

Undergraduate History Symposium: “Celebration of Excellence in History Scholarship”

Bowling Green State University, March 26, 2012

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Cross Border Warriors:

Canadian Involvement in the US Civil War

Presented at the Undergraduate History Symposium:

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The period in the United States from 1861 to 1865 is known domestically as the American Civil War, or the War Between the States. However, the implications of this Civil War spread much further than many people realize, into the realm of British North America. This nation saw a hostile, volatile, and divided US to their south, and its people became concerned with how this could change British North America. The American Civil War is truly a continental conflict as the war pushed the United States to reclaim land it had lost to a seceding South, while considering the potential of using its already fully staffed military to accrue additional lands to the north. The American Civil War is significant to the history of Canada because the conflict played a role in pushing the “would be” nation to confederate formally into one country. The political interests of the war also brought thousands of Canadians to arms to fight on the side of the Union. Various notions and modes of thought over the conflict drove Canadians to become involved in what would be the third largest war in Canadian history. Many historians view the US Civil War as purely a domestic conflict, but it had international ramifications that changed the face of international policy between the United States and Canada in the years to follow. One of the most important instruments that shaped these changes was the massive flow of Canadians into the United States who enlisted to fight on behalf of the Union, an instrument which has been largely overlooked by historians.

The purpose of this paper is to explain the rationales of average Canadians who joined the ranks of the Union during the US Civil War. Although much writing has been done on the topic of Canadian involvement, very little literature specifies why these Canadians fought. Some of the literature goes so far as to make a broad assertion about why Canadians became involved, without offering much or any supporting evidence. Rather than just rehash the well documented events where Canadians were present, the goal of this paper is to provide these men and women

with a voice that is not readily available at present. The diaries, letters, obituaries, memoirs, and other writings of these soldiers help to put a human face on the horrors of the US Civil War from a British North American perspective. Not everyone who joined from British North America fought for the same reasons or under the same pretenses, but their decision is reflective of an awareness of international relations and the ramifications of a major war taking place on their border. Although the rationale behind enlisting with the Union was different for each soldier, their reasons for joining the US Civil War can largely be categorized into four distinct areas. Those in Canada who involved themselves in the US Civil War did so for wages, fear of United States imperialism, a desire for adventure, and to work toward the goal of abolitionism.

It is important to understand however that a person who is considered to be a Canadian today is not the same as who was considered to be Canadian during the 1860s. During this time period, what is modern day Canada was under the control of the British Empire, and was referred to as British North America. With an influx of soldiers from British North America, Union officers did not have a uniform means of classifying French speaking individuals from this nation, and in many cases they did not even bother to try.¹ These Francophones from British North America persisted to refer to themselves as *Canadiens*, a term used since the French regime. The vast majority of British North Americans who did participate in the US Civil War were Francophones, so for the purposes of this paper, this group of individuals will be referred to as Canadians.

The large scale engagement of Canadians in the US Civil War was unique for a number of reasons. First, the British Empire, which still held colonial control over British North America, had a stated position of neutrality in the conflict. Although they did attempt to send an

¹ Claude Bélanger, *Franco-American History*, "Canada, French Canadians and Franco-Americans in the Civil War Era," accessed February 21, 2011, faculty.marianopolis.edu.

ambassador to meet with Confederate officials in an incident known as the Trent Affair, the British Empire remained neutral in order to avoid a war with the Union over British North America.² In previous cases Canadians readily took up arms to fight in defense of their colonial rulers' interests, such as during the War of 1812, but this was the first time Canadians engaged in a war to a large degree without guidance from the British Empire.³ The level of autonomy held by the citizens led thousands to fight for the Union without being cued to do so. Second, the volatility of the United States was a concern because public opinion in the press revealed that many believed that if the Empire would have to intervene to protect its colonies, British North America would be the battlefield.⁴ The hope was that a Union victory would negate the need for British intervention in the Americas; it was believed by many that if the Union decided it could not defeat the South, it would turn north and invade Canada instead. Third, this conflict was particularly important considering the numbers that joined the ranks of the Union army. The estimates vary widely from only a few thousand to more than 52,000, but a commonly documented, and likely a still overinflated estimate, is that 40,000 Canadians ventured south to fight in America's war.⁵ The proximity of the War may have been a factor in the numbers, but it is clear that Canadians placed an important stake in the conflict. British North America had previously avoided involvement in the American Revolution, but had seen action in the War of 1812, fighting with the British Empire 50 years prior. However, British North America had not been host to a major war since the mid 18th century during the Seven Years War. With a history

² Fred Gaffen, *Cross-Border Warriors: Canadians in U.S. Forces/Americans in Canadian Forces* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1994), 8.

³ Ibid. 4.

⁴ Helen Grace MacDonald, *Canadian Public Opinion on the American Civil War* (New York: Columbia University, 1926), 78-79.

⁵ Gaffen, *Cross-Border Warriors*, 4.

of limited engagement in wars, the large number who did enlist is an indicator of its importance to British North America.

Although the concerns over the US Civil War were generally homogenous and well published in British North America, the reasons Canadians joined were not. Some were generally afraid of the United States' ambition to conquer Canada and accordingly joined in order to make the US believe that British North America was its ally. Others simply wanted a good adventure and a job that paid them well. Some were frustrated the US had not ended the practice of slavery decades prior when the British Empire enacted a moratorium on enslavement. To gain a better sense of why these men and women ventured south to fight for the US, primary sources will be used as often as possible to give these soldiers a voice, with secondary sources being used to frame the time, context, and offer a broader view on these soldier's perspective in history. Their reasons for enlistment are neither homogenous nor mutually exclusive, but are rather composed of a web of reasoning that drew these Canadians into the conflict. Even though individual factors certainly existed for Canadians, four overarching factors emerge in their writings: desire for wages, fear of a United States invasion, desire for adventure, and an ideology opposed to slavery.

Wages

Pay in the preindustrial areas of Canada was not particularly good during the mid-nineteenth century, and as a result, military service in the US offered an "easier" way to make money. Although these soldiers cannot be categorized as fighting for political or global reasons, their service is certainly noteworthy because wages likely played at least a small role in the choice of most Canadians to join the Union. In an ad campaign launched in southern Canada to attract recruits by Union Colonel Arthur Rankin, the rate of pay listed was \$13 per month for Privates at the starting rate, with the promise of a \$100 bonus upon being discharged, and

opportunity to earn more money through additional bonuses.⁶ With workers in Canada only able to earn a few dollars per month, the draw to head to Detroit and enlist was likely compelling. Although the Lancer campaign launched by Colonel Rankin was unsuccessful in creating an all-Canadian unit, it successfully drew thousands from Canada to fight in the conflict.⁷

In the writings of Canadian soldier Donald M. Forbes, although he provides valuable insight as to why he enlisted, many of his letters speak of the money he is earning. He writes to his mother on May 8, 1862, about how stressful the conflict is, but still emphasizes the amount of the money he earns on five specific points, drawing the focus of the letter away from the war and onto finances.⁸ For Forbes, the money was what drew him into the war, although his reasoning did shift overtime. At the very least, fair compensation may have been the initial factor that would lead a Canadian to enlist.

One of the key factors that drove up the number of soldiers recruited from British North America was a new policy in the US that allowed foreign soldiers to take the place of Americans who were drafted into the Union army. When this policy was adopted in late 1863, Americans had the ability to buy their way out of the draft by finding a replacement soldier; upon enlisting, this soldier would be paid a bonus by the person they were replacing and would receive their promised pay from the Union for their service.⁹ The benefits to Canadians were immense, especially considering the size of the enlistment bonus they were offered, often \$300. William Reeves, desperate for money to send home to Canada, was one such soldier who replaced an

⁶ Library and Archives Canada, Toronto, MG 26 A, vol. 297, reel C-1693, p. 136065, "Colonel Rankin *Lancers Recruitment Poster*," 1861. Available online.

⁷ "Influence of the American Civil War Towards Confederation," Library and Archives Canada, <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/confederation/023001-2400.01-e.html> (accessed March 2, 2011).

⁸ Donald M Forbes, Letter, Canadian Letters and Images Project: Vancouver Island University, Nanaimo, BC. Dated 8 May 1862

⁹ Lester Burrell Shippee, *Canadian-American Relations: 1849-1874*, (New York: Russell & Russell: 1970), 118.

American from the draft in order to assume an enlistment bonus before serving for the remainder of the war.¹⁰

However, this process was open to abuse in two key ways: a Canadian could be lied to in order to get him to sign up, or in some cases a Canadian was able to double-dip on their enlistment bonuses. First, deception was a major issue that drew many Canadians to enlist in terms of how much money they could make. Although a poster could promise a large signing bonus, upon enlisting, the soldier could soon find out that he had been lied to. As Forbes learned the hard way, not all the promises of the recruiters were kept. When he joined the military, he was promised a \$300 bonus for enlisting, but was only given \$100.¹¹ Despite this, the pay of \$22 per month was still enough of an incentive to Forbes not to desert even after realizing he had been lied to about the size of his bonus. Even though the Union was willing to deceive foreign soldiers into enlistment, most of them stuck to their commitment.

Second, some Canadians were able to turn a large profit from the system rather than be swindled. Because of the considerable size of these bonuses, some Canadian soldiers were lead to enlist, desert, and then enlist again at a later date to make more money.¹² In fact, the absent without leave (AWOL) rate for Canadians was higher than any other foreign group that fought in the US Civil War because after receiving their signing bonus, it was relatively easy to return up north to their home country.¹³ However, this practice was the exception and not the rule as most Canadians maintained their position in the military, even if it was only for the money. One extreme example was explained in the diary of Rémi Tremblay where he espouses his

¹⁰ Lyall Manson , Editor, "Veterans of the American Civil War," *Stormont County GenWeb Society: The Freeholder*, Cornwall, ON, 4 March 1926.

¹¹ Forbes, Letter, Dated 6 February 1864.

¹² Marcus Lee Hansen and John Bartlet Brebner, *The Mingling of the Canadian and American Peoples Vol. I: Historical*, (New York: Russell & Russell: 1970), 145.

¹³ Bélanger, *Franco-American History*.

willingness to leave one side of the war in order to make more money. After deserting his Union regiment, he attempted to join up with Southern forces in order to secure a bonus, but ended up returning to his unit in the North to avoid a court martial.¹⁴ However, the number of cases of successful re-enlistments was curbed early in the war. Union General H. B. Carrington, reporting this problem to the United States Government, saw fit to court martial and execute two Canadians who had enlisted three times.¹⁵ Canadians who did attempt to take advantage of the system did so early in the conflict as the first wave of Canadians entered the war.

Although the ability to earn money was a definite pull factor to enlist, several critical push factors emerged that drew even more Canadians in. The job climate in British North America was less than ideal, and the recession that occurred only compounded the problems facing many Canadians. Into the 1860s, thousands of Canadians crossed the border of the United States on a daily basis to work in New England factories, and even more lived in the US and sent money home.¹⁶ However, when these factories faced economic difficulties, these Canadians were left jobless, with even worse prospects available in British North America. Joining the ranks of the Union offered a simple solution that largely accounted for the first wave of Canadians who joined the war. Donald Forbes, a few years into the war found himself in this position. After the New York based tailor he worked for went out of business due to trade being disrupted by the war, he wrote to his mother noting that his only other option was to enlist in the Union Army.¹⁷ At the time, Forbes was desperately begging his parents to send money considering how difficult times were in the United States. With the opportunity to make upwards

¹⁴ Bélanger, *Franco-American History*.

