman of the House Appropriations subcommittee for foreign aid.

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<sup>56</sup> Report, “The Choices in Foreign Aid,” 24 March 1969, Folder 3, Box H-021, National Security Council Institutional Files: Meeting Files (1969-74), Nixon Library.

<sup>57</sup> “New Foreign Aid Bill Lowest on Record,” *The Jerusalem Post*, 29 May 1969, 2. “Foreign (or U.S.) Aid?,” *Boston Globe*, 30 May 1969, 18.

<sup>58</sup> Felix Belair Jr., “Foreign Aid Bill Facing Hurdles,” *New York Times*, 19 October 1969, 4.

Passman, a long opponent of the program, believed that it was wrong to spend money abroad that could be spent at home. During hearings on the subject, Passman wondered aloud about how a water project in his own district could be shut down for want of funds while millions went to a development program for the Indus River basin.<sup>59</sup> His committee sheared more than a billion dollars off Nixon's original proposal.

House and Senate liberals were also skeptical of the bill. Donald Fraser, the Minnesota Democrat and leading House liberal, believed that in order for it to pass, Nixon would have to be more forthcoming on other issues like cutting defense spending. "I don't think I'm a neo-isolationist," Fraser said during the hearing with Hannah, "if I think foreign aid should be put ahead of defense spending... this has to be a two way street."<sup>60</sup> Other liberals were simply dubious of foreign aid in general, believing it to be a gateway to military interventions like that in Vietnam. Senator William Fulbright, the longtime head of the Foreign Relations Committee and prominent critic of the Vietnam War, made sure his committee cut as much as Passman's. Justifying the billion dollars in cuts, Fulbright said that aid "promoted a policy of intervention." Formerly a supporter of the program, Fulbright said that his views had changed after he realized "it would create an appetite to interfere in the affairs of foreign countries."<sup>61</sup>

By the time the bill limped onto Nixon's desk in January of 1970 it had been reduced to \$190 million, more than \$100 million below his original proposal. At the signing the President warned that any further cuts in the program would have "serious consequences for U.S. foreign policy."<sup>62</sup> Congressional opposition to foreign aid was not,

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<sup>59</sup> "Cut in US Aid Bill will hit India," *Times of India*, 31 October 1969, 1.

<sup>60</sup> Felix Belair Jr., "Remark by Nixon Imperils Aid Bill," *New York Times*, 12 June 1969, 1.

<sup>61</sup> "Senate, House Groups Vote on Foreign Aid," *Chicago Tribune*, 9 December 1969, a6.

<sup>62</sup> Don Oberdorfer, "Nixon Signs Foreign Aid Measure," *Washington Post*, 1 January 1970, A4.



as the administration attempted to suggest, a reflection of a rebellious legislature looking to restrain the power of the executive. It was also a product of Congress responding to the changing views of the American public. In the House especially, Congressmen were finding strong opposition to foreign aid in their districts. So staunch was this view in some parts of the country that Nixon, as a Presidential candidate in 1968, had told House Republicans to vote as their districts demanded on Johnson's last aid request even though he would inherit that bill in office.<sup>63</sup> Polling suggested that most Americans favored the Hill's pruning. A survey in February of 1970 found that 58% of respondents thought Congress had done a "pretty good" or "excellent" job in cutting foreign aid.<sup>64</sup> The Secretary of State's warning that these cuts would bring U.S. assistance below the targets set for industrial nations by UNCTAD and the World Bank had apparently fallen on deaf ears.<sup>65</sup>

Another Nixon Administration attempt to address the demands made by UNCTAD would run into a Congressional snag – although a lack of real executive commitment would play an important role in this case. In October 1969, President Nixon announced that the United States would “press for a liberal system of generalized trade preferences for all developing countries... with broad coverage and no ceilings on preferential imports.”<sup>66</sup> The generalized system of preferences (or GSP) was an idea born in part from the concerns about unfair trade practices that Third World states had expressed as far back as the initial ITO/GATT planning meetings in 1947. The GSP

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<sup>63</sup> Felix Belair Jr., “Foreign Aid Bill Facing Hurdles,” *New York Times*, 19 October 1969, 4.

<sup>64</sup> Harris Survey, Feb, 1970. Retrieved Oct-24-2013 from the iPOLL Databank, The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, University of Connecticut. <http://www.ropercenter.uconn.edu> (henceforth iPoll).

<sup>65</sup> Warren Unna, “Restore Cuts in Foreign Aid Bill, Rodgers Urges,” *Los Angeles Times*, 25 November 1969, 7.

<sup>66</sup> Richard Nixon: "Remarks at the Annual Meeting of the Inter American Press Association.," 31 October 1969. *The American Presidency Project*.

system would allow manufactured or semi-manufactured goods from the Global South into developed country markets with no tariffs – and no reciprocity requirement – thus hopefully allowing those goods to get a foothold in the global marketplace and facilitate the development of Third World industries. In addition to the general concern about the economic growth of developing countries, the idea was advanced in response to the failure of the so called “Kennedy Round” of GATT trade negotiations, held between 1964 and 67, to do more than reduce tariffs on industrial goods between the major world economies.<sup>67</sup>

Preferences were the only noteworthy agreement to emerge from the otherwise acrimonious second UNCTAD meeting in 1968. The developed countries, the United States included, had made a “moral commitment” to explore the GSP idea in the interest of implementing it in the near term.<sup>68</sup> The program was, at this point in time, a major issue for the G-77. Its members wanted the system, as Kissinger put it to the President in 1969, “more than they want anything else in the economic field.”<sup>69</sup> A National Security Council undersecretaries’ review had concluded that, from a foreign policy standpoint, there was almost no option: the U.S. had to support the GSP. Non-participation “at this stage, would seriously impair [U.S.] posture with both the DCs and LDCs.” The U.S. would be “forced to explain... [why] we were unwilling to make an effort to achieve an objective which in principle had achieved worldwide support.” In addition to leaving the

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<sup>67</sup> On the limited results of the Kennedy round see: Eckes and Zeiler, *Globalization and the American Century*, 174. On the U.S. decision to support preferences see: Memo, NSC Undersecretaries Committee to the President, “Tariff Preferences for Developing Countries, NSSM 48,” 8 October 1969, Folder 7, Box H-147, National Security Council Institutional Files: National Security Study Memorandums, Nixon Library.

<sup>68</sup> Memo, NSC Undersecretaries Committee to the President, “Tariff Preferences for Developing Countries (NSSM 48),” 23 September 1969, Folder 6, Box H-147, National Security Council Institutional Files: National Security Study Memorandums, Nixon Library.

<sup>69</sup> Memo, Henry Kissinger to the President, “Tariff Preferences for Less Developed Countries (LDC’s),” 28 October 1969, Folder 7, Box H-147, National Security Council Institutional Files: National Security Study Memorandums, Nixon Library.

other developed countries in the lurch, “the LDCs would react with shock, disbelief and anger.” It would not do, the review warned, to have the first major trade decision of the administration suggest that Nixon did not care about the Third World.<sup>70</sup> Moreover, while supporting the system would bring major political benefits internationally, as an earlier NSC undersecretaries’ committee report noted, the “over-all economic ‘burden’ on the U.S. would be small.”<sup>71</sup>

The problem was not so much the tariff scheme itself, but Congress. After more than a quarter century of enthusiastic U.S. support for liberalizing world trade, domestic opposition to an open global economy was mounting. Once considered a central part of U.S. visions of a proper world order, foreign trade was no longer universally viewed as a boon for the U.S. economy. A preference system had the political disadvantage of being like a free trade bill while not really being a free trade bill. On the one hand it represented a “departure from traditional U.S. trade policy of equal treatment for all friendly foreign countries” as it did not require the LDCs to reciprocate by lowering duties on U.S. goods entering their own markets.<sup>72</sup> The GSP was thus, at root, a form of development assistance, open to the same difficulties the foreign aid bill encountered. On the other hand, by opening U.S. markets to foreign goods, a preference system had the same political baggage as a free trade proposal, making it doubly unpopular. As the undersecretaries’ report put it, “preference legislation will not be easy to achieve... it will

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<sup>70</sup> Memo, NSC Undersecretaries Committee to the President, “Tariff Preferences for Developing Countries, NSSM 48,” 8 October 1969, Folder 7, Box H-147, National Security Council Institutional Files: National Security Study Memorandums, Nixon Library.

<sup>71</sup> Memo, NSC Undersecretaries Committee to the President, “Tariff Preferences for Developing Countries (NSSM 48),” 23 September 1969, Folder 6, Box H-147, National Security Council Institutional Files: National Security Study Memorandums, Nixon Library.

<sup>72</sup> Memo, Henry Kissinger to the President, “Tariff Preferences for Less Developed Countries (LDC’s),” 28 October 1969, Folder 7, Box H-147, National Security Council Institutional Files: National Security Study Memorandums, Nixon Library.

require the strong and active support of [the] administration... [and] may affect the prospects for other legislation.”<sup>73</sup> Such support was not forthcoming, given the President’s already ambitious legislative agenda and the generally restive state of the Congress.<sup>74</sup> Nixon advisor Bryce Harlow warned the President that “trade sensitivities in Congress [were] at their peak.” The administration was thus in a contradictory position, needing, for foreign policy purposes, to support some version of the tariff preference system while being unwilling to make the effort required to move the necessary bill through the Capitol.

The solution, as Kissinger described it in a message to Nixon, was to “distinguish between our initial and eventual positions.”<sup>75</sup> It was believed that, to be salable at home, any tariff scheme would have to be implemented in concert with the European Community and Japan. That way the United States would not – if it were to institute a system on its own – become the sole “dumping ground” for third world goods. Initial discussions with Congressmen had seen a number of them raise this as a key requirement for their support.<sup>76</sup> The administration could, according to Kissinger, “maximize our foreign policy gains and minimize our domestic political risks” by announcing U.S. support for a “relatively liberal scheme” with the expectation that negotiations with the other developed countries would “drag the common scheme a long way toward [other]

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<sup>73</sup> Memo, NSC Undersecretaries Committee to the President, “Tariff Preferences for Developing Countries (NSSM 48), Annex A: Domestic Political Reactions to Preferences,” 23 September 1969, Folder 6, Box H-147, National Security Council Institutional Files: National Security Study Memorandums, Nixon Library.

<sup>74</sup> In addition to the foreign aid bill already discussed, Nixon proposed in 1969 a massive welfare reform/expansion bill as well as legislation intended to further liberalize trade.

<sup>75</sup> Memo, Henry Kissinger to the President, “Tariff Preferences for Less Developed Countries (LDC’s),” 28 October 1969, Folder 7, Box H-147, National Security Council Institutional Files: National Security Study Memorandums, Nixon Library.

<sup>76</sup> Memo, NSC Undersecretaries Committee to the President, “Tariff Preferences for Developing Countries (NSSM 48), Annex A: Domestic Political Reactions to Preferences,” 23 September 1969, Folder 6, Box H-147, National Security Council Institutional Files: National Security Study Memorandums, Nixon Library.

options... which would cause us smaller domestic problems.”<sup>77</sup> The U.S. could gain all the international political benefits of appearing generous while avoiding the domestic political costs of actually being so. They anticipated they could thus avoid sending any legislation to Congress for anywhere from six to twelve months as the negotiations proceeded.

In the interim Nixon would announce his desire for new general trade legislation, submitting a bill to Congress in November 1969. During the election Nixon had straddled the trade question, signaling both his support for free trade and his “sympathy with some of the temporary measures proposed to protect certain industries.”<sup>78</sup> These November proposals would, for the most part, place Nixon squarely back in the free trade camp – the waffling during the election appears to have been a political stunt. Nixon immediately made clear his commitment to freer trade during an April 9<sup>th</sup> National Security Council Meeting on the subject.<sup>79</sup> Yet, the President did bow somewhat to protectionist pressure. “We can no longer,” said Nixon, “think of our trade policies in the old, simple terms of liberalism vs. protectionism.”<sup>80</sup> His bill thus supported new protections for the U.S. textile industry – of major importance to the President’s southern U.S. constituency – and new discretionary powers for the President to respond to unfair trade practices. Nixon also wanted to liberalize the “escape clause” a means by which U.S. industries could receive temporary tariff protection by showing injury from imported goods.

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<sup>77</sup> Memo, Henry Kissinger to the President, “Tariff Preferences for Less Developed Countries (LDC’s),” 28 October 1969, Folder 7, Box H-147, National Security Council Institutional Files: National Security Study Memorandums, Nixon Library.

<sup>78</sup> Frank C. Porter, “Trade Message Eases Fears of Protectionism: News Analysis,” *Washington Post*, 19 November 1969, A8.

<sup>79</sup> Memo, Henry Kissinger to the Secretary of Defense, *et. al.*, “NSC Meeting of April 9, 1969 on Trade Policy,” 10 April 1969, Folder 7, Box H-021, National Security Council Institutional Files: Meeting Files (1969-74), Nixon Library.

<sup>80</sup> Saville R. Davis, “New Trade Era,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 20 November 1969, 11.

It was on the whole a moderate, politically calculated proposal. It, however, failed to properly anticipate the swelling protectionist tide in Congress. After months of consideration, the House would pass its own bill in November of 1970. The House bill was, as the *New York Times* despairingly described it, “the most protectionist and reactionary trade legislation in forty years.”<sup>81</sup> It imposed mandatory import quotas on textiles, shoes, mink and glycene, maintained import quotas for oil and included a “trigger clause” that would force the president to impose restrictions to protect any American industry deemed by mathematical formula to be injured by foreign competition. The bill represented such a major potential reversal in U.S. trade policies that it prompted harsh reaction from U.S. trading partners in Europe and Japan and raised fears of a major “trade war” between the developed nations.<sup>82</sup> Though the bill would eventually stall in the Senate, it appeared for some time that it might pass, despite a veto threat from the President.<sup>83</sup>

In this environment the administration chose to, once again, couple a generous sounding public position on the preferences scheme with a private decision to hold off on submitting legislation. The original U.S. proposal for a GSP called for no ceiling on the amount of preferential imports allowed into the country. This was, on the surface, more generous than what the Europeans and Japanese had offered, as their proposals included quotas on preferential goods. Of course, as we’ve seen this was hardly an honest offer as the administration had no plans of actually seeking implementation. They had however, according to Kissinger, managed to make the U.S. proposal “look the most liberal [of the

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<sup>81</sup> “A Reactionary Trade Bill,” *The New York Times*, 21 November 1970, 42.

<sup>82</sup> “Looming Trade War,” *The New York Times*, 16 July 1970, 32.

<sup>83</sup> Frank C. Porter, “Battle on Trade Bill forming in Senate,” *Washington Post*, 21 November 1970, A12.

developed countries] and have therefore reaped major foreign policy gains.”<sup>84</sup> By May of 1970 negotiations between the U.S, E.C. and Japan had reached a point that forced the administration to make further decisions. It had become clear that the Japanese and most E.C. nations would not be able to accept the GSP without a preferential import-cap. The U.S. had to either accept this proposal, or drop its previous demand that all donor nations adopt a common scheme. While an import cap would make the program more appealing to Congress, it threatened to undermine the foreign policy advantages of the initial proposal by making the U.S. appear suddenly parsimonious. Since any preference scheme would struggle in Congress and since “legislation will not need to be submitted until early 1971,” Kissinger believed there was little risk in the U.S. decoupling its scheme from the other developed nations. Nixon agreed.<sup>85</sup>

No legislation would follow in 1971 or in 1972. While the preference scheme had drawn sustained NSC-level attention in 1969 and 70, the subject slipped off the President’s radar in 1971. The focus of three separate National Security Decision Memoranda during Nixon’s first two years in office, tariff preferences would not receive that treatment again.<sup>86</sup> They would not be submitted to Congress until 1973, as part of a new omnibus trade bill the administration submitted after three years of Congressional inaction on the original 1969 trade proposal.<sup>87</sup> By the time this second trade bill was signed into law, in January of 1975 by President Ford, the landscape of North-South

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<sup>84</sup> Memo, Henry Kissinger to the President, “Tariff Preferences for Less Developed Countries,” 19 May 1970, Folder 6, H-147, National Security Council Institutional Files: National Security Council Study Memorandums, Nixon Library.

<sup>85</sup> Memo, Henry Kissinger to the President, “Tariff Preferences for Less Developed Countries,” 19 May 1970, Folder 6, H-147, National Security Council Institutional Files: National Security Council Study Memorandums, Nixon Library.

<sup>86</sup> See the list of NSDMs and their subjects at the Nixon Digital Library:

<http://www.nixonlibrary.gov/virtuallibrary/documents/nationalsecuritydecisionmemoranda.php>

<sup>87</sup> “The Nixon Trade Bill,” *New York Times*, 11 April 1973, 46.

relations had been dramatically transformed by other events, limiting the impact of the measure.

The delayed implementation of the tariff scheme would instead contribute to the general atmosphere of disinterest surrounding the U.S. response to the demands of the Global South in the early years of the Nixon administration. The preferences system itself could not have prevented the precipitous decline in U.S. relations with the Global South and the United Nations that followed in 1971 and after. It does however represent the sort of moderate, low cost measure, that if implemented might have helped embolden the moderates in the Third World. Instead, rather than making an assertive effort to recapture the mantle of global leadership, the United States appeared to be lashing out. The Vietnam War continued, Congress threatened to spark trade wars with America's allies, the Nixon administration edged closer to the white regimes in South Africa and made little effort to fulfill the limited promises made in UNCTAD. At the exact time that the Third World was looking for more aid and concessions from the industrialized world than it had previously received, the U.S. – thanks both to Nixon and Congress – was giving even less. While the radicalization of the Third World proceeded in part according to its own logic, the United States was doing little to help its own cause.

American disinterest would soon be transformed into anger and concern by the results of another Nixon delaying action, in this case the inevitability of Communist China being seated at the U.N. It is to this event, and its aftermath, that we will now turn.



## Chapter 2:

## “We Have Lost an Ideological Empire:” The China Vote and Fears of American Decline

*“It is not the People’s Republic of China that has been isolated, but the United States...”*  
 - Nesti Nase, Foreign Minister of Albania, to the U.N. General Assembly, 1971<sup>1</sup>

*“Let the U.N. roll us. People are sick of that organization.”*  
 - Richard Nixon, 1971

*“The United Nations is the most concentrated assault on moral reality in the history of free institutions, and it does not do to ignore the fact or, worse, get used to it.”*  
 - William F. Buckley, Jr., 1973

When the final tally was announced, loud, rhythmic, applause broke out in the General Assembly chamber. Mainland China’s supporters were apparently unable, or unwilling, to maintain diplomatic protocol and hide their elation. The Assembly had voted, 76 to 35, to transfer the Chinese seat in the U.N. from the Nationalist regime in Taiwan to the Communists in Peking – ending 22 years of American backed U.N. exile for Mao Zedong’s government. The Albanian Vice Foreign Minister, Reis Malile, proclaimed loudly in French that the vote was “a great defeat for the United States” before the Assembly president, Adam Malik of Indonesia, managed to quiet him down via a point of parliamentary order. Reflecting understandable frustration at the failure of weeks of hard work, U.S. Ambassador George Bush pulled off his translation headset, threw it onto his desk, and then, regaining composure, got up and left the chamber. His exit mirrored that of the Nationalists themselves a short time earlier who, realizing that they were soon to be expelled, announced their preemptive withdrawal from the U.N. before walking up the aisle to the exit. The latter scene moved Ambassador Bush considerably. “My heavens” he said in a press conference after the vote, “anybody with a

<sup>1</sup> Excerpts from Statements in the General Assembly on the Representation of China,” *New York Times*, 19 October 1971, 12.

heartbeat who saw those decent people thrown out of the U.N., he couldn't help but be affected.”<sup>2</sup>

Bush was not alone in his emotional reaction to that October 25<sup>th</sup> 1971 vote. While Americans had, by 1971, largely accommodated themselves to the idea of Communist China joining the U.N., the expulsion of the Nationalists was extremely unpopular, sparking considerable outrage in Congress and the public. In the wake of the decision, Congress would not only vote down a foreign aid bill for the first time since World War II but, also for the first time, choose to exempt the United States from participation in U.N. sanctions against another member state. While many American political and press figures warned against such precipitous action in retaliation for the vote, it nevertheless marked an important turning point in the relationship between the United States and the U.N. This is not simply because the U.N.'s approval rating in the U.S. turned negative for the first time since 1953 and remained that way for much of the subsequent two decades. It is also because, following the expulsion of Taiwan, many observers, both in and outside the United States, wondering whether the vote was an indication that the U.S. had lost, or was abandoning, its position as a world leader. The scale of that defeat in the United Nations and subsequent retaliatory measures by the United States Congress all suggested that, perhaps, the period of American ascendancy after the Second World War was over.

The defeat also generated some of the first major American critiques of U.S. diplomacy in the United Nations – and warnings about the serious dangers of failing to

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<sup>2</sup> This description was based on the following press accounts of the vote: M.V. Kamath, “U.N. Admits China, Taiwan Out: Stunning Blow for U.S.,” *Times of India* 27 October 1971, 1; “Taiwan Ousted in 76 to 35 Ballot,” *Chicago Tribune*, 26 October 1971, 1; “Red China Seated by United Nations,” *Wall Street Journal*, 26 October 1971, 1. As well as: Records of the United Nations General Assembly, 1976<sup>th</sup> Plenary Meeting, 1-42.

respond to the Third World's dominance of the General Assembly. These views were best exemplified by the work of two prominent political intellectuals, William F. Buckley Jr. and Daniel Patrick Moynihan. Though they arrived by different paths to their conclusions, after the China vote both argued that the U.N. was a standout example of a Third World assault not only on the United States but on democracy, "justice" and "freedom" more generally. Each stressed the power the U.N. had in defining global norms and the danger it could thus pose to those basic American ideals. If the United States did not take noticeable efforts to reshape the narratives emerging from the U.N., they argued, it could find itself alone in a world of dictators and those who appeased them. These ideas would find an increasingly receptive audience in the United States as the decade wore on. This chapter examines the China vote, its aftermath, and the impact of those events on how Americans understood their nation's global role.

#### THE PRC'S LONG MARCH TO NEW YORK

Chang Kai-Shek's Republic of China (ROC) was one of the founding members of the United Nations, mentioned by name in two separate places in the U.N. Charter itself. More than just an original member, as one of the "great power" "victors" of the Second World War the Chinese Nationalists held permanent membership in the U.N. Security Council and possessed veto power over any resolution. Despite losing control of their country to Mao's Communists at the conclusion of the Chinese Civil War in 1949, the Nationalists had maintained control of the Chinese seat thanks in large part to American assistance. The People's Republic of China (PRC) in fact had the distinction of being one of the only two nations, along with North Korea, to have fought a war against U.N. forces, a result of their 1950 intervention in the Korean War. Thanks to the war, the

Nationalist's and their American allies were able to maintain the idea that the PRC did not belong in the U.N. (by virtue of the Charter's requirement that all member states be "peace loving"), but this pretense would wear thin with time.

Unlike issues of U.N. membership, which are typically the province of the Security Council and thus subject to an American veto, the China question was a "representation" or "credentials" concern traditionally left to the General Assembly.<sup>3</sup> This worked well enough for the United States during the years it easily controlled a majority there. By the late 1960s, however, as American control of the Assembly diminished, the prospect of keeping the rulers of more than 800 million people out of the United Nations seemed both increasingly absurd and untenable.<sup>4</sup> The U.S.' ability to command a majority on the China Representation issue finally collapsed in October of 1970, as a majority voted for an Albanian-Algerian resolution to expel Taiwan and seat the PRC. Taiwan's spot in the U.N. was saved only by a successful American effort to have the issue declared an "important question" requiring a two-thirds majority to pass.

After this near miss, and as the reality set in that Taipei's place in the U.N. was in serious jeopardy, the Nixon administration called for a high level study of the issue in the context of the U.S.' approach to U.N. membership issues in general.<sup>5</sup> That the PRC would soon claim China's U.N. seat was, the report granted, inevitable. Without a change in U.S. policy, it read, "the Assembly will soon seat Communist China and expel the

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<sup>3</sup> "Study of the Entire UN Membership Question: US/China Policy – Pursuant to NSSM 107," 25 January 1971, Folder 4, Box H-177, National Security Council Files: Institutional Files, Nixon Library.

<sup>4</sup> Darius Jhabvala, "UN China Vote Still Uncertain After 22 Years," *Boston Globe*, 25 October 1971, 17.

<sup>5</sup> While it was by far the most pressing issue, Chinese representation could not be thought of merely in terms of who represented China but rather had to be considered with the other "divided" states of the Cold War (Korea, Vietnam and Germany) in mind. If the U.S. advocated one principle or standard of measurement for China, it might then be forced to apply the same standard to the other three, despite the U.S. having different interests in each case. Memo, Henry Kissinger to the Secretary of State, "National Security Study Memorandum 107: Study of Entire U.N. Membership Question – US/China Policy," 19 November 1970, National Security Study Memoranda, NDL.

Republic of China” either in 1971 or at the latest 1972. However, if the U.S. wished to save the ROC’s seat, the situation was not entirely without hope. The report found that, while there was “great sentiment in the Assembly that Communist China be seated at the present time, a majority does not wish to expel the Republic of China if it can be avoided.” There was also considerable support in the General Assembly for “universality” in U.N. membership whereby “all de facto governments which for long periods of time have effectively controlled significant territory and population” would be allowed a seat. The study suggested that the U.S. was left with three possible approaches to the problem: it could stick with the present policy of isolating the PRC, regardless of the likely outcome, it could push for a “two China” policy, or it could couple the latter with a potentially popular universality resolution.<sup>6</sup>

Choosing between these options would not be easy – Kissinger described it to the President as a “rather complicated” issue – the study report, and other memos on the subject, identified numerous and sometimes contradictory interests that the U.S. had to consider.<sup>7</sup> Diplomatically there was the U.S.’s relationship with Chiang Kai-Shek, and the ROC more generally – the United States did not want to risk an open break with the ROC, nor be seen as abandoning a longstanding ally. Yet, at the same time, there was the issue of Nixon’s nascent opening to Peking. Beginning in 1969 with a loosening of the draconian trade and travel restrictions the United States had had in place since 1949, Nixon had made clear by the end of 1970 that he was seeking a normalization of relations

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<sup>6</sup> Memo, Samuel De Palma to Henry Kissinger, “Study Pursuant to NSSM 107,” 6 February 1971, Folder 3, Box H-177, National Security Council Files: Institutional Files, Nixon Library.

<sup>7</sup> Telecon, Henry Kissinger and President Nixon, 7:25 PM, 24 March 1971, KA05309, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA.

between the two estranged nations. Finally, and perhaps most critically, there was the potential domestic political reaction to any major change in Taipei's U.N. status.

American views on Peking's admission to the U.N. had changed dramatically since the middle of the 1960s. Polls in 1966 suggested that as many of 67% of Americans opposed the Communists being seated. By 1970 only 49% of respondents wanted to keep Peking out. Those with no strong opinion on the subject had correspondingly risen from 11 to 16%. On the whole, as a memo to Henry Kissinger put it, "not only the number, but the intensity of [domestic] opposition to Peking's admission [had] diminished."<sup>8</sup> The once powerful "China Lobby," a diverse group of congressmen, press figures and political action groups, was widely considered to have "die[d] quietly."<sup>9</sup> Though groups like the "Committee of One Million Against the Admission of Communist China to the United Nations" were still operating, they were struggling to raise money and maintain interest in their cause.<sup>10</sup>

Despite the reduction in hostility toward seating Peking, however, Americans were hardly fond of the idea of the Nationalists being expelled. The memo to Kissinger noted how press opinion was overwhelmingly biased toward a two China approach, rather than a policy that resulted in the ROC's expulsion. Editorial analysis revealed that six major papers continued to endorse keeping Peking out, another 26 wanted a two China policy, but none recommended seating Peking alone. Public hearings held across the country by the President's recently established Commission on U.N. Reform had

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<sup>8</sup> Memo, Marshall Wright to Henry Kissinger, "U.S. Public and Press Opinion on Chinese Representation at the UN," Folder 3, Box H-177, National Security Council Files: Institutional Files, Nixon Library.

<sup>9</sup> Warren Unna, "China Lobby' Dies Quietly: Overtures to Peking Draw Almost Total Silence," *Washington Post*, 24 January 1970, A5.

<sup>10</sup> "China Lobby,' Once Powerful Factor in U.S. Politics, Appears Victim of Lack of Interest," *New York Times*, 26 April 1970, 14.

revealed similar sentiment. The Commission's hearings had "found almost unanimous opinion among those testifying before them that both Peking and Taipei should have U.N. membership."<sup>11</sup> Other poll data from the period supports the impression gained from these hearings. A Roper survey, conducted later in 1971, for example, found that 62% of Americans preferred that Communist China not be seated if doing so required Taipei's departure.<sup>12</sup>

Additionally, for all the fading influence of the China Lobby, the possibility of Communist China entering the U.N. remained a sensitive subject for many in Nixon's conservative base. Barry Goldwater, the conservative Senator from Arizona, warned that the power of the ROC's friends had not entirely diminished. In April the Committee of One Million's *China Report* announced a "Stop Red China" campaign. Its chairman proclaimed that he was "confident" because he believed, "the majority of Americans oppose the entry of Red China."<sup>13</sup> In July of 1971 a "Free China Week" event in Washington D.C. brought in groups from all across the country, including the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Young Americans for Freedom and the American Conservative Union.<sup>14</sup> However much the China Lobby may have been reduced in power from its mid-1950s height, Nixon, at least, could not afford to brazenly disregard its members. If this danger wasn't clear enough, in June the Committee of One

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<sup>11</sup> Memo, Marshall Wright to Henry Kissinger, "U.S. Public and Press Opinion on Chinese Representation at the UN," Folder 3, Box H-177, National Security Council Files: Institutional Files, Nixon Library.

<sup>12</sup> Roper Commercial Survey, Oct, 1971. Retrieved Dec-4-2013 from iPOLL.

<sup>13</sup> Committee of One Million, *China Report*, April 1971, Folder 2, Box 1, White House Special Office Files: Special Staff Files, Nixon Library.

<sup>14</sup> Spenser Rich, "China Lobby Opens Drive to Bar Peking From U.N.," *Washington Post*, 21 July 1971, A4.

Million took out a full page ad in the *Washington Post* warning the President that if he allowed “Red” China into the U.N. it would cost him his conservative support.<sup>15</sup>

These domestic factors would ultimately play a significant role in Nixon’s slow decision-making process. Despite having less than a year to adopt and implement a policy – the General Assembly opened in September and any lobbying campaign would have to begin well in advance – the administration would not announce one until late in the summer of 1971. There was internal disagreement on the best approach, as demonstrated by a March 1971 National Security Council Meeting on the subject.<sup>16</sup> Secretary of State Rodgers preferred making an effort to keep the Nationalists in though a two-China policy – with or without a universality resolution – even if it only prevented Taipei’s expulsion for a few years.<sup>17</sup> The President, at least initially seemed inclined in that direction as well, however he was worried that “we don’t want to get caught in the crunch of welcoming Communist China in the U.N.” He also raised the question of whether “there would be much point in changing our policy,” if there was doubt about the U.S. being able to cobble together the necessary votes. Doing so might involve domestic political risk, while if they continued with the current policy they “could just get rolled [in the voting,

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<sup>15</sup> Saul Kohler, “Conservative foes of China in UN give ultimatum to Nixon,” *Boston Globe*, 20 July 1971, 49.

<sup>16</sup> In fact, there was even disagreement about whether there should be a meeting at all, the Senior Review Group had suggested it was unnecessary, to which Kissinger agreed, but Secretary Rodgers insisted (Telecon, Secretary Rodgers and Henry Kissinger, 12:35 PM, 11 March 1971, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA). Kissinger, likely hoping to keep all aspects of China policy entirely within the White House, encouraged the President to withhold any final decision at the meeting, which he did (Telecon, Henry Kissinger and President Nixon, 7:25 PM, 24 March 1971, KA05309, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA).

<sup>17</sup> Telecon, Secretary Rodgers and Henry Kissinger, 4:50 PM, 25 March 1971, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA. Memo, Henry Kissinger to President Nixon, “Chinese Representation at the United Nations,” Folder 3, Box H-177, National Security Council Files: Institutional Files, Nixon Library.



allowing Taipei's expulsion] and let the U.N. take the rap," rather than the Administration.<sup>18</sup>

The Vice President spoke up strongly in favor of this option making, what he called, a number of "radical observations." He asked whether the administration "should consider a defeat in the U.N. as something [the U.S.] should shy away from, as a bad thing for the U.S. now." It might even be in America's interest to lose, he argued, as any major lobbying effort in the U.N. would only grant a legitimacy to the institution that Agnew felt was "not [serving] the U.S. best interest." Anticipating an argument that would be picked up by his fellow conservatives after Taiwan's ouster, the Vice President, was concerned that anything but brazen U.S. defiance of the Assembly's majority might merely strengthen the credibility of the nation's enemies in the U.N. "If Peking gets in with our assistance or tacit consent," Agnew worried, "its statements later will have an enhanced dignity before the world community... it will have a tall podium... espousing its interests which are not compatible with our views of the world." The Secretary of the Treasury, conservative Texas Democrat John Connally, seconded this view, asking, rhetorically, "what's so wrong with getting defeated if you were standing for what you believed?"

Rodgers opposed the idea and, apparently concerned about this argument making headway with Nixon, pointed out that if the two-China strategy succeeded, it was unlikely that the Communists would actually take the seat. Both Peking and Taipei claimed that they were the only legitimate governments of all of China, and both had made clear in the past that only they could represent China in the U.N. Thus it was likely

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<sup>18</sup> Memcon, President Nixon and National Security Council, "NSC Meeting: Part II," 25 March 1971, KT00252, *Kissinger Transcripts*, DNSA.

that Peking would, at least for a time, refuse the seat in protest over Taipei's continued presence in the Assembly. Nixon agreed, but chose to defer any final decision believing that they "needed to talk about it more," promising to revisit the subject that weekend.<sup>19</sup>

In a phone conversation with Kissinger later that day, however, it was clear that the President – perhaps emboldened by Agnew and Connally – was enamored of the idea of "letting the U.N. roll" the U.S., repeating the phrase to Kissinger. "People," he had decided, "are sick of that organization."<sup>20</sup> A few days later, during another call with the National Security Advisor, the President seemed even more comfortable with the prospect of deliberately losing, and more dismissive of the U.N. "Don't get too excited about the U.N." he told Kissinger, "if they slapped us in the face there would be a hell of an American reaction." The "liberals and intellectuals," he continued, "would say 'fine,' but the veterans groups... I'd gin them up... there are a lot of people who want the U.N. out of this country."<sup>21</sup> Kissinger was of the same mind. In a phone conversation after the meeting, Kissinger told Agnew that he agreed with the arguments the Vice President had made during the NSC meeting: "I thought what you said desperately needed to be said."<sup>22</sup>

Nixon and Kissinger were no longer be concerned about the outcome of China vote. They felt that blaming the U.N. itself for the loss of Taipei's seat was both a viable, and appealing option. Although they would eventually adopt a two China approach, this

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<sup>19</sup> Memcon, President Nixon and National Security Council, "NSC Meeting: Part II," 25 March 1971, *Kissinger Transcripts*, KT00252, DNSA.

<sup>20</sup> Telecon, Henry Kissinger and President Nixon, 4:30 PM, 25 March 1971, KA05314, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA.

<sup>21</sup> Telecon, Henry Kissinger and President Nixon, 9:35 AM, 30 March 1971, KA05352, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA.

<sup>22</sup> Telecon, Henry Kissinger and Vice President Agnew, 7:25 PM, 25 March 1971, KA05317, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA.

was meant largely for show.<sup>23</sup> The primary concern was positioning the U.S. so that it, and the Nationalists, could appear the aggrieved victim of the U.N.'s perfidy. With that story in place, other policy concerns, like the opening to mainland China, could be given their due without reference to the outcome in the U.N. Thus, although the administration would go through the motions of making a serious push to maintain Taipei's seat, the effort was regularly handicapped by decisions, or non-decisions, in the White House.

These began with the delayed official announcement of the new U.S. policy on China's representation. Though Kissinger would write in April about the "need for speed" in order to arrest the "growing momentum working against in the international community," the two China policy would not be unveiled until August.<sup>24</sup> It was delayed first by the need to confer with Chiang Kai-Shek, in part to make sure he were willing to back a two-China approach, but primarily to see if, as Nixon put it, the "old man [could] make it a little easier for [the administration] here at home."<sup>25</sup> It would be harder for conservatives to attack the new policy, the logic went, if their Chinese hero supported the shift in tactics.<sup>26</sup> By the time Nixon's representatives had secured the ROC's reluctant acquiescence to the two-China line, however, concerns for the sensibilities of the other China intervened. Nixon and Kissinger's tentative opening to the Communists was near to bearing fruit, with Kissinger to embark upon his famous secret trip to Peking in July.

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<sup>23</sup> A conversation between Rodgers and Kissinger on Chinese representation found both agreeing that if the Mainland Chinese were to enter thanks to the U.S. maintaining its original pro-Taipei position it would be interpreted as a cynical ploy by Nixon. Telecon, Henry Kissinger and Secretary of State Rogers, 29 March 1971, KA05347, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA.

<sup>24</sup> Memo, Henry Kissinger to President Nixon, "Chinese Representation at the U.N." 9 April 1971, Folder 3, Box H-177, National Security Council Files: Institutional Files, Nixon Library.

<sup>25</sup> Memcon, President Nixon and National Security Council, "NSC Meeting: Part II," 25 March 1971, KT00252, *Kissinger Transcripts*, DNSA.

<sup>26</sup> Kissinger would, for example, bring this up in conversation with Ronald Reagan in August in an attempt to mitigate the Californian's concerns. Telecon, Henry Kissinger and Ronald Reagan, 1:32 PM, 2 August 1971, KA06213, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA.

Thus while Rodgers – whom the secretive Nixon and Kissinger had left out of the loop on the China trip – continued to press for a final decision on the situation in the U.N., the White House stalled. In the beginning of June, Kissinger, somewhat mysteriously, told the Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs, U. Alexis Johnson, that “the President does not want [the U.N. decision] surfaced until... the second half of July.” He encouraged Johnson to head off any effort by Rodgers to force the White House into a decision: the Secretary’s effort would be wasted, “delayed and sandbagged and [the announcement would] end up [delayed] anyway.”<sup>27</sup> Rodgers himself called Kissinger’s office later that month, just as the National Security Advisor was heading out the door for a trip to Europe, looking for an answer about China. “It may be too late,” he told Kissinger, “but I think the President should be apprised of the necessity of coming to some conclusion on the China representation issue.” If they really were going to try for both Chinas, Rodgers warned, the President needed to authorize an announcement as soon as possible or “we won’t have the votes.” Kissinger again demurred, promising ambiguously to “leave a memo for [Nixon] before I go.”<sup>28</sup>

The announcement did not come until after Kissinger’s triumphant return from Peking, with Rodgers giving the official notice in August 2<sup>nd</sup> statement.<sup>29</sup> This left Ambassador Bush with very little time to conduct all the lobbying and horse-trading needed to assemble votes in the U.N. The *New York Times* would later report that some delegates felt Bush’s tactics were heavy handed, which might be attributed to the limited

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<sup>27</sup> Telecon, Henry Kissinger and Ambassador U. Alexis Johnson, 7:20 PM, 1 June 1971, KA05835, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA.

<sup>28</sup> Telecon, Henry Kissinger and Secretary Rodgers, 10:37 AM, 23 June 1971, KA05835, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, KA05835, DNSA.

<sup>29</sup> William P. Rodgers, “Statement Concerning Chinese Representation in the U.N.,” 2 August 1971, Folder 3, Box H-177, National Security Council Files: Institutional Files, Nixon Library.

amount of time he had to conduct his lobbying campaign.<sup>30</sup> This was not the only handicap that Bush, Rodgers and the rest of the State Department would operate under either. As the White House continued its dance with the mainland government, Kissinger kept a close eye on how the lobbying in the U.N. was being conducted. Although a number of memos highlighted the popularity of advancing a principle of “universality” in U.N. membership, Kissinger was careful to make sure that this principle was not even hinted at by the U.S.<sup>31</sup> The issue was not that universality might complicate American diplomacy regarding the other “divided” states of the Cold War – which it could have – but rather that it could suggest to Mao’s government that the U.S. believed there were “two Chinas.” A public American denial of the latter had been an important part of the agreements that Kissinger had made with the Peking government in order to allow for Nixon’s eventual visit. Kissinger was careful to purge universalist language from American statements, even to the level of calling the Secretary of State and editing – almost line by line – Rodgers’ speech to the General Assembly mere minutes before the advance copies were to be released.<sup>32</sup>

Ambassador Bush encountered similar interference from the National Security Advisor. In early September, with Bush’s lobbying campaign underway, the Ambassador called Kissinger looking for help in getting Japanese co-sponsorship for the U.S. backed resolution for seating both Chinas. Bush believed that clear Japanese support was important because the Japanese “carry a lot of influence” in the U.N. and the “more help

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<sup>30</sup> Henry Tanners, “Steamroller Tactics of U.S. Are Blamed for Defeat,” *New York Times*, 27 October 1971, 1.

<sup>31</sup> On the popularity of Universality see, for example, John Negroponete, “Analytical Summary, NSSM 107: Study of Entire U.N. Membership Question, US-China Policy,” 2 April 1971, Folder 3, Box H-177, National Security Council Files: Institutional Files, Nixon Library.

<sup>32</sup> Telecon, Henry Kissinger and Secretary Rodgers, 8:50 AM, 4 October 1971, KA06579, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA.

we have in terms of co-sponsoring the better our chances of winning.”<sup>33</sup> Kissinger, however, was resistant, fearing that doing so might offend Communist “Chinese sensitivities,” or as he put it in another conversation on the subject with Rodgers: “we don’t want to give the Chinese too much of an impression of collusion” with the Japanese to keep them out of the U.N.<sup>34</sup> When Bush continued to press for Japanese participation, Kissinger responded with what must have been a startling question: “do we want to win that badly?” “You have got to tell me that,” Bush replied, somewhat curtly.<sup>35</sup> Although Kissinger eventually relented and the Japanese would, ultimately, co-sponsor the resolution, this conversation reveals much about the White House’s priorities.<sup>36</sup>

By early October things were looking grim for Taipei’s U.N. seat. Rather than gaining votes the U.S. was struggling to keep them. It didn’t help matters that the U.S.’s closest ally, the United Kingdom, was actively lobbying against the American position. Though the U.K. had recognized Peking relatively early for an American ally, in 1950, the British had generally been helpful in keeping Mao’s representatives out of the U.N. They abstained when necessary, or voted in favor of procedural resolutions that could help the Nationalist cause – such as declaring the issue an “important question” as in 1970. In July the British government informed Nixon that it could no longer aid in such endeavors and would instead, as Rodgers described it to Kissinger, vote “against

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<sup>33</sup> Telecon, Henry Kissinger and Ambassador George Bush, 10:25 AM, 7 September 1971, KA06399, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA.

<sup>34</sup> Telecon, Henry Kissinger and Secretary Rodgers, 2:40 PM, 7 September 1971, KA06399, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, KA06399, DNSA.

<sup>35</sup> Kissinger wasn’t done giving the Ambassador a hard time either: he then asked whether Bush wanted to “recognize Manchuria,” in order to further alienate the Mainland Chinese. Telecon, Henry Kissinger and Ambassador George Bush, 10:25 AM, 7 September 1971, KA06399, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA.

<sup>36</sup> Darius Jhabvala, “Two-China question dominates UN opening session: Japan joins US on Peking seat,” *Boston Globe*, 22 September 1971, 1.

Taiwan's membership no matter what we do."<sup>37</sup> Other U.S. allies like Canada and Italy quickly followed with their own similar announcements. The British – as well as the Canadians and Italians – would do more than simply leave the Americans to their own devices. They actively campaigned for seating the Peking government and expelling Taipei. Britain's envoy to the U.N., Sir Colin Crowe, publically rejected the U.S.'s argument for seating both Chinas, saying that, "there is no question here of the expulsion of a member state... it is rather a question of who should represent an existing state."<sup>38</sup>

In addition to these public statements, the British and others worked behind the scenes to defeat the American resolutions. "The English [*sic*], Canadians and Italians are killing us," Bush complained, as the U.S. mission had been unable to get them to "lay off [lobbying] Bahrain... and Omar" to vote against Taiwan.<sup>39</sup> Rodgers was slightly more equanimous, but otherwise agreed with Bush's assessment, telling Kissinger in October, "Britain is hurting us... [by] lobbying against us."<sup>40</sup> He requested Presidential intervention, but Nixon chose not make any major statement on Chinese representation until after the vote.

On October 4<sup>th</sup>, Rodgers gave a speech to the General Assembly warning against what was, by then, the seemingly inevitable expulsion of the Nationalists. "The path of expulsion is perilous," the Secretary warned, "it would be unjust to expel a member who has participated for over twenty five years in the work of this organization with unflinching

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<sup>37</sup> Telecon, Henry Kissinger and Secretary Rodgers, 1:10 PM, 20 July 1971. See also press coverage: Arthur L. Gavshon, "British Back Red China UN Seat" *Chicago Tribune*, 19 July 1971, 6.

<sup>38</sup> Robert Keatley, "The China Question: UN Seating of Peking Hinges on the Outcome Of a Procedural Ploy, U.S. Proposal Would Require A Majority of Two-Thirds To Oust the Nationalists, Is Maldives' Man Coming?" *Wall Street Journal*, 25 October 1971, 1.

<sup>39</sup> Telecon, Henry Kissinger and Ambassador George Bush, 10:11 AM, 11 October 1971, KA00653, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA.

<sup>40</sup> Telecon, Henry Kissinger and Secretary Rodgers, 5:25 PM, 8 October 1971, KA06646, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA.

devotion to the principles set forth in the charter. He went on to ask whether it made much sense to expel the nationalists from an organization that included both the Byelorussian and Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republics, both of which were constituent republics of the Soviet Union and thus controlled by Moscow. Rodgers also pointed out that Taipei, regardless of its claim to the mainland, governed “a population... greater than 2/3rds of the 130 U.N. members.” He also attacked the opposition Albanian resolution as unnecessarily punitive. “It does not seek to deal with the facts,” he pointed out, “but to excoriate and condemn.”<sup>41</sup>

The latter was not an unfair characterization, for the Albanian resolution did not merely denounce Taipei’s claim to rule China but questioned the ROC’s legitimacy even as rulers of Taiwan. The resolution labeled the previous two decades of keeping Peking out of the U.N. as the result of “hostile and discriminatory” behavior by “several Governments” (primarily, if implicitly, the United States). That policy was illegally premised, the resolution claimed, on the “myth of a so-called ‘Republic of China’ fabricated out of a portion of Chinese territory.” Not content to let the matter rest there, the Albanians and their 17 co-sponsors went further, describing Chiang Kai-Shek’s regime as the “unlawful authorities installed on Taiwan” and charging that their ability to rule was premised entirely upon, “the permanent presence of United States armed forces.”<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> William Fulton, “Rogers Urges U. N. Not to Oust Taiwan: Expulsion of Taiwan ‘Perilous,’ Rogers Warns U.N.,” *Chicago Tribune*, 5 October 1971, 1.

<sup>42</sup> Much as Rodgers’ speech had not connected the “injustice” of expelling Taiwan with the past “injustice” of stonewalling Peking, the Albanian resolution made no mention of the role of the military in the governing of any of its sponsor nations. *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1971, Chapter VII, 126-7. <http://unyearbook.un.org>. The 17 cosponsors were Algeria, the Congo, Cuba, Guinea, Iraq, Mali, Mauritania, the People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen, Romania, Somalia, Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Republic of Tanzania, Yemen, Yugoslavia and Zambia.



The otherwise implicit anti-Americanism of the resolution was made explicit by the statements of many of those who advocated for it. Neste Nase, the Albanian Foreign Minister, began the public debate on October 18th by castigating “the American imperialists” and the “extremely serious crimes” they had committed “against the Chinese people.” The United States, he charged, had “since 1950 continued to occupy the Chinese province on the Island of Taiwan.” Those who supported the U.S. backed resolutions, Nase proclaimed, did so only “because they have not yet completely thrown off the political, economic and military shackles which American imperialism imposed on them.”<sup>43</sup> The Tanzanian delegate mocked the past twenty years of U.S. policy on China claiming that “the policy of quarantine and isolation perpetrated by the United States has miserably failed.” He pleaded with his fellow delegates to “decisively reject” American “maneuvers, not for the sake of scoring debating victories, but for the interests... of mankind as a whole.”<sup>44</sup> The Yemeni representative argued that by the standards the U.S. was using to justify Taipei’s presence in the U.N., Manhattan Island itself should be a member. The main difference between the two islands, he continued, was that there was no “foreign military base to slash [Manhattan] off the continental United States and sponsor its cause in the United Nations... I guess the drive to liberate the hardworking, decent, law-abiding, freedom loving people of Manhattan is a hopeless cause.”<sup>45</sup>

Although a number of members gave speeches defending the United States and the ROC, what stands out from the proceedings is the regular use of terms like, “North American imperialism” and the various descriptions of how the “Yankee Seventh Fleet”

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<sup>43</sup> Records of the United Nations General Assembly, 1967<sup>th</sup> Plenary Meeting, 1-3.

<sup>44</sup> Records of the United Nations General Assembly, 1971<sup>st</sup> Plenary Meeting, 13-15

<sup>45</sup> Records of the United Nations General Assembly, 1973<sup>rd</sup> Plenary Meeting, 13.

or other forms of American occupation were severing Taiwan from its rightful rulers.<sup>46</sup> The final debate, on October 25<sup>th</sup>, stretched into the late evening and took on a distinctly undiplomatic tone by the end. The decisive moment was the defeat of an American draft resolution declaring any proposal “which would result in depriving the Republic of China representation in the United Nations an important question” requiring a 2/3rds majority.<sup>47</sup> Once it was defeated, 59-55 with 15 abstentions, there was nothing to stop the pro-PRC majority from voting to expel Taipei. Ambassador Bush attempted to forestall the inevitable with two points of order removing references to the expulsion of the ROC from the Albanian resolution, but failed. When the final tally was announced, 76-35-17 in favor of seating Peking and expelling Taiwan, a number of delegates leapt “to their feet and [began] applauding.”<sup>48</sup> Adding to the strange scene was Ambassador Malile’s aforementioned impromptu speech. Allowed to the floor on what was supposed to be a point of order rather than a political speech, the Albanian representative managed to denounce the “policy of *diktat* of the United States imperialists” and praise the PRC’s “colossal strength and vitality in the service of freedom, independence, peace and progress” before being interrupted by the Assembly President.<sup>49</sup> Perhaps understandable given the almost 20 years of American obstruction of what the U.N. had just officially designated the “restoration of the lawful rights of the People’s Republic of China in the

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<sup>46</sup> Records of the United Nations General Assembly, 1973<sup>rd</sup> Plenary Meeting, 12.

<sup>47</sup> Records of the United Nations General Assembly, 1976<sup>th</sup> Plenary Meeting, 33.

<sup>48</sup> Carroll Kilpatrick, “Hill Debate On Support Intensifies: President Decries U.N. Show of Glee,” *Washington Post*, 28 October 1971, A1.

<sup>49</sup> Records of the United Nations General Assembly, 1976<sup>th</sup> Plenary Meeting, 41. Many of China’s citizens might have objected to this characterization of Mao’s regime had they been allowed to do so. The recently concluded “cultural revolution” had killed roughly half a million Chinese, fast on the heels of the disastrous “great leap forward,” which had sent some 45 million others to an early grave. For more see: Roderick McFarquhar and Michael Schoenhals, *Mao’s Last Revolution* (Cambridge: 2008); Jang Yisheng, *Tombstone: The Great Chinese Famine, 1958-62*, Stacy Mosher and Jian Guo trans. (New York: 2012).

United Nations,” the atmosphere – as much as the fact – of the vote would draw much attention in the United States.

#### THE REACTION IN THE UNITED STATES

“The stunning diplomatic defeat” as *The Washington Post* described it, was met with a great deal of shock in the United States. This was despite persistent rumors that the Nixon administration was merely making a show of defending an old ally. “Washington to Fight to Keep Taiwan in UN – But Not Very Hard” the *Wall Street Journal* had proclaimed after Secretary Rodgers’ announcement of the two-China approach in August. “Many experts,” the paper reported, “expect the U.S. to do little more than go through the motions of supporting Taiwan.”<sup>50</sup> The subsequent months of diplomacy had done much to change that impression, however, and with some good reason. Despite the lack of enthusiasm in the White House, Rodgers and Bush had made major, last minute efforts to swing votes Taipei’s way. Rodgers visited with 92 different foreign ministers and delegates to discuss the vote while the *Washington Post* described Bush as having “lobbied like a Texas politician.”<sup>51</sup> As Rodgers put it to Kissinger, “we did everything we could have done.”<sup>52</sup> The press granted them similar credit, by October the *Wall Street Journal*, for example, had changed its tune. “Though [U.N.] diplomats disagree about the outcome,” the paper reported on the 25th, “they all concede that the U.S. has made a valiant – and unexpected – effort to win.” There was some expectation in the United States that the State Department would manage to save Taiwan from its eventual fate. A

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<sup>50</sup> Robert Keatley, “Washington to Fight To Keep Taiwan in UN But Not Very Hard: Rogers Announces New Policy But Skirts the Finer Points,” *Wall Street Journal*, 3 August 1971, 1.

<sup>51</sup> Stanley Karnow, “U.N.-What Went Wrong? Postmortems Fault U.S. Envoys, Taiwan Stand,” *The Washington Post*, 31 October 1971, A1.

<sup>52</sup> Telecon, Henry Kissinger and Secretary Rodgers, 1:10 PM, 29 October 1971, KA06753, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA.

Harris Survey report in August found that 55% percent of Americans believed that the Nationalists would not be expelled from the U.N., and while those numbers had reversed by October (with 51% believing the Nationalists would be asked to leave) Americans still had to absorb what appeared to them a startling reversal in fortune in the space of a few months.<sup>53</sup> The overall impression was that the United States had tried its best to keep Taiwan's seat and the bulk of the U.N.'s membership had rebuked that effort with a certain amount of disdain.

Some citizens questioned the administration's commitment to Taiwan and worried whether the United States had lost faith in itself. One Airman Frank Clymer of Laughlin Air Force Base in Texas, for example, wrote angrily to Bush on the night of the vote wondering what the Ambassador was doing to "straighten out the mistake you people made tonight. I'm supposed to be fighting to put a halt to communism," Clymer wrote, "and all you people down there do is defeat the purpose of what we in the military are doing."<sup>54</sup> Roscoe Hamilton, a Californian, could "not believe that our country could be so blind and unthinking, yes, even stupid, as to allow such a grievous mistake to take place." Most "civilizations," he warned, "have died from within and not by conquest from without." Perhaps, "some day in the dim future our country may regain its lost stature, prestige and world leadership."<sup>55</sup> Another, slightly more prominent Californian – the actor, and Nixon supporter, John Wayne – wrote the President proclaiming it "quite a

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<sup>53</sup> August: Harris Survey, Aug, 1971. Retrieved Dec-17-2013 from iPoll; October: Harris Survey, Oct, 1971. Retrieved Dec-17-2013 from iPoll.

<sup>54</sup> Letter, Airman Frank Clymer to Ambassador George Bush, 25 October 1971, Folder 5, Box 1, White House Special Office Files: Special Staff Files, Nixon Library.

<sup>55</sup> Letter, Roscoe Hamilton to Ambassador George Bush, 28 October 1971, Folder 5, Box 1, White House Special Office Files: Special Staff Files, Nixon Library.

shocker when I heard that you were going to... throw Taiwan to the jackals in the United Nations.”<sup>56</sup>

However – much as the President and Vice President had predicted – in the immediate aftermath of the October 25<sup>th</sup> session, concern was generally directed outward at the “jackals” in the U.N. rather than inwards at the American soul or the administration’s policies. A Gallup Poll showed that 44% of Americans thought the U.N. was doing a “poor” job, a plurality, and the U.N.’s worst showing in public opinion since 1945.<sup>57</sup> Ronald Reagan, the governor of California, said he was “deeply shocked and disgusted” by the vote and believed it “confirms the moral bankruptcy of that organization.” The Governor did not “think that the United States should simply sit there and take this without some kind of action.”<sup>58</sup> Reagan was not yet ready to advocate withdrawing from the U.N., but other conservatives were not so hesitant. Barry Goldwater said that the time “had come to recognize the United Nations for the anti-American and anti-freedom organization it has become.” The United States should “cut off all financial help, withdraw as a member and ask the United Nations to find a headquarters location outside the United States.”<sup>59</sup> The Californian Republican Assembly, a grassroots conservative group, urged a “prompt withdrawal” of the United States from the “now un-United Nations organization.”<sup>60</sup>

Similar sentiments were expressed in letters sent to Ambassador Bush. Mr. and Mrs. John W. Gipson of Franklin Grove, Illinois, encouraged Bush to “sever [his]

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<sup>56</sup> He signed the letter “Duke.” Letter, John Wayne to President Nixon, 23 November 1971, Folder 1, Box 17: White House Central Office File: Subject File, Nixon Library.

<sup>57</sup> “Gallup Poll: Only 35% say UN doing good job,” *The Boston Globe*, 13 November 1971, 5.

<sup>58</sup> “U.S. should Review U.N. Role – Reagan,” *Los Angeles Times*, 27 October 1971, A6.

<sup>59</sup> John W. Finney, “Sentiment Developing in Congress to Reduce Financial Support to U.N. Agencies: Reaction to China Vote Is Emotional and Angry,” *New York Times*, 27 October 1971, 16.

<sup>60</sup> “U.S. should Review U.N. Role – Reagan,” *Los Angeles Times*, 27 October 1971, A6.

connection with the U.N. and spearhead the movement for the complete withdrawal of the United States as a member.” The world organization was “detrimental to the best interests of the United States and the free world [and had] never accomplished anything worthwhile.”<sup>61</sup> Oliver C. Bateman, the Georgia State Senate Minority leader telegraphed Mr. Bush with a call to “regain American courage, pride and prestige to ensure at last that this is the final humiliation for the United States and get the H--- out of the U.N. ... I will support not other course.”<sup>62</sup> Mr. and Mrs. Edward Hamm Jr. of Paterson New Jersey, ended their note with a simpler exhortation, “in conclusion we would like to say: LET’S GET AMERICA OUT OF THE UNITED NATIONS!”<sup>63</sup>

While talk of leaving the U.N. was an immediate emotional reaction with almost no possibility of actually becoming U.S. policy, the corresponding call for reducing American contributions to the U.N. was much more likely to happen. Senator James Buckley, of New York’s Conservative Party, had raised the possibility of such a move. In early October, before the vote, Buckley told Ambassador Bush that there was growing sentiment in Congress for a “dramatic reduction” in funds provided to the United Nations. “I am here,” Buckley said while visiting with Mr. Bush, “as a spokesman for a group of senators who feel deeply that the expulsion of the Republic of China would be an act of injustice which would require our reevaluation of the nature and future function of the U.N.”<sup>64</sup> A group of House members lead by New York Democrat John Rooney,

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<sup>61</sup> Letter, Mr. and Mrs. John M. Gipson to Ambassador George Bush, 6 November 1971, Folder 5, Box 1, White House Special Office Files: Special Staff Files, Nixon Library.