¹⁵ Robin W. Winks, "The Creation of a Myth: 'Canadian' Enlistments in the Northern Armies During the Civil War," *Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. 34, No. 1 (1958): 38.

¹⁶ Hansen and Brebner, *Mingling*, 141.

¹⁷ Forbes, Letter, Dated 8 August 1863.

of \$20 a week along with what he notes as being a \$300 signing bonus, the draw to join was overwhelming. Forbes himself was bilingual, but many soldiers spoke only French. This wave of immigrants was so enormous that several units, especially from New York, were predominantly French Speaking as the war began.¹⁸

A second wave of Canadian came in the years to follow. The military was easily able to reach its quotas as they formed the initial regiments; thousands of Americans enlisted for their own reasons along with the first wave of Canadians. But several years into the war, American law makers opted to change their policies and deliberately looked north of the border, “unofficially” offering bounties to individuals who could bring Canadians into the Union army, against their will if necessary.¹⁹ In one case, six Canadians wrote to the Governor General of British North America, Lord Monck, in order to ask for his intervention on behalf of a 16 year old named Alfred Broissoit; Broissoit had been drinking with a Union recruiter who coerced him into signing up for a regiment while intoxicated.²⁰ Even though US law forbade the enlistment of foreign soldiers and the enlistment of soldiers that could not speak English, these laws were ignored as bounty sharing and the desperate need for recruits led US officials to take everyone and anyone they recruit.²¹ Bounty hunters, such as this recruiter, were able to reap the profits at the benefit of the Canadians they enlisted. However, most of these records show that these efforts were unsuccessful in recruiting large numbers into the Union ranks.

While Canadians would not likely have the devotion to fight for the US without compensation, it will always be unclear as to how much of a motivator wages were to the

¹⁸ Hansen and Brebner, *Mingling*, 146.

¹⁹ Ibid. 143.

²⁰ William F. Raney, “Recruiting and Crimping in Canada for the Northern Forces, 1861-1865,” *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (1923): 29.

²¹ Bélanger, *Franco-American History*.

average Canadian soldier who enlisted into the war. In the same vein, it would be difficult to accept on face that upwards of 40,000 Canadians would risk their lives and well being only for financial gain; while the money was good, it was far from exceptional pay. Regardless, the promise of more money later in the war helped to maintain retention amongst the troops, particularly among foreign soldiers. Recruitment contracts into the Union expired after a few years of service, so soldiers had an incentive not to desert in order to re-enlist for a bonus if the war continued. Thomas Moore explains that in his unit, any soldier who re-enlisted two years into the war would receive a \$1000 bonus, including \$400 that was paid up front.²² The opportunity for additional large bonuses helps to further explain why more Canadians did not enlist and then go AWOL at their first opportunity.

Fear of US Imperialism

One of the greatest ironies found in Canadian involvement in the US Civil War is that many of those who signed up greatly disliked or feared the United States. In effect, Canadians fought for the US in spite of their distaste for the Union in order to pursue some other goal: opposing a rise in US power. A common US marching song arose early in the war that was sung, “Secession first he would put down/ Wholly and forever,/ And afterwards from Britain's crown/ He Canada would sever.”²³ Canada had repelled several botched invasion attempts by the United States in the years prior, but the fear that the fully formed army of the Union would turn to invade British North America was real in the minds of the Canadian soldiers.²⁴ This general fear would later be a factor in Canada’s Confederation as a nation, but would immediately push more soldiers to enlist into the Union in the hopes the US would view British North America in a

²² Thomas Moore, “Memories of the Civil War,” accessed February 2, 2011, Bangor Public Library: http://www.bpl.lib.me.us/spcoll/canada_civilwar.htm.

²³ “Influence of the American Civil War Towards Confederation.”

²⁴ Bélanger, *Franco-American History*.

positive light following after defeating the Confederacy. Early in the war, it was rumored that the North was likely to give up its efforts to take the South and would therefore attempt to capture British North America since it already had a massive military force assembled.²⁵ Many of the early Canadian enlistments feared that they would end up assisting with the invasion of their own country, leading small groups Canadian born soldiers to petition President Lincoln not to pursue this course of action.²⁶ Although no substantial evidence exists that suggests Lincoln was planning to follow through with this plan, it was a major motivator for additional Canadians to enlist in the war effort in the hopes of appeasing the United States. Regardless, Newton Wolverton, a 16 year old Canadian who enlisted at the outset of the war, lead a delegation of British North American Union soldiers who spoke to Lincoln, telling him that they did not enlist to fight Canada.²⁷ Newton Wolverton would serve as an unofficial spokesperson on behalf of Canadians for the remainder of the war.

British North America as a whole had its own concerns regarding the US that both held back and encouraged Canadians to enlist with the Union. In the years prior, the British Empire instated an empire wide Foreign Enlistment Act of 1818 that prohibited any citizens of the empire from enlisting to fight in another nation's war unless the empire took a side in the conflict.²⁸ British North America however only enforced this neutrality law to a point; it was not an absolute standard that was followed in this war. No evidence exists that would suggest that British North America was reluctant in enforcing its neutrality laws, nor that it was reluctant in

²⁵ Robin W Winks, *The Civil War Years: Canada and the United States*, 4th ed (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998), 97-98.

²⁶ Bélanger, *Franco-American History*.

²⁷ Gaffen, *Cross-Border Warriors*, 8.

²⁸ Hansen and Brebner, *Mingling*, 142.

overlooking them.²⁹ In the face of crippling unemployment in their country, the powers that be benefited from overlooking their own laws designed to insulate them from involvement in the rest of the Americas in order to provide some short term relief to their people. Even though their citizens who did participate in the conflict were criminals of the empire, British North America did not charge them as such, except in several token incidents. Donald Forbes enlisted in the Union initially for financial gain, even though he had distaste for the Union and the Americans he was fighting for.³⁰ He believed in earnest that his actions would reflect positively on Canada, so he continued to serve through the war in spite of his frustration with his comrades.

However, as US officers crossed the border into Canada to recruit, the government of British North America was not entirely sure how to respond, fearing the implications of these incursions. There was a general uneasiness in British North America regarding the phenomenon, but nothing large enough to spark international incident.³¹ Some protests did emerge over the matter, but it did not stop the flow of soldiers across the border. This sentiment against the United States seemed to wane for some after enlistment as they assumed the role of a US citizen fighting against the call for secession. As Thomas Moore wrote his memoir, he consistently referred to soldiers of the Confederacy as “Rebs” while saying in 1863, years after the war began, that he had come to “favor the Union” in the war; this suggests that prior he did not care who won but now felt he had a stake in the final outcome.³² For some Canadians, they joined for the sake of making the US less likely to invade Canada, but adopted a US perspective as time passed. Some even saw the need to preserve the United States as a country; Jean-Baptiste

²⁹ Shippee, *Canadian-American Relations*, 136.

³⁰ Forbes, Letter, Dated 13 April 1864.

³¹ Shippee, *Canadian-American Relations*, 117-120.

³² Moore, “Memories of the Civil War.”

Rouillard, a Canadian born in Montréal who joined the Tenth Vermont Regiment in 1893, stated that he felt a duty to preserve, “[sic] the birth place of democracy.”³³

Tension in the ranks however did emerge at times given the pretenses under which many Canadians enlisted. Some Canadians felt they were more suited to military life than their American counterparts and became frustrated with them at times as a result. Donald Forbes commented on the lack experience of his American comrades, and noted that, “nearly all [were in] need of considerable drill.”³⁴ The disparity within the ranks between the Canadian soldiers and their American equals likely lead to increased tension among the forces. Although some accounts do suggest that Canadians were often picked on by their Anglo-American comrades, given the multicultural nature of the American ranks, it was not taken to an extreme in most cases. Rémi Tremblay writes in his diary that there, “was no animosity directed at French Canadians.”³⁵ This tension was likely was not a result of a distaste for Canadians as a whole. As one Canadian Newton Wolverton commented in a letter to his sister, “only trouble is the inhabitants cannot speak French and we, [referring to Canadians in general], cannot speak English.”³⁶ The prevalence of Canadians among the ranks of the Union was at times problematic, as some of these units were forced to communicate in battle using signals and drum-beat commands as opposed to verbally directing the soldiers. With the promise of steady money from the United States, neither French nor English speaking Canadian was deterred from enlisting. After joining the army, fears of an American invasion waned as Canadians became more integrated with their units.

³³ Bélanger, *Franco-American History*.

³⁴ Forbes, Letter, Dated 13 April 1864.

³⁵ Bélanger, *Franco-American History*.

³⁶ Archives of Ontario. “Wolverton Family Letters from Darroch Donation,” Letter, <http://www.archives.gov.on.ca/english/on-line-exhibits/fenians/darroch-acquisition.aspx> (accessed April 15, 2011) Newton Wolverton, 26 January 1865.

The desire for greater defense from the Union by pro-actively joining their forces raised greater concern in British North America. The nation had a strong desire to bolster their forces in order to defend against a feared American invasion. In fact, many Canadians believed that the United States hatred of Great Britain was so enormous that the North and South might form an alliance and invade British North America.³⁷ In the newspapers in the North, British North America's talk of a need to defend their nation was viewed as animosity by the Union.³⁸ In recognizing this disparity from a Canadian perception, Roseltha Wolverton expressed support to her brother for fighting on behalf of the Union, noting that she hopes that Canada's attempt to defend itself would be seen as a means for "preventing instead of causing trouble."³⁹ However, Canadians were willing to go to great lengths to make this point clear by continuing to enlist with the Union. In response to this perception, many Canadians saw joining the North as a means of protecting their homeland. If the struggle between the North and South was protracted in a way that would lead the North not to seek a peace agreement with the South early in the war, then British North America would likely be able to avoid fighting the combined forces of the North and South on their home soil. Even though the logistics of the US Civil War make this scenario seem unlikely in retrospect, at the time it was a major push factor considering the sentiment of the nation.

Adventure

As simple as it may sound, many in Canada ventured into the War Between the States simply seeking out a different experience and a change of pace. Many young people had never had the chance to fight in a war and believed it to be a grand adventure worth joining. When one

³⁷ Shippee, *Canadian-American Relations*, 112.

³⁸ Ibid. 128.

³⁹ Archives of Ontario. "Wolverton Family Letters from Darroch Donation," Letter, Roseltha Wolverton, 28 December 1864.

Canadian, Thomas Moore, enlisted, he was only 16 years of age and sought to escape from his boring lifestyle and do something new.⁴⁰ Rather than recognize the ravages that war could pose to him or his brother who accompanied him, Moore saw the conflict as an opportunity to alter the pace of his life. For many Canadians, the idea of marching into a foreign war without being ordered to by the British reflected a new found sense of independence from the Crown as it was up to them to select if it was a good idea to fight or not.