<sup>62</sup> Telegram, Oliver C. Bateman to Ambassador George Bush, 28 October 1971, Folder 5, Box 1, White House Special Office Files: Special Staff Files, Nixon Library.

<sup>63</sup> Letter, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Hamm Jr. to Ambassador George Bush, Folder 6, Box 1, White House Special Office Files: Special Staff Files, Nixon Library.

<sup>64</sup> William Fulton, “Sen. Buckley Warns U.N. of U.S. Aid Cut Over Taiwan Ouster,” *Chicago Tribune*, 12 October 1971, 5.

chairman of the House appropriations subcommittee, delivered a similar warning to President Nixon later that week.<sup>65</sup>

A reduction in American support for the U.N. was not something that the organization could take lightly. Reflecting America's relative prosperity in the war-torn world of 1945, when U.N. contributions were fixed, the United States was in the early 1970s contributing more than 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the U.N.'s official budget (around \$900 million). A reduction in U.S. contributions could represent a serious cut in the finances of the already cash-strapped organization. Bush reportedly even used Buckley's threat as part of his push for votes to retain Taipei.<sup>66</sup> A Tanzanian representative, during the General Assembly debate, took time to condemn Buckley's statement, calling it "political blackmail or perhaps [an attempt at] dollar diplomacy."<sup>67</sup>

Buckley immediately introduced legislation, the day following the vote, to cut \$100 of the \$139 million earmarked for the U.N. in the foreign aid bill then under consideration by Congress.<sup>68</sup> Buckley was able to quickly find allies for his effort including Sen. Peter Dominick a Republican from Colorado and, more prominently, both the Senate Majority Leader, Mike Mansfield (D-Montana) and Minority Leader, Hugh Scott (R-Pennsylvania).<sup>69</sup> The "underlying sentiment," as Max Frankel of *The New York Times*, described it, was that the "United Nations... shall have fewer dollars with which

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<sup>65</sup> Aldo Beckman, "UN Aid Periled if Taiwan Expelled," *Chicago Tribune*, 14 October 1971, d2.

<sup>66</sup> Robert Keatley, "The China Question: UN Seating of Peking Hinges on the Outcome Of a Procedural Ploy, U.S. Proposal Would Require A Majority of Two-Thirds To Oust the Nationalists, Is Maldives' Man Coming?" *Wall Street Journal*, 25 October 1971, 1.

<sup>67</sup> Records of the United Nations General Assembly, 26<sup>th</sup> Session, 1971<sup>st</sup> Plenary Meeting, 19.

<sup>68</sup> These funds, it should be noted, were part of U.S voluntary contributions to the U.N. – for programs like the U.N. Development Fund and the U.N. Food Program – and not part of the mandatory dues the U.S. owed for membership, which, technically, could only be reduced by treaty.

<sup>69</sup> John W. Finney, "Sentiment Developing in Congress to Reduce Financial Support to U.N. Agencies: Reaction to China Vote Is Emotional and Angry," *New York Times*, 27 October 1971, 16.

to kick us around.”<sup>70</sup> Though some, Mansfield and Scott in particular, claimed that this interest in reducing the U.N.’s funding was based on a longstanding need, rather than the China vote, that claim hardly seems credible given the timing of the legislation. The White House, meanwhile, appeared, after a delay, inclined to get into the act as well. The administration’s initial response to their defeat had been relatively muted. Bush had held a press conference, following the momentous Assembly session, where he called Taipei’s expulsion a “moment of infamy.”<sup>71</sup> Otherwise, Rodgers had issued the only official statement on the subject, a rather calm message claiming that, while Nixon regretted the loss of Taiwan’s seat, Peking’s entrance was “consistent” with the administration’s new policy toward the mainland.<sup>72</sup> Apparently shamed by the strength of the conservative reaction – and at least one phone call from Reagan complaining that Rodger’s comments had “made [him] urp [*sic*]” – Nixon took a much stronger stand in a press conference on October 27th.<sup>73</sup>

Speaking for the President, Press Secretary Ron Ziegler said that while the White House had no intention of changing policy toward the U.N. he would be “less than candid if I didn’t point out that this [vote] makes continuation of the present aid level very difficult.” The President believed that the final vote had witnessed a “shocking demonstration” of “undisguised glee” and “personal animosity” toward the United States that “could very definitely impair the ability of the Administration to maintain support for

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<sup>70</sup> Max Frankel, “Congress vs. the U.N.: Legislators Now Seem Determined To Inflict Financial Retribution,” *New York Times*, 29 October 1971, 14.

<sup>71</sup> “Taiwan Ousted in 76 to 35 Ballot: Bush Labels Vote 'Moment of Infamy' Bush Calls U. N. Vote Infamous,” *Chicago Tribune*, 26 October 1971, 1.

<sup>72</sup> Robert Keatley, “Rogers Calmly Accepts UN Loss on China, But Congress Talks of Retaliatory Action,” *Wall Street Journal*, 27 October 1971, 1.

<sup>73</sup> Telecon, Henry Kissinger and Governor Ronald Reagan, 7:40 PM, 26 October 1971, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, KA06717, DNSA.



the U.N.”<sup>74</sup> Agnew took this a step further by calling the U.N. a “paper tiger” that had “increasingly become in recent years a propaganda sounding board for the left.” Echoing Mansfield and Scott he called for reducing its funding, not as punishment for Taiwan’s expulsion, but rather because he long been unable to “see any reason why we should pay such a predominant amount of the tab.” Agnew felt the U.S. should “move away from assigning a position of predominant importance to that body until such time that there is a more even balance and fairness exhibited by the member nations.”<sup>75</sup>

Major Congressional reprisals were thus a distinct possibility. The level of concern, in what Nixon and Kissinger tended to call the “establishment,” that the U.S. might take punitive action can be measured by the outpouring of editorial and other comments warning against any precipitous move against the U.N. “We repeat, don’t blame the U.N.” read a *Christian Science Monitor* editorial on October 29<sup>th</sup>, “all the U.N. did on Monday was make de jure what Washington had made de facto [with Nixon’s pending trip to China].”<sup>76</sup> The *Washington Post* called the attempt to reduce U.N. funding an “odd idea, something in the nature of a wild pitch” and wondered whether the U.S. was “now to go in for tantrum diplomacy.”<sup>77</sup> The *Boston Globe* called the U.N. “a good investment” while the *Los Angeles Times* pointed out that “it was no ragged group of radicals that cast the deciding votes” but “a cross section embracing, in that majority, most of the most responsible nations and most of America’s allies.”<sup>78</sup> “This is the world,” the editorial continued, “Congress cannot escape it by sabotaging the U.N. with a cutoff

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<sup>74</sup> Don Irwin, “Nixon ‘Shocked by Glee’ in U.N. Vote: Hints He Won’t Impede Moves to Cut Funding,” *Los Angeles Times*, 28 October 1971, a1.

<sup>75</sup> The Vice President did caution against withdrawing from the U.N. saying, “it’s good to be in the other guy’s huddle.” “Agnew terms UN a “paper tiger,” *Boston Globe*, 28 October 1971, 40.

<sup>76</sup> “We repeat, don’t blame the UN,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 29 October 1971, 16.

<sup>77</sup> “The U.N. Vote: Taking Reprisals,” *Washington Post*, 29 October 1971, A26.

<sup>78</sup> “The UN: A good investment,” *Boston Globe*, 3 November 1971, 2; “The U.N. Vote on China,” *Los Angeles Times*, 27 October 1971, b6.

of funds.” The *New York Times* and the *Atlanta Journal* both took more moderate positions, acknowledging that the expulsion of Taiwan was an unfortunate outcome but recommending calm. The way in which Peking’s seating was accomplished, claimed the *Times*, “reflected little credit on the U.N. and did deep injustice to a member government in good standing.” Yet, the paper added, “it would be the height of folly for this country to retaliate against the U.N. ... at this juncture.”<sup>79</sup>

Former diplomats and scholars also took up their pens to defend the U.N. from its Congressional opponents. Former Secretary of State Dean Rusk published an op-ed in the *Boston Globe* urging an awareness that “a vigorous and effective U.N. is in the deepest national interest of the United States.” While Rusk claimed he “yielded to no one in sadness and chagrin that the U.N. General Assembly has voted... to expel a loyal U.N. member” he was “deeply disturbed by the many suggestions, especially in Congress, that the U.S. should now sharply curtail its support.”<sup>80</sup> Bush’s predecessor, Charles Yost, voiced similar concerns on October 29<sup>th</sup> in the *Christian Science Monitor*. Yost felt that “while it is natural for the administration and some members of Congress to express disappointment at the outcome of the U.N. vote on China... the reactions are excessive and in some cases disingenuous.” Yost suggested that much of the blame for the outcome should fall on the United States given the crude “pressure” tactics its representatives used in trying to shape the voting. “The overriding fact should be that it is clearly in the national interest to strengthen rather than weaken the U.N.,” he wrote.<sup>81</sup> James C. Thomson Jr., a leading China scholar and former State Department official, condemned the “rightist and xenophobic forces that want no truck with either Communist states or

<sup>79</sup> “China in the United Nations,” *New York Times*, 27 October 1971, 46.

<sup>80</sup> Dean Rusk, “UN’s vital work must continue,” *Boston Globe*, 3 November 1971, 22.

<sup>81</sup> Charles W. Yost, “Sour Grapes or Bitter Tea?” *Christian Science Monitor*, 29 October 1971, 16.

the U.N.” in the *Boston Globe*.<sup>82</sup> In early November a group of 16 scholars from top U.S. institutions, including Harvard, Columbia, the University of Michigan and the Brookings Institution warned against overreacting to the China vote and urged continued American support for the U.N.<sup>83</sup>

The post-war foreign policy consensus would hold in this case, but only temporarily. The opposition to funding cuts was led by Buckley’s New York colleague, Sen. Jacob Javits, who called the reductions a “terrible mistake” and “absolutely the wrong course for our country.”<sup>84</sup> A group of 10 Republican and 22 Democratic Senators, including Hubert Humphrey, Edward Kennedy and George McGovern, sent a letter to Bush proclaiming their support for the United Nations and argued for maintaining current funding.<sup>85</sup> Both Buckley’s first and second effort to reduce voluntary U.N. spending would be voted down in the first week after the China vote.<sup>86</sup> There was widespread interest in reducing the American contribution to the U.N. Even the effort’s opponents conceded that the U.S. was spending too much. When it came time, however, a number of senators who had initially spoken out in favor of cutting U.N. funding, including Mansfield and Scott, voted against Buckley’s measures. Senator John Pastore, a Rhode Island Democrat, granted that the U.N. needed to make do with less money: “every time I go to the washroom at the U.N. and pull the paper towel, one, two, three,” he said, “we’re paying for the third one.” However, he felt the Buckley amendments to the foreign aid

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<sup>82</sup> James C. Thomson Jr. “Why All the Talk of Winners and Losers,” *Boston Globe*, 28 October 1971, 38.

<sup>83</sup> “16 Scholars Warn on U.N.: Caution Against Overreacting,” *Washington Post*, A16.

<sup>84</sup> “Senate Defeats Bid to Defund U.N.,” *Boston Globe*, 29 October 1971, 1.

<sup>85</sup> “32 Senators Declare Faith in UN, Oppose Bid to Cut US Financial Aid,” *Boston Globe*, 26 October 1971, 38.

<sup>86</sup> “Senate Defeats Bid to Defund U.N.,” *Boston Globe*, 29 October 1971, 1.

bill were “wielding the ax at parts of the [U.N.] program with a humanitarian aspect.”<sup>87</sup>

Buckley would, however, manage to push through a non-binding resolution urging President Nixon to reduce the U.S. share of the United Nation’s mandatory dues from 32% to 25% in the next year.<sup>88</sup> There proved to be considerable interest in this, more measured, approach to the U.N. funding issue – such a cut had been recommended by the Lodge Commission – and it had a brighter future than Buckley’s other, more immediate and precipitous, proposals.

#### THE FOREIGN AID BILL AND THE BYRD AMENDMENT

The debate over the Buckley amendments would become somewhat moot, however, when the Senate delivered a shocking vote of its own, rejecting the foreign aid authorization entirely, in a 41-27 decision on October 29th. As seen in the previous chapter, opposition to the foreign aid program had been building, on both the left and right, for several years, but an outright rejection of the authorization bill was largely unexpected. More than simply unexpected, the vote seemed to portend a major shift in the U.S alignment toward the rest of the world. It was the first time a foreign aid authorization had been rejected by either house of Congress in the more than two decades of the program. Nixon slammed the vote as a “highly irresponsible action, which undoes 25 years of constructive bipartisan foreign policy and produces unacceptable risks to the national security of the United States.”<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> John H. Averill, “Senate Rejects First Retaliatory Move to Slash Funds for U.N.,” *Los Angeles Times*, 29 October 1971, a1.

<sup>88</sup> “Senate Favors Cut in Funds for U.S.,” *Times of India*, 30 October 1971, 1.

<sup>89</sup> Felix Belair Jr., “Foreign Aid Bill beaten 41-27 In Surprise Action by Senate,” *New York Times*, 30 October 1971, 1.

The administration was completely surprised by the Senate's move and was left scrambling on how to proceed – the funding was essential to security assistance programs in Cambodia and South Vietnam. Memos reveal them trying to decide whether the administration should adopt “project overkill,” heavily lobbying for an immediate reauthorization of the program, or take a less dramatic approach.<sup>90</sup> According to the administration's internal assessment, liberal opposition to the war in Vietnam was the main driving force behind the rejection of the bill. Secretary of State Rodgers noted this in his report to the President after a hearing with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The committee members made “efforts to focus [the hearing] on Southeast Asia policy” and much of the opposition to the program seemed to be related to the role of security related foreign aid in Nixon's policies in Southeast Asia.<sup>91</sup>

The U.N., however, played no small part in this unprecedented move by the Senate. The China vote, as the *Los Angeles Times* noted, and the “overtones of anti-Americanism that accompanied it” was “the straw that broke the bill's back.” The White House and aid supporters had apparently underestimated the “depth of the Congressional reaction to the proceedings in New York.”<sup>92</sup> A National Security Council document, without making explicit the connection between the administration's U.N. policy and the outcome in Congress did admit that the atmosphere of “threats regarding aid cuts in retaliation for the China vote” had “legitimized cutting aid” in new ways.<sup>93</sup> The *New York*

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<sup>90</sup> Memo, Marshall Wright to Henry Kissinger, “Project Overkill,” Folder 5, Box 323, National Security Council: Subject Files, Nixon Library.

<sup>91</sup> Memo, William P. Rodgers to the President, “Evening Report,” 3 November 1971, Folder 5, Box 323, National Security Council: Subject Files, Nixon Library.

<sup>92</sup> John H. Averill, “Senate Kills Foreign Aid Program; Nixon Assails Vote: Liberal-Conservative Stand Brings 25 Years of Assistance to an End to Foreign Aid,” 30 October 1971, *Los Angeles Times*, 1.

<sup>93</sup> Memo, Col. Richard Kennedy and Robert Hormats to Henry Kissinger, “Foreign Assistance Legislation,” 1 November 1971, Folder 5, Box 323, National Security Council: Subject Files, Nixon Library.

*Times* agreed, suggesting that “the White House may have contributed to the Senate rejection by Presidential statements criticizing... the United Nations on the China issue.”<sup>94</sup>

Despite the importance of opposition to the Vietnam War, the rejection of the foreign aid bill was seen, both domestically and internationally, as being closely related to anger over the treatment of Taiwan. The *Denver Post*, for example, called the vote a display of “shortsighted petulance” saying the “members of the Senate allowed pet peeves and emotional reaction to the U.S. defeat on the China issue to dictate their actions.” The result “did nothing to reassure the American people about the Senate’s ability to deal coolly, calmly and effectively with problems of foreign affairs.”<sup>95</sup> The *Atlanta Constitution* wrote that “the U.N. vote was irresponsible” but “the emotional anti-foreign aid vote in the Senate equally so.”<sup>96</sup> A State Department report on foreign reactions found that the China vote was widely seen “as having contributed significantly to the Senate’s already growing disenchantment with the U.S. aid program.” Those in developing countries in particular “were shocked and incredulous at this sudden development” which was “attributed to U.S. indignation over the voting behavior of certain aid recipient countries in the U.N.” A Nigerian radio broadcast reportedly claimed that the Senate action was the result of the China vote, which had now provided the Congress with the means for “carrying out a long standing threat to cut U.S. contributions to the U.N. budget.” A Tunisian newspaper, showing a limited grasp of American politics, believed foreign aid’s defeat was a result of Nixon’s desire to punish those countries that had voted against the U.S. It complained how “powerful countries exert

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<sup>94</sup> Felix Belair Jr., “Foreign Aid Bill beaten 41-27 In Surprise Action by Senate,” 30 October 1971, 1.

<sup>95</sup> Quoted in “Editorial Comments... On Senate’s Foreign Aid Vote,” *Boston Globe*, 13 November 1971, 8.

<sup>96</sup> Quoted in “Editorial Comments... On Senate’s Foreign Aid Vote,” *Boston Globe*, 13 November 1971, 8.

political pressure on developing countries through their economic aid.”<sup>97</sup> The halls of the U.N. were buzzing with concern. The loss of U.S. voluntary contributions to programs like U.N. Children’s Fund and U.N. Development Program was potentially devastating to those programs. The spokesman for the Development Program said his superiors were “extremely concerned.” An Asian delegate, who preferred to not have his country named, told the *New York Times* that the Senate’s decision was “shocking... it will hurt the U.N. very much and damage the image of the United States around the world.”<sup>98</sup>

Congress was not done shocking the sensibilities of the U.N. majority however, as the U.S.’s relationship with the U.N. swiftly worsened. In early October, prior to the conclusion of the China drama in the Assembly, the Senate had passed a military procurement bill with an amendment introduced by Senator Harry Byrd of Virginia. The “Byrd Amendment,” as it would be called, stripped the President of the authority to enforce a ban on U.S. imports of Rhodesian chrome as part of the U.N.’s sanctions against the outlaw nation. It amended the U.N. Participation Act (the 1945 enabling legislation for U.S. participation in the U.N.) so as to “prevent the imposition thereunder of any prohibition” on imports of strategically valuable metal ores “from any free-world country” as long as said metal was also being imported “from any communist country.”<sup>99</sup> Namely, the President could not ban imports of Rhodesian chrome while still allowing it to be imported from the Soviet Union.

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<sup>97</sup> Department of State Bureau of Intelligence and Research, “World Reaction to the U.S. Senate’s Action on the Foreign Aid Bill,” 8 November 1971, Folder 5, Box 323, National Security Council: Subject Files, Nixon Library.

<sup>98</sup> “Shock Expressed in UN on Defeat of Aid Measure,” *New York Times*, 30 October 1971, 11.

<sup>99</sup> Memo, Henry Kissinger to President Nixon, “Byrd Amendment Threatens U.S. Adherence to U.N. Sanctions on Rhodesia,” Folder 3, Box 743, National Security Council: Country Files – Africa, Nixon Library.

The amendment – which would, in essence, require the United States to violate its U.N. treaty obligations – had managed to sneak its way out of the Senate thanks, in part, to the inattentiveness of Senate liberals. Although initially blocked by the Foreign Relations Committee, the amendment made its way through the Armed Services Committee into the bill that reached the Senate floor. An early attempt to strip the rider from the appropriations bill was defeated when several prominent liberal Senators, in particular William Fulbright, who was at a Fulbright Scholars luncheon, failed to show up.<sup>100</sup> Fulbright returned to the Capitol the following day and led a more determined effort to kill Byrd’s amendment, but it was again defeated, again with prominent U.N. supporters, like Birch Bayh (D- Indiana) and George McGovern (D- South Dakota), not in attendance.<sup>101</sup> Whether or not the Amendment would have survived the Conference Committee before the China vote – the White House thought it would pass – it’s chances for survival had been greatly increased when it was considered by the House in early November. Any call for “supporting the U.N” by defeating the Byrd Amendment had lost a great deal of its appeal. Mario Biaggi, a Democrat from the Bronx, summed up the feeling this way: “the U.N.’s demonstrated lack of interest in fair play by rejecting Nationalist China makes one question whether the United States should continue to jeopardize its national defense interest to support the world body.”<sup>102</sup> The House approved the bill, Byrd rider included, 252 to 101.

In some contrast to earlier conservative arguments for ending sanctions on Rhodesia (discussed in the previous chapter) the defenders of the Byrd Amendment now

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<sup>100</sup> John W. Finney, “A High Price To Pay For Chrome: U.S. and Rhodesia,” *New York Times*, 14 November 1971, E4.

<sup>101</sup> Bruce Oudes, “The U.S. Crack in the Rhodesian Wall,” *Washington Post*, 10 October 1971, C4.

<sup>102</sup> John W. Finney, “A High Price To Pay For Chrome: U.S. and Rhodesia,” *New York Times*, 14 November 1971, E4.



spoke and wrote as much about the U.N.'s failures as they did the supposed virtues of the white supremacist state. The *Chicago Tribune* published an editorial that claimed that the Byrd Amendment, demonstrated that “the United States – or at least the Congress – has decided to act in what it regards as its best interest regardless of what the U.N. may do.”<sup>103</sup> Senator Byrd, responding to an unfriendly article on his measure in the *New York Times*, wrote that *Times* reporters had only managed to get one thing right: “the *Times* is correct in asserting that the Congress of the United States, by recorded votes, has taken actions contrary to the wishes of the United Nations.”<sup>104</sup>

Secretary of State Rodgers was worried about just that and initiated a short lived push to get the administration to speak out against the Byrd Amendment prior to its passing. The Secretary believed American support for the sanctions was essential to the “basic considerations of maintaining our credibility in Africa, observing our international obligations, and upholding the authority of the United Nations.” Furthermore the sanctions were a critical part of British efforts to bring about an acceptable settlement with their breakaway colony. Rodgers felt, that any American move to undermine those sanctions would be poorly received in London.<sup>105</sup> Perhaps reflective of Rodgers’ declining influence in the White House, Nixon issued no public statement on the matter, letting Congress sort it out on its own. Once the House passed the amendment the State Department made another push to prevent the U.S. from fully enacting the Byrd Amendment and violating its commitments under the U.N. charter. The Secretary told the President in a memo that he considered “it to be very important that we implement the

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<sup>103</sup> “Rhodesian Chrome and the U.N.,” *Chicago Tribune*, 20 November 1971, n20.

<sup>104</sup> Harry F. Byrd, “Should U.S. Buy Rhodesian Chrome?” *New York Times*, 26 November 1971, 36.

<sup>105</sup> Memo, William P. Rodgers to President Nixon, “Rhodesian Sanctions: Key Element in the Search for a Solution,” 13 September 1971, Folder 3, Box 743, National Security Council: Country Files – Africa, Nixon Library.

Amendment in a manner which would not place us in violation of our U.N. charter obligations.”<sup>106</sup> The Department proposed several options that might allow the administration to avoid implementation temporarily, with the hope that the British might bring about a settlement in Rhodesia during the following year, removing the need for sanctions. The decision makers in the White House were not any more enamored of the sanctions regime than when they had met to discuss the Rhodesia problem in 1969, however, and thus the Department’s recommendations fell on deaf ears. Kissinger dutifully forwarded them to the President, but indicated that he disagreed and recommended that Nixon “comply with the spirit and sense of the Byrd Amendment.” The President agreed and the rider was implemented as the legislation directed on January 1<sup>st</sup>.<sup>107</sup>

The Byrd Amendment caused considerable outrage in the Third World bloc at the U.N. – especially among the Africans – and quickly vaulted up the list of the G-77’s grievances with the United States. The U.N Decolonization Committee voted, almost immediately after the bill passed the House, to censure the U.S. for non-compliance with the sanctions regime. A Somali Delegate to the Fourth Committee said that the U.S. decision to import chrome would “seriously prejudice the significance of United Nations decisions and would be unpardonable on the part of a permanent member of the Security Council.”<sup>108</sup> The General Assembly took up the matter the following week (on November 16<sup>th</sup>) and passed a resolution that called upon the U.S. to maintain sanctions against

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<sup>106</sup> Memo, William P. Rodgers to President Nixon, “Implementation of the Byrd Amendment: Rhodesian Chromite,” 30 December 1971, Folder 3, Box 743, National Security Council: Country Files – Africa, Nixon Library.

<sup>107</sup> Memo, Henry Kissinger to President Nixon, “Rhodesian Chrome and the Byrd Amendment,” 17 January 1972, Folder 3, Box 743, National Security Council: Country Files – Africa, Nixon Library.

<sup>108</sup> Records of the UN General Assembly, 26<sup>th</sup> Session, Fourth Committee, 1948th Meeting, 186.

Rhodesia, 106 to 2. Ghana warned that if the Byrd Amendment were implemented it would “constitute a serious violation of a number of Security Council resolutions” and would “clearly undermine the basis for state responsibility for mandatory sanctions.” The Tanzanian representative took a harsher line proclaiming that Byrd’s rider “would put the United States in the same category as that of South Africa and Portugal, the category of sanction busters.”<sup>109</sup> Being placed in the same group as those two states was, in the early 1970s U.N., an extremely serious allegation.

Indicative of the support the U.N. still had in America’s liberal establishment, many of the major U.S. papers expressed similar anger over the Byrd Amendment, a feeling which only grew as Congress failed to repeal it the following year. The *New York Times* lamented the “cavalier fashion” with which the House had dealt a “savage blow at the U.N.” that might force the world body onto “the ruinous road traveled by the League of Nations when member states unilaterally breached the sanctions it tried to impose on fascist Italy in 1935.”<sup>110</sup> The *Christian Science Monitor* called the amendment a “blow to the U.N.” that “blotches the American image in the eyes of the black African states and other Third World countries.”<sup>111</sup> The *Washington Post* later described Byrd’s amendment a “gesture of support for Rhodesian white rule” and a move against “human dignity.”<sup>112</sup> In the *Los Angeles Times* a Professor of African Studies from UCLA called the consequences of Congress’s move “grave” and claimed that “with the exception of Vietnam war, the decision to resume chrome purchases from Rhodesia is unsurpassed in

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<sup>109</sup> Records of the UN General Assembly, 26<sup>th</sup> Session, 1984<sup>th</sup> Plenary Meeting, 3.

<sup>110</sup> “U.S. Against the Charter,” *New York Times*, 12 November 1971, 46.

<sup>111</sup> “A Blow to the U.N.,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 17 November 1971, 22.

<sup>112</sup> “Dilemma in Rhodesia,” *Washington Post*, 6 February 1971, B6.

the extent to which... it has provoked the moral anger of other nations.”<sup>113</sup> *Washington Post* columnist William Raspberry wrote that the “unilateral American break from U.N. sanctions,” showed “again that no matter how much the [United States] claims to love democracy and abhor communism or dictatorship, its international dealings are far less likely to hinge on political philosophy than on race.”<sup>114</sup>

There was a clear racial division in the tenor of U.S. reactions to the Amendment. The loudest protests against chrome importation came from the African American community, both in the press and political circles. The *Chicago Daily Defender* told its readers that the U.N. Decolonization Committee was clearly right to censure the U.S. for its action. The nation was “plainly guilty of a serious breach” and that Congress was “trying to show its contempt for the world organization.” The vote demonstrated “this nation’s utter disregard for its moral commitments [and] a callous indifference to the plight of the native black population in Rhodesia.”<sup>115</sup> The *New York Amsterdam News* called the Byrd Amendment another “brazen slap in the face by America’s racist establishment.”<sup>116</sup> In addition to the outcry from the black press, leading African American political figures took strong stands against the Byrd Amendment. Civil Rights leader Roy Wilkins wrote that the Byrd Amendment signified, “the United States Congress [placing] its official approval behind the Rhodesian racial policy.”<sup>117</sup> Congressman Charles Diggs, one of the most prominent African Americans in the House,

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<sup>113</sup> Michael F. Lofchie, “Rhodesia, Chrome and the World’s Anger,” *Los Angeles Times*, 28 November 1971, f1.

<sup>114</sup> William Raspberry, “Race and Foreign Policy,” *Washington Post*, 12 January 1972, A23.

<sup>115</sup> “Crushing Defeat for the U.S.,” *Chicago Daily Defender*, 21 December 1971, 15.

<sup>116</sup> “Another Slap,” *New York Amsterdam News*, 1 January 1972, A4.

<sup>117</sup> Roy Wilkins, “Wilkins Speaks: Congress Approves Apartheid,” *Afro-American*, 4 December 1971, 4.

resigned as a member of the 1971 U.S. Public Delegation to the U.N. believing the U.S. had become an “international law breaker” as a result of the bill.<sup>118</sup>

Liberal and African American opponents of the Byrd Amendment however were swimming against the general tide of U.S. opinion, and White House policy, in calling for a stronger stand against white supremacy and for the United Nations. Although the foreign aid program would be restored in early 1972, it was without much voluntary U.N. funding, which a House panel cut in half in December of 1971.<sup>119</sup> In December the Administration announced that it would seek to reduce the nation’s mandatory U.N. dues assessment from 32 to 25% of the U.N.’s annual budget. The House would take a stronger stand on this reduction in May, unilaterally reducing the U.S. payment to 25%. The measure would have constituted a clear violation of the U.N. charter, which requires Assembly approval of dues changes. This was too much even for Nixon. Secretary Rodgers said that Congress should not add the U.S. “to the list of defaulters” on U.N. payments (which then included France and the Soviet Union).<sup>120</sup> The Senate, in Conference in October, forced a deferral of the cut until December 31<sup>st</sup> of 1973, essentially granting the U.N. two General Assembly sessions to reduce the U.S. assessment without a unilateral American reduction.<sup>121</sup> Yet, the message from the Congress was clear, the United States was going to make a smaller contribution to the United Nations whether the organization liked it or not. Under threat from its primary

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<sup>118</sup> Zamgba J. Browne, “Cong. Diggs quits UN post in protest of US “open alliance with Rhodesia,” *New York Amsterdam News*, 25 December 1971, A2.

<sup>119</sup> It would be restored in the final version of the bill. “House Panel Cuts U.N. Funds in Half: \$2.84 Billion Foreign Aid Money Bill OK’d,” *Los Angeles Times*, 6 December 1971, 2.

<sup>120</sup> Anthony Astrachan, “House Votes 13.2 Million UN Cut,” *The Washington Post*, 19 May 1972, A4.

<sup>121</sup> Spencer Rich, “Homeward Bound Congress Rushes Through Odds and Ends,” *The Washington Post*, 13 October 1972, A5.

source of funding – and thanks to another extensive lobbying campaign by Bush – the U.N. General Assembly would approve the cut to 25% in December of 1972.<sup>122</sup>

#### THE U.N. AND DOUBTS ABOUT AMERICAN GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

In the wake of these controversies, observers wondered whether the U.S. relationship to the United Nations had entered a new, possibly terminal, stage. A *Washington Post* correspondent, reporting on the U.N. Budget Committee vote, speculated that the reduction in America's dues “appeared to eliminate the danger that the United States would turn its back completely on the organization,” something “many delegates feared would be the result if the U.S. lost the vote.”<sup>123</sup> Arthur Goldberg, former Supreme Court Justice and Ambassador to the United Nations, said in a speech that “never since its creation in 1945 has the U.N. been so downgraded as an important component of American foreign policy.” U.S. “relations with the U.N.,” he continued, “are so strained and attenuated as to threaten the very survival of the United Nations.”<sup>124</sup> The *New York Times* reported that “a feeling prevails here [at U.N. headquarters] among international civil servants and representatives of member nations that the United States can no longer be counted on as the cornerstone upon which much of the strength of the United Nations rested.”<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> “US wins fight to slice share of UN budget,” *Boston Globe*, 14 December 1972, 1. Bush was proud of winning approval for the 25% budget share, writing in his final telegram as Ambassador that achieving “difficult victory on 25%” was indicative of how 1972 was a “pretty good year” for the U.S. at the U.N.” Telegram, US Mission USUN NY to State, “The U.S. and the U.N.,” 17 January 1973, Document 3, Vol. E-14, *FRUS* 1969-76.

<sup>123</sup> Anthony Astrachan, “U.N. Unit Approves Cut in U.S. Funding,” *Washington Post*, 2 December 1972, A1.

<sup>124</sup> Quoted in: Robert Aldens, “Many at U.N. Feel U.S. Support is Declining,” *New York Times*, 25 May 1972, 2.

<sup>125</sup> Robert Aldens, “Many at U.N. Feel U.S. Support is Declining,” *New York Times*, 25 May 1972, 2.

Others wondered whether the China vote and its aftermath suggested that the United States was entering a new relationship with, not just the U.N., but the entire world. The *Christian Science Monitor* ran an article in November of 1971 with the provocative headline, “critics see U.S. developing new image – treaty breaker,” and commentary from a Johns Hopkins Law professor about the “absolutely clear” treaty obligations that required the U.S. to maintain sanctions on Rhodesian chrome.<sup>126</sup> In the aftermath of the House vote on U.N. dues, the *New York Times* leveled a similar accusation. Once a champion of international law, “a new phenomenon”, the paper’s editorial board believed, had come to “characterize America’s behavior in the world: disregard for the law.” Thanks to the votes to cut U.N. funding and ignore the Rhodesia sanctions, the “United States, which has frequently taken the lead in challenging treaty violations of other countries is in danger of becoming a lawbreaker itself.”<sup>127</sup> In an editorial entitled “changing alignments,” *The Wall Street Journal*’s editorial board suggested that the China vote might “someday be regarded as the point in history when the postwar era of U.S. dominance as the leading political power came to an end.” The editors believed that this “was probably inevitable and” and counseled calm: the “importance” of the shift, they wrote “should not be overrated... the American public will have to develop the political sophistication and maturity to expect some political setbacks and rebuffs without reading doom into each one.”<sup>128</sup>

Though many of the U.N.’s critics – the editors of the *Chicago Tribune* for example – were only too happy to belittle an organization that they saw as more of a

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<sup>126</sup> Richard L. Strout, “Critics see U.S. developing new image – treaty breaker,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 20 November 1971, 6.

<sup>127</sup> “United States and World Law,” *New York Times*, 9 November 1971, 46.

<sup>128</sup> “Changing Alignments...,” *Wall Street Journal*, 27 October 1971, 22.

farce than anything else, some others were in fact “reading doom” in the U.N.’s rebuffs of the United States.<sup>129</sup> Unlike the *Wall Street Journal*, William F. Buckley and Daniel Patrick Moynihan did not see the U.S.’s declining global political influence as an inevitable result of fluctuations in world power but rather the product of American weakness in the face of the U.N. majority’s attempt to redefine global norms in favor of socialism and “totalitarianism.” Though both figures arrived at their concerns about the U.N. from very different backgrounds, each came somewhat early to what many other perceptive observers of international affairs – including, as we shall see, Henry Kissinger, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Andrew Young and Jeane Kirkpatrick – would notice in the following years: the close relationship between the U.N., the Third World, and shifting international narratives about what constituted the proper direction for global society. Both too, would also do much, in their own ways, to shape subsequent American debates about the United Nations and its new majority.

It was a shorter road to anti-U.N. activism for Bill Buckley. Though rightly acknowledged as a central figure in the growth and success of modern conservatism as a political movement, Buckley inherited much of his political philosophy from his father rather than developing it himself. The Senior William F. Buckley was a vocal “America First” conservative, an opponent of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and U.S. involvement in the Second World War. While Pearl Harbor quieted the family’s opposition to the war somewhat, the younger Buckley remained relatively outspoken in his dislike for F.D.R. and his skepticism about the war, causing him considerable social difficulties at both pro-New Deal, Yale and in the generally pro-war Army. Reflecting the

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<sup>129</sup> How “silly can the U.N. get” asked one *Tribune* editorial: “How Silly Can the U.N. Get?” *Chicago Tribune*, 13 November 1971, 10.



tenor of the times, Buckley's *National Review* usually avoided vehemently anti-U.N. positions during the first decade and a half of its run – it began publishing in 1955 – with Buckley at one point even reading the anti-U.N. John Birch Society out of the “movement” in the magazine's pages.<sup>130</sup>

Buckley, however, was a strong supporter of the Nationalist Chinese, and their expulsion brought the U.N. directly into his crosshairs. His first major salvo was in a speech delivered a mere four days after the vote to the “China Conference” at the Commodore Hotel in New York City. Reprinted in *National Review*, the speech introduced the ideas that would mark his perspective and much conservative thinking on the U.N. in the 1970s. Buckley mocked the “utopian gleam in the eyes of [the U.N.]’s architects” and suggested that it had “been quite a while since first it became apparent that the United Nations had no clothes.” The difficulty was, as he put it, the “nations of the so-called Third World” and the way these numerically dominant states, “move in decisive blocks” according to their own “moral-sociological rubric.” This rubric, he lamented, had proved quite infectious and now dominated the discourse in the Assembly, despite the way it often elided, what Buckley believed were, important truths. The way the Third World's moral code dominated the U.N. resulted in, among other things:

... the American delegate Mr. Francis Plimpton to proclaim loudly a few years ago that colonialism was dead [and] to say so in a chamber in which thirteen nations [of the Communist bloc] metronomically do the bidding of a single state; the alternative being to lie down and receive its tanks and infantry; in a chamber in which the meaning of the word “racism” consolidates as an unfriendly act by any white man against a non-white man; and democracy something the absence of which is deplorable only in Spain, Portugal, Greece, Taiwan and South Vietnam.

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<sup>130</sup> For more on William F. Buckley's background and the early positions of *National Review* see Carl T. Bogus, *Buckley: William F. Buckley Jr. and the Rise of American Conservatism* (New York: 2011).

The danger was that, the U.S., by participating in a process where this code was promulgated, risked granting it prestige and legitimacy. The U.S. was, he continued, “a square country,” and thus it had not “occurred to us since Adams defeated Jefferson in the election of 1796 to do other than accept the verdict of the voting majority.” The Taiwan incident gave grave illustration of the problem:

in virtue of our having participated in the vote we feel particularly uncomfortable because – somehow – we know we will resist its sacramental corollary – discontinuing our relations with Formosa. We acknowledge that the General Assembly had the right to act as it did, but we recognize also that in virtue of our active participation in the procedure... we have become involved in a process that has caused a great injustice...

Thus, Buckley felt that it was time for the United States to refrain from voting in the U.N. General Assembly. Because, he said, “to participate in the vote, given the American ethos, is to psychologically involve ourselves in the outcome of a vote which we cannot – as the only major world power concerned with ethical considerations – agree to do.” The U.S. delegates should continue to participate in debate, plead their country’s case, “threaten” and “conciliate” but never vote. This would then remove any implicit American sanction from the proceedings and make it clear that the U.N. was not “engaged in writing the moral law.”<sup>131</sup>

Buckley’s investigation into the state of the U.N. would continue with a turn as a member of the U.S. public delegation to the U.N. in 1973, which led the following year to a book, *United Nations Journal: A Delegate’s Odyssey*. The volume would amplify Buckley’s criticism of the U.N. and its ability to “write moral law” as well as his critique of the American diplomatic approach to the organization. Written much like the title suggests, as an almost raw transcription of a daily journal from his time as a delegate,

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<sup>131</sup> William F. Buckley Jr., “The End of the United Nations?” *National Review* 23:45,1300-1319.

much of the book is concerned with Buckley's various transgressions of U.N. and U.S. diplomatic custom and practice, both accidental and deliberate. Buckley presents these as being due to his unwillingness – despite encouragement from his superiors at USUN – to follow the U.S. diplomatic practice of playing along with the unwritten rules of the U.N. The rest of the text consisted of a critique of those rules themselves. Buckley inveighed against the U.N.'s double standard in particular. He thought it loathsome that most member states were “effectively protected within the United Nations against criticism” of their human rights records unless they were “South Africa and Portugal... [or] any states which, from time to time, persecute Communist parties or overthrow left minded governments” and how in the U.N. “democracy means rule by one or more black men, but not a majority.”<sup>132</sup> The “aim of the United Nations,” Buckley acidly observed, appeared to be “to make the world safe for revolution and unsafe for counterrevolution.”<sup>133</sup>

Buckley brought these two themes together in an epilogue that challenged what he felt was the conventional, elite American wisdom about the U.N.'s impact on the world. He used as a straw man a note sent to him by Ambassador John Scali (who replaced Bush in 1972 and under whom Buckley had served). The note suggested that Buckley include in his book a discussion of how the U.N.'s “real power lies not within the General Assembly but in the Secretariat and specialized agencies.” It was these bodies, Scali contended, that undertook real action in the world. Buckley disagreed with this, writing that, for all the supposedly empty rhetoric of its resolutions, “the principle action of the United Nations precisely takes place in the General Assembly.” What happened in the

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<sup>132</sup> William F. Buckley Jr., *United Nations Journal: A Delegate's Odyssey* (New York: 1974), 221, 209

<sup>133</sup> Buckley, *United Nations Journal*, 221.

specialized agencies, or in the Security Council, might conceivably have emerged without a U.N., arising from conventional meetings amongst the great powers. The element that made the U.N. “uniquely significant” was the General Assembly, as it was the “only chamber in which the little countries can speak their minds.” That body, he asserted, was “principally about *theater*” and thus involved something “altogether different” than the traditional exercise of power: “the order of moral reality.”

By professing to be an institution dedicated to human rights and then passing resolutions that – as Buckley saw it – only condemned certain types of tyranny while allowing others to go unmentioned, the United Nations was threatening “the survival of truth.” The U.N. had therefore become, Buckley charged, the “most concentrated assault on moral reality in the history of free institutions.” The defense of truth was not simply a moral goal, but a “strategic objective, because” he wrote, “it is with reference to postulates – about metaphysical man – that the United States is organized.” Buckley argued that it was only through the preservation of truth, by making clear distinctions between the realities of life in free societies like the United States and those in dictatorships like the Soviet Union, that freedom could be preserved. By suggesting, through various resolutions, that it was the West that most undermined the well being of mankind, the U.N. threatened to alter the ideological balance of power in the world.<sup>134</sup>

This danger, Buckley felt, should be of concern for all those in the West, liberal or conservative, American or European. He cited as evidence, and as the final pages of his book, a telegram from the “left-liberal” Ambassador to India, Daniel Patrick Moynihan. The former Nixon advisor had also had enough of muted American responses to attacks on the nation’s honor. “Half of [those governments who failed to vote with the U.S. in the

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<sup>134</sup> Buckley, *United Nations Journal*, 255-7.

General Assembly] would collapse without American support or American acquiescence,” Moynihan wrote, and thus if they failed to back the U.S., “something specifically bad should happen to each one of them and when it has happened they should be told that Americans take the honor of their democracy most seriously.”<sup>135</sup>

While Moynihan was, if only temporarily, slightly less of a “left-liberal” than he had once been, Buckley was otherwise correct in describing him as being equally concerned about the United Nations. For all Buckley’s influence on the right, it was Daniel Patrick Moynihan’s ideas about the U.N. that would come to have the bigger impact on American life in the 1970s.

Moynihan was a longtime resident of Arthur Schlesinger’s “vital center,” having worked the Kennedy and Johnson administrations before defecting to join the Nixon White House as an advisor. This switch was more than merely one of convenience. Moynihan felt alienated by the new forces gaining influence on the American left and in the Democratic Party, in particular the “radicals” of the New Left and pro-revolutionary African American groups like the Black Panthers. He believed that these organizations were fronts for a new form of totalitarianism that might eventually shut down the free exchange of ideas in the United States. In the face of this attack on the foundations of liberal society, Moynihan thought that the scions of the American left had all but capitulated or, even worse, converted. In a private journal Moynihan wrote that “the issues of poverty, war, racism were manipulated by [far-left U.S.] intellectuals to establish their new policies... [their] main political values... are anti-democratic.” Rather

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<sup>135</sup> Buckley, *United Nations Journal*, 259-60

than fighting this, those “institutions of society thus being condemned... joined in the clamor... too civilized by half” and “easily frightened” to fight back.<sup>136</sup>

Moynihan would find, in the U.N., a disturbing international parallel to this “erosion of authority” in the United States. Similar to Buckley, Moynihan was introduced to the culture of the early 1970s U.N. through a term on the U.S. Public Delegation – though the *New Yorker*’s interest in international organizations dated back to his Ph.D. dissertation at Tufts on the International Labor Organization. Nixon offered Moynihan the U.N. Ambassadorship in 1971, but he turned it down, preferring to leave his post in the White House for a teaching position at Harvard University.<sup>137</sup> When offered the chance to serve as a public delegate, however, Moynihan accepted as it allowed him the time to continue teaching. The experience proved eye opening and helped launch his second career as a diplomat.

Moynihan earned his first U.N. related headlines in early October with a fiery speech to the Third Committee. His subject was a recent report by the Secretariat on “The World Social Situation,” which purported to review the status of economic and social development throughout the world. Moynihan claimed that the report “read like the work of a harassed undergraduate hoping against reason that his senior thesis, compiled in three horrendous nights of scissors, paste, and black coffee, will be accepted on the grounds that otherwise he will not graduate.” The study, he suggested, appeared to be going out of its way to paint the United States as a uniquely degenerate society. There was, he said, “scarcely a sentence concerning the United States... which a reputable

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<sup>136</sup> Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Journal Entry, 5 October 1973. Folder 5, Box 1:363, Moynihan Papers. There should be little doubt that Moynihan’s view of the liberal elite as having somehow failed to defend democracy and the free exchange of ideas was closely connected to his experiences after the release of his controversial “Report on the Negro Family.”

<sup>137</sup> It subsequently went to George Bush.

social scientist or a responsible government official could approve [of].” Echoing Buckley’s later comments, Moynihan suggested that the report indicated more than mere carelessness, it “misrepresent[ed] our understanding of reality.” The United States, as a society with the free exchange of ideas, had “bookstores... filled with volumes telling how terrible things are.” Much of the rest of the world, he continued, had governments that prevented any such discussion. The inevitable result was that problems in the U.S. were much better documented than those in other societies. Because of this, the report suggested that life in the U.S. was uniquely horrible while better in societies without the same freedoms American’s enjoyed. By publishing such a report the U.N. was “settling into a swamp of untruth and half truth and vagary.” Other societies may organize themselves as they wanted, Moynihan proclaimed, but they must not then misrepresent those places like the United States, that “encourag[e] the clash of opinion.”<sup>138</sup> The speech caused a mini-sensation – in addition to the aforementioned headlines, letters of praise poured into his office from the prominent and the humble. The President and Ambassador Bush both sent Moynihan letters of approval, as did John Kenneth Galbrieth, Irving Kristol, Arthur Schlesinger Jr., Buckley and a number of private citizens.<sup>139</sup> Buckley also wrote approvingly of Moynihan in his syndicated column, as did a number of other writers, with one such column being entered into the Congressional Record by Senator Gordon Allott in November.<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> Daniel Patrick Moynihan, “Statement in Committee III on the 1970 Report on the World Social Situation,” 7 October 1971, Folder 9, Box 1:323, Moynihan Papers.

<sup>139</sup> The letters from Buckley, Bush, Galbrieth, Kristol and the President may be found in Folder 9, that from Schlesinger Jr. in Folder 11, and those from the private citizens in Folder 12, Box 1:323, Moynihan Papers.

<sup>140</sup> Letter, George F. Will to Daniel Patrick Moynihan, 11 November 1971, Folder 9, Box 1:323, Moynihan Papers.

However much Moynihan's time on the public delegation alerted him to the brewing challenge to – as he later put it – the “legitimacy of Western political systems and democratic beliefs” in the United Nations, it was as Ambassador to India that he turned his full attention to the danger of growing anti-American sentiment in the Third World. Asked by Nixon to take up the position during a particularly difficult time in U.S.-Indian relations – following the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971 and the administration's ill-fated “tilt” toward Pakistan – Moynihan traveled in 1973 to an India rife with anti-American sentiment.<sup>141</sup> The relationship between the U.S. and the world's largest democracy was in such disrepair, in fact, that Moynihan generally found himself with little to do; active diplomacy having to wait until time had begun to heal the wounds of the recent war.<sup>142</sup> This relative inactivity, combined with an inability to stay healthy, made the two years in India particularly trying for Moynihan. Given the tenor of much of the writing in his journal from that period, it's reasonable to suppose that the normally cheerful Irish-American suffered a bout of depression during this time.

There was, to be fair, much for the Ambassador to be depressed about, beyond even his own personal situation. His tenure in New Delhi, 1973-1974, marked a trying time for most Americans, as the Watergate scandal tore apart the Nixon Presidency, further undermined American self-confidence, and seemed to threaten the long-term survival of the U.S. political system as a whole. The economic structure of the capitalist West appeared similarly afflicted, with 1973 witnessing the emergence of a prolonged

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<sup>141</sup> For more on the tilt toward Pakistan see Gary Bass, *The Blood Telegram: Nixon, Kissinger and a Forgotten Genocide* (New York: 2013) and Dallek, *Nixon and Kissinger*, 350-2, 621. On U.S unpopularity in India see: Memo, U.S. Information Agency, “Attitudes Among More Educated Urban Indians Toward the U.S. and Selected Countries,” Folder 10: Box 1:361, Moynihan Papers.

<sup>142</sup> Moynihan did, however, negotiate a cancellation of a large portion of India's aid debt to the United States. Lewis M. Simons, “U.S. Ends Part of India Rupee Debt,” *Washington Post*, 14 December 1973, A25.



economic crisis marked by what Americans would call “stagflation” – high inflation counter-intuitively tied to sputtering global economic growth. A malaise seemed to be settling over the democratic-capitalist world long before Jimmy Carter’s infamous 1979 speech was given that title.<sup>143</sup> Things hardly appeared better on the international scene either. As the next chapter will consider in more detail, the rapid growth of Palestinian terrorism, the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, the oil-embargo and growing discord between the United States and its European and Japanese allies were doing little to counter the specter of U.S. decline.

But more than these various geo-political events, from Moynihan’s vantage point in the Third World, the gravest danger to the West was losing an ideological battle. Not the one with communism, as in the traditional Cold War understanding, but with other non-communist and non-democratic forms of socialism. Unable to do much to influence world affairs from the Ambassador’s residence in New Delhi, Moynihan spent much of his time observing Indian politics and – by extension given the prominent role India played in the G-77 – the United Nations. He kept a journal of the observations for the duration of his appointment, likely intending to turn it into a book. The journal is at turns both polished and raw, stuffed with news clippings, letters and diplomatic telegrams and contains the ideas of a man who worried that he might be witnessing a historical transition away from his understanding of freedom. The ideas expressed in this journal would serve as the foundation for his seminal 1975 article, “The United States in

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<sup>143</sup> For more on this see: Charles Maier, “ ‘Malaise:’ The Crisis of Capitalism in the 1970s,” in Ferguson, *Shock of the Global*, 25-48.

Opposition,” a piece which would dramatically shape his subsequent career and American debates about the U.N.<sup>144</sup>

For all the eventual importance of his ideas, Moynihan’s analysis of the Third World was based on a fairly simplistic conflation of Indian political life with that of the rest of the Third World. Moynihan found in India a political culture that he felt was infected with “the British disease... the Labor Party notion that it was only necessary to redistribute existing wealth to satisfy all needs.” Moynihan felt, from meeting a variety of Indian government officials, that the leadership of the new country had absorbed ideas about socialism that had been particularly influential at the London School of Economics in the first half of the twentieth century. This ideology had then come to dominate the Indian political scene.<sup>145</sup> On top of this initial ideological malady Moynihan wrote, the Indians “add the anti-imperialism disease” where “anything Western must be eschewed.”<sup>146</sup> This anti-Westernism was often anti-American. The United States regularly ranked below the Soviet Union in opinion polls in India, something Moynihan attributed in part to the openness of U.S. society. One “could read the English [language] press here and think there was no other country with an internal life save the U.S.”<sup>147</sup> Much like his complaint about the U.N. Social Situation report, Moynihan believed that the lack of freedom of the press in places like the Soviet Union greatly benefited their international image while hurting that of the U.S.

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<sup>144</sup> The journal makes up the bulk of the “India Chronological File” (Boxes 1:360-370) in the Moynihan Papers collection at the Library of Congress.

<sup>145</sup> Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Journal Entry, 6 November 1973, Folder 9, Box 1:363, Moynihan Papers.

<sup>146</sup> Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Journal Entry, 18 November 1973, Folder 10, Box 1:363, Moynihan Papers.

<sup>147</sup> On the polls see: Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Journal Entry, 17 November 1973, Folder 10, Box 1:363, Moynihan Papers.

From these observations Moynihan would form a theory about the “three great political revolutions” of “the modern... era” that would provide the intellectual foundation for his arguments in *Commentary*. These three were the American-French Revolution of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Russian Revolution of 1918 and – his new concept – the “British Revolution” beginning in 1947 with the independence of India. Each of these three introduced a new ideological system that would spread rapidly throughout the world: liberal, communist and Third World socialist. Although he called this last the “British revolution,” it represented, in effect, Moynihan’s interpretation of the significance of decolonization and his analysis of what the Third World stood for in the early 1970s.

Moynihan applied his analysis of the influence of British socialist thought on India to the entire post-colonial world believing that, for all their differences, these states were more or less uniform ideologically. The new nations, he wrote, “naturally varied in terms of size, population” yet “to a quite astonishing degree they were ideologically uniform, having fashioned their policies in terms derived from the general corpus of British socialist opinion as it developed in the period roughly 1890-1950.”<sup>148</sup> While Moynihan acknowledged that many of the new nations had not been governed by the British, he believed the majority of the post-colonial nations bore the indelible mark of their former European rulers. “Viewed from Mars,” he wrote, “London, Paris and The Hague are not widely separated or disparate places... all were democratic with a socialist intelligentsia and often as not a socialist government.” Thus their colonies, Moynihan

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<sup>148</sup> Daniel Patrick Moynihan, “The United States In Opposition,” *Commentary* 59:3 (March 1975), 31-2.

argued, all inherited a socialist view of the world that would shape their patterns of governance after independence.<sup>149</sup>

In Moynihan's eyes, the formation of the G-77 and its effort to use its dominance of the U.N. to advance this socialist worldview was a logical, and largely inevitable, outcome of decolonization. This development could, potentially, have been positive for the United States. Instead, the G-77 had radicalized, with 1971 marking a major turning point. That year, "two large events occurred... China entered the United Nations, an event that Third World representatives saw as a decisive shift of power to their camp" and the same year the Lima Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement "established the nonaligned as an economic bloc intent on producer cartels." The resultant "radicalization in... world social policy," expressed in numerous General Assembly resolutions that drew heavily on dependency theory, threatened to reshape the global economy in pernicious ways.<sup>150</sup> It had become accepted truth in the Global South, Moynihan accurately argued, that the developed world, and the West in particular, was responsible for all the economic woes of the developing world.

Moynihan believed this radicalization in Third World thought was the result of a failure of American diplomacy – and matters would only get worse if the U.S. did not change its approach to the U.N. Instead of recognizing that they were confronting a contrary ideology, Moynihan wrote, U.S. diplomats simply went along with the majority. There were "hundreds" of U.N. documents, reports, and proclamations, he claimed, "suffused with a neo-totalitarian, anti-American bias." Until very recently, the U.S. had not only avoided fighting such documents, it had "actively participated in preparing this

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<sup>149</sup> Moynihan, "In Opposition," 34.

<sup>150</sup> Moynihan, "In Opposition," 36.

sustained assault on American institutions.” U.S. diplomats, out of a misplaced and somewhat condescending sense of charity, had merely thought of such reports, as “Third World document[s]... to be treated with tolerance and understanding.”<sup>151</sup> Opportunities to nudge the Third World in directions that “might have” allowed them to “establish fruitful relations with the West,” had been missed. In the process, as Moynihan wrote in a draft letter to Nixon, the United States “had lost an ideological empire.”<sup>152</sup> Into the U.S.’s previous position as the paragon of global progress had stepped the Soviet Union, whose diplomats, Moynihan believed, were better equipped for ideological manipulation. Under a sustained assault on the legitimacy of its institutions, retreating due to its own domestic and Vietnam related agonies, the United States appeared to be conceding the mantle of global ideological leadership with the result that “as we pull back, democracy recedes with us.”<sup>153</sup>

There was little the U.S. could do in the early 1970s to reverse this process. Moynihan thought the world was “witnessing the emergence of a world order dominated arithmetically by the countries of the Third World,” it was “already too much developed for the United States or any other nation to think of opting out.”<sup>154</sup> “We are a minority,” he wrote in *Commentary*, “we are outvoted,” and it was time for the U.S. to accept that reality and make new policy accordingly.<sup>155</sup> Moynihan did not want to see the U.S. withdraw from the world, however, nor adopt the Buckley strategy of not voting.<sup>156</sup>

Unlike his more conservative friend, Moynihan was deeply invested in the institutions of

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<sup>151</sup> Moynihan, “In Opposition,” 36.

<sup>152</sup> Draft Letter, Daniel Patrick Moynihan to President Nixon, c. 27 November 1973, Folder 1, Box 1:364, Moynihan Papers.

<sup>153</sup> Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Journal Entry, 2 May 1974, Folder 10, Box 1:366, Moynihan Papers.

<sup>154</sup> Moynihan, “In Opposition,” 40.

<sup>155</sup> Moynihan, “In Opposition,” 41.

<sup>156</sup> Moynihan, “In Opposition,” 40.

the liberal world order and wished to see them preserved as much as possible. “I don’t,” he wrote to Nixon, “want us to slink off in a sulk, or storm away in exasperation.”<sup>157</sup> The U.S. needed a new role more befitting its position in the global ideological minority, thus Moynihan proposed that the U.S. go “into opposition” in the United Nations. He wished to see the United States become something akin to a recalcitrant backbencher in Parliament, representing the “party of liberty” as he termed it, against the party of socialism.<sup>158</sup>

This would be done by speaking forcefully and truthfully about three subjects: the contributions of international liberalism, the failures of socialist economies to create greater wealth or more equality, and the global status of human rights and the general welfare. On the first subject, Moynihan believed it was high time for the United States to speak up on behalf of the liberal world order it had tried to establish after 1945. It was being too regularly disparaged without protest, and “even when this radicalism is rejected [it] is rarely from a sense that established processes do better and promise more.”<sup>159</sup> Moynihan saw similarities between Third World radicalism and New Left radicalism in the United States, “American liberalism experienced this deprecation in the 1960s; international liberalism is undergoing it in the 1970’s.” Liberal ideology needed to be more vociferously defended by U.S. diplomats than it had been at home by the U.S.’s intellectual elite. One of the ways of doing so was to point out – what Moynihan believed – was the truth about the global economy. For one thing, global inequality was not bad enough to justify the radical measures the Third World was proposing. Moreover, the

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<sup>157</sup> Draft Letter, Daniel Patrick Moynihan to President Nixon, c. 27 November 1973, Folder 1, Box 1:364, Moynihan Papers.

<sup>158</sup> Moynihan, “In Opposition,” 44.

<sup>159</sup> Moynihan, “In Opposition,” 41.

poverty of the Global South was largely “of their own making and no one else’s, and no claim on anyone else arises as a consequence.”<sup>160</sup>

The final arrow in the liberty party’s quiver would be a frank discussion of the global human rights situation and the relative quality of life in the U.S. compared to the rest of the world. This was a task, he believed that U.S. representatives could take up with “enthusiasm and zeal.” Surely, he argued:

it is not beyond us, when the next Social Report comes along, to ask about conditions and events in many countries of the Third World of which almost everyone knows, but few have thought it politic to speak... It is time, that is, that the American spokesman came to be feared in international forums for the truths he might tell.<sup>161</sup>

Too often American diplomats avoided saying things that might seem impolitic, and thus they appeared to be conceding that the U.S. had a less successful society than its critics.

This had done incalculable damage to the prestige of economic and political liberalism. It would not be difficult for U.S. representatives to challenge their Third World opponents:

Mexico, which has grown increasingly competitive in Third World affairs, which took the lead in the Declaration of the Economic Rights and Duties, preaches international equity. Yet it preaches domestic equity also. It could not without some cost expose itself to a repeated inquiry as to the extent of equity within its own borders. Nor would a good many other Third World countries welcome a sustained comparison between the liberties they provide their own peoples with those which are common and taken for granted in the United States.<sup>162</sup>

Through pointing out these “truths” Moynihan believed the United States might be able, after a sustained period of vocal opposition, to alter the global narrative about what constituted a good society. The U.S. could show the world that “the equality party has

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<sup>160</sup> Moynihan, “In Opposition,” 42.

<sup>161</sup> Moynihan, “In Opposition,” 42-3.

<sup>162</sup> Moynihan, “In Opposition,” 42-3

had its day... the liberty party's time has come once more."<sup>163</sup> To do otherwise was a dangerous folly. For, "to have halted the great totalitarian advance [of the 1930s] only to be undone by the politics of resentment and the economics of envy would be a poor outcome to the promise of a world society."<sup>164</sup>

Buckley and Moynihan appeared for much of the 1970s to be largely in accord in their thinking about the United Nations – both to outsiders and themselves.<sup>165</sup> However, Moynihan's mention of the "promise of a world society" hints at a difference between them that would prove significant during the 1980s when the Reagan administration adopted a Buckley-esque approach to the U.N. (discussed in Chapter Six). Moynihan believed himself to be fighting to preserve the promise of the liberal world order, whereas Buckley and his adherents were more inclined to let the "Wilsonian dream" die. For the latter group, the Third World's dominance of the United Nations made an argument for the unapologetic use of American power rather than, as Moynihan wished, the restoration of liberal principles of global governance. These differences would be revealed fully by another important *Commentary* article – Jeane Kirkpatrick's conservative touchstone "Dictatorships and Double Standards" published in 1979.

Between 1971 and early 1975, however, the similarities were more salient than the differences. Each figure advocated for renewed attention to U.S. diplomatic practice toward the Third World and U.N. – Buckley in his magazine, column and television program and Moynihan through his very influential "In Opposition" article and an eventual turn as U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Each also greatly embellished their status as

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<sup>163</sup> Moynihan, "In Opposition," 44.

<sup>164</sup> Moynihan, "In Opposition," 44.

<sup>165</sup> Each mentions the other favorably in their most important writing on the U.N. see: Buckley, *United Nations Journal*, 257-60; Daniel Patrick Moynihan and Suzanne Weaver, *A Dangerous Place* (Boston: 1975), 6-7, 28-31, 49, 230.



beleaguered whistleblowers; for, as the next chapter explores, by late 1973 they were no longer the only prominent Americans fearing the consequences of the Third World's hostility.

## Chapter 3:

## Breaking the “Unholy Alliance:” The Oil Embargo, the NIEO, and Henry Kissinger’s Battle Against the Third World

*“The North-South confrontation will be the big future problem”<sup>1</sup>  
- Kurt Waldheim on the NIEO, 1974*

*“The developing states may not have the power to hurt us badly now, but... there is a practical necessity to change the direction we are headed.”<sup>2</sup>  
- Henry Kissinger, 1974*

*“The North-South dialogue remains the greatest challenge for all our countries.”<sup>3</sup>  
- Japanese Prime Minister Takeo Miki, at the G-7 Summit, 1976*

As much as he wanted to imagine himself a lone dissenter, Moynihan was not the only member of the U.S. government who had grown concerned about the consequences of America’s unpopularity in the Global South. Events – the 1973 Arab Oil Embargo and the March 1974 U.N. Declaration of a New International Economic Order – had shown Henry Kissinger that more of the “axis of history” passed through southern hemisphere than he had initially thought. Beginning in 1973, after his promotion to Secretary of State, Kissinger would pay increasing attention to the specter of a solidly anti-American Global South and its dominance of the U.N. The Secretary was deeply worried by an “unholy alliance,” as German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt called it, between the non-oil producing states of the Third World and those in OPEC.<sup>4</sup> In the mid 1970s the prospect of the Global South banding together in the name of Third World solidarity to hold the

<sup>1</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, President Nixon, U.N. Secretary General Kurt Waldheim and Ambassador John Scali, 1 June 1974, Box 4, Memorandum of Conversation, Gerald R. Ford Digital Presidential Library  
[http://www.fordlibrarymuseum.gov/library/guides/findingaid/Memoranda\\_of\\_Conversations.asp](http://www.fordlibrarymuseum.gov/library/guides/findingaid/Memoranda_of_Conversations.asp)  
(henceforth, FDL).

<sup>2</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, “U.S. Policy with Regard to the Seventh Special Session of the UNGA,” 17 June 1975, KT01673, *Kissinger Transcripts*, DNSA.

<sup>3</sup> Memcon, President Ford and the Cabinet, “Puerto Rico Economic Summit,” 29 June 1976, *Kissinger Transcripts*, KT01974, DNSA.

<sup>4</sup> Memcon, Rambouillet Economic Summit, 15-17 November 1975, Box 16 Memcons, FDL.

developed world hostage over oil and other commodities seemed all too real. The U.S.'s fading influence in the United Nations and infighting between the U.S. and its industrial allies over how best to respond to this challenge did not breed much confidence.<sup>5</sup> It was not the possibility of the Global South forcing a change in economic relations that bothered Kissinger – their power in this regard remained limited. Rather, he feared that the increasingly dispirited industrial democracies would relent under the pressure of world opinion and the Third World's definition of what constituted global progress.

In response the Secretary of State, increasingly powerful as Watergate eviscerated the rest of the Nixon administration, would formulate policies aimed at restoring faith in the collective future of democratic capitalism. His attempt to do so proceeded along two tracks: one, a quest to rebuild Western solidarity on global economic policy, and the other, an effort to undermine Third World radicalism in the U.N. This chapter explores the events that led to Kissinger's conversion and the first element of his two part approach to addressing the danger posed by a hostile Global South: his policies with the democracies.<sup>6</sup> Through his attempts to restore a common front for the West against Third World radicals, Kissinger, in concert with his European and Japanese counterparts, set in motion the pattern of "Group of Seven" summitry that would, over time, minimize the role of the United Nations in major global economic decisions. G-7 meetings would help ensure elite dominance of the world economy well into the present century. As this chapter will reveal, worries about the Global South's antipathy to not only the U.S., but

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<sup>5</sup> I use the terms "industrial democracies," "developed states" and "the West" interchangeably to refer to the group industrialized, non-communist, democracies of Western Europe, North America and Japan. This group was generally what was meant by the term "North" in the phrase "North-South dialogue." Though the communist states, the Soviet Union in particular, were thoroughly industrialized and relatively parsimonious in their aid to the Third World, they were generally not seen as opposed to the G-77's programs for international economic reform and usually remained safe from the hostility faced by the U.S. and its allies.

<sup>6</sup> The subsequent chapter (four) tells the story of the less successful, second part of his plan.

to liberal capitalism, were central to the American – and broader developed country – interest in these meetings. Ironically, in a way, the very strenuousness of the G-77's attempts to grasp some partial control of the global economy would help ensure a diminished role for the U.N. institutions they controlled.

#### RESPONDING TO THE NEW UN

The China vote had revealed, rather dramatically, how much trouble a hostile, Third World dominated, U.N. could cause the United States. Yet, the Nixon administration was slow to recognize the full danger. The initial response of the White House and State Department, therefore, was mostly tactical. In conversation with Kissinger in February 1973, the President announced that he was never going to visit the Turtle Bay again. “Remember how they treated us,” he asked Kissinger about his last Presidential visit to New York, “I was snubbed both times... not only by the membership of the U.N., but also, let's face it, by the damn Secretariat.” Kissinger agreed, “it's an outrage,” he told the President. Sensing the growing public disgust with the organization, Nixon went on to recommend a “cool detachment” toward the organization. In addition to being personally satisfying it was likely to play well with the American people. “I think,” he said, “the U.N. – I think the American public now is getting really pissed off at it.” Kissinger suggested that the turning point had been the China vote, and “the way [the other U.N. delegates] jumped up and down when Nationalist China was evicted.” Nixon thought so too, “that was horrible... [they are] a bunch of apes.”<sup>7</sup> Nixon's dislike of the U.N. was also apparent when he subsequently met with new U.N. Ambassador, John

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<sup>7</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, President Nixon and the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger), Washington, February 3, 1973, Document 4, Volume E-14, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-76*, <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/nixon-ford>, (Henceforth, *FRUS* 1969-76).

Scali. The President wanted “to stir the [U.N.] pot a little,” he told the former ABC newsman. There had to be an end to double standards, Nixon said, and to the smaller nations always being so “one-sided against the bigger states.” Scali should not be “belligerent, but,” the President suggested, “more indignation,” might be “appropriate.”<sup>8</sup>

Nixon was not the only one looking for a strategy for approaching this new U.N. The China vote had also alerted the State Department to the failure of its U.N. diplomacy. In an assessment of the 27<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly, issued just before Scali took office, Secretary of State Rogers observed that it was “a telling commentary on the state of that body that most of our effort had to be expended on preventing bad situations from getting worse.”<sup>9</sup> The recent session, he alerted all posts, had seen “greater cohesion among the so-called non-aligned countries, notably on issues involving national liberation movements in Africa and other questions of particular interest to LDCs.” There was also a very worrisome increase in the “frequency of complete U.S. isolation in voting” even from the European Community, which had shown discomforting independence on votes concerning the Arab-Israeli conflict.<sup>10</sup>

Throughout 1973, U.S. diplomats would struggle to define strategies for handling their isolation in the General Assembly. Outgoing Ambassador Bush, whether honestly optimistic or simply wishing to bolster his legacy, tried to put a positive spin on events in his valedictory telegram.<sup>11</sup> Bush claimed that the U.S.’s isolation was often more a matter

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<sup>8</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, President Nixon and Ambassador John Scali, 13 February 1973, Box 1, Memcons, FDL.

<sup>9</sup> Telegram, Department of State to All Posts, “Assesment of 27<sup>th</sup> U.N. General Assembly, 5 January 1973, Document 1, Vol. E-14, *FRUS* 1969-76.

<sup>10</sup> Telegram, Department of State to All Posts, “Assessment of 27<sup>th</sup> U.N. General Assembly, 5 January 1973, Document 1, Vol. E-14, *FRUS* 1969-76.

<sup>11</sup> Bush may very well have been optimistic or, at the very least, attempting to prevent the government from writing off the U.N. entirely. The future President did seem to have a real commitment to improving the world body rather than simply giving up on it. A number of his letters in response to missives from

of choice rather than necessity, many delegations routinely agreed with the U.S. on the substance of controversial issues but simply “elected to avoid [an] isolated voting posture.” While bloc voting by the Third World was certainly an issue, there were divisions within these groups that could be exploited if a “timely and determined effort [was] made to show individual members of regional groups that their hard interests [were]... at stake.”<sup>12</sup>

Scali did not necessarily disagree, although he was concerned about what continued U.S. isolation could mean for the country’s relationship with the United Nations. In a May 1973 meeting, the Ambassador warned Kurt Waldheim that though the “USG genuinely seeks to help [the] UN achieve a record that will restore public confidence in [the] organization” this could not happen unless the Secretary General helped make sure that it avoided “actions offensive to us.”<sup>13</sup> The biggest issue, Scali told a French U.N. representative in March, was the General Assembly’s turn away from substantive actions and toward rhetoric and posturing. The French Ambassador agreed, although he counseled patience given that the “UN [was the] only available international forum” for the small nations and a “platform for oratory” was all that many really wanted. If careful, the West could take advantage of the fact that those smaller, Third

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concerned Americans, for example, usually go out of their way to assert the importance of U.S. participation in the U.N. Given his later hope for establishing “new world order” through the U.N. after the Gulf War, it is plausible to assume that Bush did believe in the potential of the United Nations as an institution. See for example: George Bush to Mrs. John T. Ogden, 10 November 1971; George Bush to Mrs. L.A. Deverell, 8 November 1971; George Bush to Mr. Edwin Gale, 27 October 1971; George Bush to Mr. S.A. Jones, 18 October 1971, Folder 4, Box 1, White House Special Office File, Nixon Library.

<sup>12</sup> Telegram, US Mission USUN NY to SecState, “The U.S. and the U.N.,” 17 January 1973, Document 3, Vol. E-14, *FRUS* 1969-76.

<sup>13</sup> Telegram, US Mission USUN NY to SecState, “The U.S. and the U.N.,” 18 May 1973 [Electronic Record], General Records of the Department of State, Record Group 59, National Archives at College Park, College Park, MD [retrieved from Access to Archival Database, [www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov), 16 September 2013] (henceforth, NARA, RG-59, AAD).

World states were, like the U.S., “having their faith in [the] UN shaken by [the] prevalence [of] rhetoric.”<sup>14</sup>

The possibility of the latter being true – or, more generally speaking, that Bush was correct in identifying competing interests within the increasingly solid Third World bloc – defined USUN’s strategy for much of the period leading up to the October War. In response to an extremely harsh Non-Aligned Group statement about a U.S. bombing campaign in Cambodia, Scali urged Washington to remember that, “our experience with such statements is that, with [the] possible exception of initiators, they are not [the product] of consultation between capitals and missions.” Instead representatives from moderate countries tended to be “swept along” in the interest of Third World solidarity despite the fact that many were uncomfortable with the rhetoric of the “more aggressive scene setters.” Scali claimed that if the U.S. government alerted some of these regimes that it took a “dim view” of anti-American statements, they might be able to prompt the moderates to greater assertiveness in Third World councils.

Like Bush, he believed that if Third World leaders, especially those receiving U.S. aid, were alerted that their “interests” were at stake, the U.S. could restore some of its influence in the U.N.<sup>15</sup> Though reasonable, this approach failed to produce results. In response to increasingly aggressive Cuban attempts to have Puerto Rico placed back on the non-self governing territories list, for example, USUN hoped that it might be able to push moderate governments to slow the effort down.<sup>16</sup> The mission expressed optimism

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<sup>14</sup> Telegram, US Mission USUN NY to SecState, “US, France and UN,” 13 March 1973, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

<sup>15</sup> Telegram, US Mission USUN NY to SecState Washington DC, “Statement by Non-Aligned,” 8 August 1973. NARA, RG-59, AAD.

<sup>16</sup> Telegram, SecState Washington DC to US Embassy Panama, 17 March 1973, NARA, RG-59, AAD. Telephone Conversation, Henry Kissinger and Ambassador Scali, 22 August 1973, KA10690, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA.

that the “considerable split between moderate and radical members” of the committee could be exploited to avoid an unacceptable resolution.<sup>17</sup> This effort ultimately failed, the Committee of 24 voted to place Puerto Rico under “continuous review” – essentially declaring it a colony of the U.S. – despite the fact that the Commonwealth had been previously declared self-governing by the General Assembly.<sup>18</sup>

The problem USUN confronted was that many of the resolutions that isolated the United States were prompted by more than simply Third World solidarity and an inadequate fear of the potential consequences. The Bush thesis downplayed the major substantive differences that had emerged between the U.S. and the Third World: on the international economy, on Southern Africa and – most prominently in the spring and summer of 1973 – Israel. The U.N. majority was, if not always deliberately or coherently, advancing a vision of world order dramatically in contrast with America’s. The failure of U.N. efforts to deal with international terrorism is a telling example. Despite the high profile terrorism received after the September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 attacks on the United States, the early to mid-1970s saw such acts with much greater frequency (hijacking of airlines, for example, occurred with such regularity as to be almost commonplace). In response to the infamous 1972 attack on the Israeli Olympic team in Munich, Kurt Waldheim used his authority as Secretary General to have terrorism placed on the General Assembly’s agenda for the 27<sup>th</sup> session. Many in the West, President Nixon included, believed that this was an area where the U.N. could, and should, serve a valuable purpose by passing conventions condemning acts of violence against civilians. No such conventions would be forthcoming from the new Ad Hoc Committee on Terrorism, however, not in the 1972

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<sup>17</sup> Telegram, SecState Washington DC to US Embassy Kabul *et. al.*, “Puerto Rico,” 29 August 1973, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

<sup>18</sup> Kathleen Teltsch, “UN Unit to Study Puerto Rico Issue,” *New York Times*, 31 August 1973: 14.



Assembly, or in subsequent years. The problem, as the historian Paul Chamberlin describes it, was that Washington's "growing isolation from mainstream sentiment on the issues of national liberation and decolonization... would render ineffective multilateral efforts to deal with the substantive issue of international terrorism."<sup>19</sup>

Where the U.S. government might see a terrorist – as in the case of PLO leader Yasser Arafat – much of the rest of the world saw a figure fighting for national liberation. These "political differences... e.g. Arab opposition over [the] Palestine question and African preoccupation with [the] legitimacy of national liberation movements," as Secretary of State Rogers described them, would prevent Assembly action.<sup>20</sup> Instead the terrorism committee established various subcommittees to investigate the "causes" of international terrorism, each almost invariably meant as means to blame Israel, imperialism and global poverty for the problem. Even an effort in November of 1973 to establish a convention for the protection of diplomats against terrorism, though eventually successful, nearly foundered on the rocks of the terrorism/freedom fighter question.<sup>21</sup> The U.S. was often at odds with the U.N. majority over whether to define an act of political violence as terrorism or, often more importantly, to decide what constituted an appropriate response.

These basic disputes about what should be deemed acceptable to the international community, and what should not, made life hard for the U.S. delegation. In 1973, for example, USUN's efforts to find common ground with moderate Third World member

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<sup>19</sup>Chamberlin, *The Global Offensive*, 167.

<sup>20</sup> Telegram, Dept of State to All Posts, "Key Issues at 29<sup>th</sup> United Nations General Assembly," 16 August 1973, Document 8, Volume E-14, *FRUS* 1969-76.

<sup>21</sup> Telegram, USUN NY to SecState Washington DC, "USUN Daily Classified Summary No. 201," 14 November 1973, NARA, RG-59, AAD. Telegram, USUN NY to SecState Washington DC, "UNGA Legal Committee, Protection of Diplomats, Liberation Movements Exceptions," 14 November 1973, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

states were regularly compromised by high profile, and internationally unpopular, Israeli reprisals against various elements of the Palestinian Liberation Organization. In April, in what is generally considered a response for the Munich attack, Israel launched a brazen raid into Lebanon to assassinate three PLO leaders. While successful, the raid killed a number of Lebanese civilians, embarrassed the Lebanese government and sparked outrage throughout the world. The U.S. immediately found itself isolated in negotiations over a Security Council resolution condemning the strike, an action which many in the Arab world believed the United States had helped carry out.<sup>22</sup> Scali, by threatening a veto, was finally able to force a resolution on which the United States could comfortably abstain, but this did little to help the perception that the U.S. was working with the Israelis in their violations of Lebanon's sovereignty and in defiance of the international community.<sup>23</sup>

The main disagreement concerned the language of the draft, whether it established equivalency between PLO terrorism and Israeli reprisals or condemned the latter more forcefully. The U.S. believed that Israeli actions, however problematic, had to be considered in context with Palestinian behavior – any resolution on the incident had to be “balanced.” Much of the rest of the U.N. membership disagreed, either refusing to condemn the PLO on national liberation grounds or failing to see the Israeli response as

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<sup>22</sup> Telegram, SecState to Embassy Kathmandu, “Special Summary No.4,” 18 April 1973, NARA, RG-59, AAD. Telegram, US Embassy Belgrade to SecState, “Media Reaction Report: US and Israeli Commando Raid” 17 April 1973, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

<sup>23</sup> Telegram, SecState to US Embassy Nairobi *et. al.*, “USUN Classified Summary No. 78,” 23 April 1973, NARA, RG-59, AAD. Telecon, Kissinger and Scali, 19 April 1973, KA09965, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA. Telecon, Kissinger and President Nixon, 21 April 1973, KA09978, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA.

proportionate.<sup>24</sup> Even when the U.S. felt compelled to vote with the majority, as it did on an August 15<sup>th</sup> resolution condemning Israel for forcing down and searching an Iraqi airliner in Lebanese airspace, there remained major philosophical disagreements. Scali warned Kissinger that the “Arabs with a big help from the Russians” were attempting to “make a big issue out of ‘state’ terrorism,” in the hope of establishing a principle that reprisals by an established government were worse than acts by stateless groups.

Kissinger declared this unacceptable and told Scali to make it clear that it “can’t be maintained indefinitely that when terrorist groups act no government is responsible [but] when a government retaliates all hell breaks loose.” The Ambassador agreed, “we can’t allow people to shoot up an Athens air terminal [a reference to an August 5<sup>th</sup> Palestinian terror attack] and the rest and expect the Israelis to sit there forever.”<sup>25</sup>

However logical this argument may have appeared to Scali and Kissinger, most other U.N. delegations would have disagreed. Indeed, when it came to the Arab-Israeli dispute, it was not simply the Global South that was arrayed against the U.S. and Israel, but quite often the Western European states as well. In the case of the resolution condemning Israel’s raid on Lebanon, for example, the Europeans were actually the principle antagonists, drafting a resolution that Kissinger characterized to the President as “totally unacceptable” and USUN believed “ignored” clearly stated U.S. views on the subject.<sup>26</sup> The Western Europeans, by and large, did not think Israel worth Third World opprobrium, regardless of how angry it made the Americans.

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<sup>24</sup> Telegram, US Mission USUN to SecState, “USUN 1385,” 17 April 1973, NARA, RG-59, AAD. Telecon, Kissinger and Scali, 19 April 1973, KA09965, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA. See also Chamberlin’s excellent discussion in *The Global Offensive*, 142-217.

<sup>25</sup> Telecon, Kissinger and Ambassador Scali, 14 August 1973, KA10620, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA.

<sup>26</sup> Telecon, Kissinger and President Nixon, 21 April 1973, KA09978, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA. Telegram, US Mission USUN to SecState, “USUN 1385,” 17 April 1973, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

By the fall, therefore, it was clear that United States had a significant U.N. problem. A seemingly unified Third World majority was advancing a worldview that diverged significantly with its own. Many of America's allies, meanwhile, appeared to fear G-77 disapproval more than that of the United States. In a telegram to the State Department, W. Tapley Bennet – writing for USUN – urged the department to explore new policy options. Anti-Americanism was increasingly becoming the organizing principle of the U.N., he warned. “Many non-aligneds [sic] have shown little or no real interest in merits of issues,” Bennet wrote, including “states which are close to the U.S. bilaterally.” The latter seemed to have no problem accepting “substantial amounts of US aid” while taking anti-U.S. positions whenever “such hostility is prescribed by [the] more militant of [the] non-aligned.” The telegram all but begged the State Department to begin a policy review exploring how to better link bilateral and multilateral relationships. Stronger steps had to be taken, Bennet urged, to make clear that the U.S. could not accept the “argument that [a] country which agrees with our position is unable to vote with us because of [the] psychology of [the] mob.”<sup>27</sup> The Department was not entirely unsympathetic. By the time Bennett wrote his telegram, November of 1973, the events that would finally bring sustained high-level attention to the U.N. were well underway.

#### THE OCTOBER WAR, THE NIEO, AND KISSINGER'S CONVERSION

October 1973 was a month of unpleasant and highly significant surprises for U.S. policy makers. The first was the wholly unexpected Egyptian-Syrian assault on Israel, the second, the just as surprising initial success of Arab arms, and the third, the subsequent oil embargo against the United States. The first two would combine to fundamentally

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<sup>27</sup> Telegram, US Mission USUN NY to SecState Washington DC, “Non-Aligned Attitude on US Positions,” 19 November 1973, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

alter the political dynamics in the Middle East, thanks in part to the machinations of Henry Kissinger. Replacing the powerless Rodgers in September, Kissinger came to dominate the foreign policy of the administration as an increasingly distraught Nixon withdrew under the pressure of Watergate. The war offers some of the most startling example of this transition of power, including the now somewhat infamous incident where Kissinger was forced to turn away a call for the President from the British Prime Minister because Nixon was too “loaded” to take it.<sup>28</sup>

The conflict offered Kissinger a chance to accelerate his longstanding program to diminish the influence of the Soviet Union in the Middle East and make the United States the indispensable outside element in the Arab-Israeli peace process.<sup>29</sup> While he would find a good measure of success in the months following the war, particularly with Egypt, the conflict itself had a number of touch and go moments where that approach seemed in jeopardy. While some level of Arab military success was acceptable – and to some degree, even desirable, in that it would reinforce Israeli’s dependence on the United States – Kissingerian *realpolitik* could not risk a major Egyptian-Syrian victory.<sup>30</sup> Thus when Israeli military losses threatened to allow for more significant Arab gains, or at the

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<sup>28</sup> If there is any area that seems to confirm the arguments of those, like Robert Dallek, who want to place Nixon’s final months in office under the auspices of a “Nixon-Kissinger” administration, it is the policymaking during and after the 1973 war, see Robert Dallek, *Nixon and Kissinger: Partners in Power* (New York: 2007) 521-22. For the “loaded” incident see, Telecon, Kissinger and Brent Scowcroft, 11 October 1973, KA11169, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA. For another example of Nixon’s limited influence see a conversation between Kissinger and White House Chief of Staff Al Haig on how Kissinger hadn’t yet talked to the President about the Soviet threat of unilateral intervention in the Mideast because Nixon would just start “charging around.” Telecon, Kissinger and Alexander Haig, 24 October 1973, KA11169, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, KA11169, DNSA.

<sup>29</sup> Kissinger outlined this policy to the Cabinet in a meeting the following March, Memcon, President Nixon, Kissinger and Members of the Cabinet, 8 March 1974, Box 3, Memcons, FDL. For further discussion of Kissinger’s approach to the Middle East and the October War see, Jussi Hahnhamaki, *The Flawed Architect: Henry Kissinger and American Foreign Policy* (New York: 2004), 302-331. And Kissinger’s own recollections, *Years of Upheaval* (Boston: 1982), 450-615.

<sup>30</sup> This was because such a victory could threaten Israeli security and/or suggested that Soviet support could deliver for its clients in the region.

very least a protracted stalemate, the administration authorized a massive, overt U.S. military airlift of supplies to Israel.<sup>31</sup> This would prove a fateful decision. In response to the airlift, and the direct and undeniable evidence it offered of U.S. support for Israel, the Arab states organized a complete boycott of oil deliveries to the United States; first from Libya on the 19<sup>th</sup> and then from the remaining Arab oil producers on the 20<sup>th</sup>.

Although the Arabs had tried a similar gambit during the 1967 war, the embargo and its success took official Washington by surprise. On October 17<sup>th</sup>, with the airlift well underway, Kissinger had still felt confident enough to flippantly remark to the President, after a meeting with Arab foreign ministers, that “this has been the best run crisis since you’ve been in the White House... we have launched a massive airlift ... and you stand here getting Arab compliments in the Rose Garden.”<sup>32</sup> It wasn’t that the government had not considered the possibility of oil restrictions, studies were indeed conducted, but the conclusion had been that the Arab states lacked the political cohesion to do so in any significant way.<sup>33</sup> The 1973 embargo and related production cutbacks rapidly disabused the entire developed world of this notion, fundamentally transforming the oil market and in some respects the entire global economy. As Kissinger himself would later describe it, the oil crisis “sharply accelerated the tilt in the balance between supply and demand and demonstrated the extraordinary leverage of the producing countries.”<sup>34</sup> In the process it “altered irrevocable the world as it had grown up in the postwar period” sounding the death knell of a global “economy that treated cheap oil as natural and excess production

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<sup>31</sup> Hahnhamaki, *Flawed Architect*, 307-8. Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 450-538.

<sup>32</sup> Memcon, President Nixon, Henry Kissinger *et. al.*, 17 October 1973, Box 2, Memcons, FDL.

<sup>33</sup> Kissinger would describe the results of these studies during a later 1974 conversation about the possibility of other commodity cartels. Memo, Proceedings of the Secretary’s Staff Meeting, 23 January 1974, KT01008, *Kissinger Transcripts*, DNSA. He also discusses it in *Years of Upheaval*, 854-866.

<sup>34</sup> Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, 874.

capacity as the main economic problem.”<sup>35</sup> The Secretary of State was much less prosaic about it at the time, his comments often bordering on rage at what he felt was insolent behavior by inferior Arab nations. In a November meeting with Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger, Kissinger complained that “it is ridiculous that the civilized world is held up by 8 million savages.”<sup>36</sup> In another meeting that day, the Secretary, obviously chafing under the limits of American power, wondered rhetorically, “can’t we overthrow one of the sheiks just to show we can do it?”<sup>37</sup>

It was not that the U.S. couldn’t have done so, or did not have other means to influence events in the Middle East. Rather the problem was that the superpower’s reputation had become so toxic throughout the region, and the broader Global South, that in matters as public as a U.S. resupply of Israel during a war with Arab states, Third World moderates were all but forced to act more anti-American than they were. As Moynihan had discovered in India, and Bush, Scali and their associates had found at the United Nations, anti-American sentiment was becoming a powerful political tool for those opposed to U.S. interests. In this case, friendly regimes, like that in Saudi Arabia, were required by the political environment to play the enemy of the superpower. “[King Faisal’s] problem is he is a friend of the United States,” Kissinger said of the Saudi ruler, “but he is pressured by radicals... so he is leapfrogging [them] so he isn’t embarrassed by his U.S. relationship.”<sup>38</sup> Where previously this anti-American wave had been an annoyance, or at worst a handicap on U.S. diplomacy in international forums for which

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<sup>35</sup> Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, 854-5.

<sup>36</sup> Memcon, Kissinger, Schlesinger, Moorer, Rush, 29 November 1973, Box 2, Memcons, FDL.

<sup>37</sup> Memcon, Kissinger, Schlesinger, Colby, Moorer, 29 November 1973, Box 2, Memcons, FDL.

<sup>38</sup> Memcon, Kissinger, Schlesinger, Moorer, Rush, 29 November 1973, Box 2, Memcons, FDL. Also makes similar comments to Schlesinger in a meeting later in December. Memcon, Kissinger and Schlesinger, 26 December 1973, Box 3, Memcons, FDL.

the Nixon administration had little regard, after the oil shock, the situation appeared more sinister. It was not simply that oil supplies had emerged as a weapon with a real ability to harm developed world interests, but the pattern that OPEC's ability to control prices for a critical commodity might set for the entire global economy.

Though the OPEC driven transformation in oil prices would prove considerably more harmful to the rest of the non-oil producing South than to the developed world, the Global South did not turn on their oil bearing brethren. The global recession that followed the 1973 oil shock only increased the strenuousness with which the G-77 demanded reform of the global economic system. A Ford administration memo would later sum up the problem: "following the success of OPEC in utilizing oil as an economic and political weapon to promote their foreign policy interests the developing nations... initiated efforts to employ the United Nations General Assembly and its subsidiary bodies ... to achieve their economic objectives."<sup>39</sup> These objectives – "to press for redistribution of economic wealth and to seek special trade benefits and increased financial flows" – were now backed by the implicit threat of commodity producers banding together in the same fashion as OPEC. Kissinger recognized this potential almost immediately. In January of 1974, he called for a study of dangers of hostile, non-oil, commodity cartels. This was over the objections of his staff, which did not see cartelization as a likely outcome of the crisis. "Up until a year ago" the Secretary reminded them, "I was told

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<sup>39</sup> Memo, "Briefing Material for June Economic Summit: Relations Between Developed and Developing Countries," Folder "EPB Memoranda, 7 June 1973," Box 33, L. William Seidman Papers, Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library (henceforth Ford Library).



exactly the same thing by every study group I had at the White House on the oil problem.”<sup>40</sup>

The full ideological scope of the challenge was revealed a few months later. The venue was the U.N. General Assembly’s Sixth Special Session, convened in April in order to consider the question of “Raw Materials and Development.” The special session had been requested in January by Algeria in the hope of maintaining their leadership role in the G-77 and providing cover for OPEC’s price increases (despite the damage they were doing to the economies of the non-oil producing regions of the Global South).<sup>41</sup> The State Department, with Kissinger’s approval, had adopted the typical “damage limitation” approach the U.S. took to difficult U.N. debates. When asked if the U.S. might try a more active approach and float a resolution of its own, Bill Buffum, Assistant Secretary of State for International Organizations, put it simply: “we did not find support for the resolution we want.”<sup>42</sup>

Initial American strategy for the meeting was therefore built around attempting to steer it clear of any specific programs or initiatives in favor of a “generalized deceleration, stripped of its extreme or partisan aspects” which the U.S. could then support.<sup>43</sup> There was some early reason for optimism as the Algerian initiative had apparently caught a number of Third World delegations off guard, leaving them skeptical of the session’s potential. A Nigerian Representative, for example, told Scali that while

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<sup>40</sup> Memo, Proceedings of the Secretary’s Staff Meeting, 23 January 1974, *Kissinger Transcripts*, KT01008, DNSA.

<sup>41</sup> Airgram, Dept. of State to All Posts, “The Sixth Special Session of the General Assembly,” 5 June 1974, Document 16, Volume E-14, *FRUS* 1969-76.

<sup>42</sup> Memo, Proceedings of the Secretary’s Staff Meeting, 18 March 1974, *Kissinger Transcripts*, KT01069, DNSA.

<sup>43</sup> Telegram, SecState to US Mission USUN NY, “USG Strategy at Sixth Special Session,” 14 April 1974, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

his delegation intended to fully participate, Nigeria had a “guarded attitude” and felt “roped into” attending by the Algerians.

Once again, American hopes of breaking up the G-77 proved unfounded. USUN quickly found that the “Algerians, Iraqis, Yugoslavs and [other G-77] radicals” were working assiduously to “nudge [the] session in [the] direction of confrontation” by constantly challenging the motives of the developed states.<sup>44</sup> According to the Guyanese Foreign Minister, a crisis atmosphere prevailed in the backrooms and corridors of the conference. Moderate delegations, like his own, recognized the “grave risk of confrontation” with the U.S. and tried to steer the G-77 in a less adversarial direction but had “become brittle under [the] intense pressure” of the radicals.<sup>45</sup> In the face of this unified Third World bloc, developed country efforts to offer alternative proposals or drafts were blunted by what the U.S. delegation called the G-77’s “steamroller” tactics. Instead of having an open debate, or even hearing proposals from those in the Global North, the G-77 voted on its own proposals in private conference meetings and then quickly forced a majority vote in the general session.<sup>46</sup> Thus there were hardly any serious negotiations over disagreements, or indeed even time enough to read all the various resolutions and amendments – a collection which U.S. representatives, in obvious frustration, christened a “voluminous irrational compendium.”<sup>47</sup> In this extremely challenging environment, European, Canadian and Japanese opposition to radical

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<sup>44</sup> Telegram, US Mission USUN NY to SecState, “6<sup>th</sup> GA Special Session-Atmospherics,” 20 April 1974, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

<sup>45</sup> Telegram, Embassy Georgetown to SecState, “UNGA 6<sup>th</sup> Special Session – Steamroller Tactics,” 30 May 1974, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

<sup>46</sup> Airgram, Dept. of State to All Posts, “The Sixth Special Session of the General Assembly,” 5 June 1974, Document 16, Volume E-14, *FRUS* 1969-76.

<sup>47</sup> Telegram, US Mission USUN NY to Sec State, “GA 6<sup>th</sup> Special Session,” 25 April 1974, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

proposals collapsed, leaving the U.S. “essentially isolated, even from its closet friends.”<sup>48</sup> The U.S., the delegation complained, was alone “in [the] forefront of resistance to unacceptable language in proposals being put forward from every side.”<sup>49</sup> Once the other industrial states had conceded, the United States found itself almost entirely isolated, the rhetorical “whipping boy,” as the Foreign Minister of the Ivory Coast put it, for the Third World.<sup>50</sup>

“Unacceptable language” defined the session’s final documents, the “Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order” and the “Program of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order.” The Declaration, or NIEO, was the culmination of decades of Third World anger over inequalities in the international economy. Its assessment drew heavily from the more radical renderings of Prebisch and Baran’s dependency theory. While, as discussed in Chapter 1, this critique had been implicit in much of the Third World’s consideration of the global economy in international forums since at least 1964, the NIEO took the leap from implicit to explicit – rejecting the rosy visions of modernization and development that underlay the promises of the liberal world order and putting the U.N. General Assembly on record as an opponent of global capitalism.

Though this statement of principles was, from the American perspective, bad enough, the problems with the “Program of Action” were, as the State Department noted

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<sup>48</sup> Telegram, US Mission USUN NY to SecState, “Special Session UNGA,” 29 April 1974, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

<sup>49</sup> Telegram, US Mission USUN NY to SecState, “Special Session UNGA,” 29 April 1974, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

<sup>50</sup> Telegram, Embassy Abidjan to SecState, “Meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs to Review 6<sup>th</sup> Special Session,” 26 June 1974, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

in a telegram, “even greater than that with the Declaration.”<sup>51</sup> The Program called for, among other things, the organization of more commodity cartels, the creation of commodity agreements in order to ensure “just” pricing, linking commodity values to the costs of manufactured goods, nationalization of natural resources under foreign control without reference to compensation, and the reduction of tariff boundaries in the developed countries to allow easier access for Third World manufactures.<sup>52</sup> In the process the Program would have placed more and more control of the global economy in the hands of the majority vote General Assembly, something which the U.S. saw as a rebuke of Western dominated institutions like the World Bank and IMF.<sup>53</sup> It was, ultimately, a staggering proposal, which, if adopted, would have truly transformed the international economic system. As the CIA put it in a later report, such proposals were advanced in:

... an international environment in which there are few shared ideals, common perceptions of danger, or accepted rules of the game. Each group struggles to insure that anticipated new rules will be drawn up to favor its interests. The result is confusion, and confusion encourages those striving to alter the status quo.<sup>54</sup>

The NIEO represented the G-77’s attempt to establish international norms that fit with its members’ own vision of international justice. The two resolutions – in combination with U.S. isolation at the session in which they were adopted – represented as direct a rebuke of American global leadership as any since the Second World War.

Arrayed against this aggressive and seemingly united Global South was a completely divided developed world. Although the U.S.’ relationship with its European

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<sup>51</sup> Airgram, Dept. of State to All Posts, “The Sixth Special Session of the General Assembly,” 5 June 1974, Document 16, Volume E-14, *FRUS* 1969-76.

<sup>52</sup> United Nations General Assembly, “Resolutions Adopted by the General Assembly During its 6<sup>th</sup> Special Session, 9 April – 2 May 1974,” [www.un.org](http://www.un.org)

<sup>53</sup> Airgram, Dept. of State to All Posts, “The Sixth Special Session of the General Assembly,” 5 June 1974, Document 16, Volume E-14, *FRUS* 1969-76.

<sup>54</sup> Memo, Central Intelligence Agency, “The United Nations, Problems Continue, Potential Erodes,” 11 February 1975, Document 20, Volume E-14, *FRUS* 1969-76.

and Japanese allies had already been under strain, the war in the Middle East gave rise to a period of inter-allied discord not seen since the Suez Crisis in 1956.<sup>55</sup> The Western European countries publically distanced themselves from the United States during the conflict. Britain, France, West Germany – every Western European state save international pariah Portugal (under constant criticism for its vicious colonial policies in Africa) – refused both landing and over-flight rights for U.S. forces participating in the resupply of Israel.<sup>56</sup>

American policy makers were furious, Kissinger especially. “We need to reconsider our European policy,” the Secretary snarled on October 24<sup>th</sup>, “the Europeans have been shits.” William Colby, the Director of the CIA, agreed, arguing that the Europeans were no longer reliable allies, they “are the first clients for oil – they are supplicants [to the Arabs].” Secretary of Defense Schlesinger felt similarly, “I agree we must think about all our European relations... the Germans have been pitiful – they say us moving our tanks [to Israel from bases in Germany] will upset the Arabs.”<sup>57</sup> Kissinger would go even further a month later, telling Schlesinger that, in the Middle East, “we must treat the Europeans as adversaries.”<sup>58</sup> This was no private dispute either, it was very public and even led to speculation that the U.S. might withdraw some of its forces from Europe.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> For more on U.S.- Western European tensions see: Matthias Schulz and Thomas Schwartz eds., *The Strained Alliance: U.S.- European Relations from Nixon To Carter* (New York: 2010). And: Hahnhamaki, *The Flawed Architect*, 275-77.

<sup>56</sup> Dan Morgan, “Western Europe Keeping Out of Mideast Crisis Moves,” *Washington Post*, 26 October 1973, A9.

<sup>57</sup> Memcon, Kissinger, Schlesinger, Colby, Moorer, 24 October 1973, Box 2, Memcons, FDL.

<sup>58</sup> Memcon, Kissinger and Schlesinger, 23 November 1973, Box 2, Memcons, FDL.

<sup>59</sup> Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, “Mr. Nixon’s Challenge to Europe,” *The Washington Post*, 23 March 1974, A19. Michael Gertler, “Alliance Rift Unprecedented: U.S. Scores Posture of NATO Allies,” *The Washington Post*, 27 October 1973, A1.

Even after the war ended, the situation did not improve. Although Arab production cutbacks affected all oil consuming nations alike, rich and poor, European and American, the embargo – targeting only the United States, Portugal, the Netherlands, South Africa and Rhodesia – served to further illustrate U.S. isolation from the bulk of the international community. The situation left the Western Europeans in an unenviable position as well, stuck between the risk of further alienating their superpower ally or doing the same to their Arab oil suppliers. There was significant disagreement between the U.S. and Europe over how to handle OPEC. Some European leaders – French Foreign Minister Michel Jobert in particular – wanted to use the crisis to further stake out an independent foreign policy for Europe. Jobert and his allies wished to have a separate, private meeting between the nine nations of the European Community and the Arab oil producers, in the hope of establishing agreements on oil prices in return for development assistance.<sup>60</sup>

Henry Kissinger thought such a meeting would be a disaster, and told his staff at one point that “the idea of a foreign ministers meeting between all the Arab states and all the European states can only fill one with horror.”<sup>61</sup> The Secretary of State instead wanted a meeting of the developed countries first before any larger meeting with OPEC or the G-77. His fear was that without a common developed country position, the producers would be able to split the consumers and play them against each other. As he told British Foreign Minister, Sir Alec Douglas-Home, we “need... to be establishing some kind of machinery which will enable us to prepare common positions... why should

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<sup>60</sup> Memcon, Sir Alec Douglas Home, Henry Kissinger, *et. al.*, “Energy Conference,” 10 February 1974, KT01026, *Kissinger Transcripts*, DNSA. Ronald Koven, “Washington Energy Meeting Becomes Michel Jobert’s Show,” *The Washington Post*, 13 February 1974, A1.

<sup>61</sup> Memo, Proceedings of the Secretary’s Staff Meeting With All Assistant Secretaries,” 6 March 1974, KT01054, *Kissinger Transcripts*, DNSA.

[the oil producers] be able to order around eight hundred million consumers?”<sup>62</sup>

Kissinger was also concerned that, given what had been happening at the U.N., any such meeting would be dominated by the Third World radicals. Without American support, Europe’s greater dependency on Middle Eastern oil would mean that any solo meeting between the E.C. and the Arab states would have a “tendency to emphasize the radical elements, because the Europeans [would] be too afraid to tackle” them.<sup>63</sup>

The U.S. at first seemed to be getting its wish, bringing the EC-9, Canada, and Japan together for a meeting to develop a common approach to the oil situation. The grandly named “Washington Energy Conference” was a modest success for its host government, with 12 of the 13 nations agreeing on a number of measures, including jointly working to reduce energy consumption and establishing a mechanism to allow for follow-on meetings to coordinate energy policies amongst the consumers.<sup>64</sup> This was despite strenuous efforts by the French to scuttle the meeting, both before and after it convened. Jobert positioned himself as the Conference’s lone friend of the Arab oil producers and their Third World allies, claiming that the conference was “too restricted” without their representatives present. By meeting on their own, he claimed, the industrial democracies threatened to force unnecessary “confrontation” between the West and the commodity producers.<sup>65</sup> The French demanded that any future meeting include representatives from the Global South and be conducted under the auspices of a more

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<sup>62</sup> Memcon, Sir Alec Douglas Home, Henry Kissinger, *et. al.*, “Energy Conference,” 10 February 1974, KT01026, *Kissinger Transcripts*, DNSA.

<sup>63</sup> Memo, Proceedings of the Secretary’s Staff Meeting With All Assistant Secretaries,” 6 March 1974, KT01054, *Kissinger Transcripts*, DNSA.

<sup>64</sup> “Text of the communiqué of the Washington Energy Conference,” *New York Times*, 14 February 1974.

<sup>65</sup> Ronald Koven, “Washington Energy Meeting Becomes Michel Jobert’s Show,” *Washington Post*, 13 February 1974, A1. Murrey Marder, “Oil Accord Thwarted By France,” *Washington Post*, A1.

inclusive body like the United Nations.<sup>66</sup> Jobert, however, overplayed his hand, angering his fellow European delegates, many of whom were skeptical of what German Foreign Minister Walter Scheel called the “illogical” French fear “of [strong] Atlantic ties.”<sup>67</sup> The French were the lone dissenters from the final agreement and the general sentiment that, as German Finance Minister Helmut Schmidt put it, “without a world energy policy, the world will flounder in profound economic confusion.”<sup>68</sup>

By March, however, this apparent unity had collapsed once again, once more under French pressure, as the E.C. agreed to meet with the Arab states privately to discuss a broad range of topics from oil prices to economic development assistance.<sup>69</sup> The Americans were furious. President Nixon cancelled his planned trip to Europe and harshly criticized the E.C.’s decision, triggering another round of public recriminations on both sides of the Atlantic.<sup>70</sup> It was in this rather sorry state, with Washington and the press abuzz with talk of the “coming crisis with Europe,” that the community of developed nations stumbled into the 6<sup>th</sup> Special Session in April.<sup>71</sup> In this context, the inability of the industrialized states to prevent the passage of the NIEO is less surprising. The lack of a common position quickly undermined European, Japanese and American

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<sup>66</sup> Robert Keatley, “Energy Conference Communiqué is Delayed as France Widens Rift with Other Delegates,” *Wall Street Journal*, 13 February 1974, 4. The French position is also described in: Memcon, Sir Alec Douglas Home and Henry Kissinger, *et. al.*, 26 February 1974, *Kissinger Transcripts*, KT01035, DNSA.

<sup>67</sup> Memcon, Foreign Minister Walter Scheel and Henry Kissinger, 3 March 1974, KT01052, *Kissinger Transcripts*, DNSA. On the French isolation from their fellow Europeans see: “French Stand at Washington Oil Conference Brings Common Market Crisis,” *Los Angeles Times*, 16 February 1974, A12.

<sup>68</sup> Murrey Marder, “Oil Accord Thwarted By France,” *Washington Post*, A1.

“Text of the communiqué of the Washington Energy Conference,” *New York Times*, 14 February 1974.

<sup>69</sup> “Jonathan C. Randal, “EEC to Negotiate with Arabs on Oil,” *The Washington Post*, 5 March 1974, A6.

<sup>70</sup> In a conversation with the columnist Joseph Alsop Kissinger discussed the European decision and how it led to Nixon canceling his trip. Memcon, Kissinger and Joseph Alsop, 15 March 1974, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, KA12159, DNSA. See also: “Europe Reacts with Hostility to Nixon Charges,” *The Washington Post*, 17 March 1974, A12. “Transatlantic Slanging,” *The New York Times*, 13 March 1974, 40. Reuters, “Allies’ Energy Talks Still on Despite Rift,” 13 March 1974, *The Washington Post*, A17.

<sup>71</sup> Murrey Marder, “The Coming Crisis with Europe,” *The Washington Post*, 17 March 1974, A1. Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, “Mr. Nixon’s Challenge to Europe,” *The Washington Post*, A19.



attempts to prevent the session from producing a radical document. Events at the Special Session had proceeded almost exactly as Kissinger feared they would: the lack of unity amongst the developed states undermined attempts by Third World moderates to reign in the radicals.<sup>72</sup>

The inability, or in some cases unwillingness, of the developed world to confront Third World attacks on the legitimacy of capitalism, or question the U.N.'s apportioning of blame for global poverty, emerged amidst, and fed into, the general feeling of malaise that overtook the West in this period. With the energy crisis turning – over the course of 1974 and into 1975 – into a prolonged global economic slow down, political chaos and fears of the “decline of the West” spread throughout the industrial democracies.<sup>73</sup> This political unrest was not restricted to United States, where the Watergate scandal finally forced Nixon's resignation in August of 1974, but afflicted most of the major Western European states, consuming even such postwar political luminaries as German Chancellor Willy Brandt.<sup>74</sup> Brandt himself was particularly gloomy about the West's prospects, reportedly suggesting upon his departure from office that, “Western Europe only has twenty or thirty more years of democracy in it [and] then it will slide, engineless and rudderless, into the surrounding sea of dictatorship.”<sup>75</sup> Though possibly apocryphal, the statement is an accurate reflection of the mood of the time.

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<sup>72</sup> According to the Guyanese foreign minister attempts by the moderates to control the radicals were “complicated by discrepancies between approaches adopted by Europeans and [by the] US” which left the moderate group “feeling they had been led down the garden path.” Telegram, Embassy Georgetown to SecState, “UNGA 6<sup>th</sup> Special Session – Steamroller Tactics,” 30 May 1974, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

<sup>73</sup> “Decline of the West,” *New York Times*, 7 October 1974.

<sup>74</sup> A good contemporary survey of the political chaos as of the time of the 6<sup>th</sup> Special Session can be found in Geoffrey Godsell, “Behind World's Turmoil,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 16 May 1974. See also Chapters XIV-XVI of Tony Judt's, *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* (New York: 2005): 453-503.

<sup>75</sup> C.L. Sulzberger, “An Anti-Suicide Policy,” *New York Times*, 11 June 1975.

Whether or not such gloom was merited, Kissinger was no longer inclined to dismiss the Global South as irrelevant to essential U.S. interests. In conversation with Brandt, the Secretary explained his fears with a historical analogy. The democracies were, Kissinger said, witnessing “a turning point in the history of the Western world” and yet, “the behavior” of the industrial democracies was not “unlike that... of the Greek city states,” fighting amongst themselves instead of uniting against a common threat. The West, he warned the German politician, was “getting smaller in the face of [the] Soviet Union, China and the LDC’s.” Instead of fighting back, the allies were wasting most of their energy on internal disputes and ignoring the “real tests ahead.”<sup>76</sup>

Kissinger described this threat in further detail to a group of Republican Congressmen in June of 1975. “The Group of 77,” he said:

... under the leadership of Algeria is politicizing economic issues. It is forming a block which links the various economic issues to each other. This has the objective tendency to produce other [non-oil] cartels. As the LDCs stick together, economic decisions will increasingly be made for political reasons. The impact of this is profound... [thus] we are trying to break up the LDC coalition.<sup>77</sup>

The U.S. could not, the Secretary continued, allow the OPEC states to use “the energy issue to link all the LDC’s together on a platform of redistribution of wealth” as they had at the 6<sup>th</sup> Special Session. The danger was not that these cartels could bring immediate economic ruin, but instead what they would signal ideologically to the rest of the world. The Secretary, as we shall see, was not unwilling to make concessions to Third World economic demands in order to break the radical’s hold on the G-77. What concerned him most was the symbolic side of things: the danger posed by an ideologically charged, left-

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<sup>76</sup> Memcon, Foreign Minister Walter Scheel and Henry Kissinger, 3 March 1974, KT01052, *Kissinger Transcripts*, DNSA.

<sup>77</sup> Memcon, Henry Kissinger and Republican Congressmen, “Foreign Economic Policy,” 10 June 1975, KT01661, *Kissinger Transcripts*, DNSA.

leaning Third World bloc managing to force concessions from the industrial democracies and what that retreat might suggest about future developments in world order. While discussing the topic with a group of Democratic lawmakers, he made this point more explicit: “the developing states may not have the power to hurt us badly now, but with the situation as it might evolve over the next fifteen years... there is a practical necessity to change the direction we are headed.”<sup>78</sup>

#### RADICALISM, RAMBOUILLET AND RESTORING WESTERN UNITY

The U.S. attempt to change this direction would proceed on two tracks, one among the industrial democracies and the other at the U.N. The next chapter will explore the policy at the U.N. The remainder of this chapter will consider the policies with the democracies.

In a fortuitous development for the solidarity of the industrial North, 1973 saw political changes that facilitated a restoration of more friendly inter-allied relations. In the American case, the most significant development was Nixon’s resignation and the end of the Watergate affair. Although it was quite clear that Gerald Ford would, by necessity, be a somewhat weaker executive than his predecessors had been, the Michigan congressman restored stability and political viability to an office that had clearly lacked both since at least the summer of 1973. Ford, as he told his first cabinet meeting as President, would stress “stability and continuity” both in public and as a practical matter.<sup>79</sup> This meant that Henry Kissinger would continue to play a dominant role in foreign policy, something the President made particularly clear in a discussion with British Foreign Minister James

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<sup>78</sup> Memcon, Henry Kissinger with Democratic Congressmen, “United States Policy with Regard to the 7<sup>th</sup> Special Session of the UNGA,” 17 June 1975, KT01673, *Kissinger Transcripts*, DNSA.

<sup>79</sup> Memorandum for the Record, “Cabinet Meeting,” 10 August 1974, Box 4, Memcons, FDL.

Callaghan, telling him, “Secretary Kissinger has at least as strong a role with me as before [with Nixon]... you tell everyone that’s the way it is and that’s the way it will stay.” Callaghan, for his part, suggested to Ford that, for all the emphasis on continuity, it was the changes in the White House that meant the most. “We feel a great weight has been lifted,” he told Ford, “the United States can now give the leadership the world needs.”<sup>80</sup>

This was more than mere sentiment, or a less than subtle comment on the damage that Watergate had done to U.S. foreign policy. It was also an indication of a genuine interest in closer relations with the United States. Callaghan represented the new Labor government of Harold Wilson – which had eked out a victory in February’s Parliamentary elections – a group considerably more pro-American than their Conservative predecessors.<sup>81</sup> Nor were they the only new European leadership group wishing to change the tone of the previous year of trans-Atlantic relations. Brandt’s replacement in Germany, Helmut Schmidt, would develop a very strong relationship with Ford and Kissinger, beginning with – as Kissinger called it – a “brilliantly” successful first meeting in September of 1974.<sup>82</sup>

The last, and most formidable, barrier to Kissinger’s aim to unify the industrial democracies was, of course, France. The French had seen their own significant political change, with Valery Giscard d’Estaing winning election to replace the deceased Georges Pompidou as president. That Giscard’s election would bring about an improvement in Franco-American relations was not immediately apparent however. In October, the new

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<sup>80</sup>Memcon, President Ford and James Callaghan, 24 September 1974, Box 6, Memcons, FDL.

<sup>81</sup> For more on the Labor government’s pro-American stance see Alastair Noble, “Kissinger’s Year of Europe, Britain’s Year of Choice,” Schulz and Schwartz, eds., *The Strained Alliance*, 221-236.

<sup>82</sup> Memcon, President Ford and Henry Kissinger, 6 September 1974, Box 5, Memcons, FDL.

French president – to Kissinger’s frustration – renewed his predecessor’s call for a broad conference on energy and raw materials involving the producer nations and the other LDCs.<sup>83</sup> This incident, however, was a last, minor hiccup before a major improvement in relations between the estranged allies. The tone changed following Ford’s first meeting with Giscard, in December, on the French Caribbean island of Martinique. Signaling a major change in French policy, Giscard dropped Jobert’s refusal to participate in any further coordination amongst the consumer nations and even proposed a smaller meeting between the United States and the major European powers – and not the entire E.C. or other larger grouping – to coordinate economic policy.<sup>84</sup> The French proposal set the stage for the following year, which Kissinger later characterized in his memoirs as something of an *annus mirabilis* for inter-allied relations.<sup>85</sup>

Scholars generally agree with Kissinger regarding the significance of 1975 to both the improvement of trans-Atlantic relations and, more importantly, to the emergence of what is now known as the “G-7.” The critical event was the Rambouillet summit of industrial democracies in November, the eventual offspring of Giscard’s proposal the previous December. That conference and its 1976 successor in Puerto Rico were the first of what would become a regular system of summits for coordinating policy between the top seven economies of the world.<sup>86</sup> Though the significance of 1975, and the importance of the Arab oil embargo to these summits is widely recognized, scholars do not always

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<sup>83</sup> Kissinger complained about Giscard’s initiative in a October memo to Ford. Memo, Henry Kissinger to President Ford, 25 October 1974, Folder “October 20- November 9 1974: Europe, South Asia and Middle East, HAK Messages for the President (1),” Box 3, National Security Adviser’s Files, Trip Briefing Books and Cables of Henry Kissinger, Ford Library.

<sup>84</sup> See the records for both sessions of the Martinique meeting: Memcon, President Ford and Valery Giscard d’Estaing (Meeting One), 15 December 1974, Box 8, Memcons, FDL. Memcon, President Ford and Valery Giscard d’Estaing (Meeting Two), 15 December 1974, Box 8, Memcons, FDL.

<sup>85</sup> Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 626.