This desire for more excitement in their lives was a major pull factor Canadians.⁴¹ The prospect that the entire continent could be gobbled up by a war on their borders enticed the enlistment of many Canadians. These Canadians did not fear battle nor think of it in a negative light, but simply saw it as part of being in the army. For Forbes, he wrote to his family not about the fear of fighting the enemy, but rather his desire to be part of a battle. He told them that he could not wait until he could gain “a vast amount of experience” as a soldier.⁴² From a historical perspective, the US Civil War was a horrendously bloody conflict, but this notion was not present at the time, leading many to enlist believing the war would be short and without much bloodshed. Forbes would later regret his desire to venture into the war after he fully embraced the reality of the conditions. Contemporary analysis places a heavy emphasis on the desire for adventure, attributing many of the young enlistments to the “particularly adventurous spirit” which had been inherited from the days of the fur trade.⁴³

Few however were able to predict the horrors of the US Civil War that would emerge out of the conflict, and the first Canadians who enlisted certainly did not anticipate the toll of destruction the war would have on the Americas. Many Canadians’ decision to enter the war was

⁴⁰ Moore, “Memories of the Civil War.”

⁴¹ Hansen and Brebner, *Mingling*, 142.

⁴² Forbes, Letter, Dated 13 April 1864.

⁴³ Bélanger, *Franco-American History*.

haphazard in anticipating the war would be over quickly. John Forbes wrote home to his mother that he was considering an enlistment as of August 8, 1863 because the war was nearly “wound up.” Although many of these Canadians did have limited military experience, having served in volunteer militias, Canada had not experienced major engagements with heavy Canadian losses since the Seven Years War, leading to a misconception about war among these Canadians.

Alonzo Wolverton certainly did not expect the horrors he witnessed during his very first battle in the war. He wrote to his sister that he had never seen such smoke like the fog of war he saw on the battlefield. While he was in complete shock that he was able to survive the chaotic battle, he notes that “The only way we could tell when night came was by the stars.” ⁴⁴

For some, the sense of adventure did not last very long into their enlistment. Rémi Tremblay, a Canadian who joined the United States Regular Infantry at age 16, signed up “not for money but for glory.” ⁴⁵ A year into the war, Tremblay deserted for several months in order to escape the realities of fighting. Thomas Moore further illuminates some of the extreme conditions that drove many Canadians to abandon their ranks. Although Moore sought a new experience for his life, he described the conditions of the war after he reached his first encampment in Plattsburg, New York, bluntly as, “mud, mud everywhere.” ⁴⁶ While these conditions were faced by Canadian and American alike, the unique position Canadians were in made them seem even worse. While a US soldier may be a few states away from his home, Canadians had to reconcile with the fact that they were not even in their home country anymore. Moore describes that early in the conflict, he felt homesick while with his unit. Even though the

⁴⁴ Archives of Ontario. “Wolverton Family Letters from Darroch Donation,” Letter, Alonzo Wolverton, 4 December, 1864.

⁴⁵ Bélanger, *Franco-American History*.

⁴⁶ Moore, “Memories of the Civil War.”

opportunity for an adventure provided a pull factor for Canadians, it was likely the factor which wore off most quickly after enlisting in the Union army.

Canadians did however find the adventure they were looking for. Some enjoyed the camaraderie which came with the military lifestyle. Many groups of soldiers from British North America, such as the five Carbino brothers, enlisted together in order to keep the others safe within their unit.⁴⁷ Even though thousands of Canadians had never had seen a camera before and were able to return to Canada after the war with photographs of themselves with interesting stories of exotic places.⁴⁸ Even if their experience was not quite what they expected or even if they lamented their time in the United States, most did get to experience new locations and have a military experience that future generations would not be able to relate to until Canada lent assistance to the British Empire during the Boer War. Canadians' experience during the war did not vary much from their American counterparts; since Canadians were not in segregated units, they experienced the same intensity in battle as any American soldier. A. J. McDonald of Ontario served with distinction in 15 of the bloodiest battle of the US Civil War, including Gettysburg.⁴⁹ He was reported to have been killed twice during the war, but would turn up back with his unit shortly after said reports; he is just one example which helps to illustrate that Canadians were not limited to support roles, but rather experienced the war and all its horrors alongside the Americans who also enlisted.

Abolitionism

It is important to note that what is now modern day Canada was at the time part of the British Empire, and as such Canadian views on political issues fell in line with what was

⁴⁷ Manson, *Stormont County GenWeb Society: The Standard*, Cornwall, ON, January 7, 1932.

⁴⁸ Bélanger, *Franco-American History*.

⁴⁹ Manson, *Stormont County GenWeb Society: The Freeholder*, Cornwall, ON, March 21, 1913.

prevalent in the mind of the Empire. The British Empire enforced an end to the slave trade in 1833 and most Canadians supported this practice.⁵⁰ Agriculture in British North America was never dependent on slave labor, so the practice did not take hold within the nation. As such, groups within British North America sought to end slavery throughout North America by fighting for the Union army. Although soldiers certainly fought for this reason, pinning down what kind of soldier would do so is difficult for a number of reasons. While many Canadians supported abolition, along with the Roman Catholic Church controlled media, French-Canadians had a more pro-south perspective because they felt they had a right to secede.⁵¹ Even more confusingly, these Canadians still fought on behalf of the Union despite their political beliefs over Southern rights. The ideals held by the Canadian soldiers were complex to say the least in the manner they prioritized certain political issues over others. In reconciling these beliefs, due to the perceived belligerence toward British North American from the United States, Canada was more anti-Northern than they were Pro-Southern.⁵² The call to end slavery took priority in this equation, as Canadians saw the conflict in the same light as Henri Césaire Saint-Pierre, a soldier in the Seventy-sixth New York Regiment, who explained Canadians “were Christian soldiers fighting for a holy cause and like the crusaders of old.”⁵³

The call to end slavery was both a rallying point and one that was problematic as well for the people of Canada. This factor more prominently impacted the second wave of Canadians into the war as opposed to the first wave. Once the Union made a pledge to end slavery in the South, many Canadians began to see the conflict as a crusade for freedom, rallying anti-slavery

⁵⁰ Winks, *The Civil War Years*, 54.

⁵¹ Nadia Fetisova, “The American Civil War – Québec,” Quebec History: <http://www.provincequebec.com/history-of-quebec/the-american-civil-war/> (accessed February 24, 2011).

⁵² S. F. Wise and R. C. Brown, *Canada Views the United States: Nineteenth-Century Attitudes* (Toronto, Macmillan, 1967), 82.

⁵³ Bélanger, *Franco-American History*.

sympathizers to take up arms to end the institution.⁵⁴ The desire to end slavery even had a rallying effect on those in society who held generally negative feelings toward the United States. The Tory class in Canada at the time held general disdain toward the North, but saw the benefits that would ensue if slavery was ended in all of the Americas.⁵⁵ Roseltha Wolverton, in reflecting on the accomplishments of her brothers, Canadians, and all others who fought with the Union following the War and the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln, wrote to Alonzo, that the grief Canada shows toward the President with all Canada contributed to the war effort “may be a means of binding the two nations together in a common brotherhood.”⁵⁶ Those who fought in the war and their families recognized the contribution Canadians made toward fighting for a common ideological goal. By the end of the war, Alonzo seemed to have a strong connection with the rest of his unit and can relate to them as being more than just Americans. This ideological belief that the Canadians were fighting with the Americans to achieve a goal that far outweighed any political concern was important toward the end of the war. It was only a few years prior that Canada was afraid of an invasion from the Union, but this new found appreciation between the Canadians and Americans created a perceived political solidarity between the two separate nations. As Jean-Baptiste Rouillard explained at his regiment’s reunion in 1893, “What better justification of the presence of Franco-Americans in the United States could there be than to show that so many had fought for the cause of emancipation and liberty in the Civil War?”⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Hansen and Brebner, *Mingling*, 141-142.

⁵⁵ Hugh Ll. Keenleyside, Gerald S. Brown, and W. P. M. Kennedy, *Canada and the United States: Some Aspects of Their Historical Relations* (New York: Knopf, 1952), 115.

⁵⁶ Archives of Ontario. “Wolverton Family Letters from Darroch Donation,” Letter, Roseltha Wolverton, 18 April 1865.

⁵⁷ Winks, *Myth*, 34.

In fact, the Canadian attitude toward the North greatly improved once the Emancipation Proclamation was delivered. No longer was the Union just an imperial power trying to keep its land holdings under its control; rather, the North was now fighting for a cause that was “just and humane,” one that could be appreciated by all Canadians regardless of how they felt about the United States.⁵⁸ In fact, the Catholic Church in Canada spoke about the contribution French Canada made to the US Civil War effort to destroy slavery.⁵⁹ The Church made the claim that more than 60,000 French Canadians took part in the war to end slavery in North America; this number is however unfounded and can be discredited by Union records of their soldiers. Regardless, the Church was a major push factor for French Canadians to enlist in the War Amongst the States, making the point that to end slavery was a higher calling from the perspective of the Church. However, even though the Church did push more Canadians into the war, this was not the intention. The Church took a strong position against the slavery, but did support the South’s right to secede from the Union. While many clergy took advantage of the opportunity to explain how Canadian actions were moral and just, the point of these speeches was to emphasize the death and destruction taking place because of the US Civil War in order to discourage further Canadian involvement.⁶⁰ The numbers of enlisted were inflated by the church, including their estimation of 14,000 Canadian deaths, to scare their followers to stay in British North America. However, Canadians placed greater emphasis on the Church’s position against slavery in their decision to enlist, leading to an overrepresentation in Francophones when compared to other segments of British North American society.

⁵⁸ Keenleyside, Brown, Kennedy, *Canada and the United States*, 112.

⁵⁹ Hansen and Brebner, *Mingling*, 146.

⁶⁰ Bélanger, *Franco-American History*.

Discussion

In providing a full understanding of Canadian involvement in the US Civil War, it is important to note that although rationale for entering the US Civil War can be largely categorized into four main areas, the choice to enlist was at its core highly individualistic. Many felt a need or calling to join and fight on behalf of the Union, and in several cases this calling came from within. Whether it was the need for additional finances, perceptions of good and evil, or a need to safeguard the future of British North America, these Canadians by and large self-selected themselves into the war for reasons that likely seemed very personal at the time. An analysis of the trends in reasoning, such as the one this paper provides, should not lead historians or readers to overlook the fact that these soldiers were real people that made a rational choice when they enlisted.

Additionally, it is important to note that these Canadians who did participate in the US Civil War were for the most part not recent immigrants of British North America, but were typically third or even fourth generation French-Canadian Americans.⁶¹ As a result, it can be said that these individuals did have a connection to British North American that ran several generations deep. Their decision was therefore not a result of a weak connection to their homeland which makes their choice seem even more deliberate. With a strong semblance of identity as a Canadian, the factors that pushed and pulled these people into the US Civil War can be viewed as either overpowering their commitment to their home country or as a reaffirmation for those Canadians who fought to preserve the integrity of British North American by showing their support to the Union in their time of need.

⁶¹ Winks, *Myth*, 36.

Further, by allowing citizens of British North America to enter the war, Canada asserted some level of autonomy. While the British Empire had clear provisions against allowing her citizens to enter foreign wars without consent, British North America only enforced these provisions to an extent. While the various enforcement agencies did stop those who blatantly violated this policy, such as Colonel Rankin in his attempt to form an all-Canadian unit, British North America did very little to curtail the flow of citizens across the border. In essence, British North American only followed the protocols of the Empire to the extent it felt it needed to, while at the same time “looking the other way” as thousands of citizens poured into the conflict. As Canada confederated in 1867, remembrance of the US Civil War was critical to this decision. After experiencing the effects and fears produced from an unstable United States to the south, Confederation brought a greater sense of unity and security to British North America. Even though the war was a nation apart from British North America, the US Civil War was not merely a war which changed the United States, but one which helped to transform what would be Canada as well. The veterans of the war carried the memories and scars with them back to their homeland in British North America. H. W. Weber of the 16th Regiment, New York State Volunteer Infantry proudly showed his friends until his death, “the bullet, fired from a Confederate rifle” that nearly cost him his life.⁶² His scars are just a few that Canadian soldiers bore due to their commitment to the Union.

Finally, the four predominant reasons which brought Canadians into the US Civil War did not all hold the same weight depending on the year; in other words, different waves of a Canadians entered the war for different reasons, which places a strong emphasis on how deliberate the choice was for most. For example, the initial wave of Canadians was largely

⁶² Manson, *Stormont County GenWeb Society: The Standard*, Cornwall, ON, September 16, 1886.

seeking immediate economic relief, viewing enlistment as an opportunity to receive steady pay. Additionally, early in the war, when the perceived threat of an invasion by the Union was strongest, Canadians, despite distaste for the United States, joined in the hopes that a presence of Canadian support could appease the Union into recognizing British North America was on their side. On the other hand, a second wave of Canadians entered the war after Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation in the hopes to destroy slavery in all of North America. Throughout both major waves of Canadians into the conflict, the draw of adventure lured many younger, and often underage, Canadians into the Union ranks. The variation found among when the soldiers enlisted shows that Canadians were neither homogenous in their rationale and that certain factors mattered more than others depending on the person, making the choice to enlist with the Union highly personal.

The opportunity for future study of the Canadian soldiers of the US Civil War is expansive to say the least. Although this paper presented information from a few dozen accounts, focusing specifically on a few of the more detailed collections, hundreds more exist that have not largely explored by historians. For historians, the lack of available sources and confusing nature of the reasons for which these Canadians fought may have detracted from the level of research in this field.⁶³ As of now, secondary sources on the topic of Canadian involvement in the US Civil War detail facts and statistics regarding how many joined, along with detailed information on a few select incidents, such as the Fenian Raids. While these accounts are significant historically, they largely overlook why individuals with clear loyalties to one country would travel to the United States to fight on its behalf. Although some of these sources make guesses and broad conjecture regarding why Canadians would fight for the United States, they fail to provide

⁶³ Bélanger, *Franco-American History*.

substantial evidence to back up their claims. With additional research to ascertain *why* Canadians felt compelled to enlist, important holes in the historical narrative can be filled with detailed explanation.

In the larger scheme of research, it may never be possible to completely hammer down every reason that would result in a Canadian enlistment into the Union. However, a need for wages, fear of the United States, desire for adventure, and the goal of abolitionism are those reasons that pervade the primary sources on the subject. Even if this list is not all inclusive, it establishes the foundational reasons for these Canadians' enlistments. The War Amongst the States was not solely fought by soldiers of the States, and while the war was domestic in a practical sense, the international ramifications forever changed the face of North America and Canada as a nation. But it must always be remembered that these forces which shaped the course of North American history were brought into fruition by average citizens who took up arms for reasons only they fully understood and the historian can one day hope to fully understand.

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First People Last Citizens: An Analysis of the Path to Native American Citizenship 1865-1965 And Why It Was Denied For So Long

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First Peoples: Last Citizens: An Analysis of Native American Citizenship and Why It
Was Denied For So Long

As a member of the white majority citizenship is unquestioned and automatic. There is no debate over whether one is a citizen because of where or who you were born to within the United States. For many other minority groups throughout the course of history this has not always been the case. Japanese Americans, African Americans and Mexican Americans have all struggled to gain citizenship rights. However, one of the most prolonged and confusing quests for citizenship have been endured by the Native Americans. As the original inhabitants of this country they have been constantly belittled and oppressed in overt and covert ways that contribute to their nearly 150 year struggle for Citizenship in a country that was arguably theirs since time immortal.

Obtaining full citizenship can be broken down into three smaller components: legal standing as a citizen, voting rights and socio-economic equality. These three components of citizenship seem simple but have posed great obstacles to Native American communities. From before the Civil War to present day Native Americans would struggle to gain all three of these aspects that compromise citizenship in the United States.

There are many reasons why Native Americans were denied these aspects of citizenship. Native Americans faced a wall of prejudice in their quest to obtain these three things. Paternalism, racism, cultural misunderstandings and greed are the most

significant of the multitude of reasons why Native Americans were denied citizenship and how those reasons changed over time show the nuance, and sometime blatant discrimination and prejudice in the United States.

This paper will follow the paths of Native Americans in their quest to obtain legal standing, voting rights and acceptance in the economic community, using major pieces of legislation and court cases that mark large turning points on the path to becoming citizens. First, this paper will highlight why these three aspects of citizenship are so important to being a full citizen. Then, this paper will use both government documents and court cases to outline the reasons why the white majority in the United States denied the Native Americans these aspects of citizenship for so long.

Citizenship is a very nuanced thing. Even the United States constitution had to break down the process of attaining citizenship. Just because a person was a citizen didn't necessarily mean that they had voting rights, as evidenced by the 14th, 15th and 19th amendments. Just because a person has voting rights does not mean that they have the positive or negative freedom to fully exercise those rights. And even when a person has obtained legal standing as a citizen and is able to exercise their right to vote it does not mean that a person is able to participate in their community or the greater economic community. Without these three things a person living in the United States is not able to consider themselves a full or equal citizen of this country.

It is hard to consider how important citizenship is when as a member of the modern majority citizenship has never been questioned. However, for many of the minorities in this country their citizenship has constantly been questioned and denied.

When minority groups such as Native Americans are denied legal standing as citizens, voting rights and economic and social equality the effects are serious. Part of being a full citizen in the United States is being able to exercise the right to vote, thereby asserting your right to representation in the legislature. Furthermore if a person is not a citizen they are barred from running for or holding political office. And if a person does not have full socio-economic equality they are often denied other benefits such as a solid education that could help them assert the first two aspects of citizenship.

Native Americans' quest towards citizenship has been a convoluted process. Citizenship was attained in small steps instead of one big leap. Some legislative circumstances allowed certain groups of Native Americans citizenship under certain conditions. Like most of the topics that will be discussed the ways that Native Americans achieved legal standing as citizens is incredibly nuanced.

To begin to understand the path that Native Americans' took toward citizenship and how that path rambled over the next century and a half it is necessary to go back in time to the foundations of the Indian Policy.

Stemming from arguments surrounding the Cherokee removal from Georgia in the 1830's Chief Justice John Marshall penned the opinion that would become the foundation for all Indian Policy decisions in the future. In Marshall's opinion for the cases of *Cherokee Nation V. State of Georgia* (1831) and *Worcester V. Georgia* (1832) Marshall attempted to define the status of Indian Tribes in the United States; specifically, *Cherokee Nation* defines the tribes' relationship to the Federal Government, and *Worcester* the relationship to the states. Marshall writes: "the acts of our government

plainly recognize the Cherokee Nation as a State, and the courts are bound by those acts”¹ While Marshall recognizes the tribes as Nations he continues to question if they can be considered foreign nations. Marshall states:

“it may well be doubted whether those tribes which reside within the acknowledged boundaries of the United States can, with strict accuracy, be denominated foreign nations. They may, more correctly, perhaps, be denominated domestic dependent nations. They occupy a territory to which we assert a title independent of their will, which must take effect on point of possession when their rights of possession ceases. Meanwhile they are in a state of pupillage. Their relation to the United States resembles that of a ward to his guardian”²

Marshall further grounds this “denomination” in the wording of The Constitution which in eighth section of article three designates Indian tribes as separate from foreign nations in terms of regulating commerce.³ Marshall further opines in *Worcester*:

“The very fact of repeated treaties with them recognizes it; and the settled doctrine of the law of nations is that a weaker power does not surrender its independence- its right to self government, by associating with a stronger and taking its protection. A weak State in order to provide for its safety, may place itself under the protection of one more powerful without stripping itself of the right of government, and ceasing to be a State.”⁴

As a domestic dependent the Native Americans were put into a very tricky position. They were not aliens of the state, nor were they citizens of the United States or any particular state. They were considered nations yet the tribes did not have enough attributes of sovereignty to sue in the Supreme Court or make treaties with other foreign nations.⁵ By including the phraseology of “wards of the state” the United States nearly legitimized paternalistic attitudes towards the Native Tribes. By using the term “ward”

¹ *Cherokee Nation V. State of Georgia*. 30 U.S. 1 (1831)

² Colin G. Calloway, *First Peoples: A Documentary Survey of American Indian History* (Bedford/St. Martins: Boston, 2007) 3rd edition. 272

³ Ibid. 273

⁴ Ibid. 274

⁵ “The Status of Indians before State and Federal Courts” *Columbia Law Review*, 14, no. 7 (Nov. 1914): 588, Accessed April 20th, 2011 DOI: <http://0-www.jstor.org.maurice.bgsu.edu/stable/1110737>

the United States associated the tribes as children to themselves, and furthermore in using this term the United States granted themselves the right to exercise full power of guardianship”⁶ This paternalistic interpretation brought with it the connotations of the Native Americans as unable to take care of themselves, uneducated, unsophisticated and uncivilized just like a child would be. By using this term “ward” Marshall both perpetuated stereotypes of Native Americans and tamped down their abilities to gain an equal standing in the law or society. This decision and this paternalistic attitude towards Native Americans would resonate throughout many Native American policy decisions for the next century.

Marshall’s opinion concluded that the title to Indian lands was not absolute yet could only be transferred to the federal government, known as preemption.⁷ This unique caveat would be the foundation for the federal government to consistently take lands away from the Native Tribes, wreaking havoc on their ability to maintain a state of normalcy that would allow them to participate in the local economies.

While the Marshall courts decisions did significantly hinder the self-governance and sovereignty along with Native Americans ability to be seen as equal to white society, it is important to note the one way the Marshall decisions did put Native Americans on the path towards citizenship. Had Marshall ruled that the tribes were foreign nations the question of United States citizenship would have seemed absurd. There would be no reason to ever consider the citizenship status of a foreign nation. By ruling that there was

⁶ “Indians and the United State” *Harvard Law Review Association*, vol. 25, no. 8 (Jun, 1912): 733, Accessed April 20th 2011. DOI: <http://0-www.jstor.org.maurice.bgsu.edu/stable/1324030>

⁷ “The Status of Indians before State and Federal Courts” *Columbia Law Review*, 14, no. 7 (Nov. 1914): 588, Accessed April 20th, 2011 DOI: <http://0-www.jstor.org.maurice.bgsu.edu/stable/1110737>

a connection between the federal government and the tribes Marshall cracked open the door for Native Americans to be citizens in the future. By bringing tribes into the fold of American government from the outside political world their exact status as people within the country could be determined at a later date.⁸

These legal definitions of the tribes status as members of the United States would be the spring board from which all further discussions of Native American citizenship would begin. This opinion of John Marshall would not only set the tone for further Indian Policy decisions in terms of legal standing as Citizens but also in terms of socio-economic standing as well.