<sup>86</sup> The initial meeting at Rambouillet was actually just six nations (the U.S., U.K., France, West Germany, Italy and Japan) with Canada added at the Puerto Rico summit to round out the seven.

place the emergence of the G-7 into the broader North-South context discussed in this chapter.<sup>87</sup> These summits emerged not simply as a response to the oil embargo and the resultant economic dislocations but as part of the Western reaction to the specter of OPEC-LDC radicalism raised by the NIEO. The meetings were intended to combat the widespread sense that Western-style capitalism was in decline and that NIEO style programs for global economic planning represented the wave of the future. The perception that world opinion had turned away from the post-war vision of a liberal world economy was thus an indispensable element of the political atmosphere that gave rise to these meetings. It was, as we have seen, a central part of Kissinger's motivation to push for economic coordination amongst the industrial democracies. It was not simply an economic but an ideological crisis challenging Western preeminence and liberal-capitalist ideology. Exclusive economic summit meetings thus emerged in part because, from the Western perspective, radicalism had, "turned the United Nations into a forum where consultation on economic issues [was] no longer possible."<sup>88</sup>

Early planning for the summit stressed the symbolic over the substantive. The meeting was intended to demonstrate that the industrial democracies were not in permanent decline, but in fact remained the leaders of the global economy. The preparatory group, consisting of mid-level staffers from all the participating countries,

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<sup>87</sup> See for example, Emmanuel Mourlon-Druol, "Managing from the Top": Globalization and the Rise of Regular Summits, Mid-1970s–early 1980s," *Diplomacy and Statecraft* 23:4 (November 2012), 679-703. Peter I. Hajnal, *The G7/8 System: Evolution, Role and Documentation* (Brookfield: 1999). Hugo Dobson, *The Group of 7/8* (New York: 2007). The major exception is Giuliano Garavini whose *After Empires: European Integration, Decolonization and the Challenge from the Global South 1957-1986* (New York: 2012) makes this point. His study considers the origins of the G-7 largely in a European context and thus does not explore American motivations in much detail. See pp. 201-249. Mark Mazower, Alfred Eckes and Thomas Zeiler also make this connection in the course of broader studies of the twentieth century. See: Mazower, *Governing the World*, 313. Eckes and Zeiler, *Globalization and the American Century*, 184-206.

<sup>88</sup> Memcon, Henry Kissinger with Democratic Congressmen, "United States Policy with Regard to the 7<sup>th</sup> Special Session of the UNGA," 17 June 1975, KT01673, *Kissinger Transcripts*, DNSA.

emphasized that the goal of the summit was not “reaching specific agreements but [to have] a broad and far-ranging series of discussions which will, hopefully, result in a sense, both among the participants and the public that these leaders are... determined to come to grips with... common problems.”<sup>89</sup> Robert Hormats, Kissinger’s senior NSC staffer for economic issues, told the Secretary that it was essential that the summit “project publically that Western leaders are able to manage current problems.”<sup>90</sup>

Moreover, for the United States, it would be a critical opportunity to “convey to the public a sense of confidence and forward motion.” To reveal the United States as a leader of a united community of industrial democracies and as such, the “geographical and... intellectual link between North and South, Atlantic and Pacific” and sole “leader of a further evolution in international economic cooperation.”<sup>91</sup> In addition to these general attitudes, U.S. preparatory memos looked for a confirmation of U.S. leadership on North-South issues. The U.S. needed to “secure endorsement of our approach to developing country commodity problems” and undermine any “new efforts to forge a political and ideological base for LDC unity.”<sup>92</sup>

The conversations at the summit itself tended to follow along these lines. The U.S. found a great deal of sympathy for its view of the international situation. Ford’s opening speech for the U.S. delegation stressed, as planned, the critical importance of

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<sup>89</sup> Memo, Helmut Sonnedfeldt to Secretary Kissinger, “Economic Conference: substance and Procedures,” 8 October 1975, Folder “Economic Summits, Rambouillet (2),” Box 4, National Security Adviser’s Files, International Economic Affairs Staff Files, 1973/1975-6, Ford Library.

<sup>90</sup> Memo, Robert Hormats to Secretary Kissinger, “Scenario for Economic Summit,” Rambouillet (3),” Box 4, National Security Adviser’s Files, International Economic Affairs Staff Files, 1973/1975-6, Ford Library.

<sup>91</sup> Memo, Robert Hormats to Secretary Kissinger, “Scenario for Economic Summit,” Rambouillet (3),” Box 4, National Security Adviser’s Files, International Economic Affairs Staff Files, 1973/1975-6, Ford Library.

<sup>92</sup> International Economic Summit: Briefing Papers for L. William Seidman, “Relations with Developing Countries: Fundamental Issues,” Folder “International Economic Summit, Nov. 15-17, 1975, Briefing Book (3)” Box 311, L. William Seidman Files, Ford Library.

projecting an image of confidence and control. “In this meeting,” he said, “we have the opportunity to shape the future of the world economy.” The conference, he continued:

can send a message of interdependence and cooperation which would contribute to a feeling of international confidence. Our nations have for three decades been the cornerstone for global peace... The cohesion and vitality of our societies is of central importance to the world. This summit is designed to deal with economic questions, but in a more fundamental sense springs... from the common values we share. It can enable us to consolidate our unity in an important moment in our history.<sup>93</sup>

Ford went on to urge cooperation in monetary issues, development aid, and trade negotiations. The message thus was quite clear, those in the West must unite to protect and inspire confidence in global capitalism, lest the economic crisis, combined with the challenge from the Global South, permanently damaging the system’s credibility.

The other leaders agreed. During the third session of the conference, Prime Minister Wilson urged the group “to face the fact that OPEC syndrome is catching on.” There were now, he warned, “phosphate-pecs, bauxite-pecs, banana-pecs and others.” There was also the worrisome “political alliance between the more militant oil producers and other developing countries.” Thus, “in the hope of preserving world consensus” about the virtues of free market economics, the West had to help the poorest nations while at the same time making the world recognize “that we must be able to create more resources before we can redistribute them.” Chancellor Schmidt was even more direct on this count, proclaiming that “we must find a way to break up the unholy alliance between the LDC’s and OPEC, but we cannot say so in so many words.” The West, he continued, had to “convince the world that there will be no earthquake and that violent disruptions and demonstrations in the system will not occur.”<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Memcon, Rambouillet Economic Summit, 15-17 November 1975, Box 16 Memcons, FDL.

<sup>94</sup> Memcon, Rambouillet Economic Summit, 15-17 November 1975, Box 16 Memcons, FDL.



This ultimately was what the conference attempted to do with its final declaration, a 17-point statement that was short on substance but long on common statements of principle.<sup>95</sup> Its message to the world was clear, the industrial democracies were united – using “we” throughout – in their expectations for a quick economic recovery, in calling for trade liberalization (and not cartelization) and in their hope for a “cooperative” and “improved” North-South relationship.<sup>96</sup> While the statement acknowledged the need for aid to the developing world, the rejection of the NIEO was, if not explicit, certainly there for all who wished to see it. So also was the potential for a new type of economic partnership between the United States, the leading members of the E.C. and Japan. As the *Wall Street Journal* put it, “everyone agrees that the embryo of an idea has been conceived at the summit” although, the paper admitted, “no one can say for sure what it will look like if and when it grows up.”<sup>97</sup>

The world would get something of a better idea a short seven months later, when the Group of (with the addition of Canada, now actually) Seven met again in late June, 1976 in Puerto Rico. The Rambouillet meeting had not produced any specific call for a follow-on summit, but a number of developments in the early months of 1976 had raised the possibility that another such meeting might be of use. While the economic prospects of many of the G-7 states had improved in the time following the November conclave, Italy had not been so lucky. The southern European nation continued to face a serious

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<sup>95</sup> Not that the summit failed to produce any substantial agreement. The U.S. and France did settle a contentious, and long-running dispute about how to handle exchange rates in the wake of Nixon’s unilateral withdrawal from the Bretton Woods system. Hobart Rowen, “Summit Ends With Pledge Of Recovery: Summit Vows Full Economic Recovery,” *Washington Post*, 18 November 1975, A1.

<sup>96</sup> “Economic Summit Meeting: Text of the Declaration of Rambouillet,” *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* 11:47 (24 November 1975) 1292-4. HeinOnline, [www.heinonline.org](http://www.heinonline.org).

<sup>97</sup> “The Significance of Rambouillet,” *Wall Street Journal*, 21 November 1975, 22.

economic and – more worryingly to Western leaders – political crisis that opened the way for major electoral gains by the Italian Communist Party.<sup>98</sup>

However, the most significant catalyst for what was sometimes called “Rambouillet II,” was the continued Western effort to find a unified approach to the North-South problem.<sup>99</sup> The month long Fourth U.N. Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD IV) held in May in Nairobi had exposed significant additional tactical differences between the developed states on how to approach Third World proposals. Despite the efforts to find unity at Rambouillet, disagreements once again emerged with regard to commodities, the focus of UNCTAD IV. The UNCTAD meeting introduced the G-77’s proposal for an “Integrated Program for Commodities” and its institutional lynchpin, the so-called “Common Fund for Commodities.” The Integrated Program was an idea drawn from the NIEO and was intended to substitute for the ad-hoc approach to commodity agreements that had generally governed the market since the Second World War. The idea was that if these individual arrangements were replaced with a system that encompassed the entire global commodities trade, the G-77 could use their leverage as a group – rather than individually or in smaller collectives – to ensure a better deal vis-à-vis the consumers. The Common Fund was to be the main means for that system to control the global commodities market. This would be done through an international stockpile of “buffer stocks” of certain commodities in order for them to be held from, or released to, the market in order to maintain a stable pricing structure.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> On the success of the Italian Communist Party see Judt, *Postwar*, 495-6.

<sup>99</sup> It is for example referred to as Rambouillet II in the following: Memo, Robert Hormats to Alan Greenspan, “Game Plan for the Monday and Tuesday Preparatory Meeting for Rambouillet II,” 10 June 1976, Folder “Puerto Rico Summit (2),” Box 136, Council of Economic Advisors Records, Ford Library.

<sup>100</sup> For good contemporary press descriptions of the fund see Geoffrey Goodwin, “The Unctad Common Fund — Challenge and Response,” *The World Today* 43:11 (1 November 1977), 425-432. “UNCTAD Crux - Common Fund,” *Times of India*, 27 May 1976, 9.

The French were somewhat more responsive to these proposals, while the U.S., West Germany, and to a lesser extent the United Kingdom and Japan, had been generally hostile.<sup>101</sup> These disagreements had led to competitive bidding where the U.S. might make a proposal to the Third World group and the French would then feel compelled to offer a better deal. Although the developed country group, as promised at Rambouillet, had been coordinating policy at the meeting, their confusion over the Common Fund led to what U.S. diplomats called a “mini-crisis” and nearly caused UNCTAD IV to collapse into mutual DC-LDC recriminations in the style of the 6<sup>th</sup> Special Session.<sup>102</sup> Disaster was ultimately averted by a resolution that the *Times of India* aptly described as an “agreement not to disagree,” yet the situation demonstrated a clear need for further Western consultation on the issue.<sup>103</sup> For one thing, the resolution did not kill the Common Fund idea but technically endorsed it, though in language that allowed a great deal of room for delay and equivocation.<sup>104</sup> The issue would eventually have to be addressed, as the G-77 was likely to bring it up again at the ongoing Conference on International Economic Cooperation, a separate, yearlong North-South negotiation being held in Paris.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Memo, David McNicol to Burton Malkiel, “Where we are at in Commodities Policy,” 20 May 1976, Folder “Darroch Subject, Commodity Agreements Study (1),” Box 149, Council of Economic Advisors Records, Ford Library.

<sup>102</sup> Telegram, Embassy Nairobi to SecState, “Mini-Crisis at UNCTAD IV,” 25 May 1976, NARA, RG-59, AAD. Memo, Deputy Secretary of State Robinson to Secretary of State Kissinger, “UNCTAD IV Follow-Up,” Document 304, Volume XXXI, *FRUS* 1969-76.

<sup>103</sup> Swaminathan S. Aiyar, “Accord on Commodities,” 1 June 1976, *Times of India*, 1.

<sup>104</sup> For press description of the final agreement, see: Swaminathan S. Aiyar, “The Story Of UNCTAD IV: II--A Compromise On Commodities” *The Times of India*, 11 June 1976, 8. For U.S. government analysis see: Memo, Deputy Secretary of State Robinson to Secretary of State Kissinger, “UNCTAD IV Follow-Up,” Document 304, Volume XXXI, *FRUS* 1969-76. Memo, For The Economic Policy Board, “U.S. Response to Commodities Work Program Agreed at UCTAD IV,” 15 June 1976, Folder “EPB Memoranda, June 10-16 1976,” Box 33, L. William Seidman Papers, Ford Library.

<sup>105</sup> The CIEC was the result of the longstanding French desire for a broader consumer-producer conference. The Americans had finally agreed to participate only after the successful conclusion of the Rambouillet

Thus the Americans were once again seeking to use the G-7 as a means to promote Western unity against the Third World, this time even more explicitly than in November. In a meeting Kissinger and his advisors agreed that the Puerto Rico meeting had to address what one staffer called, “the lack of cohesion amongst the industrialized nations.” Kissinger felt the Western habit of getting “caught up in competitive yielding” to Third World demands was the primary problem and the only way that those “controlling 80% of the resources” could routinely end up “in an isolated position.” The “competitive bidding and maneuvering is undignified,” he continued, “nobody benefits.”<sup>106</sup> In his overview memo to the President, Alan Greenspan, the Chairman of the White House’s Council of Economic Advisors, said the summit needed to “restore a sense of common purpose” in the “industrialized nations relations with the developing countries.”<sup>107</sup> It needed to reaffirm the principle that “the industrial democracies are central to the world economy and especially to the prosperity of the developing countries.” The West had to demonstrate, once again, that it would not be “vulnerable to developing country pressures to take positions leading to economically unsound solutions” to global poverty.<sup>108</sup> Another CEA memo warned that it would be incumbent upon the United States to push the G-7 toward such a display of unity as the other

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meeting, where, as Kissinger recalled in his memoirs, “the core element of our strategy – the solidarity of the democracies – [had been] demonstrated.” Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 697.

<sup>106</sup> Memcon, Secretary Kissinger, *et. al.*, “Economic Summit at Puerto Rico,” 4 June 1976, *Kissinger Transcripts*, KT01963, DNSA.

<sup>107</sup> Memo, Alan Greenspan and Brent Scowcroft to President Ford, “Puerto Rico Summit Overview,” 25 June 1976, Folder “Economic Summit (Puerto Rico) June 1976 (1),” Box 39, Council of Economic Advisors Records, Ford Library.

<sup>108</sup> Memo, Alan Greenspan and Brent Scowcroft to President Ford, “Puerto Rico Summit Overview,” 25 June 1976, Folder “Economic Summit (Puerto Rico) June 1976 (1),” Box 39, Council of Economic Advisors Records, Ford Library.

industrial states remained “more dependent... on LDC raw materials and oil” and thus were “more sensitive to unrealistic and impractical LDC demands.”<sup>109</sup>

The currently declassified records of the Puerto Rico meeting reveal some differences between the leaders – primarily with regard to commodities – but also a continued interest in finding common ground. Chancellor Schmidt made the argument against commodity controls, arguing that West German studies had revealed that the Common fund would “produce losers as well as winners” and that it “was not certain the LDC’s would always be winners.” He urged that the Group do its own studies together and see if they might find a common position through research. Kissinger, with Schmidt in agreement, suggested that the German studies provided additional evidence that dealing with commodities individually, rather than as an entire raw materials market, was the best approach. Nations could then tailor those agreements to make sure they helped “the countries you wanted to benefit the most.” President Giscard politely suggested that the West Germans and Americans were missing the point, the value of commodity agreements was in their ability to reduce price fluctuations and thus rationalize the commodities market. The German studies, Giscard argued, did not give “negative answers to the proposals we [the French] have been making.” The French made the argument that price stabilization was important for helping those states with single export economies, helping “them avoid swings from good to bad years.” There was no harm, the French suggested, in doing this in a way that went “in the direction of the NIEO” without actually endorsing it. Callaghan, now British Prime Minister after Harold Wilson’s April resignation, settled the dispute by pointing out that everyone seemed to agree on the

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<sup>109</sup> Memo, “Political Setting of the Puerto Rico Summit,” undated, Folder: Economic Summit (Puerto Rico) June 1976 (2),” Box 39, Council of Economic Advisors Records, Ford Library.

principle of helping mono-industry economies, but disagreed about the tactics. Japanese Prime Minister Takeo Miki – who told his counterparts that he believed the “North-South dialogue remains the greatest challenge for all [their] countries” – suggested that perhaps the solution was to advance new ideas rather than always responding to Third World proposals. Though the conversation was ended without any clear resolution, what did emerge was a common interest in finding solutions that reflected Western interests while taking “account of the views of the developing countries to the greatest possible extent.”<sup>110</sup>

What the “greatest possible extent” was remained in dispute, but like Rambouillet, the Puerto Rico summit had never been intended to establish concrete agreements. As a CEA “game plan” memo had put it, the “objective here is to develop a basis for... communiqué language which permits the industrialized countries to appear, once again, of one mind with regards to such issues as commodities and the common fund.” The U.S. would probably not get “precisely the language” it wanted but a statement that demonstrated “a will to undertake more extensive coordination” was sufficient.<sup>111</sup> The final communiqué therefore asserted that “close collaboration and better coordination” were “necessary for the industrial democracies” in their approach to the North South dialogue.<sup>112</sup>

In a wrap-up Cabinet Meeting held after the President’s return to Washington, Ford expressed his satisfaction with the Puerto Rico summit, believing it had

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<sup>110</sup> Memcon, “Puerto Rico Economic Summit,” 27-28 June 1976, Folder “Economic Summits, Puerto Rio (6),” Box 4, National Security Adviser’s Files, International Economic Affairs Staff Files, 1973 1975-6, Ford Library.

<sup>111</sup> Memo, Robert Hormats to Alan Greenspan, “Game Plan for the Monday and Tuesday Preparatory Meeting for Rambouillet II,” 10 June 1976, Folder “Puerto Rico Summit (2),” Box 136, Council of Economic Advisors Records, Ford Library.

<sup>112</sup> Richard J. Levine, “Economic Summit Yields Pact to Pursue Moderate Policies Chance of Aid Device,” *The Wall Street Journal*, 29 June 1976, 3.

demonstrated that the U.S. had “a position of leadership among the industrial democracies.” As for the North-South dialogue, he said, the West had renewed its commitment to a “cooperative, not competitive approach.”<sup>113</sup> Though many in the press stressed the clear divisions that remained among the industrial states, the symbolism of Western unity was incredibly significant. By so clearly tying themselves together with hard-line members like the United States and West Germany, by issuing strong statements about the value of free trade and, by implication, by committing themselves moderate approaches to global inequality, the industrial democracies sent a strong message about the limits of international economic system reform. Moreover, when the North-South dialogue began to lose steam under pressure from Ronald Reagan in the early 1980s, the habit of high-level summit meetings learned in 1975 and 1976 would remain. The G-7 represented, in many respects, the only significant, new multilateral institution for coordinating global economic policy to emerge from the turmoil of the mid-1970s.

If the Western press missed the significance of the summits, some in the Third World did not. The “Puerto Rico conference,” claimed the *Times of India*, was “clearly meant to forge a common front among the industrialized nations against what is conceived as the ‘trade unionism’ of the developing countries.”<sup>114</sup> Another contributor to the *Times* worried that while there might be “improvements to the old economic order, there will be no new” one.<sup>115</sup> The degree to which the international economic order would change depended a great deal on how Americans responded to Henry Kissinger’s

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<sup>113</sup> Memcon, President Ford and the Cabinet, “Puerto Rico Economic Summit,” 29 June 1976, *Kissinger Transcripts*, KT01974, DNSA.

<sup>114</sup> M. V. Kamath, “Cuba warned: no meddling in Puerto Rico,” *The Times of India*, 29 June 1976, 7.

<sup>115</sup> Swaminathan S. Aiyar, The Story of UNCTAD IV: I - Requiem For New Economic Order,” *The Times of India*, 10 June 1976, 8.

plan for confronting the G-77 in the UN. As the next chapter explores, supporters of the NIEO had good reason to be concerned.



## Chapter 4:

“Nobody’s Punching Bag:” Kissinger, the “Moynihan Effect” and the Popularity of  
 “Giving Them Hell at the U.N.”

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*“In general Moynihan tends to see things in a more black-and-white, with-us-or-against-us fashion than in the Secretary’s multidimensional, shades-of-grey framework.”<sup>1</sup>*

*- Malcolm Butler to Brent Scowcroft, August 1975*

*“We need the Pat Moynihans of this world to remind us that our nation’s future need not be one of retreat and pessimism... he made it refreshingly clear that the U.S. would be nobody’s punching bag.”<sup>2</sup>*

*- Ronald Reagan, February 1976*

*“He Spoke up for America, He’ll Speak up for New York”*

*- Moynihan for Senate Banner, 1976*

“We have,” Kissinger told the President in November 1975, “a long term problem now with Moynihan.” Less than half a year into the appointment, the Secretary of State was already regretting the decision to give the New Yorker control of USUN. “He has carried on,” Kissinger complained, “more violently than the Israeli ambassador [about U.N. actions against Israel] and now he is starting a brawl with South Africa on Apartheid.”<sup>3</sup> Though he had once believed that Moynihan would be a “superb” U.N. representative, the Secretary had come to find the Ambassador far too blunt an instrument for the delicate task of managing the world body.<sup>4</sup> “He [even] voted against a U.N. press office,” Kissinger said, “because he says the U.N. has 130 dictators and they don’t deserve a press office.”<sup>5</sup> The problem was that Moynihan was hard to fire – doing so would have eliminated arguably the most popular figure in the administration. As a *New York Times* reporter would put it later that month, “Mr. Moynihan has won growing popularity in this country... and it is rarely good politics to force a popular appointee

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<sup>1</sup> Memo, Malcolm Butler to Brent Scowcroft, “President’s Meeting with Ambassador Moynihan,” 26 August 1975, Document 25, Vol. E-14, *FRUS* 1969-76.

<sup>2</sup> Richard Bergholz, “Sorry Moynihan Quit, Reagan Says,” *Los Angeles Times*, 4 February 1976, b11.

<sup>3</sup> Memcon, President Ford and Henry Kissinger, 11 November 1975. Box 16, Memcons, FDL.

<sup>4</sup> Memcon, President Ford and Henry Kissinger, 26 March 1975, Box 10, Memcons, FDL.

<sup>5</sup> Memcon, President Ford and Henry Kissinger, 11 November 1975. Box 16, Memcons, FDL.

from office.”<sup>6</sup> The U.N. Ambassador had indeed grown quite popular through applying the principles in “The United States in Opposition” to diplomacy in the U.N. A poll in early January 1976 – the same month that *Time* magazine granted him a cover feature with the title “Giving Them Hell at the U.N.” – suggested that 70% of Americans supported his confrontational style.<sup>7</sup> Moynihan would resign of his own accord later that month, but not before, as the *Los Angeles Times* put it, the Ambassador “became a dazzling world figure, terrorizing less articulate delegates with his wit and rapier phrases, [and] delighting American audiences easily convinced that their nation was being victimized by the Third World.”<sup>8</sup>

Neither Kissinger nor President Ford’s troubles ended with the resignation. Moynihan had struck a chord with the growing number of Americans tired of apologizing for U.S. failures in international forums, they believed were, dominated by Third World police states. While Kissinger was himself, of course, hardly that sympathetic to the Global South, his attempt to “project an image of the U.S. which [was] progressive” but “tough on substance” left the administration exposed to the resentment it briefly harnessed with Moynihan.<sup>9</sup> The Secretary’s efforts to mollify Third World opinion were frequent targets of Ford’s primary challenger Ronald Reagan, helping to undermine the President’s reelection campaign. Moynihan’s popularity revealed that the Third World was a compelling foil in calls for a revitalization of U.S. nationalism and a reassertion of a central role for the United States in the post-Vietnam War world. Indeed, more than

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<sup>6</sup> Philip Shabecoff, “Moynihan to Stay at Ford’s Behest,” *The New York Times*, 25 November 1975.

<sup>7</sup> For the poll data see: Opinion Research Corporation Poll, “The United Nations,” 12 January 1976, Folder “Moynihan, Daniel (2),” Box 26, Robert Goldwyn Papers, Ford Library. For Moynihan’s cover feature see: “Giving Them Hell at the U.N.,” *Time*, 26 January 1976, Folder 3, Box 1:340, Moynihan Papers.

<sup>8</sup> “Moynihan vs. Moynihan,” *Los Angeles Times*, 4 February 1976, D4.

<sup>9</sup> Memcon, President Ford and Henry Kissinger, 24 Mar 1975, Box 12, Memcons, FDL.

simply compelling, this narrative was politically valuable – it would send Moynihan to the Senate in 1977 and help Ronald Reagan play a part in unseating two consecutive Presidents. Though Kissinger wanted to diminish the influence of Third World radicalism as much as Moynihan or Reagan, his relatively flexible approach to the issue, his willingness to make public concessions for “behind the scenes” gains in influence, made him politically vulnerable.

This chapter continues the story from the previous, looking at the other part of Henry Kissinger’s plan for confronting the “unholy alliance” of LDCs – his approach to the U.N.’s Third World majority – and its political fallout. Concerned that the Third World’s dominance of the General Assembly could eventually do serious damage to the U.S.’s international position, the Secretary of State made a concerted effort to blunt the G-77’s assault on democratic capitalism and the legitimacy of the United States as a world leader. For much of the period between 1974 and 1976, this involved an even mix of combative and conciliatory rhetoric along with moderate proposals for global economic reform. Briefly, however, for a period in early 1975, Kissinger and President Ford adopted a more confrontational approach. Fearing that the fall of U.S. backed governments in Cambodia and Vietnam had radically undermined international respect for the United States, Kissinger undertook to make the United States “prickly... like [French President Charles] DeGaulle” had after France’s defeat in Algeria.<sup>10</sup> It was this interest in being “tough as nails” that brought Moynihan to the U.N.<sup>11</sup> The Ambassador, however, soon proved an embarrassment to Kissinger, angering foreign governments and running against the Secretary’s more nuanced diplomatic style. Following Moynihan’s

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<sup>10</sup> Memcon, President Ford and Henry Kissinger, 14 April 1975, Box 10, Memcons, FDL.

<sup>11</sup> Memcon, Henry Kissinger and James Schlesinger, 2 April 1975, Box 10, Memcons, FDL.

resignation, the Secretary of State's supposed softness toward the Third World would prove an important element of the conservative and neo-conservative attack on Ford's allegedly weak foreign policy.<sup>12</sup> The debate over how to respond to hostile Third World opinion had become a major issue in American politics.

#### A MORE ACTIVE AND POSITIVE APPROACH

As documented in the previous chapter, the 1973 oil embargo, and subsequent adoption of the New International Economic Order in the summer of 1974, had led Secretary of State Kissinger to believe there was “a practical necessity to change the direction” the North-South dialogue was headed. The increasingly radical resolutions pouring out of multilateral institutions like the General Assembly were growing into a significant threat to U.S. interests. As the CIA would later describe the situation, the Less Developed Countries had altered, “their primary objectives from seeking financial and technical assistance to seeking fundamental revisions of international practices and institutions... these demands are potentially far more threatening to the interests of Western powers than the demands for aid which, “ had previously, “dominated LDC

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<sup>12</sup> Accounts of the period tend to miss the significance of Third World hostility to New Right political mobilizations in two critical ways. The first is by downplaying the importance of the politics of foreign policy in their entirety. This, as mentioned in the introduction (see its footnote 30 and 34) is particularly the case with those historians who study the politics of the “suburban sunbelt” south. These scholars emphasize racial, pocketbook and private property issues in the rise of the New Right rather than foreign affairs. As discussed in the introduction, I do not seek to refute these important histories, but rather to demonstrate – as this chapter does – that foreign policy was quite significant to conservative political success. The second is that many of those studies that do look at U.S. foreign policy in the 1974-1976 period focus more on battles over the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT), the signing of the Helsinki Final Act, President Ford's unwillingness to meet with Soviet dissident Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and other aspects of U.S.- Soviet *détente*. See, for example: Thomas Borstelmann, *The 1970s: A New Global History from Civil Rights to Economic Inequality* (Princeton: 2012); John Ehrman, *The Rise of Neoconservatism*; Hahnhamaki, *The Flawed Architect*, 427-56; Herring, *From Colony to Superpower*, 810-29 As this chapter reveals, North-South issues were also an important part of the foreign policy debates of 1974-1976.

activities.”<sup>13</sup> Heading into the 29<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly, opening in September of 1974, the administration thus adopted a new strategy for dealing with the Third World majority. In an early September telegram, Kissinger alerted the Foreign Service to the forthcoming changes. “We have in recent years,” he wrote, “adopted a largely damage limiting approach... in face of growing LDC domination of [the] General Assembly.” This approach, however, was marked by “weakness” and its “defensiveness and inconsistency with perceived U.S. leadership role and inability to produce positive results.” Given the highly problematic outcome of the Sixth Special Session – the NIEO – the Department had concluded that, “U.S. interests would be better served by a more active and positive approach.”<sup>14</sup>

This new diplomatic strategy was, broadly speaking, based upon mixing calls for cooperation with barely veiled threats regarding the damage that continued North-South confrontation might do to both the United Nations and the LDCs themselves. The idea was, as Kissinger put it in a White House meeting, “to tell the Third World they must be cooperative, and in turn we will try to be cooperative.”<sup>15</sup> Food was to be the center of this “global strategy... to maintain American leadership in the world.”<sup>16</sup> The United States would remind the international community that it was the world’s largest supplier of food and could, if it wanted, use its produce as a political weapon in the same way that OPEC and other producer cartels were threatening to use their respective commodities. As President Ford put it, “the oil producers have an asset and we have an asset... if we want

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<sup>13</sup> Intelligence Memo, Central Intelligence Agency, “The United Nations: Problems Continue, Potential Erodes,” 11 February 1975, Document 20, Vol. E-14, *FRUS* 1969-76.

<sup>14</sup> Telegram, SecState Washington D.C. to All Diplomatic Posts, “Key Issues at 29<sup>th</sup> UNGA,” State 184584, 22 August 1974, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

<sup>15</sup> Memcon, President Ford, Henry Kissinger, *et. al.*, 17 September 1974, Box 4, Memcons, FDL.

<sup>16</sup> Telegram, Secretary Kissinger to Brent Scowcroft, “Message to the President on Food Speech,” 3 November 1974, Folder “October 20<sup>th</sup> – November 9<sup>th</sup> 1974 (2)” Box 3, Trip Briefing Books and Cables of Henry Kissinger, National Security Advisor’s Files, Ford Library.

them to cooperate we must assure them in a strong way that we want to reciprocate.”<sup>17</sup> While this was to be broached in language that stressed the importance of cooperation over confrontation, the message contained an implied threat. If the international community did not take a turn towards cooperation, the U.S. might just take its food and go home. “Our ability,” Kissinger wrote in a telegram to the President, “to negotiate [with commodity producers] from a position of strength depends crucially on American willingness to use our special strength in food constructively.” The Secretary believed that only by husbanding the “assets we control” could the U.S. force Third World producers to act “constructively.”<sup>18</sup>

This message was articulated in two speeches to the General Assembly – one by Ford and the other by Kissinger – and through U.S. proposals at the World Food Conference, a meeting which Kissinger had called for the previous fall and scheduled for November (1974). Taking advantage of the tradition of U.S. Presidents addressing the General Assembly during their first term, Ford’s September 18<sup>th</sup> speech promised continuity in U.S. foreign policy (by explicitly endorsing Kissinger’s diplomatic efforts) and pledged the U.S. to forging “in concert with others, a framework of international cooperation.” The idea of a world order based on “cooperation” was the main thematic thrust of the speech, which was intended to “project an image of strong and constructive U.S. leadership inside and outside the U.N.” and “emphasize the responsibility of the U.N. ... to work to find practical solutions which can be generally accepted.”<sup>19</sup> What

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<sup>17</sup> Memcon, President Ford, Henry Kissinger, *et. al.*, 17 September 1974, Box 4, Memcons, FDL.

<sup>18</sup> Telegram, Secretary Kissinger to Brent Scowcroft, “Message to the President on Food Speech,” 3 November 1974, Folder “October 20<sup>th</sup> – November 9<sup>th</sup> 1974 (2)” Box 3, Trip Briefing Books and Cables of Henry Kissinger, National Security Advisor’s Files (henceforth NSA), Ford Library.

<sup>19</sup> Memo, Henry Kissinger to President Ford, “Your Visit to the UN General Assembly,” 17 September 1974, Folder “September 18 1974- United Nations, Briefing Book,” Box 1, Trip Briefing Books and Cables of President Ford, NSA, Ford Library.

form this cooperation would take was not described, but the speech was remarkably clear about what sort of behaviors the United States did not consider cooperative. The President expressed American displeasure at the G-77's bloc voting and steamroller tactics. In what was the most memorable line of the speech, Ford warned the U.N. against "the danger of the tyranny of the majority." While the United States supported the concept of majority rule, he told the Assembly, that system could only "thriv[e] on the habits of accommodation, moderation and consideration of the interests of others."<sup>20</sup> These, the President clearly implied, were not the habits the Third World majority had been cultivating.

Ford also challenged the Global South's push to create commodity cartels – in part through comparing the U.S.'s supposedly generous behavior on food to OPEC's stinginess on oil. The United States, he told the gathered delegates, had not used, "food as a political weapon despite the oil embargo and recent oil prices and production decisions." The United States, recognized its "special responsibility... as the world's largest producer of food," and the OPEC nations needed to recognize theirs with regard to energy. A "failure to cooperate on oil and food," the President continued, "could spell disaster for every nation represented in this room." More than just a matter of oil and food, Ford said, for all commodities, "all nations must seek to achieve a level of prices which not only provides an incentive to producers but which consumers can afford." While Ford acknowledged that developing nations had a right to an "adequate return" for their goods, he rejected price fixing schemes like the Common Fund. "Confronting consumers," he said, "with production restrictions, artificial pricing and the prospect of

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<sup>20</sup> Gerald Ford, "Address to the 29<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations," 18 September 1974, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *American Presidency Project*.

ultimate bankruptcy” would, in the end, make the “producers... victims of their own actions.”<sup>21</sup>

Secretary Kissinger would pick up this theme in his own speech to the Assembly later that month. History, Kissinger said grandly, “is marked by brief moments when an old order is giving way to a pattern new and unseen.” Such moments were “times of potential disorder and danger but also of opportunity for fresh creation.” The world was then witnessing such a moment and thus the assembled nations needed to decide whether this new age would be one of “joint progress or common disaster.” Though perhaps a little less directly than the President, Kissinger signaled out the same barriers to this world of cooperation: North-South conflict and economic confrontation. “Traditional concepts... of national sovereignty, social struggle and the relation between the old and new nations,” the Secretary told the United Nations, would not be useful in this newly “interdependent world.” These old ideas had brought “the increasingly open and cooperative economic system that [the world] had come to take for granted... under unprecedented attack.” Unless – and the implication here was clear – the Global South started behaving more cooperatively, the world risked a contemporary recreation of “the collapse of economic order in the [nineteen] thirties.”<sup>22</sup> Kissinger promised that the U.S. would do its part at the upcoming World Food Conference by working to maintain the world’s food supply.

In his address to that conference a month and a half later – on November 5<sup>th</sup> – Kissinger returned to the theme of global interdependence: “we are stranded between old

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<sup>21</sup> Gerald Ford, “Address to the 29<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations,” 18 September 1974, *American Presidency Project*.

<sup>22</sup> Henry Kissinger, “An Age of Interdependence: Common Disaster or Community, An Address before the U.N. General Assembly,” 23 September 1974, *Department of State Bulletin* 71: 1842, 14 October 1971, Public Papers of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, FDL.



conceptions of political conduct and a wholly new environment, between the inadequacy of the nation state and the emerging imperative of global community.”<sup>23</sup> While much of the speech was about specific American initiatives to address both current and future risk of famine, the introduction made clear that U.S. policy toward food was meant as a model for how nations should behave in this new era of interdependence. “If we can comprehend our reality,” Kissinger asserted, “and act upon it, we can usher in a period of unprecedented advance with consequences far transcending the issues before this conference.” The vision of a reformed global food market that emerged from the speech was one that could be described as moderately social democratic and was clearly intended to represent an alternative to NIEO-style market controls and centralized methods of redistribution. While hinting at U.S. skepticism about any “central body” to manage the world food situation, Kissinger pledged the United States to increased food aid, to investment in Third World agriculture, to funding research for higher crop yields and food quality, as well as developing an international system of food reserves as a global safety net.

To help advance this vision of global society and counter the dreams of a New International Economic Order, Kissinger instructed diplomats at the U.N. and in Third World capitols to “encourage” the U.N.’s member states to take a more moderate course. The U.S. would look to seize upon proposals, he wrote, “which are ripe for achievement and which can be of practical benefit to a majority of [the U.N.’s] members” while “not hesitat[ing] to register negative votes on ill-conceived” ideas. The U.S. had to “seek LDC recognition that the world’s economic and financial system cannot be remade

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<sup>23</sup> Henry Kissinger, “Address to the World Food Conference in Rome,” 5 November 1974, *Department of State Bulletin* 71: 1851, 16 December 1974, Public Papers of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, FDL.

overnight.”<sup>24</sup> Though they appeared rather unyielding on the page, these tactics were applied with a level of flexibility and sensitivity to the give and take of diplomatic exchange that would – as shall be seen – contrast sharply with Moynihan’s strategy for going into opposition.

A good example of this flexibility was Kissinger’s response to the General Assembly’s debate over a proposed Charter of the Economic Rights and Duties of States (or CERDS). The Charter was intended to, as the final draft put it, “establish or improve norms of universal application” governing the economic behavior of states in accordance with concepts like those of the NIEO.<sup>25</sup> The Charter was thus precisely the type of “unrealistic” proposal that the U.S. was hoping to see less of, yet Kissinger wanted to avoid voting against it. This was due to U.S. relations with the charter’s primary champion: the government of Mexico and its President, Luis Echeverría. Though Echeverría had been on, as a Kissinger staffer put it, “a whole series of third world tacks,” in recent months, the U.S. and Mexico otherwise had mostly cordial relations in 1974. The Mexicans had, on a number of occasions, Kissinger felt, “not carried out their own preferences” at international conferences in the interest of maintaining good relations with the United States.<sup>26</sup> At a time when most states of the Third World were openly anti-American, Mexico “at least made an effort to pretend to have a close association” with its northern neighbor.

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<sup>24</sup> Telegram, SecState Washington D.C. to All Diplomatic Posts, “Key Issues at 29<sup>th</sup> UNGA,” State 184584, 22 August 1974, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

<sup>25</sup> Resolutions Adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 3281, “Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States,” 12 December 1974, [www.undocuments.net](http://www.undocuments.net).

<sup>26</sup> At the 1974 Inter-American Conference in Mexico City in particular. Memcon, “The Secretary’s Principals’ and Regionals’ Staff Meeting,” 9 December 1974, KT01440, *Kissinger Transcripts*, DNSA.

Kissinger and Ford had thus gone out of their way to avoid any unnecessary criticism of the Charter, despite its many problematic provisions. During the private portion of a meeting between Ford and Echeverría in October, the U.S. President and Secretary Kissinger indicated their, heavily qualified, support for the proposed charter. Ford even went so far as to suggest that, in principle, the charter was a call for international cooperation “very similar to the idea Secretary Kissinger and I tried to promote.” Their only major problem with the proposal was its second article, which established principles for “full, permanent national sovereignty” over all the natural resources, wealth and economic activity within a given state.<sup>27</sup> The language of the draft seemed to leave the door wide open to nationalization of foreign property without any compensation, something that the United States would not support. While Ford was willing to countenance provisions for nationalization that required compensation, he told Echeverría, he would not “approve a Charter without protection in this sense.” The Mexican President insisted that Article 2 was essential to the document and the meeting concluded without any clear agreement on the subject.<sup>28</sup> During a subsequent joint press conference Echeverría claimed that Ford had revealed “a complete change” in the American position, when the U.S. President had “personally underlined... the importance that he gave the Charter.” While Echeverría did not claim that he had full American support for his draft, he certainly suggested that the U.S. was more open to the Charter

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<sup>27</sup> Resolutions Adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 3281, “Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States,” 12 December 1974, [www.undocuments.net](http://www.undocuments.net).

<sup>28</sup> Memcon, President Ford, Henry Kissinger and Mexican President Luis Echeverria, *et. al.*, 21 October 1974, Box 6, Memcons, FDL.

than the meeting minutes suggest. Despite this rhetorical slight of hand, Ford did not correct his Mexican counterpart or later issue any clarification.<sup>29</sup>

Instead, Kissinger pushed his negotiating team to try to find a way to avoid a high profile U.S. vote against the Charter – particularly if the U.S. was not joined by other developed countries. The rest of the State Department, however, appears to have been uncomfortable with the Secretary’s orders. In late November, while Kissinger was on a state visit to China and Japan, Under Secretary of State Robert Ingersoll, on behalf of USUN and the entire Department leadership team, sent two cables to the Secretary urging a vote against CERDS regardless of how the other developed countries voted.<sup>30</sup> The telegrams claimed that this position had the support of much of the executive branch. Sounding much like Moynihan, Ingersoll and company worried that a “CERDS adopted without a negative vote... will be portrayed, with increased effect as time passes... as an authoritative statement of the [international] legal principles governing [international] economic relations.” The “G-77,” the telegram continued, “is engaged in an intense effort [to] fundamentally restructure [international] economic relations to their disproportionate benefit and at West’s expense.” Moreover, they argued, a U.S. abstention on the Charter would undermine “otherwise increasingly successful efforts to gain the solidarity of our allies in containing the pernicious results of the sixth special session.” If the United States

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<sup>29</sup> Gerald Ford, “News Conference of the President and President Echeverria of Mexico in Tubac, Arizona,” 21 October 1974, *American Presidency Project*.

<sup>30</sup> Telegram, SecState Washington DC to USDel Kyoto, “Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States,” State 256640, 21 November 1974, NARA, RG-59, AAD. Telegram, SecState Washington DC to AmEmbassy Tokyo, “Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, State 258928, 23 November 1974, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

did not take the lead the other developed countries were likely to abstain from voting; “if we do not stand up for investor and market trading rights,” they wrote, “no one will.”<sup>31</sup>

The group was also worried that an abstention of CERDS would be toxic domestically.<sup>32</sup> Despite these arguments, however Kissinger remained unconvinced and, in response to the first telegram, withdrew authorization for USUN to vote “no” against the Charter without his approval.<sup>33</sup> The Secretary was wary of being “the only major country voting against CERDS as a whole” and was, as he put it to Ingersoll later, “looking for an excuse to abstain on the charter” because “at minimum” he did not “want to jeopardize... relations with the Mexicans.”<sup>34</sup> USUN was unable to deliver because, in their account, the G-77 once again had little interest in real negotiation. On December 4<sup>th</sup>, USUN cabled Washington and the Secretary to inform them that “most recent developments tend to confirm indications that [the] G-77 is not prepared to engage in meaningful negotiations... on disagreed paragraphs of CERDS and that Charter will be pressed to a vote on Friday November 6<sup>th</sup>.”<sup>35</sup> With the handwriting on the wall, approval for a no-vote was issued on December 5<sup>th</sup>, but instructions were to keep “a distinctly low

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<sup>31</sup> Telegram, SecState Washington DC to AmEmbassy Tokyo, “Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, State 258928, 23 November 1974, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

<sup>32</sup> They told Kissinger, “if USG were to fail to vote against [the] charter as a whole, various groups in [the] private sector, including [the] American Bar Association, U.S. Council of [the] International Chamber of Commerce, [National Association of Manufacturers], etc., would be most critical, as their continuing representations demonstrate.” Telegram, SecState Washington DC to USDel Kyoto, “Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States,” 21 November 1974 NARA, RG-59, AAD.

<sup>33</sup> On his being unconvinced see: Telegram, USDel Kytoto to SecState Washinton DC, “Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States,” Kyoto 00033, 21 November 1974, NARA, RG-59, AAD. On withdrawing approval see: Telegram, USDel Kyoto to SecState Washington DC, “Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States,” Kyoto 0040, 21 November 1974, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

<sup>34</sup> Telegram, USDel Kyoto to SecState Washington DC, “Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States,” Kyoto 0040, 21 November 1974, NARA, RG-59, AAD. Telecon, Henry Kissinger and Robert Ingersoll, 7:55 AM, 6 December 1974, KA13038, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA.

<sup>35</sup> Telegram, SecState Washington DC to AmEmbassy Copenhagen, “Charter of Economic Rights and Duties: Voting Positions,” State 264952, 4 December 1974, NARA. RG-59, AAD.

profile in U.S. explication of vote... while indicating our sympathy and support for the basic concept of CERDS.”<sup>36</sup>

Kissinger, returning home to Washington, was furious, lambasting Ingersoll over the phone and accusing the department of deliberately misinterpreting his instructions.<sup>37</sup> In a meeting with his staff on the 9<sup>th</sup>, Kissinger explained that he did not think the objectionable portions of CERDS were worth damaging U.S. Mexican relations. In particular he worried that the U.S. no-vote might undermine Mexican Foreign Minister Emilio Rabasa’s influence in his government. The pro-American minister’s influence was based, Kissinger believed, entirely upon “his American connections,” and now that they had failed to provide U.S. support for the charter, Echeverría’s Third Worldist tendencies might “be unloosed.” At the very least, the Secretary complained, Mexico would be much less helpful in future multilateral meetings.<sup>38</sup> Initial indications were that Kissinger’s fears were not misplaced. In a meeting with Ambassador Scali, Rabasa warned that the U.S. vote going to cause “a parting of ways” with the Mexican government.<sup>39</sup>

As the CERDS drama reveals, the administration’s mix of confrontation and cooperation had little immediate impact on the diplomatic environment of the 29<sup>th</sup> General Assembly. The G-77 continued to resort to steamrolling tactics, offering resolutions to the developed countries on a “take it or leave it” basis.<sup>40</sup> These resolutions also continued to advance a vision of the global economy that contrasted greatly with

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<sup>36</sup> Telegram, SecState Washington DC to USMission USUN, State 269217, 7 December 1974, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

<sup>37</sup> Telegram, Henry Kissinger and Robert Ingersoll, 7:55 AM, 6 December 1974, KA13038, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA.

<sup>38</sup> Memcon, “The Secretary’s Principals’ and Regionals’ Staff Meeting,” 9 December 1974, KT01440, *Kissinger Transcripts*, DNSA.

<sup>39</sup> Telegram, SecState Washington DC to AmEmbassy Lima, “Ambassador Scali Meeting with Mexican Foreign Minister Rabasa Re: CERDS,” State 269204, 7 December 1974, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

<sup>40</sup> Telegram SecState Washington DC to AmEmbassy New Delhi, “Charter of Economic Rights and Duties,” State 258450, 22 November 1974, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

American ideas. The G-77's initiatives were regularly so unpalatable to Americans that even the State Department, as just mentioned, had trouble playing nice despite being ordered to by the Secretary of State. In this environment Kissinger's flexibility – his willingness to sacrifice principle or make concessions to the G-77 to accomplish a broader goal – was less and less popular both inside and outside the executive branch.

Indeed, well before Ronald Reagan's primary run, the domestic unpopularity of making concessions – whether rhetorical or material – to an unyielding Third World was already impacting policy. One of the primary opponents of an abstention on CERDS, Delegate to the Second Committee and U.S. Senator Charles Percy, was certainly concerned about the domestic reaction to the Charter. "If we support it," he told Kissinger in October, "the ABA [American Bar Association], U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the International Chamber of commerce, will all be" deeply concerned.<sup>41</sup> The clearly anti-capitalist tone of the Charter, and Percy's worries about how it might play with his constituents, likely affected the negotiations. Even with the U.S. "no" vote, the Bar Association, the National Foreign Trades Council (a collection of large multinational U.S. firms) and other business groups denounced the Charter.<sup>42</sup>

When the session concluded in December 1974, there could be little doubt that the 29<sup>th</sup> General Assembly had not been a good one for U.S. interests. On every major point of disagreement with the United States – South Africa, the Middle East and the international economic order – the General Assembly had forced through measures directly contrary to U.S. wishes and interests. A Central Intelligence Agency report

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<sup>41</sup> The final word in the sentence did not make the transcript, but from the context it can be inferred as something along the lines of "worried," "concerned," or "unhappy." Telecon, Henry Kissinger and Charles H. Percy, 6:50, 18 October 1974, KA12998, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA.

<sup>42</sup> Kathleen Teltsch, "New Declaration Voted in the U.N.," *New York Times*, 13 December 1974, 11.

dourly summed up the situation in February, “by the close of the ten-week session, Yasir [*sic*] Arafat had addressed the Assembly, Israel had been muzzled in open debate, South Africa had been suspended, and expropriation of foreign investments had been sanctified.” The LDCs had “achieved each of these victories by applying their two-thirds majority with considerable efficiency and little restraint.” There was little reason, the CIA concluded, to expect “Washington’s embattled position” in the U.N. to improve “so long as the antagonism between developing countries and industrialized states continues in the world outside.”<sup>43</sup> The U.N. would remain a means for the G-77 to seek to impose its vision of a just global order with or without Western approval.

#### CONGRESS, CREDIBILITY AND MOYNIHAN

The CIA issued this gloomy report at a time in early 1975 when for many – especially those inside the White House – America’s international position seemed increasingly tenuous. In Europe, NATO appeared threatened by a left-wing coup in Portugal and the popularity of Italy’s Communist Party. The efforts at restoring broader Western solidarity discussed in the previous chapter were only just getting underway. In the Middle East, Israeli intransigence – bolstered by strong support in the U.S. Congress – was frustrating the Ford administration to the point that it would eventually announce an all-encompassing “reassessment” of its policies in the region.<sup>44</sup> At home an activist Congress was making inroads on executive power unseen since before the Second World War. The Pike and Church Committees were beginning their explosive investigations into U.S. intelligence activities during the previous decades. Neoconservative Senators like

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<sup>43</sup> Intelligence Memo, Central Intelligence Agency, “The United Nations: Problems Continue, Potential Erodes,” 11 February 1975, Document 20, Vol. E-14, *FRUS* 1969-76.

<sup>44</sup> Rudy Abramson, “White House Opens Total Reassessment of Mideast,” *Los Angeles Times*, 25 March 1975, a1.



Henry “Scoop” Jackson, meanwhile, were continuing their increasingly popular crusade against détente complicating efforts to establish trade and strategic arms accords with the Soviet Union. Congress also continued to make deep cuts to foreign military assistance programs including, over Ford’s objections, aid to NATO ally Turkey (due to its invasion of northern Cyprus). Most critically, Congress helped precipitate the conclusion of America’s calamitous involvement in Southeast Asia, repeatedly refusing strenuous entreaties from the administration to grant additional military aid to Cambodia and South Vietnam. Both of these already struggling U.S. backed regimes collapsed in April, Phnom Penh captured by the Khmer Rouge on the 12<sup>th</sup>, and Saigon, more infamously, falling to North Vietnamese forces on the 30<sup>th</sup>.

Kissinger’s fears about American credibility emerged from the convergence of these various frustrating, and in some cases catastrophic, developments. Much of his initial concern was related to, what he considered, Congressional meddling in his attempts to conduct foreign policy.<sup>45</sup> The Secretary believed that Congress – particularly through cutting military assistance – was turning the United States into an international laughing stock. In February, in a meeting with the President, Kissinger complained that “the Senate is perceived around the world as a menace.” He compared the United States to the infamously unstable French governments of the late 1940s and 1950s: “we look like the Fourth Republic... the Legislative Branch can’t run... policy.”<sup>46</sup> Congress’s inclination to undercut the Executive Branch, Kissinger believed, had reduced his ability to make promises that his international counterparts could believe in. It was no longer

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<sup>45</sup> This was to become a favorite topic of Kissinger’s in his memoirs – he would blame nearly every poor outcome of his time in office on Congressional interference in his policies. See, in particular: Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*.

<sup>46</sup> Memcon, President Ford and Henry Kissinger, 19 February 1975, Box 9, Memcons, FDL.

clear who spoke for the United States and as a result, “more and more people are getting wary of putting their chips on the U.S.”<sup>47</sup> With the U.S. no longer a reliable commodity, Kissinger told Secretary of Defense Schlesinger, the “world balance of power” had become “highly unfavorable.” American credibility was so reduced that Kissinger felt he might only “barely have enough prestige left to get another disengagement in the Middle East.”<sup>48</sup>

The brewing credibility crisis that Kissinger attributed to Congress grew more dangerous as the anti-communist redoubt in Southeast Asia began to collapse in March.<sup>49</sup> Unable to do much – with or without Congressional approval of additional aid – to alter the situation in Cambodia and Vietnam, Kissinger advocated for acting “tough” in as many other ways as possible. He told the President in March that with the “world’s view of America” being so “disturbing... anytime you look strong, you help, even if you lose.”<sup>50</sup> Kissinger wanted the U.S. to adopt as a model French President Charles De Gaulle’s foreign policy following France’s 1962 capitulation in Algeria, bringing up the example in several meetings in March and April of 1975. “As a general line,” he advised Ford on April 14th, “we are like De Gaulle – he created the impression that France was a strong country just be being prickly.” Ford agreed, saying “that would be great.”<sup>51</sup> The “thrust,” as Ford put it to Kissinger in a meeting a few days earlier, “is we have to be

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<sup>47</sup> Memcon, President Ford and Henry Kissinger, 24 February 1975, Box 9, Memcons, FDL.

<sup>48</sup> Memcon, Henry Kissinger and James Schlesinger, 8 February 1975, Box 9, Memcons, FDL.

<sup>49</sup> By the end of the month South Vietnamese forces had been routed in the strategically vital Central Highlands, while in Cambodia a numerically superior Khmer Rouge force had surrounded the remaining Republican troops in Phnom Penh.

<sup>50</sup> Memcon, President Ford, Vice President Rockefeller and Henry Kissinger, 24 March 1975, Box 10, Memcons, FDL.

<sup>51</sup> Memcon, President Ford and Henry Kissinger, 14 April 1975, Box 10, Memcons, FDL. Kissinger did not mention Algeria specifically in this meeting, but its clear from subsequent meetings that he was thinking of post-Algeria De Gaulle. On April 21<sup>st</sup> he told the President that “De Gaulle turned his back on Algeria and became a hero.” Memcon, President Ford and Henry Kissinger, 21 April 1975, Box 11, Memcons, FDL

strong.”<sup>52</sup> Ford had Kissinger convey this message at great length during a Cabinet Meeting in the middle of the month. The looming defeat in Vietnam, Kissinger told the group, was causing concern around the globe about a more widespread U.S. retreat. “The worst thing we can do,” he continued, “is say we are undertaking a global reassessment... we must conduct our foreign policy with confidence and assurance.”<sup>53</sup>

One of the key areas where the United States needed to be “prickly” and “strong” was in the United Nations and economic negotiations with the Third World. The unfortunate results of 1974’s General Assembly already merited taking a harder stance in international forums, but the broader credibility problem of early 1975 seemed to mandate it even more. “I think we have a new world,” Kissinger said in early March, “if we don’t respond the producers will band together and we will face an OPEC in every [commodity] category.”<sup>54</sup> The Secretary saw relations with the developing countries as one of the major areas of concern that the President had to confront during 1975. “We face a difficult challenge,” he wrote Ford, “in the new – and in important aspects unrealistic – demands of the developing nations for power and participation in the world political and economic order.”<sup>55</sup>

It was at roughly this time – with worries about American credibility and the Third World at their peak – that “The United States in Opposition” hit newsstands, published in the March 1975 edition of *Commentary*.<sup>56</sup> The timing, for Moynihan’s

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<sup>52</sup> Memcon, President Ford and Henry Kissinger, 12 April 1975, Box 10, Memcons, FDL.

<sup>53</sup> Memcon, Cabinet Meeting, 16 April 1975, Box 11, Memcons, FDL.

<sup>54</sup> Memcon, President Ford and Henry Kissinger, 3 March 1975, Box 9, Memcons, FDL.

<sup>55</sup> This analysis was from later in the year. Kissinger identified relations with the developing world as one of the major issues of ongoing concern in an annual policy review for the President. Memo, Henry Kissinger to President Ford, “Foreign Policy in Your First Year in Office,” 18 July 1975, Folder “Foreign Policy, Gerald Ford First Year Accomplishments, July 1975,” Box 1, Peter Rodman Files, NSA, Ford Library.

<sup>56</sup> Moynihan, “The United States in Opposition.” The article is discussed in detail in Chapter 2.

career at least, could not have been more propitious. The article made headlines in the *New York Times* and *Los Angeles Times* even before it was published, with *Commentary* taking the unusual step of holding a press conference in February announcing its arrival.<sup>57</sup> Once out, the piece – by the standards of a tract in an American political magazine – created something of a sensation. The *Wall Street Journal*, *Chicago Tribune* and, somewhat more reservedly, the *Christian Science Monitor* ran editorials favorably mentioning Moynihan’s proposals.<sup>58</sup> The *Tribune*’s editors, for their part, felt the United States had been acting “like an aging chaperone at a teen pot party” and thus believed Moynihan’s call for the U.S. to “at least do some of the shouting ourselves” was well made.<sup>59</sup>

*National Review* called the article a highly intelligent “act of perception... which illuminates a great deal in U.S. relations with the Third World.”<sup>60</sup> Buckley, in his syndicated column, put things more simply: “one of the few things in the world which there is reason continuously to rejoice is Daniel Patrick Moynihan.”<sup>61</sup> In the wake of the article, the former Ambassador’s speeches and comments became newsworthy on their own.<sup>62</sup> Despite this attention, Moynihan’s fans were worried that his call to arms would go unheeded. Former Nixon speechwriter and conservative columnist Patrick Buchanan believed “official Washington” reacted “with indifference and timidity to Third World

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<sup>57</sup> Kathleen Teltsch, “Moynihan Calls on U.S. to 'Start Raising Hell' in U.N.,” *New York Times*, 26 February 1975, 3. Don Shannon, “Moynihan Urges America to Use Food as Weapon,” *Los Angeles Times*, 27 February 1975, a22.

<sup>58</sup> “Mr. Moynihan’s Task,” *Wall Street Journal*, 10 March 1975, 12. “A Diplomat’s Tip: Raise Hell!”, *Chicago Tribune*, 15 March 1975, b10. “That U.N. Majority,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 10 April 1975, 22.

<sup>59</sup> “A Diplomat’s Tip: Raise Hell!”, *Chicago Tribune*, 15 March 1975, b10.

<sup>60</sup> “Moynihan Saw Something,” *National Review* 27:15 (25 April 1975), 435-6.

<sup>61</sup> William F. Buckley Jr., “Moynihan the Clairvoyant,” *National Review* 27:11 (28 March 1975), 361.

<sup>62</sup> See, for example: “Fate of Algeria’s Ben Bella Still Unknown,” *Los Angeles Times*, 6 April 1975, c13. Irving Spiegel, “Moynihan Assails Role of Liberals,” *New York Times*, 13 April 1975, 9.

assaults” because “a goodly segment shares... [the] Third World assessment of America as a corrupt, racist militarist exploiter of distant lands.”<sup>63</sup> The *Wall Street Journal* too worried that Moynihan “may well have to wage his battle in the forums of American public opinion,” before he could “get the U.S. to go into opposition.”<sup>64</sup>

They needn’t have been too concerned however – at least not right away – for Moynihan’s article was having an appreciable impact in the White House and the State Department. There was at least one well-placed *Commentary* reader in the White House who took it upon himself to distribute the article as widely as possible. This was Robert Goldwin, a neoconservative political scientist who had been brought into the White House as an “intellectual in residence” at the suggestion of Ford’s Chief of Staff Donald Rumsfeld.<sup>65</sup> Goldwin sent the article to a wide range of people on said staff including Rumsfeld, Assistant to the President Dick Cheney, and a number of figures in the State Department, calling it “one of the most important articles of recent months.”<sup>66</sup> Others not mentioned specifically in Goldwin’s memos appeared to have read the piece as well, if only because they repeated some of its language. Vice President Rockefeller, for example, in a meeting with the President in May, repeated Moynihan’s view that most of the non-Communist world was “Fabian socialist” and ideologically opposed to the United States.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Patrick Buchanan, “Time for a Diplomatic Change,” *Chicago Tribune*, 18 March 1975, a4.

<sup>64</sup> “Mr. Moynihan’s Task,” *Wall Street Journal*, 10 March 1975, 12.

<sup>65</sup> Aldo Beckman, “Ford’s better idea--get thinkers, doers together,” *Chicago Tribune*, 16 December 1974, 5.

<sup>66</sup> Memo, [untitled w/distribution list], 8 April 1975, Folder “Moynihan, Daniel (1),” Box 26, Robert Goldwin Papers, Ford Library. Memo, John King to Robert Goldwin, “The Moynihan Article in *Commentary* Magazine,” 15 April 1975, Folder “Moynihan, Daniel (1),” Box 26, Robert Goldwin Papers, Ford Library.

<sup>67</sup> Memcon, President Ford, Vice President Rockefeller and Henry Kissinger, 26 May 1975, Box 12, Memcons, FDL.

Kissinger had already read the piece by the time that Goldwin began evangelizing for it. The Secretary of State had received an advance copy directly from Moynihan in late February, well before Goldwin himself had read it.<sup>68</sup> Kissinger read the article soon after receiving it and called Moynihan on the afternoon of February 26<sup>th</sup> to tell him that it was “spectacularly good. I fully agree,” he continued, “we have to start harassing and we have to make it tough as these reports wind their way through.” Kissinger asked Moynihan to head a task force to develop “a strategy of how we can behave in the United Nations,” saying that he “hadn’t even mentioned it to the President” but knew Ford would approve. Moynihan agreed, saying he would be “honored” to try.<sup>69</sup> Kissinger brought the Harvard Professor to Foggy Bottom in late March for a private meeting as well as larger meetings with officials from the Bureau of International Organization Affairs (IO) and the Policy Planning Staff. Goldwin’s informants told him that Moynihan’s ideas were well received and both the Policy Planning Staff and IO had begun looking at ways to implement them.<sup>70</sup>

Events took a more dramatic turn on March 26<sup>th</sup>, when Kissinger mentioned to the President that he was thinking of putting Moynihan in charge of a U.N. study group. “How about appointing Pat at the U.N?” the President asked. “He would be superb,” Kissinger said, but warned that “you – and the press – would know when he disagreed” with his orders.<sup>71</sup> When offered, Moynihan accepted the assignment, meeting with Ford and Kissinger on April 12<sup>th</sup> to discuss details. The tone of the meeting was

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<sup>68</sup> Telecon, Secretary Kissinger and Ambassador Moynihan, 10:16 AM, 24 February 1975, KA13325, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA.

<sup>69</sup> Telecon, Secretary Kissinger and Ambassador Moynihan, 3:13 PM, 26 February 1975, KA13338, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA.

<sup>70</sup> Memo, John King to Robert Goldwin, “The Moynihan Article in *Commentary* Magazine,” 15 April 1975, Folder “Moynihan, Daniel (1),” Box 26, Robert Goldwin Papers, Ford Library.

<sup>71</sup> Memcon, President Ford and Henry Kissinger, 26 March 1975, Box 10, Memcons, FDL.

overwhelmingly positive, with both Kissinger and the President going out of their way to express approval of Moynihan's ideas. It was clear that the two saw Moynihan as being part of their campaign to make the U.S. appear tough internationally, repeating much of the same language they had been using in other meetings. "We have to rally the American public and show the world we are tough and determined," said Kissinger. "This is our campaign now," the President agreed. Moynihan, for his part, repeated many of the ideas from his article. The message had to get out that "words matter," he said, and that the U.S. was "too dangerous to be pushed around." The U.S. would be "like the Republicans in Congress," a stand that might lead to mistakes, but these would be better than "the total mistake we are making now." The President was "delighted," telling Moynihan "we are on the same wavelength."<sup>72</sup>

In a private meeting following theirs with the President, Kissinger reiterated to Moynihan how he fit into the administration's global strategy. "We shouldn't kid ourselves [that the collapse in Vietnam] does not have catastrophic results," Kissinger told him. "The President and I are going out in a Churchillian way," he continued, "the U.N. is very important to this campaign... you have got to show them we are staying the course."<sup>73</sup> However, the meeting also hinted at future trouble, when Kissinger informed Moynihan that "one major problem you will have is on Israel." The U.S. had to "disassociate... a bit from Israel," after its behavior during Kissinger's recent attempt at shuttle diplomacy.<sup>74</sup> They had to "prevent [Israel] from becoming Sparta with only military solutions to every problem." Kissinger worried that the Israelis were looking for

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<sup>72</sup> Memcon, President Ford, Henry Kissinger and Daniel Patrick Moynihan, 12 April 1975, Box 10, Memcons, FDL.

<sup>73</sup> Memcon, President Ford, Henry Kissinger and Daniel Patrick Moynihan, 12 April 1975, Box 10, Memcons, FDL.

<sup>74</sup> For more on the Secretary's frustration with the Israelis see, Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 347-462.

a spokesman in international forums and they were likely, he said to Moynihan, to “work on you.” He must not allow the representatives of the Jewish state to “get the idea that our U.N. mission is an extension of theirs.” Moynihan was to be friendly to the Israelis, to support them whole-heartedly on G-77 attempts to expel them from the U.N. or elevate the PLO, but otherwise to avoid “blind support” of the Israelis.<sup>75</sup> The memo of conversation does not record much in the way of Moynihan’s response, but it is clear from his subsequent actions that the new U.N. Ambassador did not take this advice to heart.

News of the appointment leaked out to the press few days later, with the official nomination following in early May. Ambassador-to-be Moynihan was a much discussed and, in some circles, celebrated figure, well before he had taken a single official action. Editorials in the *New York Times* and *Christian Science Monitor* offered generally positive, if wary, appraisals of the appointment.<sup>76</sup> The *Times* found much that was “valid in Mr. Moynihan’s recently published indictments of third world [*sic*] behavior in the U.N.” but was concerned that a “public brawl with the third world would be likely to leave the United States more isolated than ever.”<sup>77</sup> Others were more enthusiastic. James Reston penned an op-ed that concluded with the sunny prediction that Moynihan would be “the most effective ambassador we have had at the U.N. since [Adlai] Stevenson.”<sup>78</sup> The new Ambassador received numerous positive and congratulatory letters from across the American scene, including from the President of Random House, a member of the State Department’s Policy Planning Staff and the Commander and Chief of the U.S.

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<sup>75</sup> Memcon, Henry Kissinger and Daniel Patrick Moynihan, 12 April 1975, Box 10, Memcons, FDL.

<sup>76</sup> “Upgrading the UN,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 22 March 1975, 22. “New Man at Turtle Bay,” *New York Times*, 3 May 1975, 17.

<sup>77</sup> “New Man at Turtle Bay,” *New York Times*, 3 May 1975, 17.

<sup>78</sup> James Reston, “A Talker is Tapped for United Nation's Job,” *Chicago Tribune*, 25 May 1975, c6.



Pacific Fleet.<sup>79</sup> With the nomination alone, Moynihan had earned a bully pulpit. His comments on international affairs would remain worthy of reporting throughout his tenure, as was the case in early May when he proclaimed that the United States needed to maintain its global leadership role. “Americans” he said, “should not be afraid of free markets and free enterprise” and must arrest the “erosion of belief in the value of liberty and the defense of democracy.”<sup>80</sup>

For all this attention, there was no shortage of skepticism. Doubts about Moynihan – and his *Commentary* article – emerged almost immediately.<sup>81</sup> Critics, friendly and otherwise, took him to task for conflating the former British Empire with the entire post-colonial world in his “British Revolution” idea.<sup>82</sup> More significantly, an alternative analysis of the origins of North-South hostility – and a correspondingly different prescription for action – was also being offered. This alternative saw Third World hostility as emerging due to American neglect both of the United Nations and the demands of the Third World. This view was articulated by many of the witnesses during a May, Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing on the U.S. relationship to the United Nations. Figures ranging from the, recently retired, Senator William J. Fulbright, to former Ambassador Charles Yost and Columbia Professor Richard Gardner, argued (to varying degrees) that the General Assembly was a reflection of the legitimate frustrations

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<sup>79</sup> Letter, Robert L. Bernstein to Daniel Patrick Moynihan, 25 April 1975, Folder 8, Box 1:325; Letter, Harry C. Blaney to Daniel Patrick Moynihan, 3 June 1975, Folder 8, Box 1:325; Letter, Admiral Noel Gayler to Daniel Patrick Moynihan, 7 May 1975, Folder 6, Box 1:327, Moynihan Papers.

<sup>80</sup> Irving Spiegel, “Moynihan Bids U.S. Retain World Role,” *New York Times*, 5 May 1975, 4.

<sup>81</sup> Henry Fairlie, “Moynihan the Exotic: Is He the Right Man for the U.N.?” *Washington Post*, 18 May 1975, 33.

<sup>82</sup> Irving Kristol was one of these, telling Moynihan he was “a little uncomfortable at the emphasis you place on the British socialist tradition.” Letter, Irving Kristol to Daniel Patrick Moynihan, 2 June 1975, Folder 9, Box 1:337, Moynihan Papers. According to John King’s memo to Robert Goldwin, this was also the primary objection of many in the State Department to the piece. Memo, John King to Robert Goldwin, “The Moynihan Article in *Commentary* Magazine,” 15 April 1975, Folder “Moynihan, Daniel (1),” Box 26, Robert Goldwin Papers, Ford Library.

of many in the Third World and that the Nixon administration had not given it the proper attention.<sup>83</sup> Similar views animated the wariness in the *New York Times* and *Christian Science Monitor*'s editorial endorsements of Moynihan's appointment. Analyses of this sort would eventually turn into full-fledged condemnations of Moynihan's diplomatic style, and undergird the Carter Administration's very different policies toward the United Nations.<sup>84</sup>

Yet, in the late spring of 1975 at least, the moment appeared to be Moynihan's. A number of the witnesses at the Senate Hearing, including former U.N. representative and Supreme Court Justice Arthur Goldberg, endorsed the new Ambassador's analysis of North-South relations. Moreover, all seemed to agree that, in the present crisis, what the U.N. needed the most was increased attention from the United States, and Moynihan appeared to promise that. For one thing, Moynihan did not entirely disagree with the idea that the U.S. had been neglecting the Third World, and indeed said so on several occasions.<sup>85</sup> Given his well-established liberal credentials – Buckley for one could never get through praising Moynihan without castigating his views on domestic policy – many of his would-be critics were willing to give him the benefit of the doubt.<sup>86</sup> Additionally the incredibly articulate, voluble and charming Irish-American was, by all accounts, hard to dislike. The *Monitor*, for example, believed that, if nothing else, his "appointment surely would reverse the image of American disinterest in the U.N." and that his "Irish

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<sup>83</sup> Committee on Foreign Relations of the United States Senate, *The United States and the United Nations and the Nomination of Daniel Patrick Moynihan to Be U.S. Representative to the United Nations with the Rank of Ambassador*, 94<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, May 7-22, June 4 1975.

<sup>84</sup> These will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

<sup>85</sup> "Moynihan Criticizes U.S. For Ignoring 3rd World," *Washington Post*, 26 May 1975, A23.

<sup>86</sup> For an example of Buckley doing this see: William F. Buckley Jr., "The Attack on Moynihan," *National Review* 27:23 (20 June 1975), 684-5.

sense of humor and fun wont hurt either.”<sup>87</sup> Ford received letters of approval simply based on Moynihan’s reputation. Miss Dorothy Dallmann of River Forest Illinois, wrote the President to express her appreciation for the nomination, believing that “ for too long the UN has been a forum for Communist and Third World countries to denounce the United States.”<sup>88</sup> Walter Caswell agreed, “we need a strong man in this world of political chaos,” he wrote, and “aid should be cut off from those nations who ‘spit’ on us.”<sup>89</sup> The Senate approved the nomination during a separate hearing in June.

#### MOYNIHAN’S PUSH FOR CONFRONTATION

Even with the addition of Moynihan, and the stress on acting “tough as nails,” the basic architecture of Kissinger’s strategy toward the Third World remained largely the same. This was demonstrated in a series of “major statements” in early to mid 1975 that, as one telegram described, were “part of a concerted and long-range effort of the United States to place our relationship and our dialogue with the developing world in multilateral forums on a new footing.”<sup>90</sup> These speeches, including a March address on relations with Latin America, two May speeches on the world economic structure, and another address in July on “Global Challenge and International Cooperation,” continued many of the themes touched on in 1974.<sup>91</sup> These include the idea of a world in transition from one age

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<sup>87</sup> “Upgrading the UN,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 22 May 1975, 22.

<sup>88</sup> Letter, Dorothy L. Dallmann to President Ford, 29 May 1975, Folder “Moynihan, Daniel P.,” Box 2257, Name File, White House Central Office File, Ford Library.

<sup>89</sup> Letter, Walter C. Caswell to President Ford, 18 May 1976, Folder “Moynihan, Daniel P.,” Box 2257, Name File, White House Central Office File, Ford Library.

<sup>90</sup> Telegram, SecState Washington DC to All Posts, “Secretary’s July 14 Speech on UN,” State 178841, 19 July 1975, Folder “USUN (State Department Telegrams - 3),” Box 21, Presidential Agency File, NSA, Ford Library.

<sup>91</sup> Henry Kissinger, “The United States and Latin America: New Opportunities,” 1 March 1975, *The Department of State Bulletin* 72:1865, 24 March 1975; Kissinger, “The Challenge of Peace,” 12 May 1974, *The Department of State Bulletin* 72:1875, 2 June 1975; Kissinger, “Strengthening the World Economic Structure,” *The Department of State Bulletin* 72:1875, 2 June 1975; Kissinger, “The Global Challenge and

to another and the need to make sure this new age was one of international cooperation rather than confrontation. Ambassadors in relevant capitols were instructed to draw attention to the speeches in meetings with their counterparts and stress the value that cooperation might bring, and also let them know “that [the U.S.] intends to contribute practical proposals designed to achieve mutual benefit and... provide the basis for serious work between DCs and LDCs.”<sup>92</sup>

The major difference from 1974 was that the threatening parts of Kissinger’s comments were more so, and also incorporated some of Moynihan’s ideas about defending America’s record. The July speech, in Milwaukee Wisconsin, for example, offered an explicit attack on bloc voting and the role of the Third World in creating the North-South divide. “Ideological confrontation, bloc voting and new attempts to manipulate the [U.N.] charter,” Kissinger said, “threatened to turn the United Nations into a weapon of political warfare rather than a healer of political conflict.” The speech was even more specific as to who was to blame a few paragraphs later. “It is an irony” he said, “that at the moment the United States has accepted nonalignment... those nations which originally chose this stance... are forming a rigid grouping of their own.” The Secretary also argued, in a section that reads much like portions of Moynihan’s *Commentary* article, that the U.S.’s history of economic success gave it important credentials when it came to debating the world economic structure. “In this quest for development” he told the audience “experience must count for something and ideology is an unreliable guide... we know which economies have worked and which have failed.”

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International Cooperation,” 14 July 1975, *The Department of State Bulletin* 73:1885, 4 August 1975, Public Papers of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, FDL.

<sup>92</sup> Telegram, SecState Washington DC to All Posts, “Secretary’s July 14 Speech on UN,” State 178841, 19 July 1975, Folder “USUN (State Department Telegrams - 3),” Box 21, Presidential Agency File, NSA, Ford Library.

Yet, for all this, Kissinger acknowledged that “at the same time, the industrialized world must adapt its own attitudes to the new realities of scores of new nations.”<sup>93</sup>

The idea behind this mixed policy, Kissinger had explained to Ford back in May, was to “project an image of the U.S. which is progressive.” It looked to avoid theoretical debates about the merits of capitalism, to be “tough on substance but not on the theory.” To “fuzz the ground” on international economics – obfuscating the issue, because, as Kissinger put it, “I don’t want to accept a New Economic Order, but I [also] don’t want to confront [the G-77 radicals].”<sup>94</sup> The Secretary put it another way in a week earlier, “we shouldn’t push so hard on the philosophic ‘free market’ pitch... we should deal pragmatically.”<sup>95</sup> The President agreed, believing that there was no need to argue with the Third World on theory if, in practice, they could just “screw up the negotiations” enough to avoid any problematic agreements.<sup>96</sup>

Kissinger’s flexibility continued to make other members of the government uncomfortable. His rhetorical openness to revisions in the global economic system did not sit well with some in the Department of Agriculture, the Treasury Department and on the President’s Council of Economic Advisors. These individuals, in particular Secretary of the Treasury William Simon, Agriculture Secretary Earl Butz and CEA chairman Alan Greenspan, were wary of statements that appeared to endorse, or leave the door open, to any form of international market controls. These differences emerged during a review of Kissinger’s May speech on the international economy in Kansas City.<sup>97</sup> The subject of

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<sup>93</sup> Henry Kissinger, “The Global Challenge and International Cooperation,” 14 July 1975, *The Department of State Bulletin* 73:1885, 4 August 1975, Public Papers of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, FDL.

<sup>94</sup> Memcon, President Ford and Henry Kissinger, 24 May 1975, Box 12, Memcons, FDL.

<sup>95</sup> Memcon, President Ford and Henry Kissinger, 14 May 1975, Box 11, Memcons, FDL.

<sup>96</sup> Memcon, President Ford and Henry Kissinger, 24 May 1975, Box 12, Memcons, FDL.

<sup>97</sup> One of the major statements mentioned above.

contention was commodities policy. The speech, while rejecting indexed commodity prices – an idea introduced by the NIEO whereby raw material prices would be based on the cost of finished industrial goods – appeared to leave the door open to other forms of commodity price fixing and stressed sympathy for the economic goals of the Third World.<sup>98</sup> Kissinger believed that arguments defending a free market in commodities were a non-starter globally and thus would do little to arrest the Third World’s push for cartelization of the international economy.<sup>99</sup> Simon and Greenspan disagreed, forcing Kissinger and his staff to consult with them further on the details of the speech.<sup>100</sup> Butz also had objections to some of the language, believing that Kissinger’s discussion of international food policy was “going to cut across the market system” and get “our farmers upset as the devil.”<sup>101</sup> The Secretary made some changes, but on the whole manage to prevail on the President that it was important to give ground on rhetoric in order to hold it on substance. “Greenspan is a theoretician” the Secretary said, “he wants to vindicate a system no one will support.” It was a better idea to simply avoid making any firm commitments, Kissinger argued. If the United States appeared progressive enough, it would be able to preserve solidarity among the other industrial nations (who were more inclined to make concessions) and give LDC moderates enough room for compromise. Ford agreed.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Henry Kissinger, “Strengthening the World Economic Structure,” *The Department of State Bulletin* 72:1875, 2 June 1975, Public Papers of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, FDL.

<sup>99</sup> Memcon, President Ford and Henry Kissinger, 5 May 1975, Box 11, Memcons, FDL.

<sup>100</sup> Kissinger, in fact, believed that Simon did not want the speech given: Telecon, Secretary Kissinger and Tom Enders, 12 May 1975, KA13655, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA. See also: Telecon, Secretary Kissinger and Secretary Simon, 10:45, 8 May 1975, KA13640; Telecon, Secretary Kissinger and Tom Enders, 10:24, 8 May 1975, KA13639; Telecon, Secretary Kissinger and Bill Siedman, 10:44 AM, 12 May 1975, KA13657, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA.

<sup>101</sup> Telecon, Secretary Kissinger and Secretary Butz, 2:00PM, 12 May 1975, KA13663, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA.

<sup>102</sup> Memcon, President Ford and Henry Kissinger, 24 May 1975, Box 12, Memcons, FDL.

Thus entering the U.N. General Assembly's Seventh Special Session – on development and international economic cooperation – in September, it was Kissinger's flexible and pragmatic approach that governed U.S. policy. Initially, Moynihan meshed well with the strategy. U.S. objectives at the conference were focused primarily on conveying a certain image. As one planning document put it, the U.S. was “to demonstrate to the world and the American people that the United States in the post-Vietnam era is not drawing into itself” and was rather ready “to move on with serious efforts to work effectively on key problems of worldwide concern to both the DCs... and LDCs.” The delegation needed to help “maintain a leading and respected role” for the U.S. while “maintaining basic U.S. interests [and avoiding] a situation in which we are completely isolated and appear the lone defender of status quo policies.”<sup>103</sup> Moynihan's notes from a June 18<sup>th</sup> planning meeting with Kissinger reveal that, despite this new packaging, the true purpose of this exercise was the same as in previous years: to “keep the industrial nations together” and to “split the third world.” The centerpiece was to be Kissinger's speech to the Session – which Moynihan would deliver on his behalf – and was to be, as Moynihan recorded, “sweeping and progressive.”<sup>104</sup>

The strategy proved a success. Leaks in advance of the meeting, promising a more accommodating U.S. bargaining position, helped establish a positive atmosphere even before the session began.<sup>105</sup> The Secretary's speech, however, was the real showstopper. Widely applauded by G-77 representatives, many saw the speech as indicative of a

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<sup>103</sup> Memo, “Our Objectives for the Special Session Should Be,” [Undated], Folder 7, Box 1:341, Moynihan Papers.

<sup>104</sup> Typed Notes, “Meeting to Discuss 7<sup>th</sup> Special Session U.S. Speech: K- June 18th,” Folder 7, Box 1:341, Moynihan Papers.

<sup>105</sup> Telegram, AmEmbassy Mexico to SecState Washington DC, “Conversation with Foreign Secretary Rabasa: UNGA Seventh Special Session,” Mexico 07750, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

significant U.S. shift – or “tilt,” as Charles Yost approvingly wrote in an editorial – toward accepting Third World demands.<sup>106</sup> The speech made a number of proposals for moderate programs to aid economic growth in the Global South. Some of the highlights included a new International Monetary Fund loan facility for stabilizing Third World export earnings, an increase in development funds for the World Bank, efforts to spur private capital investment in the developing world, and increased technical assistance. Kissinger also indicated that, while the United States was still opposed to indexing, it was willing to consider other commodity arrangements on a case-by-case basis – including the possibility of using “buffer stocks” as a means of controlling prices. This major concession was punctuated by the Secretary’s announcement that the U.S. would sign the Fifth International Tin Agreement, despite long standing antipathy to the program.<sup>107</sup> The speech was popular with much of the American press as well, though some perceptively wondered whether the Secretary’s proposals were intended merely to placate and thus avoid more far reaching concession to the Global South.<sup>108</sup>

The actual negotiations over the language of the session’s final agreement were, according to their American participants, grueling and often contentious. They were

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<sup>106</sup> Charles Yost, “Kissinger's New 'Third-World' Tilt,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 11 September 1975, 28. On the positive reaction see: David Anable, “Third World Welcomes U.S. Ideas,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 3 September 1975, 1. “Kissinger U.N. Speech Well Received,” *Washington Post*, 2 September 1975, A12. For samples of international reaction see: Telegram, AmEmbassy Beirut to SecState Washington DC, “Secretary’s Speech at UNGA Special Session,” Beirut 11076, 3 September 1975; Telegram, AmEmbassy Niamey to SecState Washington DC, “Secretary’s Speech at UNGA Special Session,” Niamey 03529, 5 September 1975; Telegram, AmEmbassy La Paz to SecState Washington DC, Secretary’s Speech at UNGA Special Session,” La Paz 06173, 4 September 1975, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

<sup>107</sup> Henry Kissinger, “Global Consensus and Economic Development,” 1 September 1975, *Department of State Bulletin* 73:1891, 22 September 1975, Public Papers of Henry Kissinger, Ford Library.

<sup>108</sup> Donald Kirk, “U.S. Goes on Offensive Against U.N. Opponents,” *Chicago Tribune*, 2 September 1975, 1. “U.S. Heeds ‘Third World’ Cry,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 3 September 1975, 18. “Welcome Initiative,” *New York Times*, 2 September 1975, 30. “Winning the Fourth World,” *Wall Street Journal*, 26 September 1975, 26. Concern about the “gimmick” narrative reached the point that the Department considered how to counteract it: Telegram, SecState Washington DC to USMission USUN, “Christian Science Monitor Story,” State 214660, 10 September 1975, Folder 7, Box 1:341, Moynihan Papers.



notable, however, for actually involving negotiation. Previous North-South encounters, like that in the 6<sup>th</sup> Special Session, had consisted mostly of increasingly hostile exchanges of demands, followed by the G-77 using its numerical majority to force through its preferred resolutions. Instead the U.S.'s forthcoming rhetoric had emboldened the G-77's moderates to take the lead. The group "refrained," as Moynihan described it, "from trying to jam things down our throats by voting [on] them first [as a] group and presenting us with a *fait accompli*" as had been the case in the special session the previous year. This time, when the radical group – led once again by Algeria – attempted to "abort the process" on the final day of negotiations, they "were voted down" by the rest of the group. Armed with actual proposals (rather than simply hoping to stonewall the proceedings) the American negotiators felt as if they were finally able to control the process: "we had the initiative," Moynihan reported, "in forming and proposing positions."<sup>109</sup> The conference thus produced something that had eluded most previous North-South meetings: a consensus agreement.

Admittedly, it was a consensus that included number of formal U.S. reservations and was accompanied by a strenuous public assertion that the U.S. did "not accept any implication that the world [was] now embarked upon the establishment of something called the new international economic order."<sup>110</sup> Yet in the context of several years of unproductive confrontation, many saw the outcome as a positive sign. U.S. diplomats reported from a number of capitols that their Third World counterparts saw the session as a potential turning point – one that had been reached largely due to American

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<sup>109</sup> Telegram, SecState Washington DC to AmEmbassy Sofia, "Seventh Special Session," State 221160, 17 September 1975, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

<sup>110</sup> Don Shannon, "Rich, Poor Nations Compromise on Aid," *Los Angeles Times*, 17 September 1975, a12.

concessions.<sup>111</sup> Indonesian Foreign Minister Adam Malik said that the session showed the “U.S. is now trying to the maximum extent possible to find common cause between itself and other factions.”<sup>112</sup> The U.S. delegation had managed to accomplish nearly all its objectives. As Moynihan described it in a telegram to Washington, they had “re-established US leadership” and produced a “final document which does no violence to our central objectives and yet goes far enough to strengthen the hand of G-77 moderates... and put a monkey wrench in the machine of the New International Economic Order.”<sup>113</sup>

Moynihan’s tenure at USUN had started well. Though Kissinger on several occasions saw need to rein Moynihan in from positions likely to be unpopular with the Treasury department, he had proved an able negotiator.<sup>114</sup> For all of “In Opposition’s” discussion of the virtues of economic freedom, the Ambassador remained at heart a social democrat, and thus he was as open as Kissinger, if not more so, to making concessions on economic issues. The only real hint of trouble came when Moynihan, seeking to gain approval for including a higher promised aid level in the agreement, went outside the State Department chain of command and appealed directly to Donald Rumsfeld. The Secretary of State was not pleased.<sup>115</sup> The Ambassador apologized and all seemed well

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<sup>111</sup> Telegram, AmEmbassy Kigali to SecState Washington DC, “Rwandan Reaction to USG Initiatives Seventh Special Session,” Kigali 00561, 24 September 1975; Telegram, AmEmbassy New Delhi to SecState Washington DC, “Government of India Views on Seventh Special Session,” New Delhi 12677, 19 September 1975; Telegram, AmEmbassy Jakarta to SecState Washington DC, “Malik Calls UNGA Seventh Special Session Promising,” Jakart 11378, 16 September 1975, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

<sup>112</sup> Telegram, AmEmbassy Jakarta to SecState Washington DC, “Malik Calls UNGA Seventh Special Session Promising,” Jakart 11378, 16 September 1975, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

<sup>113</sup> Telegram, US Mission USUN to SecState Washington DC, “UNGA Seventh Special Session: Wrap-Up,” USUN N04304, 16 September 1975, NARA RG-59, AAD.

<sup>114</sup> Telecon, Secretary Kissinger and Ambassador Moynihan, 12:20 PM, 13 September 1975, KA14038; Telecon, Secretary Kissinger and Mr. Yoe, 12:25 PM, 13 September 1975, KA14039, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA.

<sup>115</sup> Telecon, Secretary Kissinger and Ambassador Moynihan, 1:50 PM, 15 September 1975, KA14051, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA.

for the moment, but Moynihan's independence and outspokenness would soon sour their relationship.

Moynihan's first major public controversy was over comments he made about Ugandan dictator Idi Amin and the Organization of African Unity. Amin had distinguished himself internationally by becoming one of the world's most brutal, outspoken, and outlandish dictators. Among his other accomplishments, Amnesty International has estimated that as many as half a million people met early deaths during his 1971-9 rule.<sup>116</sup> Though initially somewhat pro-Western in orientation, Amin had by 1975 become a prominent member of the G-77's radical wing and an able – or at least frequent – employer of the rhetoric of post-colonial African nationalism. He was by this point also a strong supporter of the P.L.O. and thoroughgoing enemy of Israel, regularly calling for the eradication of the Jewish state. Tanzanian ruler Julius Nyerere later described him as “a murderer, a liar and a savage,” but in the mid-1970s U.N. this kind of, or indeed any, criticism of Amin was hard to come by.<sup>117</sup> The Ugandan leader drew Moynihan's ire with his October 1st speech to the Assembly. During the 97 minute-long speech – which was read for him by his Ambassador – Amin called for the expulsion of Israel from the United Nations and its “extinction... as a state.” The Ugandan leader, who sat alongside the podium in a full dress uniform bedecked in medals, also said that the United States had “been colonized by the Zionists, who hold all the tools of power” in the country.<sup>118</sup> Though a few Western countries, and the Israelis, walked out, Amin's address was treated with a standing ovation from the assembled delegates.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> Patrick Keatley, “Obituary: Idi Amin,” *The Guardian*, 17 August 2003.

<sup>117</sup> Nyerere quoted in: Keatley, “Obituary: Idi Amin,” *The Guardian*, 17 August 2003.

<sup>118</sup> “Amin Urges Extinction of Israel in UN Speech,” *Chicago Tribune*, 2 October 1975, 14.

<sup>119</sup> Bruce W. Munn, “Amin Likes Jews, Not Zionism,” *Chicago Defender*, 4 October 1975, 4.

During a speech to the AFL/CIO Annual Convention on the 5<sup>th</sup>, Moynihan used Amin, and his call for the destruction of Israel, as an example of what he saw as a war being against democracy in the Third World. It was “no accident,” he told the Union, that “this racist murderer” had called for Israel’s extinction because “Israel is a democracy and it is simply the fact that despotisms will seek whatever opportunities come to hand to destroy that which threatens them most... democracy.” He also claimed that it was “no accident” that Amin was the head of the Organization of African Unity, implying that the O.A.U. was itself an instrument of this war on democratic government.<sup>120</sup>

Moynihan’s comments made headlines once again, with the *New York Times* reporting that his criticism of the Ugandan had “U.N. people buzzing.”<sup>121</sup> Both the O.A.U. and the Arab league castigated the speech. An O.A.U. spokesman called it an “uncivil” attack and a “deliberate act of provocation,” adding that Moynihan must have confused his U.N. job with one defending Zionism. The speech, he continued, threatened U.S. ties to Africa.<sup>122</sup> The Arab League, meanwhile, accused Moynihan of violating basic diplomatic courtesy.<sup>123</sup> The most controversial part of the speech was Moynihan’s claim that it was “no accident” that Amin was heading the O.A.U. and the corresponding implication that the dictator was a typical leader for Africa. Unfortunately for Moynihan, it was, technically speaking, an accident, as the job rotated amongst the organization’s membership.

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<sup>120</sup> Press Release, “Address by Ambassador Daniel P. Moynihan, United States Representative to the United Nations, at the AFL/CIO 11<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Convention, San Francisco, 3 October 1975,” 5 October 1975, Folder 7, Box 1:344, Moynihan Papers.

<sup>121</sup> Paul Hofmann, “Moynihan Criticism of Amin Has U.N. People Buzzing,” *New York Times*, 5 October 1975, 2.

<sup>122</sup> Don Shannon, “Moynihan's Remarks on Amin Threaten U.S. Ties With All Africa, Dahomean Says,” *Los Angeles Times*, 7 October 1975, a4.

<sup>123</sup> Kathleen Teltsch, “Africans and Arabs Denounce Moynihan in the U.N.,” *New York Times*, 7 October 1975, 73.

Kissinger was not pleased, believing that the speech was an unnecessary provocation and that it was “demeaning for the United States to have to deal with Amin anyway.” It was, however, the part about the O.A.U. that he disliked in particular.<sup>124</sup> The President initially backed Moynihan completely, apparently thinking Moynihan had only attacked Amin personally and not the O.A.U. Kissinger managed to get the White House to issue a clarification – backing only the “racist murderer” comments and distancing itself from the O.A.U. portion – a move which Moynihan resented.<sup>125</sup> These subtleties, however, did little to alter the impression that, as a *Chicago Tribune* headline put it, the U.S. was escalating the “talking war with [the] Third World.”<sup>126</sup> Soon reports were emerging that the “goodwill” that had emerged between the U.S. and the G-77 after the Special Session was already “beginning to fray at the edges.”<sup>127</sup>

The Amin incident would, however, pale in comparison to the controversy that surrounded Moynihan’s strident opposition to U.N. General Assembly Resolution 3379, or – as it was widely known – the “Zionism is Racism” resolution. 3379 represented a significant triumph for the Arab effort to use the United Nations to grant international legitimacy to the Palestinian Liberation Organization and undermine that of Israel. Reflecting the U.N. – and, by the mid-1970s, fairly global – consensus the colonialism and imperialism were illegitimate, this undertaking looked to define the P.L.O. as a national liberation movement akin to those that had fought against European imperialism.

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<sup>124</sup> Telecon, Secretary Kissinger and Deputy Secretary Ingersoll, 4:35 PM, 9 October 1975, KA141713, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA.

<sup>125</sup> Moynihan’s assistant would include it in a list of times the Ambassador had not gotten full support from the State Department (see discussion by footnote 162). Memo, Suzanne Weaver to Ambassador Moynihan, “To Refresh Memories on the Question of State Department Support,” 23 November 1975, Folder 1, Box 1:344, Moynihan Papers.

<sup>126</sup> Donald Kirk, “U. S. Escalates Talking War with Third World,” *Chicago Tribune*, 7 October 1975, 4.

<sup>127</sup> David Anable, “Moynihan-’3rd world’ Clash Dents UN Amity,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 8 October 1975, 3.

This process had seen its first major success the previous year when the Assembly – in a lopsided vote – granted the P.L.O. official observer status at the U.N. and invited Yasser Arafat to address the Assembly. The Zionism/Racism resolution was the next step in this process. In the anti-imperialist lexicon of the U.N., “racism” was a catchall term used to describe all ideological systems premised on race, including colonialism, segregation and apartheid. Thus in its determination that “Zionism is a form of racism and racial discrimination,” 3379 did not simply declare Israeli nationalist ideology racist but also a colonial project and the equivalent of white supremacy in southern Africa. The resolution therefore placed Israel, as far as the United Nations was concerned, on the wrong side of history, to be counted, along with white supremacy and imperialism, as among the G-77’s greatest foes.

For Henry Kissinger, the resolution was mostly an annoyance, something which complicated his attempts to bring about a settlement in the Middle East and maintain public and congressional support for his North-South economic proposals. Moynihan saw it differently: for him the resolution was yet another example of the U.N. majority attempting to delegitimize democracy. First emerging in the General Assembly’s Humanitarian, Social and Cultural, or “Third,” Committee in October, the Zionism/Racism almost immediately led to tension between Moynihan and the Secretary. Despite determined Western efforts to prevent its adoption, and uncharacteristic division amongst the African group, the Committee approved the resolution for consideration by the whole Assembly.<sup>128</sup> USUN, under Moynihan’s direction, offered dramatic protest

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<sup>128</sup> Telegram, US Mission USUN to SecState Washington DC, “Third Committee – Racial Discrimination,” USUN N 04977, 14 October 1975; Telegram, US Mission USUN to SecState Washington DC, “Third Committee Debate on Introduction of Zionism Resolution Under Racial Discrimination Item,” USUN N 05058, 16 October 1975, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

with Leonard Garment, the U.S. Ambassador to the Third Committee, labeling the vote an “obscene act.”<sup>129</sup> Moynihan himself sent an excited telegram to the Department for passing to all posts proclaiming that the twenty nine nations that had voted against had made a stand worthy of praise: “an issue of honor, of morality, was put before us and not all of us ran.”<sup>130</sup> Moynihan was disturbed by the lack of support for the U.S. position from Latin American allies, in particular Chile and Brazil. An unnamed “highly placed” USUN official – who almost certainly was Moynihan – made front page news by proclaiming that the Chileans had sold their vote to the Arabs in return for help avoiding resolutions condemning Chile’s human rights record.<sup>131</sup> Kissinger was annoyed, believing that Moynihan was threatening U.S. relations with these countries for a relatively minor issue. He instructed his deputy, Lawrence Eagleburger, to make “Moynihan understand that this vote is not the only aspect of our relations with [Brazil and Chile] or other countries.”<sup>132</sup> As he would put it in a later staff meeting, “to threaten a major country with a bilateral consequence” for “one vote in the United Nations” was “insane.” While Kissinger said he had been working “for two years” to get people to pay more attention to what the Third World was doing in the U.N., the Department had to be careful of “the limit to which we can carry these multilateral matters.”<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> “U.N. Panel Calls Zionism Racist,” *Los Angeles Times*, 18 October 1975, 2.

<sup>130</sup> The telegram’s highly unusual subject line is worth noting: Telegram, US Mission USUN to SecState Washington DC, “Wherein the United Nations Commences to Self Destruct; The Black Africans Stand up for Their Own interests and Break with the Arabs: The Fascists in Chile and Assorted Like Minded Folk in Latin America Line Up with the Antisemites of Other Equally Progressive Parts of the World: And Wherein What is More the United States Ends Up in Fit and Sufficient Company,” USUN N 05150, 18 October 1975, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

<sup>131</sup> Paul Hofmann, “U.S. Aide Charges Chile Sold U.N. Vote to Arabs,” *New York Times*, 19 October 1975, 1.

<sup>132</sup> Telegram, US Del Secretary in Tokyo to SecState Washington DC, “UN,” SECTO 16118, 23 October 1975, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

<sup>133</sup> Memcon, “The Secretary’s 8:00 AM Staff Meeting,” 5 November 1975, KT01824, *Kissinger Transcripts*, DNSA.

Meanwhile, the Third Committee's vote was causing near universal outrage in the United States. Most the major papers wrote editorials condemning the move, including the *Los Angeles Times*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, and the *Washington Post*.<sup>134</sup> The Senate passed a resolution assailing the vote and warning the U.N. that it threatened the future of the organization. Senator Hubert Humphrey, the sponsor of the bill, claimed that the resolution "weakens those in this country and around the world who are dedicated to the destruction of all forms of racism" by wrongly condemning "a central philosophical thrust of modern Jewish thought."<sup>135</sup> Letters poured into the White House from individuals and organizations opposed to the resolution. By early November the White House press office had received "400 or 500 messages" on the subject.<sup>136</sup> These included statements of protest from local Jewish and other religious organizations, the Rochester New York Chapter of the U.N. Association, the National Board of the Y.W.C.A., and the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights.<sup>137</sup> Brent Scowcroft cabled Kissinger to alert him that domestic pressure on the resolution had reached a point where the President was "probably going to have to make some kind" of official statement.<sup>138</sup> Despite internal pressure from Robert Goldwyn for – what Scowcroft called – a "flamboyant" statement, Ford issued a somewhat more mild release deploring "in the strongest terms the recent vote in the Social Committee characterizing

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<sup>134</sup> "Anti-Zionism and the U.N.," *Los Angeles Times*, 23 October 1975, d6. "Defusing the anti-Zionism Issue," *Christian Science Monitor*, 24 October 1975, 22. "Cynical Diplomacy," *New York Times*, 24 October 1975, 36. "Moment of Truth," *Wall Street Journal*, 24 October 1975, 16. "Is Zionism Racist?," *Washington Post*, 26 October 1975, D4.

<sup>135</sup> "Senate Assails U.N. for Resolution on Zionism," *Los Angeles Times*, 29 October 1975, a22.

<sup>136</sup> Memo, David Lissy to Carole Farrar, "Replies to Letters on UN vote on Zionism/ Racism," 5 November 1975, Folder "Zionism – United Nations Vote (1)," Box 43, David Lissy Files, Ford Library.

<sup>137</sup> For these and other letters on the subject see both Folder 1 and 2 of "Zionism – United Nations Vote," in Box 43, David Lissy Files, Ford Library.

<sup>138</sup> Telegram, Brent Scowcroft to Henry Kissinger, TOHAK 46, 22 October 1975, Folder "October 19-23 1975, TOHAK (4)," Box 22, Trip Briefing Books and Cables of Henry Kissinger, NSA, Ford Library.



Zionism as a form of racism.”<sup>139</sup> Popular pressure forced the President to issue another statement in early November, this time to the attendees at a rally in New York City. Called together by the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations, the rally was expected to (and did) draw at least 30,000 participants to protest the U.N.’s actions.<sup>140</sup>

Riding high on this wave of public resentment was Daniel Moynihan, who was closely associated in the public mind with American opposition to Zionism/Racism. The President’s statements and form letters all went out of their way to mention Ford’s “firm support for Ambassador Moynihan.”<sup>141</sup> Conservative editorialists in the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Chicago Tribune* praised Moynihan and promulgated his ideas. The *Journal* proclaimed that the Third Committee vote revealed that “as Mr. Moynihan avers... nothing less than the values of Western liberal democracy are under attack from despotisms of both left and right.” Moynihan, the editorial continued, was “performing a unique public service by dragging this incident into public view.”<sup>142</sup> A contributor to the *Tribune* said Moynihan was “good medicine for the U.S.” because “as in the cold war days when our U.N. ambassadors had to talk right back at the Soviet Union we are now in a verbal confrontation with the Third World.”<sup>143</sup> Moynihan did his best to fan these flames, garnering headlines with his calls for rejecting the resolution.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> Gerald Ford, “Statement on a United Nations Draft Resolution Concerning Zionism,” 24 October 1975, *American Presidency Project*.

<sup>140</sup> Memo, David Lissy to Robert Goldwin, “Administration Action Regarding New York City Rally Against Racism and Anti-Semitism,” 6 November 1975, Folder “Zionism – United Nations Vote (1),” Box 43, David Lissy Files, Ford Library.

<sup>141</sup> Memo, David Lissy to Carole Farrar, “Replies to Letters on UN vote on Zionism/ Racism,” 5 November 1975, Folder “Zionism – United Nations Vote (1),” Box 43, David Lissy Files, Ford Library.

<sup>142</sup> “Moment of Truth,” *Wall Street Journal*, 24 October 1975, 16.

<sup>143</sup> Nick Thimmesch, “Good medicine for the U.S.,” *Chicago Tribune*, 24 October 1975, a3.

<sup>144</sup> “Moynihan Says U.N. Must Bar Resolution Condemning Zionism,” *New York Times*, 22 October 1975, 4. Don Shannon, “U.N. Zionism Vote Called Losers’ Victory,” *Los Angeles Times*, 22 October 1975, b11.

Kissinger was less enthusiastic. Still attempting to advance his agenda in the Middle East, and to prepare for the Paris CIEC North-South meeting (mentioned in the previous chapter), the Zionism business threatened to disrupt his plans.<sup>145</sup> This is not to suggest that Kissinger did not deplore the resolution. In a phone conversation with Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme, the Secretary called the resolution “senseless.” To attach, he said, “a stigma to the State of Israel on Jewish grounds makes the problem insolvable” and the U.S. “domestic situation very much more difficult for no purpose.”<sup>146</sup> Still, Kissinger did not want the U.S. in the forefront of opposition and, as far as he was concerned, it did not need to be. The Western Europeans had decided, as a group, to take a strong stand against Resolution 3379. Kissinger ordered his Ambassadors to talk “with European colleagues and, after they make their approaches, make supportive effort with host government wherever posts think this would be helpful.”<sup>147</sup> This was hardly the stirring call to arms Moynihan was seeking in his public statements, or in his telegrams to the State Department.<sup>148</sup> The U.S. was instead taking, as I.O. Secretary, William Buffum reported to Kissinger, “a low-key second hand role.”<sup>149</sup> Whether or not a stronger American effort in the capitols of the Global South would have made a difference is not clear, but the final results were not exactly close. The U.S., Canadians and Europeans made a last ditch effort to force a deferral of the resolution during the Plenary debate on

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<sup>145</sup> Kissinger’s staff, for example, was concerned that the vote might make a public discussion of a Generalized System of Tariff Preferences (see chapter 1) politically impossible: Memcon, “The Secretary’s 8:00 AM Staff Meeting,” 13 November 1975, KT01825, *Kissinger Transcripts*, DNSA.

<sup>146</sup> Telecon, Secretary Kissinger and Prime Minister Palme, 2:45 PM, 13 November 1975, KA14345, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA.

<sup>147</sup> Telegram, SecState Washington DC to All Diplomatic Posts, “30<sup>th</sup> UNGA – Anti-Zionism Resolution,” State 259569, 1 November 1975, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

<sup>148</sup> Telegram, US Mission USUN to SecState Washington DC, “US Efforts to Prevent Adoption of Anti-Zionist Resolution,” USUN 05493, 31 October 1975, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

<sup>149</sup> Telecon, Secretary Kissinger and Ambassador Buffum, 5:00 PM, 31 October 1975, KA14260, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA.

November 10.<sup>150</sup> Their motion was defeated 67 to 55 with 15 abstentions and the U.N. subsequently declared Zionism a form of racism by a 72-35 vote with 32 abstentions.<sup>151</sup>

Following the vote, Moynihan delivered a defiant, almost theatrical, address condemning the resolution. “The United States,” he proclaimed, “rises to declare before the General Assembly of the United Nations, and before the world, that it does not acknowledge, it will not abide by, it will never acquiesce in this infamous act.” The Resolution, he told the assembled nations, was an “obscenity,” an “infamous act” and November 10<sup>th</sup> 1975, a “day of infamy.” With it, he told the assembled representatives, the U.N. had granted “symbolic amnesty – and more – to the murders of the six million Jews.”<sup>152</sup> Kissinger was furious. He had ordered Moynihan, via Buffum, to “tone down the speech,” and remove the line about “symbolic amnesty” in particular. “It’s just too much” he had said, “we are conducting foreign policy... this is not a synagogue.”<sup>153</sup> It was on the following morning that Kissinger proclaimed Moynihan “a long term problem” in his meeting with Ford.<sup>154</sup> Later in the day, he confronted Moynihan by phone. “That speech was too nasty,” he told him, “it is a good issue but we can’t have our whole foreign policy revolve around it.” While the Secretary had brought Moynihan on to “stand up” for U.S., the country could not be “embroiled in an issue every day and be confrontational.”<sup>155</sup> Moynihan was polite, but hardly apologetic, and indeed did not need

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<sup>150</sup> Telegram, US Mission USUN to SecState Washington DC, “Efforts to Persuade Sierra Leone to Move to Defer Anti-Zionism Resolution,” USUN N 05694, 6 November 1975, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

<sup>151</sup> Telegram, SecState Washington DC to All Diplomatic Posts, “UN Plenary Vote on Anti-Zionism Resolution,” State 267380, 12 November 1975, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

<sup>152</sup> The text of the speech may be found in Troy, *Moynihan’s Moment*, 275-80.

<sup>153</sup> Buffum was happy to convey the message, claiming, with apparent sarcasm, that, he “thought Pat was being converted.” Telecon, Secretary Kissinger and Ambassador Buffum, 4:25 PM, 10 November 1975, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, KA14329.

<sup>154</sup> Memcon, President Ford and Henry Kissinger, 11 November 1975. Box 16, Memcons, FDL.

<sup>155</sup> Telecon, Secretary Kissinger and Ambassador Moynihan, 11:20 AM, 11 November 1975, KA14333, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA.

to be. The Plenary vote and his speech had launched another round of public excitement, with additional letters and resolutions pouring into the White House and USUN.<sup>156</sup>

However popular he was at home, Moynihan was reportedly causing the U.S. significant problems abroad. An NSC “outside the system” memo to Brent Scowcroft warned that there was “an increasingly disturbing trend in how our actions are viewed by other governments.” Moynihan’s activities were “giving comfort to those who are truly working against us, alienating those who disagree with us often but are not hostile, and dismaying our friends.”<sup>157</sup> Indeed, Moynihan had not simply annoyed U.S. enemies in the Third World but its friends. The Ambassador had used his popularity to more or less force Henry Kissinger into allowing him to introduce, on November 12<sup>th</sup>, a draft resolution calling for amnesty for all political prisoners worldwide – a proposition as potentially embarrassing to pro-American dictators like Chile’s Augusto Pinochet as to anyone else.<sup>158</sup>

The Europeans were uncomfortable too, a point brought home rather dramatically by Britain’s Ambassador to the U.N., Ivor Richard. The British politician turned diplomat launched a thinly veiled attack on Moynihan during a speech to the United Nations Association in New York. “I’ve spent a lot of time preventing rows at the United Nations,” he said, “whatever the place is, it’s not the O.K. Corral and I am hardly Wyatt

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<sup>156</sup> For example letters to the White House see: Folder 1 and 2 of “Zionism – United Nations Vote,” in Box 43, David Lissy Files, Ford Library. For those to USUN see: Folder 3 and 4, “Fan Mail,” Box 1:325, Moynihan Papers.

<sup>157</sup> Memo, Hal Horan and Robert Oakley to Brent Scowcroft, “The United States, Moynihan and the United Nations,” 31 October 1975, Folder 1, Box 21, Presidential Agency File, NSA, Ford Library.

<sup>158</sup> For text of the amnesty draft resolution see: “U.S. Draft on Amnesty,” *New York Times*, 13 November 1975, 8. On Kissinger feeling blackmailed see: Telecon, Secretary Kissinger and Ambassador Buffum, 3:10 PM, 5 November 1975, KA14299, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA.

Earp.”<sup>159</sup> The British Foreign Office backed Richard’s statements and the U.S. State Department made no public defense of Moynihan. Subsequently stories appeared in the press, citing unnamed diplomats, reporting that Moynihan was alienating nearly everyone in the U.N.<sup>160</sup> The situation escalated further when William Safire published an essay in the *New York Times* claiming that Kissinger had encouraged the British attack on Moynihan during a dinner with Prime Minister Callaghan at the Rambouillet conference.<sup>161</sup> The Ambassador, who apparently already felt that the State Department was not giving him proper support, believed the story and made preparations to resign.<sup>162</sup> He had his assistant Suzanne Weaver draw up a list of occasions that the Department had not supported Moynihan and scheduled a press conference to announce his departure.<sup>163</sup>

The story developed into a major political scandal, fitting in well with prevalent U.S. political narratives in late 1975 and 1976. The Moynihan-Kissinger scandal drew upon and accentuated a growing political divide between opponents and proponents of a more aggressive U.S. foreign policy, with Kissinger an increasingly unpopular figure amongst conservatives. This will be discussed in more detail presently, but for the moment it is sufficient to note that who opposed Henry Kissinger’s policies were already championing Moynihan and now simply had additional reason to do so. Moynihan’s

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<sup>159</sup> Paul Hofmann, “Moynihan's Style in the U.N. Is Now an Open Debate,” *New York Times*, 21 November 1975, 3.

<sup>160</sup> “Envoy Disclaims Moynihan Attack,” *Washington Post*, 24 November 1975, A11.

<sup>161</sup> William Safire, “Henry & Pat & Ivor,” *New York Times*, 24 November 1975, 35.

<sup>162</sup> Although Kissinger was certainly unhappy with Moynihan, there is no direct evidence to support or disprove Safire’s claim. Kissinger, for his part, denied it both in public and private. For his private denials, to Moynihan, a reporter, and British Ambassador to the U.S. Peter Ramsbotham, see: Telecon, Secretary Kissinger and Ambassador Moynihan, 4:45 PM, 21 November 1975, KA14381; Secretary Kissinger and Mr. Richard Valeriani, 5:03 PM, 21 November 1975, KA14382; Telecon, Secretary Kissinger and Ambassador Ramsbotham,” 9:40 AM, 22 November 1975, KA14391, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA.

<sup>163</sup> Memo, Suzanne Weaver to Ambassador Moynihan, “To Refresh Memories on the Question of State Department Support,” 23 November 1975, Folder 1, Box 1:344, Moynihan Papers.

threat to resign was thus immediately addressed by Administration officials who wished to avoid another high profile loss to the cabinet so soon after Ford's infamous "Halloween Massacre" in early November.<sup>164</sup> Already angry at the loss of the conservative Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger, firing the very popular Moynihan threatened to agitate conservatives even more. Thus Ford and Kissinger went out of their way to keep Moynihan happy – getting him to cancel his scheduled November 21<sup>st</sup> news conference mere minutes before its start.<sup>165</sup> Kissinger called Moynihan both that morning and later in the afternoon to placate him saying that the accusation that he colluded with Callaghan, was "too disgraceful to be discussed amongst serious people."<sup>166</sup> Both the Secretary and the President asserted publically their complete support for the U.N. Ambassador and his diplomatic style.<sup>167</sup>

However, the effort to mend fences in November did little more than paper over the growing rift between the Secretary and the Ambassador. When former Secretary of State Dean Rusk phoned Kissinger a day later to say that Moynihan was a major liability with nations both North and South, Kissinger couldn't agree more. Rusk, pointing to a recent U.N. vote condemning U.S. military bases on Guam, said that even allies with an interest in these bases (like Australia and New Zealand) had voted against the U.S. He believed this should be attributed to the "tactics of our principle delegate up there."

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<sup>164</sup> The "massacre" was a reshuffling of the Cabinet meant to address both personnel problems and address Ford's flagging poll numbers. Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger, popular with conservatives for his hard-line position on the SALT talks but unpopular with the President and Kissinger for the same reason, was fired and replaced with Donald Rumsfeld. Dick Cheney took over for Rumsfeld as White House Chief of Staff and William Colby was replaced with George H.W. Bush as director of the CIA. Kissinger, increasingly unpopular, lost his joint appointment as both National Security Advisor and Secretary of State – "demoted" to the Secretary's job alone. He was replaced in the White House by his deputy Brent Scowcroft. While this move reduced – or was meant to reduce – the Secretary's visibility, it did little to alter his influence on foreign policy.

<sup>165</sup> "Moynihan Nearly Resigned as U.N. Envoy, Sources Say," *Los Angeles Times*, 22 November 1975, 1.

<sup>166</sup> Telecon, Secretary Kissinger and Ambassador Moynihan, 4:45 PM, 21 November 1975, KA14381, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA.

<sup>167</sup> Philip Shabecoff, "Moynihan to Stay at Ford's Behest," *New York Times*, 25 November 1975.

Kissinger agreed, “we get a lot of sensitive information... people talk to each other and make it clear that the impact is really disastrous for us.” Rusk said that, in his opinion, if Moynihan made another move toward resignation, Kissinger should “grease the pan.” While Kissinger was of the same mind, he said the President hoped to keep Moynihan at least through the upcoming primary campaign.<sup>168</sup>

Moynihan would not last that long. He continued to believe that Kissinger was undercutting him and eventually chose to resign. In late January, Kissinger’s Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs, Joseph Sisco, reported that Moynihan was “in a semi-hysterical state” after hearing from a journalist that Kissinger had been spreading rumors about Moynihan angling for the Secretary’s job. According to Sisco, Moynihan had said that Kissinger needed to better support him or he would “bring down the President of the United States” by resigning.<sup>169</sup> Kissinger cabled back with instructions that Moynihan be told, “I do not think he wants my job [but] I think I know what job he wants in 1976 and 1980.”<sup>170</sup> Moynihan resigned, ostensibly to maintain his faculty position at Harvard but in all likelihood to prepare for his run for Senate in New York, on February 2<sup>nd</sup>.<sup>171</sup>

#### “THE MOYNIHAN EFFECT” AND RONALD REAGAN

Moynihan’s departure did not bring down the President, at least not of its own accord. However, the Ambassador’s popularity was symptomatic of a broader political

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<sup>168</sup> The two believed that the only explanation for Moynihan’s actions was that he was secretly preparing a run for Senate. “I assume he would run as a Democrat,” Rusk said, and “he would [t]ee off you in the campaign.” Telecon, Secretary Kissinger and Dean Rusk, 12:50 PM, 22 November 1975, KA14396, *Kissinger Telephone Conversations*, DNSA.

<sup>169</sup> Telegram, SecState Washington DC to US Delegation Secretary, “Odds and Ends,” State 017891, 24 January 1976, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

<sup>170</sup> Telegram, US Delegation Secretary Madrid to SecState Washington DC, “Odds and Ends,” SECTO 01113, 24 January 1976, NARA, RG-59, AAD.

<sup>171</sup> James M. Naughton “Moynihan Resigns Post at UN,” *New York Times*, 3 February 1976.

development which did indeed have serious consequences for Ford's reelection chances. The 1976 election season would prove a relatively confused one with each of the political parties subject to severe internal dissension as older political coalitions broke down with new ones not yet formed. Both the Republican and Democratic Parties were suffering from identity crises so severe that even the results in November did not bring them to a close. The candidate who emerged victorious in the Presidential election for example, Jimmy Carter, was able to do so in large part by straddling the issues. His much-celebrated status as an "outsider" was useful not so much for its moral appeal but as an opening for a deliberate campaign of sounding like all things to all people. As the *New York Times* reported in June, polls suggested that "conservative voters tend to view Mr. Carter as conservative, that moderates see him as moderate and that liberals see him as liberal." Anonymous sources on Carter's staff admitted to the paper that "their candidate studies opinion polls carefully and tries to position himself so that as few voters as possible become disaffected with his stands."<sup>172</sup> This served Carter well in a Democratic primary that featured a large divide between the party's liberal wing and its anti-communist, pro-defense spending and union based conservatives.<sup>173</sup> More conservative Democrats with clear national records – like Senator Henry "Scoop" Jackson of Washington – struggled to win votes amongst the party's liberals and Carter emerged as the least objectionable candidate for all parts of the Democratic Party. As the next chapter details, once Carter had a clearer record, he too would struggle politically. His problem,

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<sup>172</sup> David E. Rosenbaum, "Carter's Position on Issues Designed for Wide Appeal," *New York Times*, 11 June 1976.