The first major policy decision that would affect Native American citizenship following the Civil War is the Fourteenth Amendment.

The Fourteenth Amendment, adopted on July 9, 1868, is the most famous piece of legislation other than the Declaration of Independence to guarantee persons living in the United States their citizenship. However, this act famously does not apply to Native Americans. The Act in section one states; “All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside.”⁹ Continuing in section two the amendment states: “Representatives shall be apportioned among the several states according to their

⁸ Michael T. Smith. “The History of Indian Citizenship” in *The American Indian: Past and Present*, ed. Roger L. Nichols (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986), 3rd ed., 232. Accessed April 19th URL: <http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=8jG1Bb7sh14C&oi=fnd&pg=PA232&dq=elk+v.+wilkins&ots=lbDXp0iqKH&sig=JOZKWnQwY8-OqeCGk7kqTthh4v8#v=onepage&q=elk%20v.%20wilkins&f=false>

⁹ U.S. Constitutional Amendment. Fourteenth Amendment, sec. 1

respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons in each state, *excluding Indians not taxed*¹⁰¹¹.”

While this mention of Native Americans in the second section is the only mention of them in the four corners of the document, the Amendment was very carefully drafted to make sure that it excluded Native Americans from being considered citizens.

The drafters of the 14th Amendment (and for the purposes of this paper the Civil Rights Act of 1866 will be considered contemporaneously because the two acts are so similar in composition and argument) engaged in many heated discussions about how the phrasing of the Amendment would or would not include Native Americans. While Congress at this time was very consumed with the new republican ideals of equality for African Americans most of the members of Congress agreed that Native Americans should not be included in this new extension of citizenship. Discriminatory attitudes towards Native Americans had not been lessened and the ideas of the Native American as a people in a less developed state of culture and civilization predominated American thought. It was easy for writers of the new reconstruction amendments to leave out a group of people who had never been counted in American politics before.

Congress looked back to the decision in *Worcester V. Georgia* to ground their argument in the idea that Native Americans who remained under tribal authority were therefore citizens of their tribe and were not people of the United States, let alone citizens. Congress also justified their argument by utilizing how votes were counted in elections for the House of Representatives. Unlike African American slaves who before

¹⁰ *ibid.* sec. 2

¹¹ Italics added by author for emphasis

the 13th Amendment were counted as 3/5ths of a person, or free aliens who were counted as whole persons, Native Americans were not counted at all.¹² Congress used this fact as further justification for excluding Native Americans from gaining citizenship because they had never been part of the political process and had never been counted as people living in the United States.¹³

The holes in the logic of this argument are obvious. Native Americans had been excluded from congressional representation by actions of the federal government. The Federal government then counted this to their advantage. Drafters of the 14th Amendment appear to interpret this governmental decision as a personal decision by the individual tribes not to participate in government. By utilizing this interpretation of fact the drafters further perpetuated Native Americans exclusion from the political system, along with lowering them below the level of consideration given to the newly freed African Americans, placing Native Americans in the lowest position of peoples living within the United States at the time. This type of citizenship exclusion can therefore be considered to have racist underpinnings. However, this was not the only example of race as a decision factor for the Citizenship Amendment. There would be further evidence of racist reasoning as to why Native Americans should not be included in the Fourteenth Amendment.

While the issue of representation provided a nice diversion from the predominantly racist reasoning as to why Native Americans could not be counted there

¹² Earl M. Maltz, "The Fourteenth Amendment and Native American Citizenship" *Constitutional Commentary* 17, no. 555 (Winter, 2000) Accessed March 25th URL: <https://litigation-essentials.lexisnexis.com/webcd/app?action=DocumentDisplay&crawlid=1&doctype=cite&docid=17+Const.+Commentary+555&srctype=smi&srcid=3B15&key=c479b6d1a81034a070bdf0090a5daa28>

¹³ Ibid. 8

were much less nuanced factors at play in the senate chambers. Earl M. Maltz comments, “Most republicans balked at conferring citizenship on a group that they viewed as ‘perhaps the lowest class ever known as Indians’”¹⁴. Senator George H. Williams of Oregon noted that if they were citizens states could no longer enforce their bans of the sale of alcohol and firearms. Senator William’s logic speaks to the cultural prejudices against the Native Americans that were fermenting during this time. Native Americans were seen as lesser people who were prone to quarrels, violence and drunkenness. Native Americans were perceived to be prone to such childish behavior due to the government regulating the sale of firearms and alcohol because as Gilbert Quintero notes ‘the common frame of mind around Native American drinking was that Indian drunkenness bore the reflection of Indians essential faults in character disposition that arose from their primitive pagan lifestyle’¹⁵ these more blatant uses of racist reasoning shows the state of mind of Congress as they began to draft these pieces of legislation.

The drafters of the Civil Rights Act of 1866 and the Fourteenth Amendment realized that the phrasing of these pieces of legislation would have to be very carefully worded to make sure that they excluded Native Americans in the present and would make it clear that Native Americans would be excluded in the future. It was finally decided that the act and amendment would include the phrase “Indians not Taxed” into the documents. While some such as Senator Thomas A. Hendricks and Senator Lyman Trumbull thought this phrasing would discriminate between poor and rich Indians, Senator Daniel Clark noted that this “Not taxed” language would in essence would give

¹⁴ Maltz “14th Amendment and Citizenship” 8

¹⁵ Gilbert Quintero “Making the Indian: Colonial Knowledge, Alcohol, and Native Americans” *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 25:4 (2001) 59

states the authority to decide whether to naturalize Indians through their taxing policy.¹⁶ This allowed the senate to put the matter aside for later debate at a later time.

Despite Congress's attempts at careful drafting, ambiguities that the Congress had hoped to avoid still remained. The most significant of these ambiguities about who was denied and who could gain citizenship and whether or not Indians could gain voting rights would be addressed in the case *John Elk V. Charles Wilkins* (1884).¹⁷ John Elk was a Native American who was born on a reservation but had willingly renounced his tribal status and all affiliations and attempted to vote in the state of Nebraska. Elk was denied the ability to register to vote by Charles Wilkins the registrar of voters in the fifth ward of Nebraska.¹⁸ Elk claimed that he was a citizen by virtue of the citizenship clause and that the fifteenth amendment therefor guaranteed that Nebraska could not deny his right to vote on the basis of race. The question became, was Elk a citizen under the law? If so, the Fifteenth Amendment would have guaranteed him the right to vote and if not then the fifteenth amendment did not apply. Elk's cause was taken all the way to the Supreme Court and on November 3rd 1884 the Waite Court handed down their decision as written by Associate Justice Horace Gray. Gray's opinion was that Elk was not a citizen and could therefore be constitutionally denied the right to vote.¹⁹ Earl Maltz summarizes the Gray opinion:

“Gray began with the premise that one could only become a citizen by virtue of either birth or naturalization. At the time of his birth, Elk was subject only to the jurisdiction of an Indian tribe, which Gray described as ‘an alien, though dependent,

¹⁶ Maltz “14th Amendment and Citizenship” 8

¹⁷ *Elk v. Wilkins* 112 U.S. 94 (1884)

¹⁸ 112 U.S. 94 (1884) Summary of

¹⁹ 112 U.S. 94 (1884)

power’ and could therefore not claim birthright citizenship—a conclusion Gray supported by reference that suggested that Indians born to tribal jurisdiction could only obtain citizenship through naturalization.”²⁰

This decision sharply limited the significance of the Fourteenth Amendment for Native Americans seeking to become citizens. Members of tribes could not fall under the “complete jurisdiction” requirement as outlined by the Fourteenth Amendment nor could they become naturalized because all routes to naturalization were closed to them. So, while on the surface the Gray opinion gives some hope with the naturalization language it is a false hope, there was no way at the time for a Native American to become naturalized. This reinforced the notion that it doesn’t matter that you are born in the United States, the circumstance of your birth (on a reservation) and the status of your parents (as Native Americans) bear equal consideration. This decision further shows how racist thoughts and ideas were often the foundation for Indian policy decisions.

The first instance of Native Americans gaining any ground on the path to becoming recognized as citizens was the Dawes General Allotment Act. Signed into law on February 8, 1887 The Dawes Act would allow Indians, much like John Elk, who denounced allegiance to their tribes and emulated the ways of the whites could be considered a citizen of the United States. Specifically the act stated:

“every Indian born within the territorial limits of the United States who has voluntarily taken up, within said limits, his residence separate and apart from any tribe of Indians therein, and has adopted the habits of civilized life, is hereby declared to be a citizen of the United States, and is entitled to all the rights, privileges, and immunities of such citizens, whether said Indian has been or not, by birth or otherwise, a member of any tribe of Indians within the territorial limits of the United States without in any manner

²⁰ Maltz “14th Amendment and Citizenship” 10

impairing or otherwise affecting the right of any such Indian to tribal or other property.”²¹

The Dawes Act was created by those who considered themselves “friends of the Indian”. These “friends” felt that separating the Indian from the tribal structure would push them towards acceptance by white society and civilization. In the public address of the Lake Mohonk Conference which was a self proclaimed conference of “men who by long experience and careful investigation had come to an accurate understanding of the Indian question in its various phases”²² and were now proclaiming how to answer said question. The conference resolved that “The organization of the Indians in Tribes is, and has been, one of the most serious hindrances to the advancement of the Indian toward civilization, and that every effort should be made to secure the disintegration of all tribal organizations.”²³ This statement and the address of the conference are representative of the feelings of the time. Sentiments like this one are what helped to push through the Dawes Act in Congress.

The wording of the Dawes Act is very specific and highlights many of the goals of Indian policy as they were evolving at the time. The Dawes act was a shift away from the treatment of Native Tribes as so different they must be dealt with entirely separate

²¹ “An Act to Provide for the Allotment of Lands in Severalty to Indian on the Various Reservations,” Known as the Dawes Act, Ourdocuments.gov, Accessed March 31st. URL: <http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=50>

²² “Second Annual Address to the Public of The Lake Mohonk Conference” Held at Lake Mohonk, N.Y. Sep. 1884 on behalf of the Civilization and Legal Protection of The Indians of the United States. Printed bu Executive Committee of the Indian Right Association, Philadelphia, PA 1884 (pamphlet) originally found in Library of Peabody museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology in connection with Harvard University received 1884. Accessed April 22nd URL: http://books.google.com/books?id=9oASAAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA3&lpg=PA3&dq=Lake+Mohonk+conference+1884&source=bl&ots=3RFqm0rUcL&sig=tG2QZTu303uamVzAtcp_zKshk9U&hl=en&ei=EjqzTb0MjtG3B627hOoO&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=2&ved=0CCAQ6AEwAQ#v=onepage&q&f=false

²³ *ibid.* 6

laws and rules to a policy of strict assimilation. The Act stresses that Indians who have separated from their tribes and taken up civilized life can be granted citizenship. This Act pushes the idea that Indians are inherently uncivilized. An Indian would have to take up and emulate all aspects of white life and values in order to blossom in order to be considered a civilized person. To remain on the reservation and continue to participate in traditional Indian ways was to remain a person who is less than the members of the white majority. The blatant discounting of Native American culture and economic self-sufficiency is an example of how Native American culture was misunderstood and tribes were discriminated against and not considered equals in socio-economic standing purely because of their Native American status. The act would require Native peoples to take up white ways of mono-crop farming to be considered for citizenship and hold the land given to them in trust for twenty-five years. This new individual ownership and style of farming went against the traditional ways of native farming such as holding tribal land communally and farming multiple crops in traditional native ways. With the passage and enforcement of the Dawes Act another large cultural misunderstanding had been codified.