<sup>173</sup> This national divide was echoed in Moynihan's own New York Senate Democratic Primary battle against the liberal feminist Representative, Bella Abzug. See: Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, "Abzug-Moynihan Fight Centers on National Security Issue," *Boston Globe*, 26 August 1976.



however, would not be with his party's liberals but the same national political trend that had helped sabotage his Republican opponent in 1976.

This new force was, what the conservative intellectual Irving Kristol called at the time, the "Moynihan effect." Rather than highlighting its source, the name referred to how Moynihan's time at the U.N. revealed the political appeal of reassertions of American nationalism and the defiant rejection of international criticism. Moynihan had shown, Kristol wrote, the:

outline of a new foreign policy – one that was bound to be controversial, debatable, divisive. It was a foreign policy based upon the assumption that there was still in the American people a willingness to shoulder the burdens of world power, that Vietnam had been a passing trauma rather than a permanent impairment of the American will.<sup>174</sup>

This call for a more assertive U.S. had reached a wide audience. Even figures traditionally seen as liberals, like the columnist Max Lerner, found much to approve in Moynihan's tenure. Lerner wondered, in response to criticism of the Ambassador, "why it must be the Americans who always do the muting... at the first sign that America is willing to answer the attacks they howl about American aggressiveness."<sup>175</sup> The centrist *Christian Science Monitor*, though calling for Moynihan to soften his style, wanted to see him continue on the job and to speak "out vigorously and candidly" – if in a more "subtle way."<sup>176</sup> The *New York Times*' editors felt similarly, writing that despite Moynihan's "self defeating" excesses, they wanted him to stay and maintain the "policy of setting the record straight, calling member states to task for practicing double standards and warning of the perils of capricious... resolutions."<sup>177</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> Irving Kristol, "Kissinger at a Dead End," *Wall Street Journal*, 10 March 1971.

<sup>175</sup> Max Lerner, "Tough Guy vs. Nice Guy," *Los Angeles Times*, 7 November 1975, c7.

<sup>176</sup> Ford's 'Guy' at the UN," *Christian Science Monitor*, 26 August 1975, 25.

<sup>177</sup> "Moynihan Affair (Conc.)," *New York Times*, 3 February 1976.

Yet it was not in the hallowed halls of the establishment press that Moynihan had enjoyed his greatest popularity. His views resonated most with large segments of the voting public. This was echoed in Moynihan's aforementioned 70% approval rating and the large amount of fan mail he received while in office. "For too... long," a Joseph McGukian wrote to Moynihan, "the cheeks have been turned like a revolving door by our representatives [at the U.N.]."<sup>178</sup> Carl Parker felt similarly, "it's about time someone of authority stood up for the democratic nations," he wrote.<sup>179</sup> George Worthington of St. Louis, Missouri put this sentiment in more crass and racist terms, expressing his sadness that "those pious 'pussy cats' in the State [Department]" had once again "spared no effort" in undermining "anyone with real talent for protecting... our Republic [*sic*] from the tactics of shoe banging dictators and barefoot, subnormal leaders of pseudo nations." Worthington believed that Moynihan's work was "deeply appreciated by millions of us."<sup>180</sup> Many of these letter writers expressed similar views of his popularity. Phillip and Olive Locker wrote the Ambassador out of their "overwhelming desire to complement and express our admiration for your conduct." Moynihan, they continued, had "convincingly demonstrated that the practice... of diplomacy does not require silencing the truth." They found that many agreed with them: "among our friends – the common people – it is clear that your remarks represent the real feelings of the majority of the country."<sup>181</sup> Picking up a similar theme, A.E. Griffin told Moynihan that "the image of

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<sup>178</sup> Letter, Joseph McGukian to Ambassador Moynihan, 11 December 1975, Folder 3, Box 1:325, Moynihan Papers.

<sup>179</sup> Letter, Carl I. Parker to Hon. Daniel P. Moynihan, 6 October 1975, Folder 4, Box 1:325, Moynihan Papers.

<sup>180</sup> Letter, George M. Worthington to Hon. Daniel P. Moynihan, 2 February 1976, Folder 4, Box 1:325, Moynihan Papers.

<sup>181</sup> Letter, Phillip and Olive. L. Locker to Hon. Daniel P. Moynihan, 19 October 1975, Folder 4, Box 1:325, Moynihan Papers.

the United States” that he was projecting was the one, “Mr. F.D.R.’s common man would agree to.”<sup>182</sup>

Though scholars have done admirable work illuminating the relationship between the growth and success of American conservatism in the late 1970s and ‘80s and “suburban sunbelt politics,” such studies have missed the critical importance of the politics of foreign policy to this story.<sup>183</sup> Contemporary observers and historians have all noted the role that the unpopularity of “*détente*” – the Nixon/Kissinger/Ford policy of easing tensions with the Soviet Union – played in the 1976 election. Yet, as Kristol’s article illustrates, the conservative rejection of *détente* was about more than anti-communism. *Détente* (and Henry Kissinger) symbolized a particular vision of the American role in world order: as a conservative but rhetorically moderate power seeking to manage global change and preserve the status quo as much as possible. Opponents of *détente* saw this as immoral, defeatist cynicism or, as the more highbrow Kristol described it, “a kind of Spenglerian vision of a liberal-democratic West in decline confronted with virile, self confident ‘new barbarians’ and... American foreign policy... as a [mere] holding action.”<sup>184</sup>

As Kristol correctly pointed out, in his brief tenure Moynihan advanced an alternative vision, which, as his startlingly high poll numbers and fan mail suggests, captured the imagination of many Americans. It saw the United States as less a status quo and more a revolutionary power, forceful both in protecting its interests and converting

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<sup>182</sup> Letter, A.E. Griffin to Ambassador Moynihan, 12 December 1975, Folder 4, Box 1:325, Moynihan Papers.

<sup>183</sup> See footnote 12.

<sup>184</sup> Irving Kristol, “Kissinger at a Dead End,” *Wall Street Journal*, 10 March 1971.

the world to its vision of a proper society. Kristol, rather approvingly, described the phenomenon as an:

obviously powerful upswell of American opinion – call it American nationalism if you will – which feels we ought to do what is necessary to prevent the world from becoming a place where American values are scorned and American power is discounted.<sup>185</sup>

The Third World, as we have seen, played a critical role in this renewed nationalism. The supposed illiberality of the Global South was claimed as an indication of both the dangerous results of past American timidity and the scope of the present threat to freedom. It was in the Third World that the battle for American values had most noticeably turned against the United States. As Moynihan had put it to President Ford in an August 1975 meeting, “early in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, America – and the world – saw American institutions as those toward which the world was headed.” By 1975, however, “the new socialist tradition of the emerging Third World” had become dominant, and it was “anti-American... by nature.”<sup>186</sup> The U.S. in this vision thus became the embodiment of democratic capitalism; any condemnation of U.S. or its policies was equivalent to an assault on “freedom” itself. The United States, the argument went, needed to reject hostile international opinion – its very criticism of America exposing it as illiberal and suspect – and to strenuously defend its actions and institutions regardless of their results or how the world saw them.

This theme became a central part of Ronald Reagan’s insurgent campaign for the 1976 Republican Presidential nomination – the most successful primary challenge to a sitting President since Theodore Roosevelt’s attempt to defeat his wayward pupil,

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<sup>185</sup> Irving Kristol, “Kissinger at a Dead End,” *Wall Street Journal*, 10 March 1971.

<sup>186</sup> Memcon, President Ford and Ambassador Daniel Patrick Moynihan, 27 August 1975, Box 14, Memcons, FDL.

William Howard Taft, in 1914. More than simply rejecting *détente* with the Soviet Union, Reagan called for ending *détente* with the world. In addition to assailing the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) and other elements of U.S.-Soviet *détente*, Reagan also relentlessly attacked Kissinger and Ford's allegedly defeatist attempts to accommodate Third World demands. Indeed, it was the broader idea that the United States needed to better stand up for its self in a hostile world – rather than simply reject *détente* with the Soviets – that would elevate the Reagan campaign from a political sideshow to nearly securing the Republican nomination. As Reagan put it in his remarks on Moynihan's resignation, the country needed “the Pat Moynihans of this world to remind us that our nation's future need not be one of retreat and pessimism.” Moynihan had “made it refreshingly clear that the U.S. would be nobody's punching bag.”<sup>187</sup> It was this theme, that the United States need not fear the future nor the world's scorn, which animated Reagan's campaigns, in 1976, 1980 and 1984.

Reagan's speeches regularly echoed many of Moynihan's views about the eroding position of freedom in the world. The Californian castigated the Ford administration for its aimless foreign policy, evoking the ghosts of appeasement in the 1930s. “Totalitarianism threatens the world once again,” Reagan said in his major campaign address, “and the democracies are wandering without aim.”<sup>188</sup> Though it proved their greatest asset, the Reagan camp did not initially intend to make Ford's foreign policy a centerpiece of their campaign. The November 1975 speech announcing his campaign had only made brief mention of the issue, focusing instead on attacking the political

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<sup>187</sup> Richard Bergholz, “Sorry Moynihan Quit, Reagan Says,” *Los Angeles Times*, 4 February 1976, b11.

<sup>188</sup> Ronald Reagan, “To Restore America,” 31 March 1976, Folder “Reagan – Nationwide TV Address 3/31/76,” Box 39, Ron Nessen Papers, Ford Library.

“buddy system” in Washington that taxed Americans for its own benefit.<sup>189</sup> As the *Wall Street Journal* noted later in 1976, Reagan “had originally wanted to woo Republicans” with a focus on taxation and a call for “paring \$90 billion from the federal budget.” But, as the Reagan camp learned that “primary voters would respond to appeals to stand up to the Soviet Union and talk back to the Third World,” they shifted the focus of their campaign.<sup>190</sup> Much as the *Journal* did in this discussion of Reagan’s campaign strategy, the candidate’s views on the North-South conflict and Moynihan’s resignation were often mentioned alongside his positions on the East-West divide.<sup>191</sup> Both were recognized at the time as part of the same thematic element: the perceived need to restore American pride and global leadership in the face of a seemingly hostile world. Reagan found a receptive audience for his view that, as he put it in a campaign radio spot in Wisconsin, the previous decade had seen “the collapse of American will and retreat of American power.”<sup>192</sup> Reagan zeroed in on two areas in particular – both involving decisions the administration made in the hope of improving America’s reputation in the Global South. Reagan attacked the administration’s choice to continue negotiations with Panama on the status of the Canal Zone and its April 1976 turn toward stronger opposition to white supremacy in Africa.

The U.S. government had been in various forms of negotiation with Panama about the Canal since 1964. That year, spectacular and bloody riots in and around the Canal

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<sup>189</sup> Ronald Reagan, “Statement, 20 November 1975,” Folder “Reagan - Announcement of Candidacy, 11/20/75,” Box 39, Ron Nessen Papers, Ford Library.

<sup>190</sup> “Lesson in a Cliff Hanger,” *Wall Street Journal*, 16 August 1976.

<sup>191</sup> See for example: Roland Evans and Robert Novak, “Keeping Ford Honest,” *Washington Post*, 11 March 1976, A16. “Top Republicans Say Henry Cost Ford Votes,” *Chicago Tribune*, 7 May 1976, 1. “The Electorate’s Message,” *Wall Street Journal*, 18 August 1976.

<sup>192</sup> Memo, Bruce Wagner to Stu Spencer, “Reagan Radio Copy,” 2 April 1976, Folder “Reagan – General,” Box 39, Ron Nessen Papers, Ford Library.

Zone had revealed the unpopularity of the U.S. presence in the country.<sup>193</sup> The process had been delayed by numerous factors, and in 1975 it fell to the Ford administration to decide whether to maintain the process. Both Kissinger and the President recognized that the negotiations would be a political liability even before Reagan had formally announced his candidacy. In a July, 1975 conversation with Kissinger, President Ford told the Secretary that “the Reagan forces need something... to dramatize” and thus the longer they “can drag [preliminary negotiations with Panama] out the better it is domestically.” Yet both also believed there was no real alternative to continuing the process. The Canal was a major international liability that threatened to undermine the administration’s attempt to give the United States a progressive international image. “If we don’t settle Panama” Kissinger told Ford, “I fear we will have a Vietnam in the Western Hemisphere.” The U.S. would find itself, he continued, with the “Army engaged in guerilla warfare” and the country “pilloried in international forums – all for something we will give up eventually.”<sup>194</sup>

With his campaign struggling to make the necessary headway in early 1976, Reagan began to take advantage of the “Moynihan effect,” turning to foreign policy and aggressive attacks on the Canal negotiations.<sup>195</sup> In a television spot broadcast in North Carolina just before its March primary, Reagan went after the Administration on the Canal. “As I talk to you tonight,” he said, “negotiations are ongoing with another dictator... negotiations aimed at giving up our ownership of the Panama Canal Zone.”

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<sup>193</sup> For more on these riots and the origins U.S.- Panamanian negotiations see: Alan McPherson, “Courts of World Opinion: Trying the Panama Flag Riots of 1964,” *Diplomatic History* 28:1 (January 2004), 83-112.

<sup>194</sup> Memcon, President Ford and Henry Kissinger, 21 July 1975, Box 14, Memcons, FDL.

<sup>195</sup> Jon Nordheimer, “Reagan Sharpens His Criticism of Ford,” *New York Times*, 29 Feb 1976. Rudy Abramson, “Ford Aides Blame Loss on Failure to Answer Reagan,” *Los Angeles Times*, 25 March 1976, b18.

The Californian implied that these negotiations were being kept secret from decent Americans, “apparently everyone knows about [the negotiations] except the rightful owners of the Canal Zone – you, the people of the United States.” Reagan suggested to his viewers that Ford, under threat from Panamanian dictator Omar Torrijos, was giving away sovereign U.S. territory. “We should end these negotiations,” Reagan said, “and tell [Torrijos]: We bought it, we paid for it, we built it, and we intend to keep it.”<sup>196</sup>

Historians have noted the importance of the Canal to Reagan’s ability to restart and maintain the viability of his campaign for the nomination.<sup>197</sup> As a Ford campaign organizer put it, the President lost North Carolina thanks to “Sally Jones sitting at home, watching Reagan on television and deciding she didn’t want to give away the Panama Canal.”<sup>198</sup> Barry Goldwater, writing to the President in May with campaign advice, told him “for God’s sake, get off Panama.”<sup>199</sup>

The Canal was not the only Third World issue that aided Reagan in 1976. The insurgent candidate also attacked the administration for its policy in southern Africa, particularly after Kissinger’s late April visit to the continent. That trip – like much of the rest of the Ford/Kissinger policy in the Third World – was intended to project a progressive image for the United States and counteract anti-American sentiment. This particular effort was a result of the administration’s fears about the spread of radical

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<sup>196</sup> Ronald Reagan, “To Restore America,” 31 March 1976, Folder “Reagan – Nationwide TV Address 3/31/76,” Box 39, Ron Nessen Papers, Ford Library.

<sup>197</sup> See: Adam Clymer, *Drawing the Line at the Big Ditch: The Panama Canal Treaties and the Rise of the Right* (Lawrence: 2008). And: Natasha Zaretsky, “Restraint or Retreat? The Debate over the Panama Canal Treaties and U.S. Nationalism after Vietnam,” *Diplomatic History* 35:3 (June 2011), 535-563. Both studies do an excellent job of outlining the importance of the Canal to conservative political mobilizations in 1976 and 1980. Clymer focuses mostly on it as a tactical issue while Zaretsky ably connects Panama to the same issues of American identity and nationalism discussed in this chapter. Both, however, tend to view the Canal controversy somewhat singularly rather than as part of an older and larger debate about the U.S. relationship to the Global South.

<sup>198</sup> Quoted in Clymer, *Drawing the Line*, 30.

<sup>199</sup> Letter, Senator Barry Goldwater to President Ford, 7 May 1976, Folder “PL (Exec.), 6/1-30/76,” Box 3, Subject Files, White House Central Office Files, Ford Library.



influence in southern Africa after Congress forced the end of U.S. covert operations in Angola. Although the U.S. backed factions in Angola's confused civil war were already struggling mightily, the cut-off all but ensured the victory of the Soviet and Cuban backed Popular Front for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA).<sup>200</sup> Kissinger feared that the U.S.'s failure to fully support its faction was going to hurt American credibility and aid the spread of radical Third World ideology.<sup>201</sup> As he put it to the President, "the pro-Western states [in Africa] were in a panic because they thought a fate like Angola's awaited them." The "radicals," he said, "were starting a crusade against Rhodesia and all of Africa was being pushed into radicalism."<sup>202</sup>

The objective of the April trip was thus to "prevent the further radicalization of Africa" and avoid a situation where the U.S. ended up on the wrong side of "all... black or white [racial] issue where even the moderates would have to be against us."<sup>203</sup> The centerpiece of this effort was an address Kissinger delivered in Lusaka, Zambia on April 27<sup>th</sup> – "it will be something of a sensation," he promised Ford.<sup>204</sup> The speech was indeed the most aggressive pronouncement in favor of majority rule in southern Africa by a U.S. policy maker since the early 1960s.<sup>205</sup> While somewhat reserved about South Africa's own apartheid system, Kissinger made clear American opposition to its continued presence in Namibia and announced "unrelenting opposition" to minority rule in

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<sup>200</sup> For more on U.S. involvement in the Angolan Civil War see Herring, *From Colony to Superpower*, 824-5.

<sup>201</sup> Interestingly, Kissinger does not mention the damage done to the U.S. position on the continent by American association with South Africa's invasion of Angola.

<sup>202</sup> Memcon, President Ford and Henry Kissinger, 9 May 1976, Box 19, Memcons, Ford Library.

<sup>203</sup> Memcon, President Ford and Henry Kissinger, 9 May 1976, Box 19, Memcons, Ford Library.

<sup>204</sup> Memcon, President Ford and Henry Kissinger, 21 April 1976, Box 19, Memcons, Ford Library.

<sup>205</sup> This was despite Kissinger's own personal misgivings on the subject. In conversation with Ford on the 21<sup>st</sup> (see footnote 203), the Secretary of State said: "basically I am with the Whites in Southern Africa... I think it's no better for the majority to oppress the minority than vice versa." Yet he felt that the move was necessary in order to bolster the U.S.'s global image and maintain its influence in southern Africa.

Rhodesia. He also said that the administration would push Congress to repeal the Byrd Amendment before the end of the year.<sup>206</sup> Just as with Panama, the administration knew that this policy would hurt it with conservatives. When Kissinger told the President that he would “get some flak from the South on” the speech, Ford was willing to take the risk, “that is our position,” he affirmed.<sup>207</sup>

Kissinger’s prediction proved correct. He returned home to, as a *Washington Post* headline put it, a “post-Africa political brawl.”<sup>208</sup> Reagan, campaigning in Texas, had immediately attacked Kissinger after the speech, calling the policy change on Rhodesia “impulsive” and “dangerous.” The U.S., he said, seemed “to be embarking on a policy of dictating to the people of southern Africa and running the risk of increased violence and bloodshed.” In Georgia, a few days earlier, Reagan said that he feared “we are going to have a massacre” in Rhodesia.<sup>209</sup> Reagan was speaking in advance of several primaries and caucuses being held in the first week of May (in North Dakota, Texas, Colorado, Alabama, Georgia and Indiana). The Californian, in his strongest showing to that point, swept every vote that week except North Dakota’s, dealing Ford a particularly heavy blow in delegate laden Texas. The latter primary was, as Brent Scowcroft described it, “a disaster” for the Ford campaign, virtually assuring that the primary contest would last into the Republican Convention in August.<sup>210</sup> Many interpreted the results as a repudiation of Henry Kissinger and his Lusaka address.<sup>211</sup> The administration’s own

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<sup>206</sup> “Text of Kissinger’s Address in Zambia on U.S. Policy Toward Southern Africa,” *New York Times*, 28 April 1976.

<sup>207</sup> Memcon, President Ford, Henry Kissinger and Brent Scowcroft, 12 April 1976, Box 19, Memcons, Ford Library.

<sup>208</sup> Murrey Marder, “Kissinger Back To Post-Africa Political Brawl,” *Washington Post*, 8 May 1976, A11.

<sup>209</sup> Jon Nordheimer, “Reagan Attacks Kissinger for his Stand on Rhodesia,” *New York Times*, 1 May 1976.

<sup>210</sup> Telegram (draft), Brent Scowcroft to Henry Kissinger, TOHAK 67, 2 May 1976, Folder “April 23- May 7 - Africa, TOHAK (3),” Box 32, Kissinger Briefing Books and Cables, NSA, Ford Library.

<sup>211</sup> Kenneth Reich, “Reagan Sweeps Texas Primary,” *Los Angeles Times*, 2 May 1976, a1.

assessment of the results found that much of the swing to Reagan was due to crossover Democrats (Texas had an open primary), many of whom may have been alienated, pro-segregationist George Wallace supporters drawn to Reagan's position on Rhodesia.<sup>212</sup> Rumblings in favor of Kissinger's ouster were once again heard amongst Republicans.<sup>213</sup> "We must" Scowcroft warned, "be carefully attuned... to the domestic impact of the foreign policy actions we take."<sup>214</sup>

Despite the disaster in May, Ford was able to maintain a slim delegate lead over Reagan and eventually secure his party's nomination – with Kissinger still in office. It proved a pyrrhic victory. The President staggered into the General Election more than 10 points down in national polls to Jimmy Carter (who had secured his own nomination well in advance of the President).<sup>215</sup> While Ford would close the gap by the election, he was severely handicapped by the perception that he was a weak, indecisive leader focused on winning elections rather than what was in the best interest of the country. As a Ford memo put it, the Republican primary had created a situation where, "the President, whose strong suit has never been his perceived leadership abilities, is now seen as weaker than ever."<sup>216</sup> A Ford campaign strategy guide listed "the struggle with Reagan" as the number one reason for their political problems.<sup>217</sup> Despite these handicaps, Ford nearly won.

Though Carter accumulated 297 electors to Ford's 240, the Georgian barely carried the

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<sup>212</sup> Telegram (draft), Brent Scowcroft to Henry Kissinger, 3 May 1976, Folder "April 23- May 7 - Africa, TOHAK (3)," Box 32, Kissinger Briefing Books and Cables, NSA, Ford Library.

<sup>213</sup> "Top Republicans Say Henry Cost Ford Votes," *Chicago Tribune*, 7 May 1976, 1.

<sup>214</sup> Telegram (draft), Brent Scowcroft for Henry Kissinger, TOHAK 74, 3 May 1976, Folder "April 23- May 7 - Africa, TOHAK (3)," Box 32, Kissinger Briefing Books and Cables, NSA, Ford Library.

<sup>215</sup> Harris Survey, Aug, 1976. Retrieved Feb-28-2014 from iPoll.

<sup>216</sup> Memo, George Van Cleve to David Gergen, "The General Election – Part 1," 5 July 1976, Folder "Campaign Strategy - Suggestions (2)," Box 13, Michael Raoul-Duval Papers, Ford Library.

<sup>217</sup> "Campaign Strategy for President Ford, 1976," Folder "Presidential Campaign - Campaign Strategy Program (1)," Box 1, Dorothy Downton Files, Ford Library.

popular vote.<sup>218</sup> The death blow may very well have been Ford's infamous gaffe during his second televised debate with Carter. Attempting to tiptoe through the rhetorical minefield he had been forced into by the Republican primary, Ford stumbled, claiming that there "was no Soviet domination of Eastern Europe," and then inexplicably refusing to back off that politically disastrous statement.<sup>219</sup> Reagan may not have been physically present that evening, but his influence was certainly felt.

Carter was thus briefly the beneficiary of the Moynihan effect – with the conservative call for a more aggressive foreign policy seriously handicapping his Republican opponent. As President, however, things would be different. Ominous signs were apparent, for those looking, even before the Georgia governor entered the White House. At least one national exit poll, conducted by CBS News, found Reagan in a dead heat with Carter in a hypothetical contest.<sup>220</sup> Carter's own policies toward the Third World – which, as a *Washington Post* columnist noted, were not all that different from Kissinger's – proved just as politically compromising.

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<sup>218</sup> Carter received about 50% and Ford 48% of the votes cast.

<sup>219</sup> Debate Transcript, "The Second Carter Ford Presidential Debate," 6 October 1976, *Commission on Presidential Debates*, [www.debates.org](http://www.debates.org).

<sup>220</sup> CBS News Exit Poll, November 1976. Retrieved Feb-28-2014 from iPoll.

## Chapter 5:

“Joining the Jackals:” The United Nations, “World Order” and the Failure of Carter’s Demarche to Third World Opinion

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“There was a widespread sense abroad that the United States was fearful of global change [and] indifferent to the newly surfacing aspirations of mankind”<sup>1</sup>  
 - Zbigniew Brzezinski

“I think of myself as an American who... can help the United States to resume the rightful leadership role that we ought to have in the world.”<sup>2</sup>  
 - Andrew Young

“So long as the ideas underlying the Carter administration’s U.N. policy are dominant within the Democratic Party, we Democrats will be out of power.”<sup>3</sup>  
 - Daniel Patrick Moynihan

In 1979, as controversy surrounded Andrew Young’s forced resignation from his Ambassadorship to the United Nations, the contributors to *National Review* penned an editorial noting their bemused confusion. How was Young’s supposedly mortal sin – meeting with the P.L.O. despite a Presidential ban on such contact – any different from the “Third Worldism” the Ambassador had demonstrated his entire tenure? As far as *National Review* was concerned, Young had long ago “taken over and internalized the dominant attitudes at the United Nations” making his actions far from surprising. His “anti-U.S.” preference for “leftist dictators” had been apparent, and inexcusable, for years, his departure long overdue.<sup>4</sup> Those at *National Review* did have a technical right to their gloating. The magazine, and conservatives in general, had been hammering away at Young from nearly the moment he was appointed.<sup>5</sup> It was not merely the longtime

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<sup>1</sup> Memo, Zbigniew Brzezinski to President Carter, 12 January 1978, “NSC Report for 1977,” Folder “Weekly Report to the President, 42-52,” Box 41, Zbigniew Brzezinski Collection, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library (henceforth, Carter Library).

<sup>2</sup> Andrew Young, *Andrew Young at the United Nations*, Lee Clement ed (Salisbury: 1978), viii.

<sup>3</sup> Daniel Patrick Moynihan, “Joining the Jackals: The U.S. at the U.N., 1977-1980,” *Commentary*, February 1981, 23-31.

<sup>4</sup> “Young in Perspective,” *National Review*, 14 September 1979, 1134-1135.

<sup>5</sup> Buckley’s conservative flagship had, for example, suggested his firing as early as April of 1977. “The Andy Young Conundrum,” *National Review*, 29 April 1977, 481.

conservatives of *National Review*'s ilk either; the recently defected liberals of the neoconservative movement had also joined the fray. As historian John Ehrman has noted, if neoconservatives were going to attack anyone in the Carter administration by name it was probably going to be Andy Young.<sup>6</sup> Thanks to his race and politics, Young had become the symbol of nearly everything these figures disliked about President Carter's policies.

The furor around Young – and his supposed anti-American allegiance to the U.N. and the Third World – represents the next chapter in the story of how perceptions of Third World hostility shaped U.S. policy and politics in the 1970s. Despite Carter's slim electoral victory over Ford (and by implication, Henry Kissinger), the battle over Third World hostility and its implications for U.S. foreign policy continued. Young quickly became symbolic of Carter's new approach to the issue, which drew upon liberal critiques of the Nixon and Ford administrations and argued for a more conciliatory U.S. approach to the Global South. Conservatives, however, had not given up after Moynihan's resignation, Reagan's primary defeat, or Carter's election. They continued to argue for an unapologetic United States – one which rejected international criticism and vigorously promoted an idealized version of America's internal political and economic order as a model for the rest of the world. Thus, much as it had during the 1976 Republican primary, the resultant debate served as a surrogate for competing visions of world order. It was a debate the Carter administration would ultimately lose.

However well intentioned, the 39<sup>th</sup> President's attempt to build a foreign policy based on human rights and accommodation with the Global South would founder in the harsh reality of Third World and General Assembly politics. Carter's conservative critics,

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<sup>6</sup> Ehrman, *The Rise of Neoconservatism*, 110-111.

it would turn out, were not without a point.<sup>7</sup> Vilified by his opponents at home, undermined by the low regard for human rights in the United Nations and the resulting contradictions within his own policies, Carter's demarche to Third World opinion would prove a serious electoral liability by 1980, contributing to Ronald Reagan's victory. While President Carter's reputation among historians has improved, those painting a positive picture of his administration have struggled with explaining why "the American public turned so strongly against a presidency that, by all accounts, it wanted to like."<sup>8</sup> This chapter reveals how part of that explanation lies in the administration's failure to win the battle over how to respond to Third World hostility. More than simply a contribution to the outcome of a presidential election, this defeat would have a lasting impact on how Americans viewed the Third World and thus shape the North-South relationship for decades to come.

#### "WORLD ORDER" AND THE LIBERAL CRITIQUE OF NIXON AND FORD

The Carter administration's foreign policy was shaped by liberal critiques of Nixon and Ford that had emerged in the mid 1970s as the Vietnam War gradually lost its place as the nation's predominant, day-to-day, foreign policy concern. This criticism developed amongst former supporters of the pre-1968 foreign policy consensus (discussed in Chapter One) and offered a vision of how the U.S. should proceed in international affairs after the disaster in Southeast Asia. Unlike those – such as Moynihan – who had turned to the right following the chaos of the late 1960s, this critique came

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<sup>7</sup> This is not to endorse Gil Troy's generally unapologetic defense of the conservative position in *Moynihan's Moment* nor to embrace Mark Mazower's more critical evaluation in *Governing the World* (305-342). Rather it is to suggest, simply, that the American right may have more accurately assessed the profound philosophical distance between the West and the mainstream of General Assembly and Third World thought than did Carter and his allies.

<sup>8</sup> Burton Kauffman, "Review of *The Carter Presidency: A Re-Evaluation* by John Dumbrell," *The Journal of American History*, 81:3 (December, 1994): 1384-5.

from the left. It was not, however, a radical or “new left” view of the world but one from the established foreign policy “community” – as the *New York Times* labeled it in 1976.<sup>9</sup> These arguments were formed in Ivy League libraries, articulated in major newspapers, and promulgated by think tanks like the Rockefeller backed “Trilateral Commission,” rather than printed in the *New Left Review*. Thus they contained no rejection of capitalism, multi-national corporations, the basic premises of containment, or any of the other hallmarks of radical criticism of U.S. foreign policy.

Instead they looked to restore the post-1945 liberal commitment to international institutions like the United Nations and to aiding economic growth in the poorer regions of the world. This perspective, sometimes called a “world order” approach, looked to address the problems that underlay international crises in the interest of fostering a gradual, positive evolution in international affairs.<sup>10</sup> The hope was to replace military confrontation and force with a focus on advancing social justice and global cooperation via international organizations like the U.N. Thus supporters of world order policies tended to see the issues that had driven the North-South conflict for the past decade – global economic inequality and white supremacy chief among them – as the international community’s leading problems. The threat of communism to the West, for example, was seen as relatively pale in comparison. Many of the advocates of a world order foreign policy – including the Carnegie Endowment for Peace’s Charles William Maynes,

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<sup>9</sup> Leslie Gelb, “The New American Establishment Is Called the Community,” *New York Times*, 19 December 1976.

<sup>10</sup> For examples and descriptions of “world order” thought see: Zbigniew Brzezinski, “U.S. Policy in an Awakened Complex World,” *Washington Post*, 1 November 1977, A19. Harlan Cleveland, “Are We Ready for a New World Role?,” *Washington Post*, 17 December 1976, A21. Clayton Fritchey, “World Order Politics’ May Become Carter Doctrine in Foreign Policy,” *Los Angeles Times*, 2 January 1977. Stanley Hoffman, *Primacy or World Order*, New York: 1978. Charles W. Maynes, “The Hungry World and the American Ethic,” *Washington Post*, 1 December 1974, B1 Robert Scheer, “Brzezinski – Activist Seeker of World Order,” *Los Angeles Times*, 24 January 1977, b1.



Columbia Professor Richard Gardner, Harvard Professor Stanley Hoffman, and the Trilateral Commission's Zbigniew Brzezinski – and others with similar views – such as then Congressman Andrew Young – would end up as advisors to, or members of, Carter's foreign policy team.

For these thinkers and policy makers – and, as we shall see, Brzezinski in particular – U.S. unpopularity in the Global South was a major problem. Unlike conservatives, who would certainly have agreed on the seriousness of the issue, these liberal critics believed the U.S. should become more conciliatory, not hostile, in response. They also tended to blame the United States (and Nixon and Ford) for the country's falling out with the General Assembly rather than the Third World radicalism conservatives saw as responsible. This division was on clear display during the 1975 Senate hearing on the U.S. relationship with the U.N. mentioned in the previous chapter. While many witnesses had expressed views similar to Moynihan's, "In Opposition," thesis, two prominent experts, Sen. Fulbright and Professor Gardner, did not.

Fulbright argued that in 1975 the U.S. needed the United Nations more than it ever had before. "The tragic catastrophe in Southeast Asia," he told the Committee, "demonstrates the limits of... unilateral and bilateral diplomacy." The United States, he continued, could not "be the policeman of the world... the only alternative is collective action and multilateral diplomacy – the principal arena for which is the United Nations." Using the U.N. effectively would require major changes in the U.S. approach to the world body – and not those of the Moynihan sort. The U.S. needed to take the U.N. more seriously and not simply ignore General Assembly when its views ran counter to

America's own. Fulbright believed that the U.S. was much to blame for its own global isolation:

As soon as we sensed that we were losing control over the United Nations and that member states did not buy our view of the world... we abandoned the U.N. as a major channel of U.S. foreign policy and chose to take upon ourselves the responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. What, however, would have happened if our attitude had been to try to put ourselves in the shoes of the developing and nonaligned countries? Could we not have avoided the polarization of the General Assembly and our subsequent isolation from the mainstream of world opinion? Was the 'tyranny of the majority' that is now so decried a product of our own making?

Though phrased rhetorically, the balance of the former Senator's comments makes clear that the answer to these questions was "yes." The United Nations, he said, "was intended to be the world's instrument for peaceful change but our nay-saying of recent times has thwarted that purpose."<sup>11</sup>

Gardner was more explicit than Fulbright about how the U.S. had been thwarting the U.N., and who was responsible. In his statement the Columbia professor asserted that "during the Nixon Administration the attitude [toward the U.N.] at the highest levels was one of malign neglect, of weakening the U.N. rather than strengthening it as an institution." The U.S.'s problems in the General Assembly, Gardner argued, were not a result of the U.N. They were a sign of "the increasing divergence of the United States and the majority of mankind on fundamental issues." While Gardner did not believe that the U.N. majority was right on every issue – "indeed, its 'double standard' on the Middle East and human rights is often deplorable" – the U.S. had much to answer for. "It is" he asserted, "an unhappy fact that United States leadership has been badly damaged, by

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<sup>11</sup> Committee on Foreign Relations of the United States Senate, *The United States and the United Nations and the Nomination of Daniel Patrick Moynihan to Be U.S. Representative to the United Nations with the Rank of Ambassador*, 94<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, May 7-22, June 4 1975, 58-9.

Vietnam, Watergate, economic mismanagement and the neglect of Third World interests.” If the “U.N. reflection is ugly,” Professor Gardner continued, “it’s not the mirror that’s to blame.”<sup>12</sup>

Gardner, like Fulbright, believed that the U.S. needed to take the U.N. and the issues raised by its majority more seriously. Though the U.S. could not entirely abandon what he called “balance of power politics,” it needed to demonstrate a new “commitment to ‘world order politics’ “ and the “building of effective international machinery to manage mankind’s common problems.” Vietnam was again the cited example of how the old policies had failed the United States. The U.S. had spent, he argued, “thousands of lives and billions of dollars in defense of ‘national security’ in Vietnam while neglecting the much greater threat to national security from our growing dependence on Middle Eastern oil.” A more effective approach, and one which reflected the actual nature of the world in the 1970s, would require the U.S. to pay more attention to international economic inequality and human rights concerns. The superpower had to abandon, as much as possible, its habit of favoring “short term considerations,” over long term ones, bilateral diplomacy over multilateral institutions, and military solutions over diplomatic ones. Only in this way, Gardner believed, could the U.S. “begin, very gradually, to deflect the divisive tendencies of nationalism... and exploit the latent possibilities for strengthening the international system.” While Gardner admitted that a “generation of arduous and possibly futile negotiations on specific fundamental problems is not a very

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<sup>12</sup> Committee on Foreign Relations of the United States Senate, *The United States and the United Nations and the Nomination of Daniel Patrick Moynihan to Be U.S. Representative to the United Nations with the Rank of Ambassador*, 94<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, May 7-22, June 4 1975, 83-4.

inspiring one to put before a democratic electorate,” the U.S. had “no choice,” but to try.<sup>13</sup>

Although it might have seemed a distant prospect on Capitol Hill in the summer of 1975, the advocates of world order politics would have their chance to impact U.S. policy. The Republican implosion in 1976 would help usher into the White House a man very open to their views: Jimmy Carter. One of world order’s key advocates, Zbigniew Brzezinski, would become the new president’s primary foreign policy advisor and do much to shape his approach to international affairs. Motivated by worries over the perceived decline in America’s reputation in the Global South, the Carter administration would move to address many of the issues that so concerned world order’s advocates. However, as Gardner rightly worried, selling these policies to the American electorate would prove difficult.

#### CARTER’S WORLD ORDER POLICY

Given the high profile that Carter granted human rights it is little wonder that much public discussion and academic scholarship sees them as the focus of the administration’s foreign policy.<sup>14</sup> Yet, human rights were instead the public face – and most politically useful element – of the administration’s broader effort to address the U.S.’s unpopularity in the Third World and shape a new world order.<sup>15</sup> The primary

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<sup>13</sup> Committee on Foreign Relations of the United States Senate, *The United States and the United Nations and the Nomination of Daniel Patrick Moynihan to Be U.S. Representative to the United Nations with the Rank of Ambassador*, 94<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, May 7-22, June 4 1975, 88.

<sup>14</sup> See for example, David Schmitz and Vanessa Walker, “Jimmy Carter and the Foreign Policy of Human Rights: the Development of a Post-Cold War Foreign Policy,” *Diplomatic History* 28:1 (January 2004): 113-143. Itai Nartzizenfeld Sneh, *The Future Almost Arrived: How Jimmy Carter Failed to Change U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: 2008).

<sup>15</sup> John Skidmore makes a similar point about the use of human rights as a marketing tool in “Carter and the Failure of Foreign Policy Reform,” *Political Science Quarterly*, 108:4 (Winter, 1993-4): 699-729. His analysis however misses (likely because of a lack of access to administration documents) how human rights

architect of this strategy was Zbigniew Brzezinski. As scholars have begun to recognize, the National Security Advisor was a dominant influence on the nation's foreign policy during the Carter years. This was due both to candidate Carter's relative inexperience in foreign policy, his membership in the Brzezinski-run Trilateral Commission, and "Zbig's" ability to dominate the national security bureaucracy once in the White House.<sup>16</sup> Despite his reputation as an unreconstructed Cold Warrior, Brzezinski did not see human rights as merely a means to browbeat the Soviet Union. They were instead an integral part of a program to restore the U.S.'s international standing so that it could help push the international community in a "world order" direction. Thus the deterioration of American prestige – especially in the Third World – had concerned Brzezinski for some time.<sup>17</sup>

His worries about America's eroding reputation first emerged in the 1970 study, *Between Two Ages*. In the book, the then Columbia University professor expressed concern about "the increasing danger of American isolation in the world" and the

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were both a public relations ploy *and* an important part of administration plans for repairing the U.S.'s image abroad.

<sup>16</sup> Herring, 832-3, *From Colony to Superpower*. Betty Glad, *An Outsider in the White House: Jimmy Carter and the Making of American Foreign Policy* (Ithaca: 2009). Brian J. Auten, *Carter's Conversion: The Hardening of Defense Policy* (Columbia: 2008). These scholars have tended to emphasize Brzezinski's gradual increase in influence, but the evidence suggests that, relatively speaking, he was always the dominant figure. During the campaign, "clearing it with Brzezinski" was the watchword on all foreign policy questions" according to the *Los Angeles Times* (23 January 1977, pg 7) and once in the White House, both Brzezinski and Vance's own recollections point to how much of what went to the President on foreign policy matters had to be cleared through the National Security Advisor's office (Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Power and Principle: Memoirs of the National Security Advisor, 1977-1981*, New York: 1985. Cyrus Vance, *Hard Choices: Critical Years in America's Foreign Policy*, New York: 1983). This is supported by the documentary record, which shows that even the earliest State Department Four Year Plan for the administration arrived on the President's desk with Brzezinski's critical comments: Memo, Zbigniew Brzezinski to President Carter, 7/5/77, "Your Four Year Goals," NLC-128-6-17-1, Carter Library. Those scholars that highlight Brzezinski's influence tend to do so in order to demonstrate administration's ultimate inability to truly move away from orthodox Cold War concerns. As this chapter outlines, this glosses over important elements of the Polish émigré's thought.

<sup>17</sup> Recent scholarship has rightly begun to challenge the orthodox view of Brzezinski as overwhelmingly focused on the Cold War, see: Schmitz and Walker, "Jimmy Carter and the Foreign Policy of Human Rights," 132. Simon Stevens, "From the Viewpoint of a Southern Governor: The Carter Administration and Apartheid, 1977-81," *Diplomatic History* 36, no. 5 (November 2012): 849-51.

negative impact that might have on the process of global change.<sup>18</sup> Brzezinski was, in Frank Ninkovich's definition of the term, a thoroughgoing "Wilsonian" thinker.<sup>19</sup> He believed in the importance of maintaining the appeal of the United States as a symbol of progress and the future. This symbolic appeal was essential to ensuring that the world moved in a democratic and capitalist direction rather than a socialist or anarchic one. Yet, despite its importance, it was precisely in this respect that Brzezinski found the policies of Kissinger under Nixon and Ford most lacking. In their, as he saw it, obsession with strategic and military credibility these two presidents and their Secretary of State had forgotten about the credibility of something even more important: liberal-capitalism. Rather than appearing as the model of a decent and desirable form of social organization, the U.S. had inadvertently assumed the mantle of being the successor to the white imperial powers that had dominated the Global South since the Enlightenment. The results, for Brzezinski, were deeply troubling. Describing the administration's "inheritance" in a memo to Carter, the National Security Advisor wrote that the "international position of the United States at the end of 1976 was not good." World opinion no longer saw the U.S as a society to be emulated but as "a nation primarily concerned with might and money." The result was that America no longer had the ability to "propel historical change in the right direction," a thoroughly dangerous state of affairs.<sup>20</sup> The situation clearly had to be improved, but this improvement could not rest on martial toughness or clandestine ingenuity – as he felt it had for much of the last decade.

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<sup>18</sup> Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Between Two Ages: America's Role in the Technetronic Era* (New York: 1970), 305.

<sup>19</sup> See Ninkovich, *Modernity and Power: A History of the Domino Theory in the Twentieth Century* (Chicago: 1994). And, Ninkovich, *The Wilsonian Century* (Chicago: 1999) as well as the discussion of Wilsonianism in footnote 28 of the Introduction.

<sup>20</sup> Brzezinski to Carter, "NSC Report for 1977," 1, 3.

Such methods only reinforced what Brzezinski called “the widespread sense abroad that the United States was fearful of global change... and... unable to exercise creative leadership.”<sup>21</sup> Restoring America’s place at the vanguard of global progress would require new policies and new approaches.

Brzezinski saw one such method in emphasizing the nation’s supposed moral roots: human rights. In words that would be echoed by President Carter throughout his term, Brzezinski wrote in *Between Two Ages* that, “America’s relationship with the world must reflect American domestic values and preoccupations,” a belief he clearly carried into office.<sup>22</sup> However, while human rights would become the defining *public* aspect of Carter’s foreign policy, they remained only one part of the administration’s global strategy to improve America’s reputation in the Global South. Early administration planning demonstrates this prioritization: despite the constant public rhetoric about human rights, the subject remained one bullet point among many.<sup>23</sup> Concrete steps to improve America’s low standing in the Global South were as important to the administration’s plans as any of its human rights initiatives. Brzezinski’s outline of foreign policy goals, for example, includes a veritable laundry list of issues that were of central concern to America’s detractors from the region: arms control, normalization of relations with China, Cuba and Vietnam, returning the Panama Canal Zone to Panama, initiating contact with the Palestinian Liberation Organization, ending white supremacy

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<sup>21</sup> Brzezinski to Carter, “NSC Report for 1977,” 1.

<sup>22</sup> Brzezinski, *Between Two Ages*, 255. See also: Schmitz and Walker, “Jimmy Carter and the Foreign Policy of Human Rights,” 132.

<sup>23</sup> Memo, Peter Tarnoff to Zbigniew Brzezinski, 24 June 1977, “1976-1980 Goals for U.S. Foreign Policy,” NLC-18-6-17-2-3, Carter Library.

in Southern Africa and alleviating global economic inequality.<sup>24</sup> By taking initiative in these areas, the administration hoped to get “in front of the North South dialogue” and “restore [the U.S.’s] image and influence in the Third World.”<sup>25</sup> In fact, many of these measures, rather than those concerning human rights, were among administration’s most striking plans for the first term. This is particularly the case with regard to their strategy for addressing the accusations of the NIEO and the actual inequalities in the global economic system.

Though still fully committed to trade liberalization and tying “the LDCs to the economic system of the west,” Carter’s advisors demonstrated a sincere (when compared to Kissinger) sensitivity to the demands and divergent economic interests of the Global South.<sup>26</sup> Instead of embracing the “one size fits all” approach to the global economy that was characteristic of modernization theory in the 1960s and the neoliberal orthodoxy that would follow in the Reagan administration, administration documents show an awareness of the “disparate [economic] needs of the major groups of LDCs” and a recognition that trade liberalization did not help every economy equally.<sup>27</sup> Carter’s economic advisors instead tried to strike a balance, as Brzezinski summarized it, “between being more politically forthcoming and economically sound.”<sup>28</sup> Put another way, they wanted to make concessions to the demands of the NIEO without wholly sacrificing American

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<sup>24</sup> Those who wish to blame Carter for trying to do too much, too quickly might not be far from the mark. Memo, Zbigniew Brzezinski to President Carter, 5 July 1977, “Your Four Year Goals,” NLC-128-6-17-1, Carter Library

<sup>25</sup> Brzezinski to President Carter, “NSC Report for 1977,” 16.

<sup>26</sup> Memo, Richard Cooper to Members of the Economic Policy Group, 25 February 1977, “Summary of Overview Paper on North/South Strategy,” NLC-132-25-7-4-6, Carter Library.

<sup>27</sup> They for example acknowledged that while trade liberalization served some more industrialized LDCs well, it offered little for others. Memo, Richard Cooper to Members of the Economic Policy Group, 25 February 1977, “Summary of Overview Paper on North/South Strategy,” NLC-132-25-7-4-6, Carter Library.

<sup>28</sup> Action Memo, Zbigniew Brzezinski to President Carter, 14 April 1977, “Completion of EPG Work on PRM-8: North South Issues,” NLC-25-15-12-4-7, Carter Library.



economic interests or acquiescing to the resolution's ideological pretenses. The centerpiece of these efforts was a decision to support the UNCTAD "Common Fund for Commodities" discussed in previous chapters. The choice to support this program represented, at the very least, a tacit acknowledgement that Third World worries about an unbalanced international economic system were not entirely unfounded. It was thus a major departure for U.S. global economic policy which had long been resistant to any centralized system of global price controls.

To be clear, stronger U.S. support for UNCTAD did not signify a wholesale acceptance of the premises of the NIEO.<sup>29</sup> Indeed, it was in part an attempt to *reduce* American responsibility for global problems. As one memo described it, these moves were partly intended to get "away from the familiar North-South approach" where "all concessions and responsibilities flow one way [from the industrialized West] to a more balanced approach to global issues."<sup>30</sup> Nor was it always clear how far the U.S. would go in this or other efforts to address the concerns of the Global South. As we shall see, some elements in the Administration – Young in particular – wanted to see more of this sort of approach, others comparatively less. Yet, in however confused or minor a way, Carter's shift in American policy represented a genuine attempt to adopt a more cooperative approach to resolving global problems. Despite Kissinger's willingness to make rhetorical gestures of support for elements of the NIEO, his was never a truly sincere effort to address global poverty. As Kissinger had put it in a meeting discussing increases in food aid, "I don't give a damn about Bangladesh or humanitarian grounds, I want [the

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<sup>29</sup> This is not to suggest that the Carter administration should, or even could, have done so. As discussed in Chapter 3, the resolution was so radical in its implications that it's hard to imagine how any U.S. government could have; endorsing the NIEO was tantamount to rejecting liberalism and capitalism.

<sup>30</sup> Memo, [undated] 1976, "PRM 8 – Track III: US Relations with Developing Countries The Next Twelve Months," NLC-132-27-1-1-3, Carter Library.

increase] for foreign policy.”<sup>31</sup> While, as the last two chapters revealed, Kissinger had over his final two years in office realized that the United States needed to make concessions to the Global South to deal with its image problem, these were to be as limited as possible. For the Carter administration, preserving the international credibility of the United States required more than military or strategic superiority, or mere rhetorical gestures; it included a basic level of sincere responsiveness to the concerns of the less powerful. Even when this policy was limited in substance, it was conveyed with a new attitude that suggested a real interest in cooperation and accommodation rather than opposition or indifference.

#### ANDREW YOUNG AND SUCCESS ABROAD

Nothing was more indicative of this move toward cooperation with the Global South than Carter’s new U.N. Ambassador, Andrew Young. Quickly becoming the personification of the administration’s attitude toward the G-77, Young’s background alone was suggestive of the new government’s desire for a more cooperative North-South environment. A former lieutenant of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Young had long linked the struggle for the liberation of African Americans in the U.S. to worldwide independence movements against colonial rule and white supremacy.<sup>32</sup> Though making this connection was a common enough phenomenon, for Young it was a product of personal experience. In the time before he joined the staff of King’s Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Young – a Congregationalist minister – had spent several years moving within the international circles of the Protestant left. After a period serving as a

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<sup>31</sup>Memcon, President Ford, Henry Kissinger, *et. al.*, 17 September 1974, Box 4, Memcons, FDL.

<sup>32</sup>For more on the relationship between Young’s background in the Civil Rights movement and his views on foreign affairs see Andrew J. DeRoche, *Andrew Young: Civil Rights Ambassador* (Wilmington: 2003).

preacher in rural Georgia, Young took a position in the Youth Department of the National Council of Churches (NCC). Headquartered at the Interfaith Center on Riverside Drive in Manhattan, the NCC shared office space with a number of different religious and missionary organizations, including the World Council of Churches (WCC).<sup>33</sup> An umbrella organization for Protestant groups worldwide, the proximity of the WCC afforded Young the opportunity to meet with many aspiring African leaders, some of whom would later become involved in national liberation movements on the continent.<sup>34</sup> In his memoir, Young claimed that these meetings, and travels abroad to ecumenical conferences, exposed him to ideas and perspectives about anti-colonial movements that would have been hard to come by in the American media.<sup>35</sup> The materials retained in his papers from the WCC's Programme to Combat Racism and the 1960 Ecumenical Youth Conference confirm this, conveying an anti-colonial and Non-Aligned Movement viewpoint that would – at best – have been treated with deep skepticism by 1950s America. Presaging the call for resource transfers that would become such a source of controversy in the 1970s U.N., the draft Programme called for member churches to recognize that “there can be no justice in our world without a transfer of economic resources to undergird the redistribution of political power and to make cultural self-determination meaningful.”<sup>36</sup> In stark contrast to many in the U.S. diplomatic

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<sup>33</sup> Andrew Young, *An Easy Burden: The Civil Rights Movement and the Transformation of America* (New York: 1996), 102-124.

<sup>34</sup> Young, *Easy Burden*, 117.

<sup>35</sup> Young, *Easy Burden*, 119-21.

<sup>36</sup> “Recommendations Regarding an Ecumenical Programme to Combat Racism” Folder 7, Box 2, and “Preparatory Studies on the Main Theme of the Assembly” Folder 13, Box 2, Andrew J. Young Papers, Auburn Avenue Research Library, Atlanta GA (henceforth Young Papers).

establishment, Young's first encounter with the political program of the Third World was as an ally rather than as an opponent.<sup>37</sup>

However much the Third World may have radicalized by the 1970s, when Young arrived at Turtle Bay he retained this deep connection to the project of national liberation and its representatives. In a May 1977 letter to his wife, the Ambassador reported being inspired by a meeting with the leadership of Mozambique – “students who left school to organize a liberation army” – and was convinced that the American press “distorted” what these individuals represented.<sup>38</sup> Thanks to such sentiments and his background in the Civil Rights Movement, Young possessed an ability to connect with the leaders of the Third World that few of his – generally white and very privileged – peers and predecessors could remotely approach. In fact, Young's personal history conveyed so strong a message on its own that his impact was felt before he had even spent a month in office. A February 1977 “Presidential Review Memorandum” [PRM] for Southern Africa noted that, President Carter's “designation of Andrew Young as U.N. ambassador [has already] raised African expectations at the U.N. that the U.S. will play an aggressive role in the pursuit of majority rule... in southern Africa.”<sup>39</sup> Young himself wasted no time in using his past to his advantage, as evidenced by his speech to the opening meeting of the U.N. General Assembly that year. In what might have proved an ominous portent, delegates from around the world began the session by lining up to praise a unified Vietnam, the newest member state, for its heroic struggle against “imperialism” and

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<sup>37</sup>It should be noted that, as was discussed in Chapter 1, the Third World Young encountered early in his career as a minister was far from identical to that which he confronted at the U.N.

<sup>38</sup> Andy Young to Jean Childs Young, 20 May 1977, Folder 12, Box 401. Young Papers.

<sup>39</sup> Memo, 27 January 1977, “Presidential Review Memorandum/NSC-4,” NLC-18-4-6-1-1, Carter Library. These new expectations worried at least one NSC staffer, who complained to Brzezinski that the PRM failed to mention that “raised expectations usually lead to much more bitter disappointment.” Memo, Jessica Tuchman to Zbigniew Brzezinski, 7 February 1977, “PRM-4 – Southern Africa,” NLC-18-4-6-1-1, Carter Library.

lambast the U.S. for not providing reconstruction aid. Rather than responding to the noticeably anti-American tone of the proceedings, Young instead highlighted – with hard earned credibility – his own long opposition to the war. After stating that the United States looked to the future in its relations with Vietnam, the Ambassador added a “personal” note: “I would remind this Assembly that Viet Nam’s struggle for independence was accompanied by a profound struggle within the nation which I represent.” Young then went on to describe the anti-war movement and how he had personally been part of the Congress that “cut off funds for the purpose of waging the Vietnam War.” In doing this, Young clearly identified himself, and the new administration, with the global anti-war majority.<sup>40</sup>

This episode was typical of Young’s tactics at the U.N. and represented his belief that Moynihan’s “in opposition” approach had been counterproductive. Confrontation at the U.N. might have been good for American egos, Young argued, but it had “fairly disastrous results” for U.S. interests.<sup>41</sup> From the new Ambassador’s perspective, the verbal shootouts that Moynihan had so enjoyed brought no real improvement in international respect for democracy or capitalism and a clear decline in American prestige. They were also a poor tactic for securing votes for U.S. initiatives, since harsh rhetoric only intensified opposition amongst the delegations from more moderate governments. Making matters worse, all this confrontation triggered a corresponding decline in the U.N.’s reputation at home. The final result was a world body that did not

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<sup>40</sup> Records of the UN General Assembly, 32<sup>nd</sup> Session, 1<sup>st</sup> Plenary Meeting, 13-14. This opening speech caused the *Wall Street Journal*, a strong proponent of Moynihan-style confrontation, to lament that the U.S. was “back in the groove” of accommodating hostility in the U.N. “Back in the Groove,” *The Wall Street Journal*, 30 September 1977, 16.

<sup>41</sup> Quoted in Joseph Lelyveld, “Our New Voice at the U.N.” *The New York Times Magazine*, 6 February 1977, 18.

respect the United States, and an American population that did not respect the U.N. For the Ambassador and his comrade in the State Department, Assistant Secretary of State Charles William Maynes, this situation was unacceptable.<sup>42</sup> Where Moynihan and his defenders would have argued that mutual animosity was unavoidable given the philosophical disagreements involved, Maynes and Young believed there was another way. Their goals for the first term were therefore built around making “the U.N. again a plausible instrument for... U.S. foreign policy” and reopening “communication with the American people regarding the... utility of international organizations.”<sup>43</sup>

To do this, Young needed to moderate resolutions before they hit the floor and avoid the kinds of ideologically charged exchanges that had isolated the United States in the past. This required him to ignore insults and instead find common ground with hostile delegations, as he did during the initial session welcoming Vietnam. He also made efforts to get to know his fellow ambassadors outside of official business, employing informal diplomacy and friendship – rather than public debates – to influence other representatives. In what would be a rather difficult scenario to imagine any number of his predecessors at USUN, Young on one occasion was found crawling on the floor of the Ambassador’s Residence playing “cowboys” with his son and the “dignified, white haired Ambassador from Mauritius,” Radha Krishna Ramphul. These kinds of informal interactions with representatives of smaller nations were, according to Ramphul, “very important” and became a hallmark of Young’s diplomacy. A Tunsian diplomat told *The*

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<sup>42</sup>Maynes, was, as mentioned, a world order advocate sympathetic to the U.N. and its Third World majority. In an 1974 op-ed in *The Washington Post*, Maynes wrote that the U.S., “cannot live in isolation... the United States has no choice but to work for an adjustment in the international economic order... which gives everyone a chance for his place in the sun.” In fact, he went on to suggest that “the most urgent foreign policy task” of the nation was “to confront these major international economic questions (Maynes, “The Hungry World and the American Ethic.” *Washington Post*, 1 December 1974, B1).

<sup>43</sup> Memo, Charles William Maynes to Andy Young, 9 January 1979, “Thoughts for the Next Two Years,” Folder 1, Box 199, Young Papers.

*Washington Post* that “everyone sees Young as the perfect antonym to Daniel Moynihan.” Dramane Ouattara, a representative from the Organization of African Unity, attributed this to Young’s abandoning of the “loftiness” that American ambassadors had generally demonstrated toward diplomats from the Global South.<sup>44</sup> Where previous heads of USUN, according to *Times of India*, had shown “scant courtesy” toward the representative of the Third World, Young demonstrated a genuine interest and “respect for the United Nations and the representatives of the third world [*sic*].”<sup>45</sup> One State Department memo claimed that Young’s talents in this field “defie[d] quantification or easy explanation” leaving those who experienced his “magnetism” firsthand simply “astounded” by his abilities.<sup>46</sup>

This combination of personal charm and quiet diplomacy proved successful in influencing the international body and indeed, leaders of the Global South more generally. The *New York Times* found, in conversations with U.N. delegates from other nations, that many thought Young “the most influential man at the United Nations” and that his “presence... ha[d] swung more than a few votes or... prevented issues from coming to a vote when the outcome would have been against the United States.”<sup>47</sup> Young was integral, for example, to successful American participation in the U.N. Conference for Action Against Apartheid in Lagos, Nigeria during August of 1977. According to a White House Situation Room report, it was largely Young’s “skill and personal magnetism” that allowed the U.S. delegation to overcome what the report admitted was a

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<sup>44</sup> Milton R. Benjamin, “Credited With 'Personal Touch,' Young: A New Kind of U.S. Ambassador,” *The Washington Post*, 6 November 1977, A1.

<sup>45</sup> M.V. Kamath, “UN Assembly’s 32<sup>nd</sup> Session ‘Constructive,’” *Times of India*, 26 December 1977.

<sup>46</sup> Memo. John Tefft to Brian Atwood. 7 September 1977. “Ambassador Young’s Tenure at the UN” Folder 5, Box 207, Young Papers.

<sup>47</sup> “Rediscovering Andrew Young,” *The New York Times*, 28 August 1977.

lack of “the new [American] initiatives hoped for by the African delegations.”<sup>48</sup> Later that year, during negotiations over the language of the Security Council’s arms embargo of South Africa, Young was once again critical in getting a positive outcome. In October, after initial discussions on the issue, USUN had expressed concern that the negotiations might be “prolonged” given the distance between the Western and African attitudes on the subject.<sup>49</sup> However, by early November, Young was able to report that African representatives had accepted a compromise resolution “substantially in accord with [the] position of the Western Five” despite their early opposition.<sup>50</sup> Ouattara admitted that he and his fellow Africans didn’t like the final language but were willing to “let it go because of the general effort which has been deployed by people like Andrew Young.”<sup>51</sup> As Maynes enthused in 1979, the Ambassador’s personal diplomacy had brought about “an impressive increase... in the ability of the United States to have its voice heard in Third World councils.”<sup>52</sup>

Carter and his top advisors were quite aware of the powerful asset that Andrew Young could be for their foreign policy. Even before taking office, the then President-Elect Carter had suggested to Brzezinski that they have their new U.N. representative “meet with black South African leaders early” to help establish their new policies toward the region. Young, as a number of scholars have shown, would go on to play an important role in the Carter administration’s diplomacy in Southern Africa, particularly in

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<sup>48</sup> Memo, The Situation Room to Zbigniew Brzezinski, 30 August 1977, “Additional Information Items.” NLC-1-3-4-32-7. Carter Library.

<sup>49</sup> Memo, USUN-Ambassador Young to President Carter, 28 October 1977, “U.S. Mission to the United Nations Activities: October 19-27,” NLC-126-9-29-1-0. Carter Library.

<sup>50</sup> Telegram, USUN-Ambassador Young to the Secretary of State, 3 November 1977, “Accord Near on Security Council Arms Embargo on South Africa.” SA00803, *South Africa: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1962-1989*, DNSA.

<sup>51</sup> Benjamin, “Credited With 'Personal Touch,” *The Washington Post*, 6 November 1977, A1.

<sup>52</sup> Memo, Charles William Maynes to Andy Young, 9 January 1979, “Thoughts for the Next Two Years,” Folder 1, Box 199, Young Papers.



the successful effort to bring about a transition to majority rule in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe and in the less successful attempt to end South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia.<sup>53</sup> The President, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and Brzezinski would all heap praise upon him for his work throughout their tenure and in later memoirs. The President told the Congressional Black Caucus in 1978, for example, that he didn't "know anyone in the administration... who has done more for our country throughout the world than Andy Young."<sup>54</sup> Vance, for his part, would recall that many of the gains the administration made in "were due, in substantial part, to Andy's tireless efforts to persuade African leaders of our seriousness about genuine majority rule."<sup>55</sup> Brzezinski too thought Young did an exceptional job. In a 1978 interview he told James Reston that the improvement in U.S.-African relations was "thanks very much to Cy Vance and Andy Young."<sup>56</sup> Brzezinski would later claim that it was in this field – improving relations with the Third World and Africa – that he and Vance had been most in accord. In Africa in particular he wrote, "I did not inject myself... much and generally supported [Vance] and Andy Young's efforts."<sup>57</sup>

In spite of this, Young's actual role in decision-making – even in African affairs – remained relatively limited. While most in the administration, Jimmy Carter in particular, thought very highly of Young and his skills, he was unable to parlay those relationships

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<sup>53</sup> See: DeRoche, *Civil Rights Ambassador*, 71-119. DeRoche, "Standing Firm for Principles: Jimmy Carter and Zimbabwe," *Diplomatic History* 23, no. 4 (October 1999): 657-685. Piero Gleijeses, "A Test of Wills: Jimmy Carter, South Africa and the Independence of Namibia," *Diplomatic History* 34, no. 5 (November 2010): 853-891. Bartlett C. Jones, *Flawed Triumphs: Andy Young at the United Nations* (Wilmington: 1996): 51-92. Simon Stevens, "From the Viewpoint of a Southern Governor," 843-880.

<sup>54</sup> David Broder, "Carter Solidly Behind Andrew Young," *The Washington Post*, 1 October 1978, A2.

<sup>55</sup> Vance, *Hard Choices*, 285.

<sup>56</sup> James Reston, "The World According to Brzezinski," *The New York Times Magazine*, 31 December 1978, 4.

<sup>57</sup> Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, 38.

into a dominant policy role.<sup>58</sup> In a telling early 1977 reversal, the President, despite first choosing to put Young in charge of a plan for peaceful evolution in South Africa, later changed his mind. After reading the minutes of the initially decisive meeting, he noted to Brzezinski by hand that Vance should instead “take [the] recognized lead... consulting [with] Andy.”<sup>59</sup> Even in situations where Young’s views were heeded there was little advance guarantee that they would be. Young’s aides and allies, for example, showed real concern that the President might ignore the Ambassador’s pleadings and accept the 1978 “internal settlement” in Rhodesia, in what would have been a major setback for Young’s approach to the region.<sup>60</sup> While the Ambassador, in concert with Vance, would prevail in this case, he did not always get his way on such important African issues. Peiro Glejeses, for example, has documented how Young failed to convince Carter of the necessity for sanctioning South Africa over its continued occupation of Namibia, a decision with significant ramifications for the future of that troubled territory. Although Young was the acknowledged expert on Africa and his position had the support of the Secretary of State, it was Brzezinski’s interest in a more moderate policy that would win the day.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Barlett Jones offers an insightful discussion of this, including the significance – and limits – of Young’s personal friendship with the President, in Chapter 2 of *Flawed Triumphs*, 9-25.

<sup>59</sup> Memo. Zbigniew Brzezinski to the President. 3 March 1977. “NSC Meeting on South Africa.” NLC-17-1-5-8-9. Carter Library.

<sup>60</sup> The settlement, a 1978 ploy by white Rhodesians to avoid true majority rule by holding multiracial elections while reserving real power for themselves, was a non-starter for most African leaders but increasingly popular in the United States. Carter, for a time, gave serious thought to accepting it as a reasonable solution to the crisis, something that was anathema to Young and could have seriously damaged efforts to improve American relations with black Africans. Anne Holloway, Young’s State Department secretary, worried that the President had already settled on accepting the Salisbury arrangement, and would thus abandon “our buildup of goodwill... throughout Africa.” (Memo, Anne Holloway to Ambassador Andrew Young, 5 March 1978, “A Personal Primer on Zimbabwe,” Folder 2, Box 199, Young Papers.) Maynes too was concerned, informing Young in a March 4<sup>th</sup> memo that his subsequent meeting with the President was “crucial” and that what he said to the President would have a “decisive effect on how the meeting comes out.” (Memo, IO-Charles Maynes to USUN-Andrew Young, 4 March 1978, “Your Meeting with the President on Rhodesia on Monday March 6,” Folder 2, Box 119, Young Papers.)

<sup>61</sup> Glejeses, “A Test of Wills,” 884-9.

This latter development is indicative of the considerable space for tactical disagreement that existed among those otherwise in accord about the strategic goals of the administration. It may also offer some answer as to how Carter's key policy makers could both routinely – and with apparent sincerity – assert that they rarely disagreed, and yet often seem to be working at cross purposes. Both Young and Brzezinski, for example, believed that improving the U.S.'s reputation in the Global South was essential to limiting the growth of Soviet or other radical influence in the Third World. Both would also have agreed that combating white supremacy was a central component of those efforts.<sup>62</sup> Yet in the case of sanctions for South Africa's occupation of Namibia, they were at variance on how to proceed: Brzezinski more afraid of appearing weak on communism, Young more concerned with weakness in the face of white supremacy.<sup>63</sup> This would not be the only time that Young found himself out of step with his superiors either. In fact, there is much indication that he and Charles Maynes saw themselves as a sort of embattled ideological vanguard for the administration. In the same 1979 memo in which the Assistant Secretary praised Young for his global influence, Maynes also lamented their less established position within the executive branch. They had failed “almost totally,” he complained to Young, in their goal of pushing the administration “to adopt a more world order focus in its formulation of foreign policy objectives.”<sup>64</sup> Even though the President was already widely seen as the most friendly to the Third World in many years, Young and Maynes were apparently hoping for more. Given this, one could attribute some of the Ambassador's more politically inopportune statements – more on

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<sup>62</sup> Simon Stevens also makes this point in “From the Viewpoint of a Southern Governor,” 845-6.

<sup>63</sup> Glejeses, “A Test of Wills,” 885-6.

<sup>64</sup> Memo, Charles William Maynes to Andy Young, 9 January 1979, “Thoughts for the Next Two Years,” Folder 1, Box 199, Young Papers.

which later – to the frustrations of his being cut out of the policymaking process on a given issue. He may have been attempting to use his high profile outside the White House to make up for an inability to be heard within it.

Whatever the cause, the result was to give a more radical cast to policies that were sometimes considerably more moderate in practice. Though it would prove problematic at home, this tendency actually played well abroad. As far as his global target audience was concerned, Young remained an incredibly able pitchman, emissary and – most importantly – symbol of the Carter administration’s attempt to mollify Third World opinion. Carter himself would point to Young’s importance as the latter in his memoir: “when I chose Andrew Young... there was no doubt within the developing world that ours was an honest and sincere voice.”<sup>65</sup> With support for the Common Fund, the restoration of the Canal Zone to Panama, genuine efforts to help establish majority rule in southern Africa and Young’s winning diplomacy in the U.N., the Carter administration had, by early 1979, softened the harsher edges of the North-South dialogue. In spite of his restricted influence on policy, Young remained a potent symbol these efforts and the potential they held for a changed relationship between the United States and the Global South. As Brzezinski told Reston, “I believe very strongly that to make the world congenial to ourselves... we have to be very active in shaping... wider and fairer patterns of global cooperation... this is why Andy Young has been a very constructive force.”<sup>66</sup>

#### THE CONSERVATIVE BACKLASH

Though of great advantage in international forums, Young, and the policies he came to represent, would become an increasing liability in the United States. Still

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<sup>65</sup> Jimmy Carter. *Keeping Faith: The Memoirs of a President* (New York: 1989), 150.

<sup>66</sup> Reston, “The World According to Brzezinski,” 3.

convinced that a hostile Global South required a Moynihan-like defense, not reevaluation, of American positions, conservatives deeply resented any moves to align U.S. policy with the interests of Third World governments. Young's race, his left-leaning politics, and his ability for finding controversy made him an easy target. As early as July of 1977 the Ambassador was the subject of a direct mail flyer from the grassroots advocacy group Conservative Caucus. It featured New Hampshire Governor Meldrim Thomson Jr. accusing Young of representing "the socialist and Marxist nations of the Third World" and "black power" rather than the United States. Pointing to Young's assertion that "the destruction of Western Civilization" might be required to create a truly just world, as well as his view that racism was a greater threat to the U.S. than communism, Thomson encouraged his fellow conservatives to demand the Ambassador's departure.<sup>67</sup> As this might suggest, these attacks were routinely scurrilous and often invoked race, directly or indirectly, to suggest that it was not just Young's politics that made him "un-American." A crudely titled *National Review* article – "the Amos and Andy Young Show" – for example, had an extended consideration of Young's skin color and what the author believed was its highly marketable lighter shade.<sup>68</sup> William F. Buckley, meanwhile, used his syndicated column to call Young "a Catherine's wheel of black bombast" whose rhetoric was "straight out of the old songbooks of the Black Panthers."<sup>69</sup>

But racism was not Young's, or the administration's, only problem in selling their North-South policies. As was the case during Nixon and Ford's Presidencies, much of

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<sup>67</sup> Memo, Tom Offenburger to Jody Powell et al. 27 July 1977. "Executive 7/1/77-12/31/77" Folder, Box IT86-27, WHCF-Subject File, Carter Library.

<sup>68</sup> D. Keith Mano, "The Amos and Andy Young Show" *National Review*, 23 December 1977, 1507-8.

<sup>69</sup> William F. Buckley, "Andrew Young – The Not-So-Innocent Abroad," *The Los Angeles Times*, 2 June 1977, E5.

what passed as world opinion in the United Nations of the late 1970s – especially amongst the contingent from the Global South – was not the feelings of the recently liberated masses yearning for freedom but rather that of their oft-despotic rulers. Therefore while most members of the U.N. may have long declared imperialism and white supremacy unacceptable, they were hardly pushing the international community toward a democratic, rights based utopia. In general, Third World representatives stressed self-determination and national sovereignty as the preeminent guarantors of freedom. All other rights, especially those located in the individual, were considered the luxuries of rich bourgeois societies. They were likely, at the Global South's current point in post-colonial development, to undermine the proper liberation of the people.<sup>70</sup> In a number of cases (Rhodesia/Zimbabwe, Nicaragua, and Iran) the Carter administration's policies – though rightly recognizing the immorality of white supremacy or prudently avoiding direct intervention in support of a dictator – helped usher in regimes with human rights records little better than their predecessors. The administration's culpability for these outcomes varies, and is in some cases quite limited, yet this record illustrates the challenges inherent in combining a human rights policy with new approaches to crises in the Third World. In southern Africa bringing an end to white minority rule involved a similar problem: working closely with (and hence providing legitimacy to) the leaders of the so-called Frontline States (primarily Botswana, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Zambia). While these countries had taken the lead in combating white supremacy their regimes – at least in the case of the latter three – could hardly be considered paragons of respect for human rights. In Latin America the same predicament emerged again, this time with the

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<sup>70</sup> See Burke's discussion of this, *Decolonization and the Evolution of International Human Rights*, 112-151.

return of the Panama Canal to the government of Panamanian autocrat Omar Torrijos. All told, any policy of strengthening ties with the Third World involved improved relations with nearly as many dictatorships as the “immoral” Cold War policies that Carter was supposedly abandoning.

In Young’s case the problem was particularly pronounced. In order to avoid confrontation with other delegations he had to downplay or ignore the regent hierarchy of rights at the U.N. where South Africa, Israel and the United States were subject to withering criticism (often quite deserved) for their policies while most other states escaped even the slightest condescending word. The longstanding “double standard” complaint against the U.N. was hardly fabricated – as no less a world order supporter than Richard Gardner had admitted to the Foreign Relations Committee in 1975. A Third Committee debate over creating a U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights in 1977 is demonstrative of the politically vulnerable position this put Ambassador Young in. Floated in the interest of improving the U.N.’s machinery for monitoring human rights, the Western backed draft resolution fell under a withering barrage of criticism and disingenuous technical quibbles. A parade of representatives from repressive regimes assembled to attack the idea that their governments deserved even the slightest bit of international scrutiny. Oman’s delegation, for example, worried that the Commissioner would interfere with his nation’s internal affairs and urged fellow delegates to limit the High Commissioner’s responsibilities to the human rights of Palestinians and blacks subject to minority white rule alone.<sup>71</sup> The representative of the Byelorussian S.S.R. charged that the High Commissioner plan was little more than a ploy to “cover up the policy of co-existence of South Africa” and allow the United States to “obstruct” efforts

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<sup>71</sup> Records of the UN General Assembly, 32<sup>nd</sup> Session, Third Committee, 68<sup>th</sup> Meeting, 4.

“with regard to the problems of racism and colonial domination.”<sup>72</sup> A Kuwaiti delegate called the idea “elitist” and a “Trojan Horse from which sallies would be made against developing countries [and] the Soviet Union” while Cuba claimed the concept sanctioned individualism and implied “that the old unjust social order could contribute to the realization of these rights.”<sup>73</sup> The debate – if it could be labeled as such – may have been a banner moment for self-determination but was certainly not so for the idea of human rights.

Ambassador Young’s response to this assault on the very concept of human rights, and at times the United States and the ideals on which it was founded, was comparably muted. However much his backroom diplomacy may have softened the harshest Third World rhetoric it did nothing to resolve the ideological disputes that continued to divide the U.S. from most of the governments of the Global South. While Young needed to pretend these ideological differences did not exist or were of little consequence, few of his fellow delegates were similarly encumbered or inclined. In such an environment, the Ambassador’s tactics could easily be – and often were – interpreted as a sign of weakness. At the very least, Young’s approach hardly seemed to be getting the United States on the promised “right side” of the moral issues of the world. In the case of the High Commissioner debate, for example, Young’s two speeches on the subject did offer some defense of individual rights and a plea to recognize that the world “had been waiting for thirty years” for such a resolution.<sup>74</sup> Yet, whatever strength they may have possessed was undercut by self-deprecatory references to the U.S.’s own human rights failings and an odd discourse on how the American people had “trapped”

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<sup>72</sup> Records of the UN General Assembly, 32<sup>nd</sup> Session, Third Committee, 67<sup>th</sup> Meeting, 8.

<sup>73</sup> Records of the UN General Assembly, 32<sup>nd</sup> Session, Third Committee, 68<sup>th</sup> Meeting, 4-5.

<sup>74</sup> Records of the UN General Assembly, 32<sup>nd</sup> Session, Third Committee, 68<sup>th</sup> Meeting, 13, 18-19.



the Carter administration into its human rights policy.<sup>75</sup> The contrast with Moynihan's unapologetic defense of liberal democracy and America's claims to moral superiority could hardly have been more pronounced.

Young's precarious situation reveals the basic flaw in the administration's North-South policies as a whole: one could not credibly stress both human rights *and* improved relations with the Global South. Support for human rights is an inherently ideological and interventionist policy while foreign intervention – of any kind – was precisely what many Third World leaders wanted most to avoid. Thus there was virtually no way Carter could take as strong a stand on rights as he promised and cooperate with these regimes. The administration was not oblivious to this issue or simply being naïve – it was fully aware of the problem. PRM-28, the Presidential Review Memorandum outlining the administration's human rights policy, established multiple human rights standards, for “Western Democracies,” “Third World States,” “Communist States” and “Gross Violators of Human Rights.” In some cases, the document suggested, it might be “more realistic to expect concrete achievements with the first and second group of rights [violations of the integrity of the person and economic and social rights respectively] than... with the third [civil/political rights].<sup>76</sup> Just as *détente* required muting the ideological differences between the United States and the Soviet Union, so too would efforts to nurture a more placid North-South dialogue. Yet by doubling down on ideology

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<sup>75</sup> Records of the UN General Assembly, 32<sup>nd</sup> Session, Third Committee, 68<sup>th</sup> Meeting, 18-19. The U.N. records cited here contain only a summary transcript. For a verbatim record of Young's speech, including the “trapped” line, see Clement, *Young at the United Nations*, 130-131. This “trapped” business appears to have annoyed Moynihan, who often took personal credit for making human rights a centerpiece of American policy, prompting him to write the President for clarification of Young's comments. Daniel Patrick Moynihan to Jimmy Carter. 7 December 1977. *Daniel Patrick Moynihan: A Portrait in Letters*. Stephen Weisman, ed (New York: 2010), 392.

<sup>76</sup> “Presidential Review Memorandum/NSC-28: Human Rights,” 15 August 1977, NLC-132-44-6-1-9, Carter Library.

through constant references to morality and human rights, the Carter administration had not minimized ideology but had instead made it the public cornerstone of their foreign policy.

The result was that their nuanced approach to the problem of rights and the Global South did not make much headway in a political environment that the administration itself had helped fixate on the morality of foreign policy. Carter's domestic opponents did not see a President wisely adjusting to the views of the world's majority, but one failing to see through the propaganda of totalitarian leaders masquerading as representatives of the world's moral will. Conservatives seized upon the contradictions in the President's policies and repeatedly employed them to discredit the administration – hence the obsession with Young. The columnist Carl Gershman, for example, savaged Young in *Commentary* for his “ability to turn a blind eye to repression if it [was] carried out by Africans or other Third World regimes in the name of a progressive ideology.” Young, he argued, showed “a lack of commitment to political freedom” and was instead an “advocate for U.S. acquiescence in a new system of tyranny.”<sup>77</sup> Another writer asserted that the Carter administration had, in reality, undermined human rights by failing to demonstrate the “foresight and consistency” or “courage” necessary for a true defense of them.<sup>78</sup> In what has become the most well-remembered articulation of this position, future U.N. ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick's highly-charged essay, “Dictatorships and Double Standards,” asserted that the “United States has never tried so hard, and failed so utterly, to make and keep friends in the Third World.” The failure of a policy “whose crowning achievement has been... a transfer of the Panama Canal to a swaggering Latin

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<sup>77</sup> Carl Gershman, “The World According to Andrew Young” *Commentary*, August 1978. 17-23.

<sup>78</sup> Walter Laqueur, “The World and President Carter” *Commentary*, February 1978, 56-63.

dictator of Castroite bent” was “now clear to everyone except its architects.” Rather than having orchestrated a reassertion of American leadership, she argued, the administration had actually overseen a worldwide retreat through a “posture of continuous self-abasement and apology vis-à-vis the Third World.”<sup>79</sup> Taking a similar line, Moynihan entitled his election post-mortem simply: “Joining the Jackals: The U.S. at the U.N., 1977-1980.”<sup>80</sup>

Despite their vitriol, exaggeration, and utter lack of sympathy for the difficulties faced by post-colonial states, these arguments were not entirely specious. By promising that American policy would reflect a new morality and then working to improve relations with a United Nations and Third World that seemed to be embracing dictatorships and socialism, rather than democracy or capitalism, the Carter administration did give the impression that the U.S. was conceding an ideological battle. It was in this respect that Young had proved to be a major liability. Whether attempting to shape administration policy through the press, or simply expressing his genuine opinions, the Ambassador’s penchant for off-the-cuff comments drew focus onto the tensions in the administration’s policies rather than deflecting it away. Early statements about Cuban troops bringing stability to Angola and the potential need to destroy Western Civilization [if other plans to bring about a just international community failed] were only the start. In 1978, long before the unappealing details of the “internal settlement” in Rhodesia had emerged publically, Young dismissed any such settlement as “no settlement.” However accurate a reading of the situation, the timing of Young’s statement strongly suggested that administration policy was biased in favor of the communist inspired national liberation

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<sup>79</sup> Jeane Kirkpatrick, “Dictatorships and Double Standards,” *Commentary*, November 1979, 34-45.

<sup>80</sup> Daniel Patrick Moynihan, “Joining the Jackals: The U.S. at the U.N., 1977-1980,” *Commentary*, February 1981, 23-31.

movements of Robert Mugabe and Joshua Nkomo rather than more moderate black leaders.

Later that year, in an ill-fated attempt to praise the U.S. court system, Young appeared to favorably compare political rights in the Soviet Union to those in the U.S., given the “hundreds, perhaps thousands of political prisoners in the United States.” In early 1979, as the administration struggled to address the growing chaos in Iran, Young again complicated matters. He first characterized American reactions to the situation as an unjustified “panic” that would subside and reveal the Ayatollah Khomeini to be “some kind of saint” and then later compared the use of the death penalty in Florida to political killings carried out on Khomeini’s behalf.<sup>81</sup> As a Democratic Party official put it confidentially to the *Christian Science Monitor*, “how long can Young keep on doing these things?”<sup>82</sup> Young’s final gaffe – the secret, unauthorized meeting with the PLO – was, if not merely a straw, certainly just the last in a series of blows to the camel’s back. Indeed, the offending act itself was hardly as sinister as it appeared to the conservative press. Young was simply seeking to delay discussion of a report from the U.N. Committee on Palestinian Rights and had hoped to use his brand of personal diplomacy get the PLO to go along.<sup>83</sup> The official cause of Young’s departure was not so much the meeting itself but the fact that he initially attempted to mislead not only the press, but Vance and the President as well, over the nature of his contacts with the Palestinians. Yet, the atmosphere of controversy that had so long surrounded Young had already made his

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<sup>81</sup> Young’s Statements – And Reactions to Them,” *The Washington Post*, 16 August 1979, A7.

<sup>82</sup> Godfrey Sperling Jr., “Young; Carter Burden,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 16 August 1979, 1.

<sup>83</sup> The Chicago Tribune described this well in its editorial on the subject: “Exit Andrew Young,” *Chicago Tribune*, 17 August 1979, D2. Also see Bartlett Jones’ very detailed description, *Flawed Triumphs*, 129-152.

position all but untenable. As a *Los Angeles Times* editorial concluded, “Young was probably in the wrong job from the start.”<sup>84</sup>

The Ambassador’s departure did not much help matters for the administration. Even after Young left office worries continued that, whatever Carter may have done to improve the position of the United States vis-à-vis the Global South, it had been done at the expense of American national and ideological prestige. Critically, this impression was not confined merely to conservatives. In response to UNESCO efforts to establish a New International Information Order in 1978, for example, the *New York Times* ran an editorial that – while hardly blaming Carter – lamented how the “Western democracies [were] giving up the fight” for their values in the U.N.<sup>85</sup> Later in 1980, Philip Geyelin, a member of the *Washington Post*’s editorial board, complained that American diplomats were no longer working to reinvent the U.N. but to accommodate themselves to the “moral swamp” of “mob rule by a Third World majority in close alliance with the communist bloc.”<sup>86</sup> Brzezinski himself realized that U.S. had a broader public relations problem in 1980, informing Carter that the administration had to avoid “reinforcing the image that America has lost its capacity to control events.”<sup>87</sup> By this point, of course, the Iranian hostage crisis had entered into the equation, but it only intensified and did not create, the perception of American passivity in the face of an assault on its image and

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<sup>84</sup> “Young’s Downfall,” *Los Angeles Times*, 16 August 1979, C6.

<sup>85</sup> Akin to the NIEO, plans for the New International Information Order or New World Information Order usually called for censorship of the Western press in the interest of a more equally representative international media. “Tired Nations and the United Nations,” *The New York Times*, 22 December 1978, A32. Debates over international freedom of the press had a long history at the U.N. and played no small part, as Kenneth Cmiel has documented, in the formation of the idea of the Third World as something distinct from the East and West. Kenneth Cmiel, “Human Rights, Freedom of Information, and the Origins of Third World Solidarity,” *Truth Claims: Representation and Human Rights*, Mark Phillip Bradley and Patrice Petro, eds. (New Brunswick: 2002): 107-130.

<sup>86</sup> Philip Geyelin, “United Nations: An Outrage,” *The Washington Post*, 19 August 1980.

<sup>87</sup> Memo, Zbigniew Brzezinski to President Carter, undated. “Meetings SCC 293: 3/25/80” Folder, Box 33, Brzezinski Collection, Carter Library.

values. Inflation, the oil crisis, the Iran hostage situation and subsequent failed “Desert-One” rescue attempt were all indisputably important parts of convincing Americans that Carter was not capable of dealing with a hostile world. It would, however, be a mistake to miss the important role his accommodationist approach to the Global South played in this development.

#### THE 1980 ELECTION AND THE VICTORY OF AN ALTERNATIVE VISION

Of course, it is difficult to tell precisely what impact Carter’s North-South policies had on a 1980 election that is generally seen to have turned on economic issues. This is especially so in an environment where pre-election polls and prognostications failed to foresee the scale of Ronald Reagan’s victory. Regardless, what seems clear is that these policies – and Young’s proclivity for controversy – helped lay the foundation for a Reagan campaign that depicted a declining America in search of a savior. As one Reagan ad asked voters (after similar questions about Iran and the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan): “do you really think third rate military dictators would laugh at America and burn our flag in contempt... if Ronald Reagan were president?”<sup>88</sup> Poll data suggests this argument may have had real power in securing votes for the Republican. Surveys from 1980 depict an electorate concerned not only that Carter had lost respect for the United States abroad but also receptive to the idea that Reagan might do better at getting it back. An ABC News/Harris Survey in September of 1980 found that 72% of likely voters felt Carter had “let the economy at home get much worse and lost the respect of the world.”<sup>89</sup> A Gallup Poll that same month gave Reagan a 41-32% lead over Carter on

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<sup>88</sup> Historic Campaign Ads, “Iran” Reagan, 1980. <http://www.hulu.com/watch/40598>. Accessed 8 August 2012.

<sup>89</sup> ABC News/Harris Survey, Sep, 1980. Retrieved Aug-5-2012 from iPoll.

who would better increase respect for the U.S. overseas, while in October a CBS News poll found 66% percent of respondents believing that Reagan would “see to it that the United States is respected by other nations” with only 49% so believing in Carter.<sup>90</sup>

Without disputing the widely acknowledged role of suburban politics in the electoral success of the New Right, historians – again – may need to reconsider the importance of foreign policy, and the right’s rejection of Carter’s version of world opinion, to the story.<sup>91</sup> In their attacks, the President’s conservative opponents successfully combined his policies toward the Global South with his early continuation of *détente* with the Soviet Union to create the picture of a leader unable to halt – or even recognize – the sudden expansion of communism and erosion of the free world during his term. Much as they had with Ford, the Reagan camp depicted Carter as a weak, fearful President presiding over a decline in U.S. power. The conservative columnist Mona Charen would sum up this view decades later, writing: “despite the clear evidence that Communists had never won a free election, liberals... took communist regimes at their word when they claimed to be pursuing the ‘people’s’ interest.” “President Carter” she continued, “sounded the call for a foreign policy based on human rights... while permitting the monstrous human rights nightmare of the Communist world to go almost unmentioned.”<sup>92</sup> The Reagan campaign’s ability to label Carter as a rank, guilt-ridden, appeaser was critical to the Californian’s success. Carter’s weakness in the face of threats to freedom in the Third World was as important to these efforts as charges about the

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<sup>90</sup> I would also suggest that the fact that pollsters were asking these types of questions is itself indicative of how widespread a concern this was. Gallup Poll/AIPO, Sep, 1980. Retrieved Aug-5-2012 from iPOLL. CBS News/New York Times Poll, Oct, 1980. Retrieved Aug-5-2012 from iPOLL.

<sup>91</sup> See the introduction, footnote 34.

<sup>92</sup> Mona Charen, *Useful Idiots: How Liberals Got it Wrong in the Cold War and Still Blame America First* (New York: 2003), 82-84.

President's softness on more traditional Cold War issues. Indeed, it was the divide between Carter's professed objectives and policies in the Global South that grounded this hyperbole in reality and gave it its political potency. By acknowledging that there might be some validity to Third World demands, the conservative argument went, Carter was simply folding under pressure from petty dictators using the North-South divide as a means to maintain their own illegitimate power. Highly effective for the Reagan campaign in 1980, and in 1984, this concept of reliable liberal appeasement of "Third World dictators" would prove quite durable.<sup>93</sup>

This – as the next and concluding chapter will consider – would have important consequences. Among the more significant long-term casualties of Carter's failure to control the narrative over world opinion was the idea of cooperation with the Third World and even the most token respect for negative international assessments of the United States. While it is necessary to acknowledge the important role Reagan played in restoring American self-confidence, his methods came with a high cost. For the new President and his advisors, the Third World's views had little to offer the United States or world order; it was Americans who once again had all the answers. The pendulum would swing entirely in the other direction. Among the programs that would suffer were the moderate attempts at global economic system reform that Carter had initiated, including American support for the Common Fund for Commodities.<sup>94</sup> But perhaps the critical loss was not so much any particular program, but an attitude. While foreign aid, loans, and military intervention, would remain as policy options for U.S. relations with the Global South, sensible adjustments to the international economic order would not. Carter's

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<sup>93</sup> Charen herself employs it in her description of the political scene in 2003, *Useful Idiots*, 259-263.

<sup>94</sup> "U.S. rejects plan for commodities," *The Times of India*, 14 July 1983, 13.



willingness to acknowledge criticism of the U.S. would fall to the wayside as well – soon to be labeled “blam[ing] America first” by Jeane Kirkpatrick. The Reagan administration would instead usher in an entirely new U.S. attitude toward world order, one that transformed both American attitudes and the international system.

## Chapter 6:

## A Reagan Revolution for the World: The U.S., the Third World and the United Nations after 1981

*“We must also recognize that a strategy for growth that depends on a massive increase in the transfer of resources from the developed to the developing countries is simply unrealistic.”<sup>1</sup>*

*- Secretary of State Alexander Haig to the United Nations, 1981*

*“The President is now faced with the prospect of refusing to participate in the impending case, thereby allowing ‘world opinion’ to issue orotund statements about ‘this lawless President’ ...we suggest Mr. Reagan... let the world scream.”<sup>2</sup>*

*- The Wall Street Journal, 1984*

*“President Reagan... has silenced talk of inevitable American decline.”<sup>3</sup>*

*- Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, 1984*

In early May of 1980, some weeks after the failed U.S. “Desert One” raid to free the American hostages in Iran, the editor of the *Times of India*, Girilal Jain, wrote an editorial on the superpower’s place in the world. There had been “endless talk about a post-Vietnam America,” he wrote, but such conversations, obscured “reality... because [they convey] the impression that the United States is suffering from a trauma which it can and will overcome.” The truth, Jain suggested, was that the U.S. had “lost forever the capacity to establish a world order in its own image under its own auspices.”<sup>4</sup> Such impressions were hardly confined to the *Times*’ editor. Staggering under the successive blows of inflation, the Iranian Revolution, the resultant oil crisis, and apparent global isolation, the United States no longer seemed the dynamic force it had at mid-century. In the middle of 1980 polls suggested that many Americans perceived their nation’s

<sup>1</sup> “Excerpts From Haig Speech at General Assembly,” *New York Times*, 22 September 1981, A8.

<sup>2</sup> “Victorious Nicaragua,” *Wall Street Journal*, 29 November 1984, 34.

<sup>3</sup> “Text of Jeane Kirkpatrick’s Remarks at Republican Convention in Dallas,” *The New York Times*, 21 August 1984, A22.

<sup>4</sup> Girilal Jain, “Two Faces Of America: Gap Between Desire And Reality,” *Times of India*, 14 May 1980, 8.

influence as in decline.<sup>5</sup> A decade of economic stagnation, military defeat, and global unpopularity had taken its toll. Yet, by the end of the following year, an American President was doing something that U.S. leaders had been unwilling to do for much of the past decade: brazenly lecturing the Third World about being more like the U.S.

At the 1981 North-South summit in Cancun, Mexico “the Third World got the Reagan treatment,” as American columnist Bill Neikirk put it.<sup>6</sup> The 1<sup>st</sup> year President told the assembled group that there would be no major resource transfers from Global North to South, as asked for in the NIEO. The states of the Global South instead needed to follow the American example, liberalize their economies and rely upon, “substantive [economic] fundamentals with a proven track record of success.”<sup>7</sup> As Neikirk sardonically described it, “the Gipper bounced in, apologized for being a bit late and with his good humor and easy going manner delivered a poignant little parable about how he would rather teach a man to fish than to give him a fish.”<sup>8</sup> Elected in part due to voter concerns about Carter’s alleged weakness in the face of Third World hostility, Reagan’s time in office would significantly impact the Global South, the United Nations system, and the world economy for decades to come. Far from being unable to establish a world after its own image, in the years and decades following Reagan’s election, his version of American ideals would do much to shape world order. Americans, of both parties, would, once again, regularly invoke their “opportunity to remake the world” – as President

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<sup>5</sup> Gallup Poll, May, 1980. Retrieved Mar-21-2014 from iPOLL.

<sup>6</sup> Bill Neikirk, “North South Summit Hears Reagan Sermon,” *Chicago Tribune*, 25 October 1981.

<sup>7</sup> Ronald Reagan: “Statement at the First Plenary Session of the International Meeting on Cooperation and Development in Cancun, Mexico,” 22 October 1981, *American Presidency Project*.

<sup>8</sup> Bill Neikirk, “North South Summit Hears Reagan Sermon,” *Chicago Tribune*, 25 October 1981.

William J. Clinton put it when signing legislation for the North American Free Trade Agreement in 1993.<sup>9</sup>

Though Reagan's supporters certainly overstate their case, they are correct in suggesting that the 40<sup>th</sup> President managed to reinvigorate or – to borrow terminology from the digital world – “reboot” U.S. nationalism.<sup>10</sup> Through his remarkable talent for reducing politics to emotion laden themes – evoking a Norman Rockwell-esque, idealized and mystical American past – Reagan made it possible for many Americans to forget the struggles of the 1970s and believe, again, in the United States as a global force for good, eliding the darker chapters of American history (recent or distant). His administration was, as the journalist Richard Reeves aptly called it, a “triumph of imagination.”

President Reagan:

was an ideologue with a few ideas he held with stubborn certainty. His rhetorical gift was to render those ideas into values and emotions. He was capable of simplifying ideas to the point of dumbing-down the nation's dialogue by brilliantly confusing fact and fiction. He made politics, and governing, too, into a branch of his old business, entertainment.<sup>11</sup>

His critics were routinely baffled as failures that would have derailed other presidencies failed to dampen Reagan's popularity. Writing in the *Los Angeles Times*, in the wake of the ignominious withdrawal of U.S. Marines from Lebanon, Richard Straus and Ken Wollack marveled at how “according to... public-opinion polls, an overwhelming majority of Americans believe that U.S. involvement in Lebanon was a mistake” yet

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<sup>9</sup> William J. Clinton, “Remarks on Signing the North American Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act,” 8 December 1993, *American Presidency Project*.

<sup>10</sup> There is no shortage of celebratory material on Ronald Reagan. For good examples in this context see: David Frum, *How We Got Here: The 1970s, the Decade that Brought You Modern Life – For Better or Worse* (New York: 2008); Paul Kengor, *The Crusader: Ronald Reagan and the Fall of Communism* (New York: 2007); Jeane Kirkpatrick, *The Reagan Phenomenon and Other Speeches on Foreign Policy* (Washington D.C.: 1983); Peter Schweizer, *Reagan's War: The Epic Story of his Forty Year Struggle and Final Triumph over Communism* (New York: 2003).

<sup>11</sup> Richard Reeves, *President Reagan: The Triumph of Imagination* (New York: 2005): xii-xiii.

“according to these same polls, the rating of the President’s handling of foreign policy remains the same.”<sup>12</sup>

Reagan, according to the historian Daniel T. Rodgers, had an “exceptional ability to project his own inner confidence and conviction across the television screen.”<sup>13</sup> As President, Reagan transferred this confidence from himself to U.S. national identity as a whole, creating a confident, largely fictional, and remarkably usable version of the nation’s history to justify his policies. He, again described by Rodgers:

... retold the story of the American past. The doubts and inner divisions of the revolutionary era, the anguish of the Civil War, the stress of twentieth-century social change were edited out. The story of a people ‘born unto trouble,’ but nevertheless ‘always becoming, trying, probing, falling, resting, and trying again,’ as Lyndon Johnson had put the American story, was reconstructed as a country of timeless confidence, in which past and present met of a field of eternally positive thinking.<sup>14</sup>

The details of his policies themselves ceased to matter – as his political programs were closely tied to an imaginary “best possible America” which voters would help create by endorsing him. The Reagan administration was able to create an atmosphere where, as a 1984 campaign memo described it, attacking the administration was “tantamount to an attack on America’s idealized image of itself.”<sup>15</sup>

The Californian’s reboot of American identity came with new programming for U.S. interaction with the world – including the Global South.<sup>16</sup> While Reagan’s idea of

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<sup>12</sup> Richard Strauss and Ken Wollack, “Reagan Sails Over Foreign Policy Debris: He Escapes Blame and Confounds Critics,” *Los Angeles Times*, 1 April 1984, d1.

<sup>13</sup> Daniel T. Rodgers, *Age of Fracture* (Cambridge: 2011): 23.

<sup>14</sup> Rodgers, *Age of Fracture*, 25.

<sup>15</sup> Sean Wilentz, *The Age of Reagan: A History: 1974-2008* (New York: 2008), 173.

<sup>16</sup> Recent scholarship has rightly challenged the idea that Reagan substantially shifted U.S. politics on his own contending that Reagan instead continued or deepened trends that had begun before he entered office. As Daniel Rodgers has written, “too sharp a sense of break at Reagan’s 1980 election simplifies and distorts” (*Age of Fracture*, 3). This was particularly the case with his economic policies, Ford had adopted some of the anti-inflationary policies of the Reagan years in the mid 1970s while Jimmy Carter began much of the deregulation of the U.S. economy that Reagan was later given credit for. For more on Reagan’s

America bore many superficial similarities with the conceptions that animated the 1945 vision of a “New Deal for the world,” the differences were significant. The idea of the U.S. as the “shining city on the hill” – a favorite Reagan image – and an example to the world, remained. So also did the rhetoric about leading “the free world,” in its battle against Soviet totalitarianism. A great deal of attention has been – rightly – paid to Reagan’s aggressive anti-communism and the role of his policies in the collapse of the Soviet Union and eastern European communism.<sup>17</sup> East-West relations were, inarguably, the centerpiece of Reagan’s foreign policy, yet – as the last chapter considered – Reagan came into office with a clear mandate to alter U.S. policies toward the Third World and the United Nations, and this he did.

This change was not only a matter of the much-discussed “Reagan Doctrine” for supporting anti-communist forces in Latin America or Central Asia.<sup>18</sup> Implicit in Reagan’s mystical new nationalism was also a rejection of the Third World’s challenge to American global leadership in international economic policy and the United Nations. For Reagan, Reeves has written, “everyone admired or envied Americans – if they did not, they were evil.”<sup>19</sup> The Reagan administration dismissed the Third World’s effort to alter the global economic system and rejected the legitimacy of multilateral institutions if they were critical of the United States. Aided by a decade of North-South hostility, U.S. exhaustion with regularly being on the wrong side of U.N. double standards, and the

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economic policies in the context of the period see: Johanna Bockman, *Markets in the Name of Socialism: The Left-Wing Origins of Neoliberalism* (Stanford: 2011); Agnus Burgin, *The Great Persuasion: Reinventing Free Markets Since the Depression* (Cambridge: 2012); Daniel Stedman Jones, *Masters of the Universe: Hayek, Friedman and the Birth of Neoliberal Politics* (Princeton: 2012). However, as this chapter reveals, when it came to international affairs, particularly in policy toward the United Nations and the Third World, Reagan’s election did mark a sudden and significant shift.

<sup>17</sup> The celebratory titles mentioned in footnote 10 are a good example of this tendency.

<sup>18</sup> For more on Reagan’s covert anti-communism in the Third World see: Brands, *Latin America’s Cold War*, 289- 372; Westad, *Global Cold War*, 331-396.

<sup>19</sup> Reeves, *Triumph of Imagination*, xiv.

emergence of a debt crisis in the Third World, the Reagan administration “imagined” a new, “free market,” version of international economic relations that changed both the rhetoric and reality of the North-South dialogue. Instead of a New Deal for the world, Reagan offered an international version of his “Reagan Revolution,” where economic liberalization – and not changes in the structure of the global economy – would bring modernity to the Global South. These policies were made difficult to oppose by Reagan’s ability to suggest that they were, above all else, “American” policies born out of the nation’s very identity and closely tied to a love of freedom. To be critical of the United States, in this worldview, was to reveal your own inadequacy or malevolence.

#### A REAGAN REVOLUTION FOR THE WORLD

Once in office, Reagan engineered a sharp transformation in the North-South dialogue on the international economy. Though it would prove a dramatic change, the administration’s moves were not wholly unexpected. The promise of the early Carter years had faded as that President’s attention was distracted by the hostage crisis, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the sharp downturn in the American economy, but negotiations on international economic policy had accelerated following Reagan’s election victory. They built upon a resolution – 34/138 – passed, with American approval, toward the end of the 1979 General Assembly. Resolution 34/138 called for new, formal and U.N. supervised, “Global Negotiations” between North and South on the world economy.<sup>20</sup> Preliminary talks, supervised by West Germany’s Ambassador to the U.N. and President of the General Assembly, Rüdiger von Wechmar, were held to “draw up an

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<sup>20</sup> United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 34/138, “Global Negotiations Relating to International Economic Cooperation for Development,” Resolutions Adopted by the General Assembly at its 34<sup>th</sup> Session, United Nations Research Guides and Resources, [http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/resguide/r34\\_en.shtml](http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/resguide/r34_en.shtml) .

agenda and a method of procedure” for this new North-South process, before “the end of the assembly session and before Mr. Reagan entered the White House.”<sup>21</sup>

The haste was due to widespread fear at the U.N. that, as the *Christian Science Monitor* reported, Reagan would “treat the United Nations in a manner consistent with the frequent anti-U.N. proclamations coming from the radical wing of the Republican Party.” Such a change, given the Carter administration’s much different policies, had the potential to be quite jarring. An unnamed Arab ambassador told the paper, “Carter was a favorite here, especially among Arab and third-world [*sic*] delegates who remember Andy Young and have felt that this administration had not turned a deaf ear to the developing nations.”<sup>22</sup>

The ambassador had reason to be concerned. Reagan signaled an immediate change in the U.S. approach to the North-South dialogue. In May of 1981 the administration announced that it would not participate in the Resolution 34/138 talks until it had conducted a policy review.<sup>23</sup> The review, expected to last until at least the fall, was almost certainly a means to effectively withdraw from the negotiations without formally doing so. An internal administration memo from later in 1981, for example, asserted that “there is general agreement within the U.S. government that Global Negotiations in New York are likely to be counterproductive, and all U.S. agencies would not want the U.S. to participate in [them] as currently structured.”<sup>24</sup> The U.S. believed that these negotiations

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<sup>21</sup> Bernard D. Nossiter, “Accord on Global Talks Elusive at U.N.,” *New York Times*, 18 December 1980, A3.

<sup>22</sup> Louis Wiznitzer, “Reagan victory causes concern at UN,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 10 November 1980, 5.

<sup>23</sup> Louis Wiznitzer, “Reagan stalls rich-poor talks on trade, aid, resources, fuel,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 11 May 1981.

<sup>24</sup> Memo, “Global Negotiations and Cancun Follow-on Options Paper,” undated, DDERS-276475-i1-4, *Declassified Document Reference System*, <http://gdc.gale.com/products/declassified-documents-reference-system/> (henceforth: *DDRS*).



were intended to reduce Western control of the international economy by increasing Third World influence over the governance of the IMF and World Bank (the voting structures there being weighted by the size of a member's financial contribution). A CIA report stated, flatly, that "the G-77 wants the IMF and World Bank to serve as agents for Third World development" and thus the group looked to "increase LDC participation in bank and fund decision making." Since the General Assembly lacked the power to alter the structure of these agencies on its own, the CIA believed the G-77 was looking to use the Global Negotiations to "apply political pressure" for such changes. The U.S. was therefore best served by avoiding participation in the negotiations altogether.<sup>25</sup> However, as the administration memo put it, "all [U.S.] agencies wish to avoid isolating the United States" something which might result from a "U.S. rejection [of Global Negotiations] without a viable alternative."<sup>26</sup> As a result, the U.S. made no final public judgment on the talks. Many diplomats were nonetheless horrified by the administration's move. "It is clear," one ambassador told the *Monitor*, that the new administration has decided to... ignore the South."<sup>27</sup>

The Reagan administration's skeptical view of the North-South dialogue was made more explicit in September. In a telling departure from precedent, Reagan demurred from addressing the General Assembly during his first year in office and instead sent Secretary of State Alexander Haig. The Secretary's September 21st speech "surprised most diplomats because it was devoted almost exclusively to problems of

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<sup>25</sup> Report, CIA National Foreign Assessment Center, "Impact of Global Negotiations on International Finance Institutions," undated, DDRS-288145-i1-8, *DDRS*.

<sup>26</sup> Memo, "Global Negotiations and Cancun Follow-on Options Paper," undated, DDRS-276475-i1-4, *DDRS*.

<sup>27</sup> Louis Wizenitzer, "Reagan stalls rich-poor talks on trade, aid, resources, fuel," *Christian Science Monitor*, 11 May 1981.

promoting faster economic growth in the third world [*sic*] and touched only briefly on other aspects of international politics.” Third World delegates, while perhaps happy at Haig’s choice of topics, were “distressed” by the substance.<sup>28</sup> The Secretary delivered an unequivocal, public rejection of a core tenet of the New International Economic Order – large scale resource transfers – a move which the preceding three administrations had carefully avoided. “We must... recognize,” Haig told the Assembly, “that a strategy for growth that depends on a massive increase in the transfer of resources from the developed to the developing countries is simply unrealistic.” Haig instead proposed a “strategy for growth” based upon liberalization of global trade, “reliance on incentives for individual economic performance,” and private, rather than public, economic activity. The United States, the Secretary asserted, “can offer what it knows from its own experience... we have seen that the policies which encourage private initiatives will promote better resource allocation and more rapid economic growth.” Though poor nations certainly needed “long-term and generous concessional aid,” Haig made it clear that such assistance would come through the U.S.-dominated international development banks – “an important and... essential feature in the international finance system” – and not from any U.N. managed North-South negotiation.<sup>29</sup>

President Reagan repeated this message personally the following month at the North-South summit in Cancun, Mexico.<sup>30</sup> The 22-nation meeting was born from the work of an international commission on global economic reform headed by former West

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<sup>28</sup> Bernard D. Nossiter, “Haig Rebuffs Poor Nations’ Program for More Aid,” *New York Times*, 22 September 1981, A1.

<sup>29</sup> “Excerpts From Haig Speech at General Assembly,” *New York Times*, 22 September 1981, A8.

<sup>30</sup> The administration saw these two speeches as linked: Memo, Richard Allen to the Secretary of State, *et al.*, “Tactical Approaches to the President’s Participation in Cancun,” 2 September 1981, DDRS-278453-i1-2, *DDRS*.

German Chancellor Willy Brandt. The commission's report had recommended smaller North-South meetings – in place of the massive CIEC meeting in Paris discussed in Chapter 3. The idea was then championed by Austrian Chancellor Bruno Kriesky and Mexican President Jose Lopez Portillo and found wide support among the governments of the European Community.<sup>31</sup> The United States had agreed to attend primarily to please its European allies. The U.S. position, however, contained no concession to the South's hope for a restructured world economy. Upon his departure for the meeting, Reagan promised reporters that his message at Cancun would be "clear" in asserting that "the road to prosperity and human fulfillment is lighted by economic freedom and individual incentive" and that the United States would "always... be a friend and an active partner in the search for a better life" when that search followed those guidelines.<sup>32</sup>

Reagan's speech was a clear expression of his free market orthodoxy and his belief in the justice of the global economic system as already constituted. Much like the rugged individualism the President saw animating the U.S. economy, Reagan asserted that while all nations were to some degree "mutually interdependent," as Henry Kissinger had been so fond of saying, they were also, "above all... individually responsible" for their own economic development. The idea of a world economic system that gave wealth to some nations and trapped others in poverty – so basic to the assumptions of the NIEO – was dismissed by mere implication. Where Kissinger had been afraid of debates about the virtues of the free market, Reagan declared them already over:

... we do not seek an ideological debate; we seek to build upon what we already know will work. History demonstrates that time and again, in

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<sup>31</sup> Report, State Department Bureau of Intelligence and Research, "The Mexico Summit: Sign of a New Era in North-South Negotiations?" 22 June 1981, DDRS-275866-i1-12, *DDRS*.

<sup>32</sup> Ronald Reagan: "Remarks to Reporters Upon Departure for the International Meeting on Cooperation and Development in Cancun, Mexico," 21 October 1981, *American Presidency Project*.

place after place, economic growth and human progress make their greatest strides in countries that encourage economic freedom. Government has an important role in helping to develop a country's economic foundation. But the critical test is whether government is genuinely working to liberate individuals by creating incentives to work, save, invest, and succeed.

Reagan also aggressively defended existing Western-dominated economic institutions like GATT, the World Bank and the IMF, proclaiming that they had “done much to improve the world economy.” What was needed, Reagan argued, was not more and new structures for the world economy, but less. The President called for further liberalization of trade, removal of barriers to private capital flows, and the abandonment of multilateral economic schemes in favor of plans tailored to individual countries and industries.<sup>33</sup> A *Christian Science Monitor* reporter accurately predicted Reagan’s message when he wrote that the President was, “expected to suggest... that the developing nations follow America’s example, adopt capitalism and... work hard, get loans from the private sector, encourage free enterprise and help themselves.”<sup>34</sup>

For Reagan, the *Monitor*’s implication that the U.S. was being parsimonious – or “Uncle Scrooge to the poor nations” as a *Washington Post* columnist later put it – would have made little sense.<sup>35</sup> The United States, by pushing for a more open global economy was, in the Reagan view, making a significant contribution to global growth and, as a result, Third World development. “I am puzzled,” the President told the group in Cancun, “by the implication that the U.S. might ignore the developing world... we come to Cancun offering our hand in friendship as your partner in prosperity.”<sup>36</sup> A program that

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<sup>33</sup> Ronald Reagan: "Statement at the First Plenary Session of the International Meeting on Cooperation and Development in Cancun, Mexico," 22 October 1981, *American Presidency Project*.

<sup>34</sup> Louis Winitzer, “Reagan: Cancun’s Odd Man Out,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 21 October 1981, 13.

<sup>35</sup> Hobart Rowen, “Uncle Scrooge to the Poor Nations,” *Washington Post*, 15 December 1983, A19.

<sup>36</sup> Ronald Reagan: "Statement at the First Plenary Session of the International Meeting on Cooperation and Development in Cancun, Mexico," 22 October 1981, *American Presidency Project*.

stressed market liberalization and reductions in government spending was what Reagan felt would best serve international development: a “Reagan Revolution” for the world, an international counterpart to the President’s approach to domestic policy. Indeed, much in the same way that Reagan saw – and sold – market liberalization at home as an expression of U.S. identity, his international economic policy was portrayed as the product of a romanticized American past. The United States was not trying to foist some self-serving economic system on the world, but merely advocating the same policies that had made it a success. The U.S. program dealt “not in flashy gimmicks,” Reagan said, but on ideas supposedly proven by the simplified version of American history the President had such talent for employing. “We believe in freedom,” Reagan said, “we know it works. It's just as exciting, successful, and revolutionary today as it was 200 years ago.”<sup>37</sup> In Reagan’s history, “freedom” had always meant an unquestioned faith in free markets and extremely limited government economic intervention. Contradictory historical details like, for example, the connection between protectionism and U.S industrial development in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, went unmentioned.

The Reagan administration never completely closed the door to the possibility of economic negotiations with the Global South. It instead put such severe limits on what the U.S. was willing to negotiate that such talks would have been meaningless. The President’s Cancun speech had rejected dialogue based upon Resolution 34/138. It did allow for a resumption of new preliminary discussions (the old ones would have to be discarded) on establishing global talks, but only if the G-77 was willing to meet four U.S. conditions. These conditions were clearly meant to reframe the Global Negotiations as

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<sup>37</sup> Ronald Reagan: "Statement at the First Plenary Session of the International Meeting on Cooperation and Development in Cancun, Mexico," 22 October 1981, *American Presidency Project*.

mere conversations rather than a step toward altering the world economic system. They, for example, required that negotiations deal with “specific” issues rather than philosophical debates and also mandated that the new talks have “respect for and preservation of the competence, powers, and charters of the specialized international institutions [the World Bank and IMF] and no [call for] new institutions.” The American conditions also included the vague demand that the talks “be conducted in a cooperative spirit.”<sup>38</sup> As the latter stipulation indicates, the Reagan administration had no intent to engage in Global Negotiations, at any point, under any conditions, and left itself generous room for avoiding them. A memo from National Security Advisor Robert McFarlane to the President in 1984, for example, admitted this. McFarlane told the President that G-7 acquiescence to the U.S. conditions was, thankfully, an “unlikely event” but even then the U.S. could “still refuse to participate on the grounds that our... offer was not necessarily open indefinitely.”<sup>39</sup>

The U.S. wanted to see the end of the “North-South” question as a major issue in international affairs – it “would only lead to confrontation” McFarlane wrote. Although unifying U.S.-European policy toward relations with the developing countries had been a founding purpose of the G-7 and a regular topic of its summits, U.S. negotiators had “worked hard”, and succeeded, in getting the subject removed from the agenda for the meetings in Williamsburg in 1983 and London in 1984. “We would prefer to see,” McFarlane told the President, “the developing countries fully integrated into [other]

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<sup>38</sup> Memo, James W. Nance to the Vice President, *et al.*, “National Security Council Meeting,” 7 December 1981, DDERS-303583-i1-17, DDERS.

<sup>39</sup> Memo, Robert C. McFarlane to the President, “London Economic Summit, June 7-9, 1984,” 18 May 1984, DDERS-304244-i1-50, DDERS.

discussions on specific subjects.”<sup>40</sup> American gestures toward the possibility of North-South talks – such as they were – were not meant as signs of U.S. goodwill towards the Third World’s political interests but rather the interests of America’s industrialized allies. “For many [Western] countries the illusion if not the actuality of progress in North-South relations continues to be important,” a State Department Bureau of Intelligence and Research report claimed in 1981. Although as a whole Western “governments are reluctant to commit themselves to large new resource transfers,” the report explained, “economic and humanitarian aid has a well developed political constituency in Europe, for example.” Thus, the department believed, the “substantive importance” of North-South meetings, like the one in Mexico, was “more in its implications for West-West rather than North-South relations.” The Department believed that the primary U.S. objective in Cancun was to “develop European support for U.S. policies.”<sup>41</sup>

This interest in building European support for American policy is indicative of the increasing importance of the G-7 to the U.S. approach to the world economy. With newly intensified American opposition to the already stalled effort to establish new, U.N. based, institutions for global economic governance, the G-7 remained the highest-level, highest visibility, multilateral organization for coordination of economic policy. As a symbol of developed world unity, these meetings were extremely important. Though the European states regularly pushed the U.S. to be more forthcoming on North-South issues – as, for example, at the 1981 Ottawa conference, where Reagan had been convinced to leave the door open slightly for Global Negotiations – the statements of unity that followed the

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<sup>40</sup> Memo, Robert C. McFarlane to the President, “London Economic Summit, June 7-9, 1984,” 18 May 1984, *DDRS-304244-i1-50, DDRS*.