The Dawes Act and various riders to the bill enacted later, such as the Clapp Rider, intensified the process of Native American's being swindled out of their land.²⁴ The Dawes Act was intended to help protect Native lands; however, in reality because people could deal directly with the individual Native Americans instead of with the Federal Government it was much easier to trick the individuals out of their land. Often the Native Americans had become so destitute because of these new farming endeavors that were not supported by the government in terms of the promised machinery and

²⁴ Calloway "First Peoples" 502

equipment that Native Americans were forced to sell their only remaining asset, their land.

From an optimistic standpoint the Dawes Act was created in good faith. The “Friends of the Indian” were trying to help Native Americans in the best way that they knew how, which was to make them like themselves, white. Unfortunately, the cultural misunderstandings of these “friends” are large, and resulted in a mass of new problems for the Native Americans. The monoculture way of farming was unfamiliar to Native Americans, and some tribes had engaged in agriculture at all up until this point. Unfortunately, this resulted in failed farms and an even further loss of land. The other large disastrous result of these cultural misunderstandings is that the Dawes Act completely undermined tribal structure. Due to the inability to own lands communally and the caveat that Native peoples must give up their associations to their tribes. Without these binding factors Native Americans began to lose their tribal identity. From a pessimistic standpoint the Dawes Act was founded in greed. One sure way to gain more of the coveted Indian Land would be to cut it up and sell off the extra. If a specific piece of land was assigned to a specific member of a tribe or head of household then there would be many, many acres left over that the government could sell to people interested in moving west. Either way you view the situation, overall the Dawes Act caused Native Americans to be further from participating in the greater economic market, and further away from being an equal citizen under the law.

From the Dawes Act on specific tracts of Native Americans were able to gain Citizenship through a variety of ways. Some Native American women were able to gain citizenship by marrying white men, others by receipt of allotments similar to those that

were granted under the Dawes Act. Other Native Americans were able to gain Citizenship through special treaties or statutes.²⁵ However, despite some Native Americans being able to gain citizenship many were still not citizens. Native Americans were also still barred from the normal processes of naturalization that were available to foreigners.

By 1924 the Native Americans were the last minority to not have suffrage. However, despite this fact there was no universal petition by Native Tribes to gain this right. NebraskaStudies.org attributes the passing of the Indian Citizenship Act to “a move by the federal government to absorb Indians into the mainstream of American life. No doubt Indian participation in World War I accelerated the granting of citizenship to all Indians, but it seems more likely to have been the logical extension and culmination of the assimilation policy.”²⁶

Whatever the motivations for the granting Native Americans their citizenship, on June 2, 1924 President Calvin Coolidge signed the Indian Citizenship Act, alternatively known as the Snyder Act into law. This Act officially granted legal standing as a United States citizen to the remaining one-quarter to one-half of the Indian population that did not have citizenship prior to the Act’s passage.²⁷ This act also guaranteed Indians the

²⁵ “Native American Citizenship: 1924 Citizenship Act” Nebraska Studies. Accessed April 18, 2011 URL: http://www.nebraskastudies.org/0700/frameset_reset.html?http://www.nebraskastudies.org/0700/stories/0701_0146.html

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ This number is somewhat disputed but the numbers given fall between this range Charles J. Kappler, ed. “Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties Vol. IV, Laws (Compiled to March 4, 1927)” (Washington: Government Printing Office) Part VI 1165. As accessed on the Oklahoma State digital library April 20th 2011. URL: http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/vol4/html_files/v4p1165.html

right to vote by placing them under the protection of the Fifteenth amendment (which they had previously been exempted from because of the decision in *Elk V. Wilkins*).

At seventy-two words long the act is remarkably short. However, the last line of the act is important to note: “provided that granting of such citizenship shall not in any manner impair or otherwise affect the right of any Indian to tribal or other property.”²⁸ This was a refreshing change from the grab-and-go land policy of previous decisions. This act made sure that just because all tribal members are now U.S. citizens does not mean that their lands can now become public property.

By the 1920’s the federal government realized the disaster that they had created for individual Native Americans and Native Tribes through the Dawes Reallotment Act. The Act had created many more problems for Native people than it had solved “Far from turning Indians into productive, upstanding citizens in the mold of whites, it has succeeded in make most of them more dependent on government than ever, and creating more occasions for corruption than even the old system had.”²⁹

In response to the breakdown of the federal government to adequately assist the Native Americans, The Institute for Government Research, alternatively known as the Brookings Institution, sponsored the most comprehensive report on Native Americans since the 1850’s. The Rockefeller Foundation funded the report, as opposed to the federal government, in the hopes of obtaining the most unbiased report possible. The study group was headed by Lewis Meriam, an expert in government operations and

²⁸ *Indian Citizenship Act of 1924*, 43 *U.S. Statutes at Large* 253, ante 420

²⁹ Dr. Craig Wollner, Dr. David Peterson del Mar, Dr. Carl Abbot et al. “The Indian Reorganization Act of 1934” TAHDPX: Great Decisions in U.S. History as sponsored by the US Department of Education. Accessed April 24, 2011 URL: http://www.upa.pdx.edu/IMS/currentprojects/TAHv3/Indian_Act.html#Sub3

efficiency and was assisted by experts in law, economics, health and agriculture.³⁰ The Meriam Report, as it came to be known, was presented to Hubert Work, Calvin Coolidge's Secretary of the Interior, in 1928. While the report condemned the Federal Government for their paltry efforts in Indian Affairs one of the most scathing sections of the Meriam Report was the section on the Indian Economy.³¹

The report illustrated that earned income was extremely low among native families and communities. Meriam directly correlated this low earned income and resulting poverty to the Dawes Act. The Meriam Report asserted that "the loss of land due to [the Dawes Act] was a significant factor of the poverty of the Reservations, especially since the land left to the Indians was valueless."³² The report concluded that the economic basis of Indian culture had been "destroyed by the encroachment of white civilization."³³

Yet, as damning as the Meriam Report was the Herbert Hoover Administration took no heed of the problems that the report outlined. As the depression set in there was nothing that the Hoover Administration believed that it could do. The report would wait until the election of Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1932 and the appointments of Harold Ickes to the Secretary of the Interior and John Collier to the head of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA).³⁴

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Lewis Meriam "The Problem of Indian Administration: Report of a Survey made at the request of Honorable Hubert Work, Secretary of the Interior, and submitted to him, February 21, 1928" (Johns Hopkins Press: Baltimore, 1928) 14 Accessed April 26, 2011. URL: http://www.narf.org/nill/merriam/b_meriam_letter.pdf

³³ Ibid. 15

³⁴ Wollner et al. "Indian Reorganizational Act"

Immediately upon appointment Collier began to roll back some of the most damaging aspects of previous Native American policy. Collier first abolished the Board of Indian commissioners, which had enforced the assimilationist policies of the previous administrations. Collier also pushed Roosevelt to issue an order that would require the reduction of missionaries influence and put Indian spiritual traditions on the same plane as the Christian teachings. Collier closed twenty-five of the dreaded residential boarding schools. Most importantly Collier “called for the suspension of the Dawes Act which, he could see, had created a disaster of tragic proportions in the Indian country: two-thirds of all Indians were either landless or owned pieces of land so small that it was impossible to make a living; in 1887, natives owned 138 million acres, but by 1934, they possessed only 52 million.”³⁵

The suspension of the Dawes Act would become permanent with the passing the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 (IRA). Popularly known as the Indian New Deal the act formally ended the policy of allotment and all remaining surplus lands were remitted to the control of Indian tribes. The trust period for Indian lands, 25 years under Dawes, was extended indefinitely, meaning that henceforth the Federal Government would protect Indian lands. The act promoted the idea that tribes should create written constitutions and by-laws, and to incorporate, which would enable them to own and manage property and do other kinds of business. In addition, the Act authorized the tribes to establish their own governments with authority vested in elected councils and tribal chairmen. Also, the act provided for a revolving credit fund which tribes could draw on to capitalize their ventures. It tried to expand educational opportunities by providing

³⁵ Wollner et al. “Indian Reorganization Act”

funds for the improvement of schools in Indian country. The act also called for the preferential hiring of native peoples in the BIA.³⁶

Many viewed this Indian New Deal as a great leap forward in the quest to put Native Americans on the path to equal socio-economic status. However, there was a large amount of dissention among Congress and the Tribes over whether or not to accept the act. Some of the Native people viewed the United States government understandably with a great deal of mistrust and viewed the IRA as another attempt by the white men to force them into the white man's ideal. Some would call the act the "Back to the Blankets" Act because of the belief that it was setting native tribes back.³⁷

Despite disagreement 174 tribes (130,000 people) voted to accept the IRA while 78 tribes (68,000 people) voted against the legislation. It should be noted that this vote in itself was a first in Indian policy as the Tribes were able to decide or decline to adopt the legislation while all previous legislation had carried with it mandatory compliance. In a first for a Director of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, John Collier himself travelled across the country holding 10 regional conferences in 1934 to explain the philosophy, operation and importance of the IRA.³⁸ If a tribe rejected the act by referendum they were left out of the act. Oklahoma and Alaska were also left out of the provisions of the act. Famously, the Navajo, the largest tribe in the country, voted to not accept the IRA.³⁹

While many tribes disagreed with the IRA it was a decisive break from the Indian policies of the past. Firstly, it was a pathway to recapturing the culture that was severely

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Wollner et al. "Indian Reorganization"

³⁸ Calloway "First Peoples" 442

³⁹ Ibid. 443

damaged in the Dawes Act. The IRA also laid out plans for tribal self government, this Act allowed Native Americans to hold some of the cards in terms of their own sovereignty and the resulting legal disputes over the IRA showed that Tribes now had the status to challenge the Federal Government themselves.⁴⁰ These were all major turning points for Indian policy up until this time. This provided a basis for tribes to assert their legal standing as citizens with basic rights. The Act is also momentous in recognizing there is a problem in the way that Indian policy has been conducted in the past. This was the first Act in which the government checked itself and allowed Native Tribes to accept or decline the IRA instead of forcing the policy upon them. While there was disagreement about the act it showed for the first time that there could be disagreement with a Federal Policy that affected Native Americans. Also, by ending the Dawes Act Native Americans could now gain economic independence and equality on their own terms. However, this policy would have a relatively short life.