<sup>41</sup> Report, State Department Bureau of Intelligence and Research, “The Mexico Summit: Sign of a New Era in North-South Negotiations?” 22 June 1981, *DDRS-275866-i1-12, DDRS*.

summits indicated that the Europeans were more interested in good relations with the U.S. than helping the Global South.<sup>42</sup> As the U.S. economy recovered, more quickly than Europe's, in 1983, President Reagan became a dominant figure in the G-7. The Williamsburg Summit in 1983, for which he was the host, was a triumph for the President. Thanks to the growth in the U.S. economy, as the *Los Angeles Times* reported, Reagan was able to use the Williamsburg meetings to convince the “somewhat skeptical leaders of the six other leading industrial nations of the West to go along with certain basic elements of Reaganomics.”<sup>43</sup>

The accord included, most critically, agreement to support the U.S. backed “strategy” for dealing with the Third World’s debt crisis, including efforts to “promote adjustment efforts in debtor countries.”<sup>44</sup> This approach, where Third World states were asked to undertake “structural adjustment” of their economies in order to secure additional IMF/World Bank funding and restructuring of unaffordable loan payments, was reconfirmed at the London Summit in 1984, and would have significant implications for life in the Global South.<sup>45</sup> The explosion of Third World debt – which by early 1983 had grown beyond \$550 billion – was a result both of the sudden OPEC oil price increases of the early 1970s and global economic decline in the latter part of the decade. In order to pay for increased fuel prices, developing economies had borrowed well beyond their actual economic growth and, as the global recession undercut the

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<sup>42</sup> Bill Neikirk, “Economic summit OKs talks in UN,” *Chicago Tribune*, 24 October 1981.

<sup>43</sup> William J. Eaton, “U.S. Economy Gives Reagan Summit Clout: Despite Skepticism, Allies Go Along With Basic Reaganomics,” *Los Angeles Times*, 31 March 1981.

<sup>44</sup> Memo, Robert C. McFarlane to the President, “London Economic Summit, June 7-9, 1984,” 18 May 1984, DDERS-304244-i1-50, DDERS.

<sup>45</sup> Johnston Oswald, “Summit Insists on Austerity as Loan Condition,” *Los Angeles Times*, 9 June 1984, a1.



commodity prices that supported their economies, many Third World states faced a high likelihood of default.<sup>46</sup>

The Reagan Administration supported, from early in the first term, a program whereby debtor nations would be forced to undertake austerity programs – severely cutting public spending – and reducing barriers to foreign trade and capital.<sup>47</sup> The government was aware – as a 1984 memo from McFarlane to the President mentioned – that the program required “wrenching economic adjustment measures” from “developing countries.”<sup>48</sup> Yet administration decision makers were convinced that, according to a memo from Treasury Secretary Don Regan, “an increased reliance on market forces and disciplined economic policies are the only lasting solution to current difficulties.”<sup>49</sup> U.S. allies routinely expressed concern about the impact of these policies. In advance of the 1984 London Summit, an administration planning memo noted that “France, Canada and to a lesser extent, the U.K.... feel that current arrangements have resulted in unacceptable economic burdens in the debtor countries which threaten their political stability.” Despite this concern, and thanks in part to Reagan’s dominance of the G-7 meetings, American arguments would win out and structural adjustment dominated the lending programs of the multilateral development banks for the following decade. Nations across the Global South – including prominent Third World leaders like Mexico – would be forced under the knife of austerity. Well in advance of 1989, the global spread of “socialism” so

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<sup>46</sup> Erich Heinmann, “Third-World Debt Problem: Governmental Role Argued Third-World Debt: Is Help Necessary?” *New York Times*, 10 March 1983, D1.

<sup>47</sup> See for example Reagan’s 1981 speech to the World Bank: Ronald Reagan, “Remarks at the Annual Meeting of the Boards of Governors of the World Bank Group and International Monetary Fund” 29 September 1981, *American Presidency Project*.

<sup>48</sup> Memo, Robert C. McFarlane to the President, “IMF/World Bank Meetings, September 24-27, 1984,” 30 August 1984, DDRS-289807-i1-2, *DDRS*.

<sup>49</sup> Memo, Donald T. Regan for the President, “Results of the 1983 World Bank/International Monetary Fund (IMF) Annual Meeting,” 6 October 1983, DDRS-288428-i1-2, *DDRS*.

lamented by Moynihan in his *Commentary* piece was being reversed. Third World states were forced to cut social spending and open their economies to international trade. These programs would expand in the 1990s, when even socialist stalwarts like India began to liberalize their economies in accordance with IMF demands.<sup>50</sup>

## THE REAGAN REVOLUTION IN TURTLE BAY AND THE HAGUE

As structural adjustment was reshaping the U.S. economic relationship with the Global South, Reagan's U.N. delegation was also bringing a transformative attitude to the U.S. role in the world body. No one better symbolized this new attitude than Reagan's pick to head USUN: Georgetown professor, scholar of Latin American politics, and prominent neoconservative, Jeane Kirkpatrick. The first woman to be appointed Ambassador to the U.N., Kirkpatrick had drawn Reagan's attention with her own *Commentary* piece, "Dictatorships and Double Standards," mentioned in the previous chapter.<sup>51</sup> The article (which remained a touchstone for conservative thinkers on foreign affairs into the early 21<sup>st</sup> century) argued – with some vehemence – that the Carter administration had deeply undercut U.S. national security by failing to provide necessary support for pro-American, right leaning dictators. This policy, she believed, foolishly aped the double standard in the United Nations, where right-wing dictators came up for serious criticism of their human rights violations and communist or leftist Third World regimes did not. More than simply undercutting U.S. influence, Kirkpatrick argued that such policies retarded the growth of freedom in the world. Left-leaning dictators, through

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<sup>50</sup> Bernard Weinraub, "Economic Crisis Forcing Once Self-Reliant India to Seek Aid," *New York Times*, 29 June 1991.

<sup>51</sup> John M. Goshko, "Kirkpatrick Emerges From Strife With Haig to Thrive in U.N. Role," *Washington Post*, 25 November 1982, A33.

their “totalitarian” dominance of the economic life of a nation, crushed civil society and thus, she claimed, pushed these countries further from the social conditions necessary for democracy than did rightist leaders like Chile’s Augusto Pinochet.<sup>52</sup>

Kirkpatrick, a Democrat for the majority of her life, had grown alienated from her party, believing it soft on defense policy. She saw Reagan’s election as the triumph of a “new consensus” based on a “restoration of American military strength and the legitimacy of America playing an active role in foreign affairs.” Strident, defiant and unapologetic in style, Kirkpatrick enjoyed challenging what she called the “overblown rhetoric” of the U.N. She was undeterred by warnings that, when addressing the General Assembly, she appeared a professor lecturing her students: “I don’t mean to lecture my colleagues. It may be that I sound like a professor. So be it.”<sup>53</sup> Kirkpatrick was, unsurprisingly, compared with Moynihan even before taking up her post.<sup>54</sup> Much like her predecessor, Kirkpatrick and her USUN team believed that they had an almost subversive mission to expose, what her legal advisor Allan Gerson called, the U.N. majority’s “different visions of reality.” Kirkpatrick, according to Gerson, believed that what happened in the U.N. “affected... power realities in the world beyond the walls of the United Nations.” There was a direct relationship between the “United States being the odd man out” in the U.N. and what “seemed beyond doubt in the winter and spring of

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<sup>52</sup> Jeane Kirkpatrick, “Dictatorships and Double Standards,” *Dictatorships and Double Standards: Rationalism and Reason in Politics* (New York: 1982), 23-52.

<sup>53</sup> Bernard D. Nossiter, “Mrs. Kirkpatrick Tackles Her U.N. Job With Zest,” *New York Times*, 24 June 1981, A11.

<sup>54</sup> Daniel Southerland, “The Reagan team -- XIX Kirkpatrick: firm voice at UN,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 28 January 1981, 10.

1981... [that] the United States was not faring well” in the world.<sup>55</sup> “We were like Davy Crockett at the Alamo,” said one of her advisors later.<sup>56</sup>

The comparison to Moynihan was thus, in many respects, a fair one. Kirkpatrick, like the New York Senator, believed the U.N. was important in shaping global narratives and thus global power dynamics. As Gerson described it, she “could not accept [the] notion” that “what went on” in the U.N. “was mere ‘word games’ not to be confused with the real ‘man’s world’ of bilateral diplomacy.”<sup>57</sup> This belief resulted in vigorous efforts to hold foreign delegations accountable for how they voted, especially when it was against U.S. interests. In September of 1981, for example, a foreign ministers meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement issued a communiqué, which even Third World delegates admitted was “one-sidedly anti-American.”<sup>58</sup> Kirkpatrick circulated a blistering letter in response demanding that the signatories explain their support for “base lies and malicious attacks upon the good name of the United States.” According to the *New York Times* “diplomats here [at the U.N.] could not recall a letter to match the tone of Mrs. Kirkpatrick’s.”<sup>59</sup> It was an extremely harsh and combative document. “In a year which sees a continuing military occupation of Afghanistan, Kampuchia and Chad – all with the support of the U.S.S.R.” the Ambassador wrote, “the non-aligned communiqué contains NO [*sic*] mention of the Soviet Union... yet negatively mentions my country... nine times by name and dozens of times by implication.”<sup>60</sup> Like Moynihan she also ruffled

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<sup>55</sup> Allan Gerson, *The Kirkpatrick Mission: Diplomacy without Apology, America at the United Nations, 1981-1985* (New York: 1991), xiii.

<sup>56</sup> Peter Collier, *Political Woman: The Big Little Life of Jeane Kirkpatrick* (New York: 2012), 123.

<sup>57</sup> Gerson, *Kirkpatrick Mission*, xiii.

<sup>58</sup> Bernard D. Nossiter, “Mrs Kirkpatrick Asks 40 Nations To Explain Their Anti-U.S. Stand,” *New York Times*, 14 October 1981, A1.

<sup>59</sup> Bernard D. Nossiter, “Mrs. Kirkpatrick Asks 40 Nations To Explain Their Anti-U.S. Stand,” *New York Times*, 14 October 1981, A1.

<sup>60</sup> “Jeane Kirkpatrick Strikes Back,” *Chicago Tribune*, 17 October 1981.

many feathers with her abrasive, pugnacious tone. One Ambassador complained Kirkpatrick had a “thirst for confrontation.” “She speaks to us as if she were in possession of the Holy Grail, the eternal truth,” said another.<sup>61</sup>

Yet the differences between her tenure and Moynihan’s are also quite significant, and easily missed if one focuses on the confrontational style alone. Moynihan’s views of the United Nations, as discussed in Chapter 2, were born of his commitment to the ideas of the liberal world order and its Wilsonian dream of multilateral institutions for global governance, a dream that he believed had been hijacked by Third World radicals. As a result, Moynihan was more than willing – to Kissinger’s endless frustration – to pick fights with U.S. strategic partners, like South Africa or Chile, when he saw them as acting contrary to these principles. Kirkpatrick, on the other hand, was more stridently nationalistic, sharing Reagan’s belief in the close, almost direct link between U.S. interests and what was good for all of mankind. The “Dictatorships and Double Standards” article had, in fact, been an attempt to make this connection explicit; backing friendly, right-wing dictatorships not only aided U.S. interests, it had argued, but also advanced the cause of human freedom. Much like William F. Buckley, Kirkpatrick had no commitment to the dream of U.N. based multilateralism.

She thus unerringly worked on behalf of the Reagan administration’s foreign policy, instead of a Moynihan-style effort that – however executed – was meant to advance liberal democracy and economic freedom. She sometimes did this to great controversy. Her initial appointment, for example, angered many on the left because of her outspoken, and unapologetic, support for right leaning dictators. “If it’s a choice

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<sup>61</sup> Louis Wiznitzer, “Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick ruffles UN diplomats,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 5 June 1981, 10.

between a moderately oppressive government friendly to the United States,” Kirkpatrick said at one point, “and a Soviet-Cuban backed movement dedicated to imposing a much more repressive regime... we should chose the former.”<sup>62</sup> She also caused a significant diplomatic flap when she met with the general in charge of South Africa’s Military Intelligence, an agency central to the enforcement of apartheid. Her opponents unfavorably compared this to the Ambassador’s refusal to meet with the Palestinian Liberation Organization, despite its status at the U.N. “The PLO is not a government,” she said, whereas “we do have relations with the government of South Africa and we regularly have contact with them.”<sup>63</sup> Where Moynihan was a vocal critic of Chile’s leaders, Kirkpatrick, on 1981 trip to Latin America, proclaimed that the United States would “normalize completely its relations to Chile in order to work together in a pleasant way,” regardless of the regime’s human rights record.<sup>64</sup> These comments deeply angered the Chilean opposition.<sup>65</sup>

Another significant difference with Moynihan was that Kirkpatrick enjoyed the unqualified support of her President and thus survived these, and all other controversies, to have the longest tenure for a U.N. ambassador since the early 1960s.<sup>66</sup> Reagan thought highly of Kirkpatrick and said so, both publically, and in his private diaries.<sup>67</sup> She, unlike Moynihan, even survived a tussle with her Secretary of State – it was Haig, and not the

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<sup>62</sup> Don Shannon, “New Reagan Envoy to Shun PLO at U.N.,” *Los Angeles Times*, 8 June 1981, b1.

<sup>63</sup> Karen DeYoung, “Kirkpatrick Says Flap Over South Africa Was ‘Highly Traumatic,’” *Washington Post*, 1 April 1981, A3.

<sup>64</sup> “Mrs. Kirkpatrick, Loudly,” *New York Times*, 22 August 1981, A22.

<sup>65</sup> John Dinges, “Kirkpatrick Trip Upsets Opposition in Chile,” *Washington Post*, 13 August 1981, A25.

<sup>66</sup> Kirkpatrick departed office in 1985, her roughly four-year term as Ambassador was the longest since Adlai Stevenson had held the position from 1961-1965.

<sup>67</sup> Public comments: “Reagan, Haig Try to Cool Kirkpatrick Controversy,” *Los Angeles Times*, 25 June 1981, A2; John Goshko, “Kirkpatrick Poses Personnel Problem: A Reagan Favorite,” *Washington Post*, 10 November 1984, A1. Diaries: Ronald Reagan, “Tuesday December 11<sup>th</sup>,” *The Reagan Diaries*, Douglas Brinkley ed. (New York: 2009) 406.

U.N. Ambassador who left the administration early.<sup>68</sup> The President himself had long been skeptical of the United Nations, regularly expressing negative views of the organization on his weekly radio show. In a May 1975 broadcast, for example, Reagan called the U.N. “a dream that didn’t come true” and wondered aloud about “how much Americans should have to pay” for that failed dream.<sup>69</sup> Like Kirkpatrick, the future President believed the U.N. was dangerous, writing in a November 1976 draft, that the NIEO was a noteworthy threat to U.S. institutions. “I know we don’t pay much attention to votes in the U.N. General Assembly” he said, “but remember that grapevine communications system. When the jungle drums are pounded by one set of bureaucrats [*sic*] – another set is listening.”<sup>70</sup> He also variously described the U.N. as lacking a “soul” and dominated by “Marxist or military dictatorships.”<sup>71</sup>

The President and the Ambassador were thus ideologically in sync and more than willing to threaten the survival of the U.N. if doing so advanced U.S. interests there. After an early meeting with Kirkpatrick, Reagan noted in his diary that the Ambassador had told him “the U.N. is a worse can of worms than even she anticipated. We’ve agreed the U.S. has to get tough and maybe walk out a few times.”<sup>72</sup> Such talk of walking out was likely idle – Americans, regardless of their views of the efficacy of the U.N., generally did not support wholesale withdrawal – but it was an option that Kirkpatrick

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<sup>68</sup> For a good (though partial) account see: Collier, *Political Woman*, 117-8, 133-40, 160.

<sup>69</sup> Ronald Reagan, “United Nations: May 1975,” *Reagan, In His Own Hand: The Writings of Ronald Reagan that Reveal His Revolutionary Vision for America*, Kiron Skinner, et al., eds. (New York: 2001), 159-64.

<sup>70</sup> Ronald Reagan, “Human Rights: April 13, 1977,” *Reagan, In His Own Hand*, 165-6.

<sup>71</sup> Ronald Reagan, “No Pay, No Vote: April 3, 1978,” and “Property Rights: July 6, 1977,” *Reagan, In His Own Hand*, 172, 167.

<sup>72</sup> Ronald Reagan, “Tuesday, July 28,” *Reagan Diaries*, 60.

implied was always possible.<sup>73</sup> In response to the perennial G-77 effort to find a way to expel, or revoke the credentials of, Israel, Kirkpatrick issued a stark warning. If Israel was expelled, she told the U.N., “we will leave with Israel and take our check book with us.”<sup>74</sup> Though the United States remained in the U.N., Reagan would eventually lead the U.S. out of the United Nations Education, Social and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 1984 due to its habit of serving “anti-U.S. ends.”<sup>75</sup> The U.S., and its financial contributions, would not return to UNESCO until 2003. In 1986, after Kirkpatrick’s departure from USUN but with her editorial support, Reagan also backed Congressional efforts to withhold American contributions to the U.N.’s funds.<sup>76</sup>

For all this, the U.S. was not unwilling to use the U.N. system when it suited the administration’s interests. This was demonstrated, with some drama, following the Soviet downing of a Korean civilian airliner in 1983. Korean Airlines Flight 007 was a regularly scheduled civilian flight from New York to Seoul, via Anchorage Alaska. During that last leg the plane strayed into Soviet airspace and was shot down by Russian aircraft, killing all on board. The destruction of the Korean plane was a public relations disaster for the Soviet Union, managing to make it appear both cruel and inept at the same time. The U.S.S.R. initially denied knowledge of the plane’s whereabouts and then claimed that the attack was entirely an accident. Kirkpatrick gave a defiant address before the U.N. Security Council, playing intercepted radio transmissions that demonstrated, unequivocally, that the Soviet air defense had very deliberately considered whether, and

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<sup>73</sup> A Gallup poll in October of 1983, for example, found that while 51% of Americans thought the U.N. was doing a poor job, 79% wanted the U.S. to remain a member of the organization. Gallup Report, Oct, 1983. Retrieved Apr-4-2014 from iPoll.

<sup>74</sup> “Kirkpatrick condemns bias against Israel in UN forums,” *Jerusalem Post*, 24 September 1981, 2.

<sup>75</sup> As the administration described it: Don Shannon, “UNESCO Decision Firm, U.S. Says,” *Los Angeles Times*, 30 December 1983, b10.

<sup>76</sup> Jeane Kirkpatrick, “U.S. Is Not a Bottomless Purse for UN,” *Newsday* (NY), 28 September 1986, 11.



then chose, to shoot down the Korean plane.<sup>77</sup> She proclaimed that the attack demonstrated, “contempt for the international community and for even minimal standards of decency and civilized behavior.” The Soviet Union, she went on, was “a state based on the dual principles of callousness and mendacity” which used “violence and lies” as “regular instruments” of its policy.<sup>78</sup> The U.S.S.R. subsequently admitted that its planes had shot down the jet. Gerson, in his account of Kirkpatrick’s ambassadorship, argued that the incident represented the first time in many years that the Soviet’s “could not count on an automatic U.N. majority to protect [them] from condemnation.”<sup>79</sup>

The administration, however, had no patience for the U.N. when the organization determined that it was the United States that had violated civilized norms of behavior. There was, perhaps, no more stark illustration of the Reagan administration’s departure from the assumptions of the liberal world order than its response to Nicaragua’s effort to bring suit against the United States in the International Court of Justice. The lawsuit stemmed from the Reagan administration’s covert war against Nicaragua’s revolutionary “Sandinista” government. The Sandinistas had overthrown the last of the Somozas – a family of U.S. backed dictators who had dominated Nicaragua for much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century – in 1979. In 1981, at the urging of CIA director William Casey, Reagan authorized a program for arming and training the “Contras,” an insurrectionary group of former Somoza supporters and other disaffected Nicaraguans. Ostensibly an operation to interdict Sandinista support for revolutionaries in El Salvador (fighting their own bloody war against the U.S. backed government there) the operation’s true purpose was

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<sup>77</sup> “Russia Admits Downing Jet,” *Los Angeles Times*, 6 September 1983, A1.

<sup>78</sup> Gerson, *Kirkpatrick Mission*, 211.

<sup>79</sup> Gerson, *Kirkpatrick Mission*, 214.

overthrowing the Sandinista regime. The CIA's involvement increased over the course of 1982 and 1983, eventually extending to mining Nicaragua's harbors.<sup>80</sup>

In response, the Nicaraguans filed suit in the International Court of Justice accusing the United States of violating international law by supplying the Contras and mining the ports.<sup>81</sup> Located in The Hague, the I.C.J., or "World Court," had been established in 1945 by the U.N. Charter as the organization's judicial branch, overseeing adjudication of international law. The United States was one of the main supporters of establishing a Court and, accepting its compulsory jurisdiction in 1946, had long supported its legitimacy. During the Iranian Hostage Crisis, for example, the U.S. had filed suit in the Court against Iran, which was found in violation of international law, liable for reparations, and ordered to release the hostages.<sup>82</sup> In anticipation of Nicaragua's move, the U.S. announced that it was suspending its acceptance of the court's jurisdiction in Central America for two years because the Sandinistas were abusing the institution. Davis R. Robinson, the State Department's legal advisor, accused the Nicaraguans of having used "the court in a most cynical way, as a political stage on which to parade [their] propaganda." The U.S. argued that the Court did not have jurisdiction in Nicaragua because the Sandinista government had never filed an official notice accepting its jurisdiction. Robinson asserted that, contrary to their appearance, U.S. measures actually demonstrated the nation's deep reverence for the World Court. Unlike other countries, which ignored the I.C.J. when it suited them, he argued, the U.S. had instead

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<sup>80</sup> Herring, *From Colony to Superpower*, 889.

<sup>81</sup> Stuart Taylor, "Nicaragua Takes Case Against US to World Court," *New York Times*, 10 April 1984, A1.

<sup>82</sup> Youssef Imbrahim, "World Court Says Iran Must Release Hostages, Pay US," *New York Times*, 25 May 1980, A1.

appeared at The Hague “because of its deep and long lasting commitment to the International Court of Justice.”<sup>83</sup>

The Court ruled against the United States in November of 1984, deciding, 16-1, that it had jurisdiction to hear Nicaragua’s suit. The *Wall Street Journal* called the ruling “an embarrassing defeat for the administration at home and abroad,” which revealed “a growing conflict between the U.S. and... an international tribunal that the U.S. took the lead in establishing nearly four decades ago.”<sup>84</sup> The administration immediately began to indicate that it might boycott the Court in response. Allan Gerson, the day after the ruling, said that “undoubtedly, serious consideration will be given to whether the U.S.’s acceptance of the court’s jurisdiction makes sense at a time when so few other nations, and certainly no other great powers, have accepted the authority of the court.”<sup>85</sup> Those raising doubts about the Court, like Gerson and Robinson, were quick to resort to arguments about double standards very similar to those that had been used to challenge the legitimacy of the General Assembly since the early 1970s. They positioned the United States as the aggrieved party, dutifully respecting a court that others ignored save when it could be used as a tool against the U.S. Kirkpatrick explicitly linked the court to the Assembly, sarcastically commenting that the I.C.J. was “as nonpolitical as the Assembly itself.”<sup>86</sup> She called it a “semi-legal, semi-judicial, semi-political body which nations sometimes accept and sometimes don’t.”<sup>87</sup> In an editorial, the *Wall Street Journal* advised

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<sup>83</sup> John Vincour, “U.S. Urges the World Court To Reject Nicaragua's Case,” *New York Times*, 28 April 1984, A5.

<sup>84</sup> David Rogers, “World Court Rules It Has Jurisdiction In Nicaragua's Complaint Against U.S.,” *Wall Street Journal*, 27 November 1984.

<sup>85</sup> Stuart Taylor, “World Court Step Poses Test For U.S.,” *New York Times*, 27 November 1984, A1.

<sup>86</sup> Stuart Taylor, “The United States Has a Bad Day in World Court,” *New York Times*, 2 December 1984, E2.

<sup>87</sup> Curtis J. Sitomer, “The World Court: US Case Will Test its Credibility,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 14 December 1984.

the President to ignore the institution's rulings, "and let the world scream."<sup>88</sup>

Reagan would eventually do just that. In October of 1985, well in advance of the ruling on Nicaragua, the United States announced that it would no longer accept the Court's compulsory jurisdiction save in mutually submitted disputes "appropriate" for its abilities.<sup>89</sup> Numerous U.S. supporters of international law were outraged by the move. "Our national security is best served," Professor Richard Gardner wrote in the *Wall Street Journal*, "by strengthening not weakening those few international institutions that can promote stability and order in international relations." The administration had "undermined both the World Court and the reputation of the U.S. as a law abiding nation."<sup>90</sup> Alfred Rubin, a professor of international law at the Fletcher School, feared that Reagan's move might "end the utility of international organization in general to control international conflict." At the very least, he believed, the U.S. had shown "contempt for the concept of law and order."<sup>91</sup> Edwin Yoder, a Pulitzer Price winning syndicated columnist, found remarkable irony in the administration's decision. The Court represented the efforts of the victors of World War II, the U.S. chief among them, to bring an end to the idea that "power writes its own law. To reinforce that costly triumph," he wrote in the *Los Angeles Times*, "the United States [had been] determined to pursue whatever steps human ingenuity could devise to strengthen international law." Deepening the irony was the fact that the Court was not simply an American idea, but in many respects a particularly Republican one. "Most of the leading spirits of the 20<sup>th</sup> century

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<sup>88</sup> "Victorious Nicaragua," *Wall Street Journal*, 29 November 1984, 34.

<sup>89</sup> Charlotte Saikowski, "Reagan Pulls US Away From World Court," *Christian Science Monitor*, 8 October 1985, 5.

<sup>90</sup> Richard Gardner, "It Was Wrong to Duck the World Court," *Wall Street Journal*, 22 February 1985, 30.

<sup>91</sup> Alfred P. Rubin, "The US, Nicaragua, and the World Court," *Christian Science Monitor*, 18 August 1985.

GOP... fought long and hard for its jurisdiction,” including the man Ronald Reagan claimed as a “hero, Calvin Coolidge.”<sup>92</sup>

The opponent that may have revealed the most about how far the Reagan administration’s move had carried the United States from its former ideals was Daniel Patrick Moynihan. Moynihan, the ranking Democrat on the Senate Intelligence Oversight Committee, had entered into a high profile battle over Nicaragua with CIA Director William Casey in April of 1984. Moynihan – as well as the Committee’s top Republican, Sen. Barry Goldwater – accused the Agency of failing to disclose its role in mining Nicaragua’s harbors when it had successfully petitioning the Committee for additional funding in January. When the CIA claimed that it had, in fact, informed the Committee, Moynihan resigned his position in protest.<sup>93</sup> The resignation proved only temporary, Moynihan returned to the job a few weeks later, after extracting an apology from Casey and an admission that the Agency had not “adequately” informed the Senate of its mining operation.<sup>94</sup> Moynihan’s fight with the administration over its Nicaragua policy, however, was not over.

When Reagan’s lawyers began to argue that the World Court had no jurisdiction over Nicaragua, the Senator from New York described their effort as “squalid behavior.”<sup>95</sup> In a May 1984 letter to the *New York Times*, and an editorial exchange with William F. Buckley Jr. in the *Washington Post*, Moynihan made it clear that he thought

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<sup>92</sup> Edwin M. Yoder, “Defiance of World Court Puts U.S. Among Scofflaws,” *Los Angeles Times*, 10 May 1985, c7.

<sup>93</sup> Bernard Gwertzman, “Moynihan To Quit Senate Panel Post In Dispute On C.I.A.,” *New York Times*, 16 April 1984, A1.

<sup>94</sup> Philip Taubman, “Moynihan To Keep Intelligence Post,” *New York Times*, 27 April 1984, A1.

<sup>95</sup> Oswald Johnston, “Propaganda Drubbing Likely: U.S. Stand on World Court: Choice Fast, Options Poor,” *Los Angeles Times*, 12 April 1984, b1.

the Court did have jurisdiction and that Reagan was hurting the U.S.'s image.<sup>96</sup> In a collection of three essays published the same month, entitled *Loyalties*, Moynihan accused the Reagan administration of overcorrecting for the Carter administration's weakness. "Neither the Carter administration... nor the Reagan administration," he wrote, "display a sense of the past American commitment to the role – if not the *rule* – of law in international relations."<sup>97</sup> Where Carter had been hesitant to address other nations' violations of international law – during the hostage crisis in particular – Moynihan accused the Reagan administration of deciding "that inasmuch as the Soviets dissemble and cheat and Lord knows what else, they were going to get a taste of their own medicine" from the United States.<sup>98</sup> In part because other nations had so abused international law, the U.S. had "lost our earlier belief that international relations... can and should be governed by a regime of public international law."<sup>99</sup>

Moynihan felt that the Reagan administration had a case *against* the Sandinistas in Nicaragua (for supposedly exporting revolution to El Salvador). Rather than taking the Nicaraguans to court himself, the President had instead chosen to violate international law in an effort to counteract Nicaraguan lawlessness. "For the United States to respond in kind," Moynihan wrote, was "a policy devoid alike of ethical authority, political promise, or legality."<sup>100</sup> The United States, "enraged by the contempt of adversaries for our standards" no longer held "to those standards" and even appeared, unable "to discern

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<sup>96</sup> Buckley, of course, disagreed. William F. Buckley Jr., "The Damage At the World Court," *Washington Post*, 28 December 1984, A17; Daniel P. Moynihan, "A Reply From Sen. Moynihan" *Washington Post*, 1 January 1985, A16; Daniel P. Moynihan, "Disputes Clearly Fit For the World Court," *New York Times*, 19 May 1984.

<sup>97</sup> Daniel P. Moynihan, *Loyalties* (New York: 1984), 67.

<sup>98</sup> Moynihan, *Loyalties*, 62.

<sup>99</sup> Moynihan, *Loyalties*, 83.

<sup>100</sup> Moynihan, *Loyalties*, 86.

our interest in doing so.”<sup>101</sup> Expanding upon these ideas in his 1990 volume, *On the Law of Nations*, Moynihan admitted those American Presidents, like Wilson and Franklin Roosevelt, who had spoken the loudest on behalf of international institutions, had often “broke all manner of rules, not least those which they proclaimed.”<sup>102</sup> Yet these Presidents deserved applause because they had, however imperfectly, broken the centuries old tradition of weak nations praising international law and strong states disdaining it. “The praise of Wilson and Roosevelt,” the Senator wrote, “is that at times when American power was so clearly preeminent, they advocated restraints on the use of power.”<sup>103</sup> In the 1970s and 1980s, Moynihan argued, the U.S. had abandoned this commitment.<sup>104</sup> Believing their nation abused by international institutions like the U.N. and the World Court, Americans were now happy to support politicians, like Reagan, who openly disdained them. Moynihan – quoting the columnist Lars-Erik Nelson – described the situation under Reagan as one where, “America’s message to the world is that we are strong, we are good, we are moral and we will do whatever is right. Most Americans will probably agree with this. Just don’t be surprised if nobody else does.”<sup>105</sup>

## REAGAN’S POPULARITY AND WORLD ORDER

A majority of Americans did indeed agree with Reagan. The degree to which the average citizen approved of the particular details of the policies discussed in this chapter is certainly debatable. The widespread popularity of the administration’s broader political themes – the idea that President Reagan stood up for American values and was tough

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<sup>101</sup> Moynihan, *Loyalties*, 86.

<sup>102</sup> Daniel P. Moynihan, *On the Law of Nations* (Cambridge: 1990) 176.

<sup>103</sup> Moynihan, *On the Law of Nations*, 176-7.

<sup>104</sup> Moynihan does not mention his own, prominent, role in this transformation.

<sup>105</sup> Lars-Erik Nelson quoted in Moynihan, *On the Law of Nations* 176. Senator Moynihan made no mention of his own, prominent, role in these changes in how Americans viewed the world.

with the nation's enemies – is harder to dispute. Reagan's success in this area was not immediate, but as the U.S. economy began to recover in 1983, polls revealed a growing sentiment amongst Americans that Reagan had restored the U.S. to its proper global role.<sup>106</sup> By 1983 a *Time* magazine poll found that 66% percent of Americans agreed with the statement “after many years of permitting ourselves to be pushed around by other countries, we finally have a President who is prepared to be assertive in the use of American influence... in the world.”<sup>107</sup> A Harris Survey in January of 1984 showed 54% of respondents believed that the President had done an “excellent” or “pretty good” job of “restoring respect for America in the world.”<sup>108</sup> This number would increase over the year as Reagan's reelection campaign ramped up in advance of the 1984 general election.

Picking up where the “lets make America great again” 1980 campaign had left off, the 1984 campaign played heavily on the idea that the President had already accomplished this mission. It had a two part central theme: Reagan had established a “resurgent economy at home and a more assertive America abroad.”<sup>109</sup> Campaign advertisements proclaimed that it was “morning again in America.”<sup>110</sup> The idea was to make America “feel good about itself” and, by implication, the incumbent.<sup>111</sup> A Republican campaign memo said that the party should “paint Reagan as the personification of all that is right with or heroized about America” and leave Democratic

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<sup>106</sup> A 1982 poll found that only 47% of respondents agreed (compared to 41% who disagreed) to the statement “there is a new respect for the United States overseas because of the way Reagan is handling foreign affairs.” ABC News/Washington Post Poll, Jan, 1982. Retrieved Mar-28-2014 from iPoll.

<sup>107</sup> *Time*/Yankelovich, Skelly, Dec, 1983. Retrieved Aug-15-2012 from iPoll.

<sup>108</sup> Harris Survey, Jan, 1984. Retrieved Mar-28-2014 from iPOLL

<sup>109</sup> Charlotte Saikowski, “Reagan sounds the themes for GOP in '84,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 23 January 1984, 1.

<sup>110</sup> “Reagan TV Ads Will Start Monday--'It's Morning Again, in America!,” *Los Angeles Times*, 19 May 1984, a12.

<sup>111</sup> Elisabeth Bumiller, “Reagan Ad Aces: The Tuesday Team,” *Washington Post*, 18 October 1984, D1.



Party candidate Walter “Mondale in a position where an attack on Reagan” meant disparaging the United States itself.<sup>112</sup>

The Republican National Convention in Dallas in August of 1984 was thus, “a cascade of patriotic imagery and speeches,” that aimed to cement this association of Reagan with an idealized America.<sup>113</sup> The President’s acceptance speech sharply contrasted the nation’s health in 1984 with that of 1980 and closed with a stirring invocation of idea of the U.S. as a light of freedom for the world. Referring to the recently concluded 1984 Summer Olympic Games in Los Angeles, the President talked of how, during the torch relay proceeding the games, “crowds began spontaneously singing ‘American the Beautiful’ or ‘The Battle Hymn of the Republic.’” Moving from the Olympic torch to that held by the Statue of Liberty, Reagan said it had been “lighting the way to freedom for 17 million new Americans” and the “glistening hope of that lamp” was “still ours.” As for his Democratic opponents, they were notable only for an unpatriotic mistrust of their own country. This self-loathing had sullied a once honorable party. “Democratic candidates have suggested” he told the crowd, “that [the 1983 invasion of Grenada] could be likened to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the crushing of human rights in Poland or the genocide in Cambodia. Could you imagine,” Reagan asked rhetorically, “Harry Truman, John Kennedy, Hubert Humphrey or Scoop Jackson making such a shocking comparison?”<sup>114</sup>

Jeane Kirkpatrick’s address – which made her the “toast of Dallas” – two days earlier, had offered a similar depiction of the Democrats. The party she had once

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<sup>112</sup> Wilentz, *Age of Reagan*, 173.

<sup>113</sup> Wilentz, *Age of Reagan*, 173.

<sup>114</sup> “‘84 The Republican National Convention: Complete Text of President Reagan's Acceptance Speech,” *Los Angeles Times*, 24 August 1984, b6.

supported was now marred by anti-Americanism. They had taken up the cry of the U.S.'s Third World critics and chosen to "blame America first" for the world's problems. "The same people who were responsible for America's [pre-1981] decline," Kirkpatrick said, "have [wrongly] insisted that the President's [current] policies would fail." Instead the Reagan administration had moved the nation past Carter-era defeatism and had "silenced talk of inevitable American decline and reminded the world of the advantages of freedom."<sup>115</sup> This conflation of the Carter administration with the President's 1984 opponent was no accident. Mondale, who had been Carter's Vice President, had to fight an uphill battle against the Reagan campaign's successful effort to make the 1984 contest a second referendum on the Carter administration. Democrats were depicted as the party of "cynical professional pessimists" who would quickly return the country to its former "days of malaise and confusion."<sup>116</sup> Why, Reagan ads asked viewers, "would we ever want to return to where we were four short years ago?"<sup>117</sup> Mondale carried many of the perception problems that Carter had struggled with in 1980. Harris Survey polls in September and October of 1984 found that 59% of respondents believed that Reagan would do a better job of restoring respect for America in the world; only 34% believed that Mondale would turn in a superior performance.<sup>118</sup>

Reagan's resounding victory – he won every state except Mondale's own Minnesota – would have lasting implications for the U.S. relationship with the rest of the

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<sup>115</sup> "Text of Jeane Kirkpatrick's Remarks at Republican Convention in Dallas," *The New York Times*, 21 August 1984, A22.

<sup>116</sup> Francis X. Clines, "Reagan Denounces Rivals As 'Professional Pessimists,'" *New York Times*, 2 March 1984, A14.

<sup>117</sup> "Reagan TV Ads Will Start Monday--'It's Morning Again, in America,'" *Los Angeles Times*, 19 May 1984, a12.

<sup>118</sup> Harris Survey, Sep, 1984. Retrieved Mar-28-2014 from iPoll; Harris Survey, Oct, 1984. Retrieved Mar-28-2014 from iPoll.

world. It confirmed him, as the historian Sean Wilentz described it, as “the single most important political figure of the age,” a late 20<sup>th</sup> century conservative counterpart to liberal scion Franklin Delano Roosevelt.<sup>119</sup> The election also represented a second, strong electoral rebuke of the G-77’s criticism of the United States and its claims to global leadership. By rejecting the Democrats, U.S. voters were rejecting the idea that the U.S. had anything to apologize for in international circles. Reagan’s success cemented his approach to the Third World as the new default position for U.S. policy, one to which subsequent national politicians, both Democrat and Republican, would conform or risk obscurity.

Both of Reagan’s two-term, Democratic successors in the Oval Office, for example, rarely risked straying far from his pro-free market orthodoxy. William J. Clinton, elected in 1992 and 1996, was a proud champion of such policies, a vocal supporter of what, in the 1990s, was called the “Washington Consensus” that global market liberalization was the best path to worldwide development.<sup>120</sup> Barak Obama, elected in 2008 and 2012, amidst a recession deeper than that of the 1970s, did speak of the success of free markets being tied “rules to ensure competition and fair play.”<sup>121</sup> Yet even this language offered a sharp contrast with Henry Kissinger’s unwillingness to “push... hard on the philosophic ‘free market’ pitch” before a global audience, or the Carter administration’s agreement to the Common Fund’s plan for regulating the international commodities market.<sup>122</sup> The fate of Common Fund itself tells much about how profoundly the international discussion on economic policy changed in the last two

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<sup>119</sup> Wilentz *Age of Reagan*, 1.

<sup>120</sup> David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (New York: 2005) 13.

<sup>121</sup> See his second inaugural: Barack Obama, “Inaugural Address,” 21 January 2013, *American Presidency Project*.

<sup>122</sup> On the Kissinger quote see Chapter 4 (pg 30).

decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Once a centerpiece of the G-77's push for a regulated global commodities trade, by 2014 the Fund's website proclaimed its free "market-oriented approach."<sup>123</sup> By influencing U.S. policy and political life in the 1970s and early 1980s, the G-77 had indeed helped change the world economy, but not in the way it intended.

Reagan's disregard for the United Nations and broadly inclusive forms of multilateral diplomacy (as opposed to the club-like G-7) cast a long shadow as well. The administration's inclination to use the U.N. when it was useful, and to otherwise ignore or disparage it, set a pattern for U.S.-U.N. relations throughout the 1990s and 2000s. The remarkable multi-nation U.N. coalition that reversed Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait in 1991 was less the beginning of a "new world order," as President George Bush promised at the time, and more an example of a rare convergence of interest between the permanent members of the Security Council.<sup>124</sup> The United States and its closest allies proved, when it suited them, willing to use military force without U.N. approval, such as when NATO bypassed a recalcitrant Security Council to wage "humanitarian war" on Serbia in 1999.<sup>125</sup>

Throughout the 1990s, meanwhile, the U.S. Congress demonstrated significant resistance to U.N. based multilateralism. The Republican majority waged a long war against the U.N.'s funding by withhold the U.S.'s mandatory dues payments. Many in the G.O.P. believed that withholding funds could force the U.N. to remake itself more to their liking. Rep. Harold D. Rodgers, of Kentucky, said in 1997 that "there appears to be

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<sup>123</sup> Common Fund For Commodities, "Organizational Profile," <http://www.common-fund.org/organization/organisation-and-profile/>.

<sup>124</sup> George H.W. Bush, "Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the Persian Gulf Crisis and the Federal Budget Deficit," 11 September 1990, *American Presidency Project*.

<sup>125</sup> See Herring, *From Colony to Superpower*, 930-38. For a more in depth discussion see: David Halberstam, *War in a Time of Peace: Bush, Clinton and the Generals* (New York: 2001).

one thing and one thing only that captures the attention of the U.N., and that is money.”<sup>126</sup> For Jessie Helms, a Republican Senator from North Carolina, even withholding did not go far enough. He wanted the U.S. to threaten to withdraw from the U.N. unless it made major reforms. “I am convinced,” he said, “that without the threat of American withdrawal, nothing will change.”<sup>127</sup> A CNN/*USA Today* poll, in November of 1997, found that Americans supported withholding 63% to 26%.<sup>128</sup> In addition to this assault on the U.N.’s finances, the U.S. regularly declined to participate in various U.N. initiatives. Republicans, and some Democrats, for example, vehemently opposed the U.N. sponsored Kyoto Protocol on climate change, which President Clinton, accurately reading the political tea leaves, never submitted to the Senate for approval. The treaty’s opponents found the U.N. to be, once again, applying double standards and seeking world socialism. The protocol demanded deeper emissions cuts from developed nations than from the Global South, a system which Idaho Republican Sen. Larry Craig said was “designed to give some nations a free ride... to raise energy prices in the United States... [and] perpetuate a new U.N. bureaucracy to manage global resource allocation.”<sup>129</sup> “For the first time,” said Senator Chuck Hagel, a Nebraska Republican and future defense secretary, “the United States would give control of its economy to an international bureaucracy within the United Nations.”<sup>130</sup> *National Review* warned that “approving the Kyoto treaty could impose obligations on the U.S. that would be ignored in the rest of the world.”<sup>131</sup> As the above indicates, the relative ease with which the George W. Bush

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<sup>126</sup> Luck, *Mixed Messages*, 244.

<sup>127</sup> Luck, *Mixed Messages*, 248.

<sup>128</sup> Luck, *Mixed Messages*, 276.

<sup>129</sup> Helen Dewar and Kevin Sullivan, “Senate Republicans Call Kyoto Pact Dead: Some Democrats Suggest Clinton Delay Submission to Ratification Vote,” *Washington Post*, 11 December 1997, A37.

<sup>130</sup> Hagel quoted in Jonathan H. Adler, “Mercury Check,” *National Review* 50:15, August 1998.

<sup>131</sup> Jonathan H. Adler, “Mercury Check,” *National Review* 50:15, August 1998.

administration disregarded widespread international condemnation and maintained U.S. domestic support for its 2003 invasion of Iraq was simply another chapter in this long story. Originating in the North-South conflict of the 1970s, a profound and consequential distrust of the motives of the U.N., and international criticism, had worked deep into the fabric of American political life.

The nation had come a long way from 1945 and the “New Deal for the world” discussed in the first chapter. The post-1980 American conceptions of world order retained many of the problematic elements of that older vision, including a belief in the unimpeachable virtue of U.S. intentions and the universal applicability of America’s domestic institutions. It was shorn, however, of the more noble elements, particularly the interest in helping the Third World develop both economically and politically and a willingness to divest some of the U.S.’s awesome power for transfer to international institutions designed to create a better, more cooperative world. The United States had learned many of the wrong lessons from its time as the target of the Third World’s anger. Despite its power, extensive global influence, and the widespread adoption of its economic practices, the United States had not yet left behind the habits it learned during its time in opposition.

## Conclusion:

## “Losing After You’ve Won”

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*“We need the United States to exercise its power and might responsibly. This is not the time to ignore the rest of the world and go it alone. To do so would be to risk losing after you’ve won.”*  
 - Salman Rushdie, “America and Anti-Americans,” 2002

It was February 2002, the high point of President George W. Bush’s “War on Terrorism.” The Taliban had been routed, their captive nation of Afghanistan liberated by a U.S. campaign that seemed to vindicate the entirety of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld’s “doctrine” for light footprint warfare. An attack plan based on a small number of American troops, Special Forces, and an overwhelming deployment of air and technological superiority had exceeded even its own advocates’ expectations: enabling the rag-tag “Northern Alliance” of anti-Taliban forces to regain control of their country. All seemed well in the West.

Yet, at least one critic, writing in the *New York Times*, feared what this victory might bring. This is not to say that this writer – the British-Indian (and part-time American) novelist, Salman Rushdie – was unsympathetic to the Bush administration’s campaign. The United States, he felt, “did, in Afghanistan, what had to be done, and did it well.” Rushdie even took a certain amount of pleasure in the discomfort of America’s most vociferous critics. The “critics of the Afghan campaign,” he wrote, “are enraged because they have been shown to be wrong at every step.” Rushdie did not expect this victory to trigger a reduction in anti-American sentiment, however. In the Muslim world anti-U.S. rhetoric had become “too useful a smokescreen for [those] nations’ many defects... their corruption [and] their oppression of their own citizens,” while, in the West, anti-Americanism was “an altogether more petulant phenomenon.” Though the

aftermath of the Afghanistan campaign represented a just comeuppance for those who used the United States as an excuse for their own faults, Rushdie was afraid that Americans would, similarly, find ways to avoid self-examination: “it would be easy for America, in the present climate of hostility, to fail to respond to constructive criticism.” With remarkable prescience, Rushdie warned that it was not the time for the United States, “to go it alone... to do so would risk losing after you’ve won.”<sup>1</sup>

History, of course, records that the United States proceeded to do just that, using the complicated and oft-problematic motives of its most unfriendly critics as an excuse to ignore the well-meaning ones. The superpower would instead proceed, over the subsequent half-decade, on a course that ran roughshod over the Geneva Conventions, the United Nations, and the remaining, fragile, remnants of a world order of international law and multilateral agreement that the United States itself had done so much to establish, and then undermine, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. What Rushdie so perceptively feared was not something born of the supposedly transformational September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist attacks but a pattern that had its origins in the North-South confrontation of the 1970s. The early 21<sup>st</sup> century was not the first time that – to borrow Rushdie’s formulation – Third World leaders had sought to hide their own flaws by attacking the United States, nor the first instance where Americans, in turn, used a “climate of hostility” as a reason to ignore “constructive criticism.”

Rushdie had managed, in a way, to grasp the essence of the problem two decades earlier in Nicaragua, touring the country during Reagan’s campaign against the Sandinistas. He traveled there looking to pierce the veil of pro and anti-revolutionary propaganda that shrouded the troubled nation. Toward the end of his visit, the author

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<sup>1</sup> Salman Rushdie, “America and the Anti-Americans,” *New York Times*, 4 February 2002.



found himself haunted by a limerick he overheard in the countryside. It told of a smiling young girl “of Nicaragua” riding a jaguar and how her smile had been transferred the beast after it had, predictably, eaten the girl.<sup>2</sup> “It occurred to me,” he wrote in a book recounting his experiences, “that the limerick, when applied to contemporary [1980’s] Nicaragua” had “both a conservative and a radical reading.” There were, “so to speak, two limericks, two Misses Nicaraguas riding two jaguars,” Rushdie wrote. “If the young girl was taken to be the revolution” he continued, “then the jaguar was geopolitics, or the United States; after all, an attempt to create a free country where there had been... a colonized backyard was indeed to ride a jaguar.” That, “was the ‘leftist’ interpretation... but what,” he asked, “if the young girl were Nicaragua herself and the jaguar the revolution?” It was necessary, the writer concluded, to choose the “vision one preferred.”<sup>3</sup>

Much like the stark choice Rushdie offered for Nicaragua, analyses of the North-South conflict of the 1970s and 1980s are often presented as a choice between two jaguars. The divisions of those years are echoed by contemporary writers seeking to blame the problems of the current world order on the actions of those from one side of the equator or the other – as the results of various plots by either Third World radicals or First World capitalists. Friends of the American New Right, and the intensified “globalization” of the world economy that began in the 1980s, are quick to employ a caricature of the Global South whereby its problems – whether they be poverty, terrorism, or human rights abuses – are all products of bad government or radical political

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<sup>2</sup> “There was a young girl of Nic’ragua/ Who smiled as she rode on a jaguar./ They returned from the ride/ With the young girl inside/ And the smile on the face of the jaguar.” Salman Rushdie, *The Jaguar Smile: A Nicaraguan Journey* (New York: 1987), frontispiece.

<sup>3</sup> Rushdie, *Jaguar Smile*, 129.

philosophies. Gil Troy's *Moynihan's Moment* offers a clear example of this thinking. Troy implies that many of the world's problems can be explained by the U.S. losing touch with "Moynihan's politics of patriotic indignation" and forgetting that "only [it] could save civilization by defying evil."<sup>4</sup> If the U.S. acted more resolutely, unafraid of supposedly malevolent criticism, then perhaps it could bring an "end to evil," as the neoconservatives David Frum and Richard Perle proposed, sincerely, in 2002.<sup>5</sup> More serious and scholarly works by the likes of Vijay Prashad and David Harvey still offer a somewhat distorted narrative of North-South relations in the last two decades of the Cold War era.<sup>6</sup> Inclined to see the fundamentalist pro-market policies of the 1980s as resulting from the internal logic of a capitalist system they despise, their studies suggest an inevitability that obscures the true contingency of the period. The policies they label "neoliberal" did not result solely from the common class interests of First and Third World elites, nor can the role the G-77 played in undermining the credibility of the U.N. system be as blithely elided as Prashad wishes it to be.

History, in this case, is better understood as a process than as a plot. This dissertation has endeavored to shed light on a part of this process: how perceptions of Third World hostility helped transform U.S. visions of world order between 1970 and 1984. Entering into the period with a lingering commitment to the "new deal for the world" and the international institutions that went with it, by 1984 Americans had widely accepted a radically different understanding of the U.S. role in international affairs. As these pages have documented, this transformation cannot be explained solely by internal political developments within the United States. Historians of the suburban U.S.

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<sup>4</sup> Troy, *Moynihan's Moment*, 269.

<sup>5</sup> David Frum and Richard Perle, *An End to Evil: How to Win the War on Terror* (New York: 2003).

<sup>6</sup> Prashad in *The Darker Nations*; and Harvey in *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*.

“sunbelt” – like Matt Lassiter, Robert Self and Joseph Crespino – have added greatly to our understanding of late 20<sup>th</sup> Century American politics.<sup>7</sup> So also have those scholars who trace the growing popularity of the pro-market ideas that gained ascendancy in the late 1970s and early 1980s.<sup>8</sup> The “great persuasion,” as Angus Burgin has called it, of Friedrich Hayek, Milton Friedman, and other libertarian economists was certainly an important part of the “wrenching ideological transformation of the United States between the presidencies of Franklin Roosevelt and Ronald Reagan.”<sup>9</sup>

None of these changes, however, operated in a vacuum – they were deeply informed by an international context. The G-77’s campaign in the United Nations was a central, not extraneous, character in this play. Reagan’s 1980 victory had as much to do with perceptions that the world had turned against the United States as it did the politics of America’s suburbs. Moreover, for all of Carter’s steps to deregulate the U.S. economy in the late 1970s it was Reagan – with his quite different understanding of Global North-South relations – who suddenly and decisively transformed nearly forty years of U.S. international economic policy. When viewed as part of the story of the U.S. relationship with the Third World, the idea of a “sharp... break at Reagan’s 1980 election” appears less the distortion that historians, like Daniel T. Rodgers, have claimed it to be.<sup>10</sup> Reagan’s election, and the subsequent triumph in the United States of his understanding of global governance, was a profoundly transformative event and we are still living with the consequences.

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<sup>7</sup> Again, the important titles here are: Crespino, *In Search of Another Country*; Lassiter, *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South*; Self, *American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland*; Self, *All in the Family: The Realignment of American Democracy Since the 1960s*.

<sup>8</sup> Bockman, *Markets in the Name of Socialism*; Burgin, *The Great Persuasion*; Daniel Stedman Jones, *Masters of the Universe*.

<sup>9</sup> Burgin, *The Great Persuasion*, 223.

<sup>10</sup> Rodgers, *Age of Fracture*, 3.

Yet, for all the significance of Reagan's tenure – and its consequences – it remains best to understand his policies as the result of, again, a process. There was certainly a preexisting trend away from the commitments of the liberal world order, beginning, as Chapter 1 documented, with the policies of Richard Nixon. This trend was born largely of the perceived lessons of the Vietnam War. That this movement would culminate in Reagan, however, was hardly pre-determined. As we have seen, figures as diverse as Henry Kissinger, Zbigniew Brzezinski and Andrew Young attempted to institutionalize alternative approaches to the U.N and the North-South dialogue that might have resulted in a somewhat different contemporary world. Indeed, even Daniel Patrick Moynihan's ideas – for all their similarity to those of Reagan and his lieutenants – were born of a significantly different understanding of world order. Instead, the New Right was able to take control of the U.S. political conversation about the Third World and slowly shrink the political space available for those wishing to accommodate the G-77. Thus the anti-U.N. and pro-market policies of the 1980s emerge from this study as more of a populist reaction to perceived attacks on American honor than an effort by elites to maintain their control over the world economy.

This U.S. reaction would likely have been less virulent if not for the excesses of Third World solidarity and the reality of the U.N. majority's double standard. From a U.S. vantage point, whatever may have been achievable via G-77 solidarity on economic issues, the Third World cause was harmed by reflexive bloc voting. Support for harshly anti-American resolutions – such as the 1971 Albanian motion to seat Peking – served little purpose when more moderate measures could have achieved the same results. The same can be said of extreme and utterly counterproductive propaganda efforts like the

Zionism-Racism resolution. It is also hard to understand what advantages the Third World group gained through their unwillingness to criticize (or even withhold applause for) brutal dictators, like Idi Amin. It did the G-77 no service to have its anti-colonial rhetoric so easily exploited by the cruel and self-serving. As the preceding chapters reveal, such actions and inactions made it difficult for U.S. politicians to convince the American people of the necessity for U.S. concessions in the North-South dialogue.

U.S. leaders, from Kissinger to Carter, tried to be more forthcoming, for various reasons, but were instead undermined by an effective – though clearly accidental – alliance between Third World radicals and the American New Right. Scholars of the period, like Mark Mazower, who fail to note the degree to which U.S. leaders did try to respond to the demands of the Global South provide an incomplete picture of the proceedings.<sup>11</sup> When both sides chose to be moderate and forthcoming – as during the 7<sup>th</sup> Special Session in 1975 – there was common ground to be found and progress to be made. The tragedy of North-South relations in the 1970s was that radicals and reactionaries managed to drown out moderate and pragmatic voices both North and South. In the same way that domestic political histories can be incomplete without providing an international context, so also can international or transnational histories that do not properly incorporate the various internal factors influencing policy makers.

With this in mind, it would be inappropriate for this study – limited, as it is, to the policies of a single actor in the international history of the North-South dialogue – to too strongly suggest alternative paths for the various members of the G-77 between 1970 and 1984. What can be clearly delineated here, however, is the possibility of a different U.S. response than that which emerged following the 1980 presidential election. Recovering

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<sup>11</sup> See Mazower, *Governing the World*, chapters 11 and 12 (pp: 305-377) in particular.

these alternative policies is extremely important. They demonstrate that, despite the Reagan camp's protestations, there is nothing essentially American, or even essentially capitalist, about the contemporary U.S. approach to world order. To suggest otherwise, even in the interest of promoting positive change, is to limit the space available for building political coalitions to effect such change. A more generous and cooperative international posture does not require Americans to abandon fundamental elements of their self-conception as a nation. It would, in fact, merely ask voters to adopt elements of a slightly older U.S. worldview only recently abandoned thanks – as this study has described – to a unique combination of historical circumstance. This older view was formed largely by the experiences of what, for many, remains the U.S.'s most celebrated international contribution: winning the Second World War. A social democratic vision of world order was once considered to be quintessentially American; it could easily be so again.

There is much to admire about the contemporary world. The vast increase in global trade has brought wealth to places where it was previously unimaginable. Global commerce has also, more valuably, increased intercultural contact and undermined centuries old barriers of difference. Democracy and human rights are held in as high esteem as ever. Meanwhile, the U.N., for all those who question its legitimacy, remains a popular recourse for diplomacy in times of crisis. The problems that confront international society, however, are grave and threaten to destroy the progress that has been made. Despite all the new wealth created by world trade, upward mobility remains a chimera for much of the human race. Many nations in the Global South are still trapped in the unpromising role of primary commodity producer. Almost any drop in global

prices has the potential to destabilize entire continents. The idea that force, not international agreement, sanctions state action has seen a sad resurgence since the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq. More threatening still, as nations throughout the world voraciously consume non-renewable resources in a race to reach, or maintain, fossil fuel powered modernity, no effective international agreement exists for preserving the ecosystem on which every human being relies for life. This is, to a large degree, “the world America made,” as the neoconservative author Robert Kagan triumphantly proclaimed in 2012.<sup>12</sup> The United States retains unparalleled global influence, an ability to shape international affairs for good or for ill. If Americans fail to shed the habits of opposition learned between 1970 and 1984, the United States truly does risk losing after it has already won.

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<sup>12</sup> Robert Kagan, *The World America Made* (New York: 2012).

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