As the country came out of the depression and into World War Two the attitude and focus of the government shifted away from minority policy and into the war effort and problems abroad. Again, Native Americans served in the war effort. Roughly twenty five thousand Native Americans served in WWII⁴¹, the Navajo “wind talkers” earned distinction for their codes that were never broken in the war, a Native American participated in the flag raising on Iwo Jima. More than 500 Native Americans were killed during the war.⁴² However, Native Americans’ service in the war would not do

⁴⁰ Wollner et al. “Indian Reorganization”

⁴¹ the Iroquois confederacy separately declared war on the Axis powers in 1942 to indicate that they were engaging in this war as a sovereign nation and not part of the United States

⁴² Calloway “First Peoples” 445

them any favors in the long run on their path to citizenship. According to Colin Calloway:

“In the late 1940’s and 1950’s the pendulum of public opinion and government support swung away from the reform impetus of the New Deal to conservatism and conformity...and resentment of those who did not seem to fit in with mainstream society. Many Americans saw Indian participation in the War as evidence of their readiness for final assimilation into American society. The government decided to hasten the process of assimilation by ending or ‘terminating’ its relationship with Indian Tribes.”⁴³

The government now believed that tribes who had made the most “progress” were identified as tribes that were eligible for this new termination policy. In 1953 House Concurrent Resolution 108 proposed ending federal relations with a number of the eligible tribes⁴⁴ with the goal of “as rapidly as possible to make the Indians within the territorial limits of the United States subject to the same laws and entitled to the same privileges and responsibilities as are applicable to other citizens of the United States, to end their status as wards of the United States and to grant them all the rights and prerogatives pertaining to American Citizenship.”⁴⁵ Both houses of Congress unanimously passed the bill two weeks later.

While the bill purports to be a catalyst for bolstering the “rights and prerogatives pertaining to American Citizenship” for the Native Americans the bill actually decreased their gains as citizens. To start, the bill did not grant Native Americans any further rights of citizenship that they did not already have. Proponents of the act claimed that this would be a move to further assimilate Natives into society and release them from stifling

⁴³ Calloway “First Peoples” 447

⁴⁴ Eligible tribes specifically were the Six Nations of New York, the Prairie Potawatomis of Kansas, the Menominees of Wisconsin, the flatheads of Montana, the Klamats of Oregon, the Hoopas of Northern California and various southern California Bands (First peoples, 449)

⁴⁵ Francis Paul Prucha, ed. *Documents of United States Indian Policy* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1975), 233.

reservation life and dependence on the federal government;⁴⁶ however, termination would set tribes back even farther on their quest to becoming equal citizens.

A case study of the disastrous effects of termination on citizenship rights is the case of the Menominees. The Menominee of Wisconsin were a fairly self-sufficient tribe in 1950. A lumber and sawmill operation on the reservation covered most of their community services.⁴⁷ In 1953 the Menominee were seeking distribution of an earlier settlement based on a per capita basis. However, upon hearing this Senator Arthur Watkins of Utah (a large supporter of termination) called for the termination of the Menominees and then informed the tribe that in order to receive their payments termination would be required. The Menominee did not fully understand the consequences of termination and voted to accept the deal believing that they were voting on whether or not to receive their payment. In June 1954 President Eisenhower signed the Menominee Termination Act and saddled the Menominee with establishing their own municipal, educational, health and other services by 1958.^{48 49}

From the moment that termination was enacted there was ample evidence that it was a failure. Menominee County at the time of termination was the poorest and least populous county in Wisconsin. There was not a suitable tax base to support basic services such as waste disposal, police or firefighters. At the time of termination in 1961 the tribe had owned over 10 million dollars in cash assets. By 1964 this sum had been diminished to \$300,000 in an attempt to keep the reservation afloat. The previously prosperous lumber mill could not employ all of the Menominee, and was in need of

⁴⁶ Calloway "First Peoples" 449

⁴⁷ Calloway "First Peoples" 449

⁴⁸ This deadline was later extended to 1961 on petition of the tribe

⁴⁹ Calloway "First Peoples" 450

renovations that the tribe could not afford, and therefore engaged in a downward spiral of prosperity. The only reservation hospital was forced to close. Schools, utilities and a variety of other public services were also forced to close or scale drastically back. Meanwhile, as unemployment grew so did social unrest.⁵⁰ Standards of living were lowered across the board as a result of termination for the Menominee.

This case was not specific to the Menominee; dozens of tribes faced the same set of circumstances as a result of termination. While the act had been intended to give Indians increased citizenship in reality it pushed Indian tribes farther away from the goal of full participation and equality in American society while simultaneously putting tribes in positions of poverty and unable to provide basic care for their tribe. This particular Act can be described as both a cultural misunderstanding and governmental greed. From an optimistic standpoint the failure of the Termination Acts can be described as a misunderstanding about the best way to help the tribes. From a more pessimistic standpoint this Act can be seen as a way for the government to unburden themselves from the costly support of Native Tribes.

The policy of Termination would last for 30 years. It would take both the American Indian Movement (AIM) and change within the Government itself to reverse the policy of termination with the Indian Self Governance and Assistance Act of 1975. Both AIM and specifically President Richard M. Nixon would be the voices that would end Termination. On July 8th 1970 President Nixon would issue a statement that is considered to have changed the tides of Indian policy, Nixon Stated:

⁵⁰ "Menominee Termination and Restoration," Indian Country as supported by the Milwaukee Public Museum. Accessed April 30 2011 URL: <http://www.mpm.edu/wirp/icw-97.html>

“Forced Termination is wrong, in my judgment, for a number of reasons. First, the premises on which it rests are wrong...the second reason for rejecting forced termination is that the practical results have been clearly harmful in the few instances in which termination actually has been tried...the third argument I would make against forced termination concerns the effect it has had upon the overwhelming majority of tribes which still enjoy a special relationship with the Federal government ...The recommendations of this administration represent a historic step forward in Indian policy. We are proposing to break sharply with past approaches to Indian problems.”⁵¹

This statement issued by President Nixon was the catalyst for the Indian Self Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975 (Public Law 93-683) (ISDEAA 1975). The Act as it was passed in 1975 contained one title and had three primary goals. The first goal was to place the federal government’s Indian programs firmly in the hands of the local Indian people being served. The second goal was enhance and empower local tribal governments and their governmental institutions. The third goal was to correspondingly reduce the federal bureaucracy.⁵²

Despite these goals, after ten years in effect, major cracks began to show that indicated that the act was not fulfilling these goals. A series of editorials published by the *Arizona Republic* in October of 1987 and later republished as “Fraud in Indian Country: A Billion Dollar Betrayal” showed the abuses of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and how they were not keeping up their end of the ISDEAA deal. This expose would push congress to create and pass the Indian Self-Determination Amendments of 1988 (Public Law 100-472) which includes the “Tribal Self Governance Demonstration Project” in Title III. These Amendments to the ISDEAA gave tribes more control over management

⁵¹ Richard M. Nixon “Termination Policy” Special Message on Indian Affairs, Washington DC, July 8th 1970.

⁵² “History of the Tribal Self-Governance Initiative” Tribalselfgov.org Accessed April 17 2011 URL: http://www.tribalselfgov.org/red%20book/the%20history%20&%20goals/history_of_the_tribal_self.htm

of BIA resources, provided for a wide use of those resources, and replaced the multiple contract system through the BIA with a single funding agency.⁵³

Title IV of the ISDEAA known as the Tribal Self-Governance Demonstration Act (Public Law 102-184) officially made all of the elements of Title III a permanent option for tribes.

While the ISDEAA is arguably the largest and most decisive change in Indian Policy in recent decades it has largely been ineffective due to greed within the BIA. The BIA has been unwilling to give up control of the tribes, and BIA resources as the ISDEAA states. Tribes have still found themselves faced with road blocks put up by the BIA to stall the transfer of monies and resources. The issue of tribal self-governance is still under debate and is still being amended, the most recent example being the Tribal Self-Governance Act of 2010.

Racism, cultural misunderstandings and greed have all played a significant part in the formulation, passage and enactment of Federal Indian Policy. From John Marshall's decisions to present day these policies have prohibited Native Americans from achieving full citizenship in terms of legal standing, voting rights and equal socio-economic standing. While the first two elements of citizenship have been met, Native Americans are still not in equal socio-economic standing with the average United States citizen. One in four Native Americans live in poverty; one in three don't have health insurance. Reservations are often located in remote areas that make substantial economic activity impossible. In some reservations, such as the Black Foot reservation in Montana, the

⁵³ Ibid

annual unemployment rate is 69 percent.⁵⁴ Native Americans are still not fully participating citizens of the United States.

When studying Native American citizenship from the perspective of Governmental Acts and Supreme Court decisions it is easy to fall into the trap of assigning Native Americans as having a lack of agency. However, this is not the case. There is always resistance to every Act or Decision that is passed, there was never full scale acceptance. To say that Native Americans were passively accepting everything that was thrown their way would be historically inaccurate. On the same token it is just as likely, and just as false, to say that the United States Government is the villain in this story. While many of the decisions and act did not turn out the way they were intended to, not all of them came from a place of ill will.

What is important to remember is that while the Native American citizenship story is unique because it had lasted so long many minorities experienced a similar struggle to become citizens of the United States. Native Americans have been consistently discounted and discriminated against as a result of Federal policies. As the first people to live in what would become the United States they would become its last citizens. This paper has shown why that was the case. Native Americans were consistently denied citizenship on the basis of race, cultural misunderstandings and greed. And these underpinnings of the above mentioned ten Acts and Decisions have inhibited them from becoming full citizens in terms of Legal Citizenship, Voting Rights and equality in terms of socio-economic factors.

⁵⁴ Tom Rodgers, "Native American Poverty," Spotlight on Poverty and Opportunity, Accessed April 30th URL: <http://www.spotlightonpoverty.org/ExclusiveCommentary.aspx?id=0fe5c04e-fdbf-4718-980c-0373ba823da7>

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Settler Situation and the Struggle for Independence in Kenya and the Gold Coast

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Settler Situation and the Struggle for Independence in Kenya and the Gold Coast

While European colonization and exploitation are seen as common experiences shared by almost all Africans, the system imposed unique circumstances and challenges on different people groups. Some were forced to cede their land and property to European powers, and others were made to convert their land into cash crop farms. While a member of one people group may live his or her entire life without seeing a white man, others interacted with Europeans on a daily basis. European powers subdivided the continent and ruled it as they saw fit, with little or no regard to how their governance would impact the citizens of their colonies.¹ Ultimately, colonial policies would play an enormous role in shaping the history of African peoples and their strive for self-governance. In studying independence movements in the Gold Coast (present-day Ghana) and Kenya, it is vital to understand the policies of their respective colonizers, especially those which pertain to governance and African land.

The Gold Coast was a British colony in modern day Ghana. In this region, the British practiced a policy known as “indirect rule”, a system which would become common in their African colonies. Basil Davidson, African historian writes:

With a few exceptions, most notably Ivory Coast, West Africa remained free of European settlers..The reason for this lay partly in the climate, believed to be bad for Europeans, but even more because local Africans as in Nigeria and Ghana, successfully resisted the arrival of settlers.²

While it may appear at first that the British allowed West Africans to exist in relative autonomy, this was certainly not the case. The policy of indirect rule, at times could be just as brutal as

¹ Basil Davidson, *Modern Africa: A Social and Political History* (London: Longham, 1983) p. 11

² Ibid., p. 14.

direct dictatorship. European powers would allow preexisting local leaders to continue to ‘rule’ their people, but only under heavy influence from the colonizer. When the British wanted to impose a new tax or crop policy on the Ghanians, they informed their ruler, who had no choice but to inform his people. This system of governance allowed a small number of British officials settled within the colony to enact any policy which the empire saw fit, while providing enough distance from the colonized people to minimize their culpability. Despite the fact that Ghana was not settled *en masse* by Europeans, the practice of indirect rule allowed a few British settlers to rule an entire people group.³

The British land policy in the Gold Coast was as underhandedly brutal as the policy of indirect rule. As was mentioned earlier, the inhabitants of the colony had successfully rebelled settlers from land which most Europeans saw unfit for white settlement. However it can be argued that from the start of British colonial rule, no African truly owned his land. Historian Sean Stilwell writes, “In West Africa, by taxing rural producers, the colonial state could force Africans to farm ‘cash crops’ which they would then have to sell on the market for cash. These, in turn could be taken from the producers as tax.”⁴ In the Gold Coast this cash crop was cocoa, the raw material for a European delicacy, chocolate. By understanding the impact of taxation on a non-monetary society, one can understand the claim that it was the British who truly owned the land in the Gold Coast. Citizens of the colony had previously operated on a limited monetary or non-monetary system, whereby goods and services were traded not for money, but for other goods and services. Furthermore, colonial laws often stipulated that taxes must be paid in European currency, which could only be acquired by trading with or working for European

³ Adebayo Oyeade, “Colonial Political Systems”, in *Africa: Volume 3 - Colonial Africa, 1885-1939*. ed. Toyin Falola (Durham: Carolina Academic Press, 2002) p. 74-75

⁴ Sean Stilwell, “The Imposition of Colonial Rule”, in *Africa: Volume 3 - Colonial Africa, 1885-1939*. ed. Toyin Falola (Durham: Carolina Academic Press, 2002) p. 22

individuals. For these two reasons, a cash based tax posed nearly impossible for subsistence farmers and laborers. Through this system farmers could only grow what would sell at market, and the British controlled what would sell, in turn controlling what the farmers could grow. This created an impossible dilemma for most farmers in the Gold Coast: they could either shirk the tax and face jail time, or grow the cash crops, for which they were drastically underpaid, and jeopardize their ability to provide for their families. Through the policies of indirect rule and cash-based taxes, the British stripped Ghanians of control over everything from governance of their society, to the seeds they could plant in their land.

The Colonial situation in Kenya differed from that of the Gold Coast, despite a few shared hallmarks of British control. While the British practiced the same governing policy of indirect rule in the colony, their land policy was drastically different. British settlers considered Kenyan land among the most valuable in Africa, and Kenya's climate was not drastically different from that in England. Contrary to that of the Gold Coast, the land in Kenya, particularly the Kenya highlands was taken from Kenyans and redistributed to white settlers. Karuti Kanyinga explains the system, "It (The Crown Lands Ordinance of 1915) bifurcated land into land for Africans or ('native reserves') and 'scheduled land' (white highlands). This took away all land rights for Africans and vested those rights in the crown."⁵ This system of land expropriation was different from the British policy in the Gold Coast, but it sought the same result. By providing white settlers with low-interest loans on huge tracks of land, the British were able to ensure that the best farm land would be populated with farmers who sought to grow cash-crops. These crops, like coffee and tea in the case of the Kenyan highlands, would then be sold in large volumes to large English companies at a relatively low price. In both the case of

⁵ Karuti Kanyinga, "The legacy of the white highlands: Land rights, ethnicity and the post-2007 election violence in Kenya", *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* Vol. 27, No. 3 *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed November 16, 2011)

Kenya and the case of the Gold Coast, the British used their colonies to funnel cheap raw materials into their empire's production system.

British colonial administrators in Kenya used systems similar to those in the Gold Coast in order to ensure that large farm owners had cheap labor to tend their crops. The dualistic nature of the British land policy forced former residents of the fertile Kenyan highlands onto smaller tracts of lower quality land. Many of those forced onto nearly unusable land 'volunteered' to work on the farms they had once owned in the hopes of earning a livable wage and providing for their families. Along with abusive land practices, officials introduced the Hut and Poll taxes in the early part of the 1900's. Similar to those in the Gold Coast, the taxes had to be paid in British Pounds, which could only be acquired through laboring for British land-owners. This system forced a mass of Kenyan men over the age of 16 onto British farms to labor for wages which were barely enough to keep them out of jail.⁶ These systems of taxation and land redistribution carved a clear rift in Kenya between the white 'elite' and the 'subordinate' black population.

Despite very different situations, Kenya and the Gold Coast emerged as two of the first African nations to question the legitimacy of European rule in Africa, and make strides towards self-governance. Members of Accra's educated elite were among the first to join the National Congress of British West Africa in 1920. The NCBWA, despite being denied the right to present their demands in the British Parliament, is widely recognized as setting the stage for the West African Independence movement.⁷ Kwame Nkrumah of the Gold Coast and Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya were both assigned Secretary roles for the 1945 Pan-African Conference in Manchester England; a conference of prodigious importance to the African independence movement.⁸ The

⁶ Vincent B. Khapoya, *The African Experience: An Introduction* (Upper Saddle River NJ: Prentice Hall, 1998) p. 135-138

⁷ Patrick U. Mbajekwe, "Population, Health and Urbanization." in *Africa: Volume 3 - Colonial Africa, 1885-1939*. ed. Toyin Falola (Durham: Carolina Academic Press, 2002) p. 261-262

⁸ Op. Cit., Khapoya, 165.

purpose of this conference was to air the grievances of the people and make requests for basic concessions on the part of colonial powers. The gathering truly embodied the spirit of Africa after World War Two. The war had only further illuminated the disparity between European principle and practice. African soldiers and citizens alike were forced to contribute to a war aimed at stopping aggression and human rights violations on the part of nations like Germany and Japan. Meanwhile, Africans suffered daily with human rights violations on behalf of their colonial powers. Many individuals began to grow discontent with colonial policy and called for political action in their nations. Both Kenyatta and Nkrumah would emerge as individuals synonymous with Africa's struggle for independence in the years following the Second World War.

Kwame Nkrumah was a member of the African educated elite. He had received his education at Lincoln University in Pennsylvania, and returned to West Africa having studied the works on which the Western democratic world was founded. Along with other members of the so-called 'intelligista', he would lead peaceful protest against colonial rule in the Gold Coast. Nkrumah knew that blacks in the Gold Coast had the ability to protest, boycott and make attempts at self governance with no white settler base to provide a backlash. Yuri Smertin writes of a boycott in Accra:

Over 600 demonstrators had marched through the streets carrying signs that read 'We Will Not Buy!' ...In the end the foreigners had been forced to back down. *The Africa Morning Post* wrote, "The Gold Coast African is today awake;...and there is reason to believe he will sleep no more."⁹

In 1946, blacks in the Gold Coast led by Nkrumah's intellectual elite, the United Gold Coast Convention and the Gold Coast youth party, won an important victory in their struggle for self-rule; a new Constitution was written for the Gold coast which allowed Africans to have a majority in the legislative council which advised the governor. However, this new Constitution

⁹ Yuri Smertin., *Kwame Nkrumah* (New York: International Publishers, 1987) p. 35.

wrote in requirements for election which largely favored pro-Western conservatives. Although this power was mostly titular, it was a step towards recognizing African's right to govern. The new Constitution would ultimately mark the beginning of a rift between Nkrumah and the largely conservative UGCC.¹⁰

In 1949, Nkrumah vowed that peaceful protest would continue until total self-governance was achieved. He formed the Convention People's Party and began to ally himself with local youth and labor organizations. The party enacted a policy called 'Positive Action' which stringently emphasized a non-violent approach to the struggle. Positive Action was an overwhelming success. The movement contributed immensely to a general strike of CPP allied unions in 1950. The strike halted trade, closed shops and nearly stopped civil service in the Gold Coast. As demonstrations collided with police, Nkrumah and other members of the CPP were jailed, their imprisonment only increased pressure on the colonial government. Under an even newer constitution, elections were held in February, 1951. The results saw Nkrumah and his CPP allies sweep the newly formed legislative committee. It was ultimately through this same legislative committee, that on March 6th 1957 a free and independent Ghana was born.¹¹ It was the lack of a strong settler presence in the Gold Coast which allowed Nkrumah to use civil disobedience, rather than violence, as a tool of change.

In Kenya, the colony founded on the expulsion of native Africans from the best farm land, two competing ideologies converged to found a nation: the relatively peaceful resistance movement, headed by Jomo Kenyatta and the like, and the mysterious Mau Mau uprising headed by Kikuyu leaders like Dedan Kimathi. Kenyatta, like Nkrumah was a student of W.E.B.DuBois and the Pan Africanist movement. Also like Nkrumah, Kenyatta received his education overseas,

¹⁰ Ibid., 34-38

¹¹ Basil Davidson, *Black Star: A View of the Life and Times of Kwame Nkrumah* (Oxford: James Currey, 2007) 73-101

at the London School of Economics. It was there that Kenyatta authored a series of essays entitled *Facing Mt. Kenya*, which sought to challenge the white version of African history.¹² This would begin Kenyatta's practice of using the written word, and other peaceful means to combat colonial policy in Africa. Whether accurately or inaccurately Kenyatta blamed Kenyans for playing a role in their own oppression. In 1947, after becoming President of the Kenya Africans Union, Kenyatta addressed the crowd and proclaimed:

If we want freedom we must eschew idleness...We must work, and work hard particularly on our shambas (gardens) and on soil conservation...We must eat only clean food which has been properly cooked, whatever food that is...After getting rid of idleness we must get rid of our reputation for robbery and theft.¹³

While some have pointed to this speech as racist, it is more likely that Kenyatta sought to rid his people of anything that could be misconstrued as barbarism. He knew that the path to decolonization would not be a smooth one. He also knew that he might make the process easier by stripping the British of perceived justifications for their racist policies.

Kenyatta's approach of quiet optimism to colonialism combined with a call to a 'more proper' way of life, came as a stark contrast to the Mau Mau movement that dominated the Kikuyu people in the white highlands. Like the Vietcong under Ho Chi Minh, the Mau Mau were a guerilla movement, aimed at wreaking havoc on the British settlers who had taken their land. The Mau Mau 'emergency' while certainly horrific, was greatly overstated by British Authorities. The rebellion lasted the better part of a decade, killed only thirty-two European settlers and fewer than two hundred British military and police. African civilian losses totaled more than 1,800 and nearly 20,000 Mau Mau rebels were killed. Indeed, it was the European backlash to the movement which spilt the most blood. The uprising would ultimately prove relatively fruitless, as it was denounced by the majority of Kenyan society. In fact, many of those

¹² Jeremy Murray-Brown, *Kenyatta* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1973) p. 219-220

¹³ Ibid., 271

who hunted the Mau Mau were not British security forces, but Kikuyu civilians.¹⁴ Unlike in the Gold Coast, which lacked a large white settlement, Africans in Kenya were forced to live with the fact that their ancestral land now belong to a different people. Worse yet, through an oppressive system of land-redistribution and cashed-based taxes, many were forced to work that same land in order to provide for their families. While the horrors of the Mau Mau uprising are difficult grasp let alone justify, it is not so difficult to see how a group of people, confined to this existence by powers beyond their control, might act out in an armed rebellion. However, some believe that the instead of advancing the cause of self-governance, the Mau Mau Rebellion only justified a continued British presence in Kenya.

The Mau Mau uprising led to the persecution of many Kenyan Nationalist figures, including Kenyatta himself, who on many occasions publicly voiced his opposition to the movement with great vehemence. As opposed to the Mau Mau movement, which sought to rid the nation of white settlers, Kenyatta was content to peacefully coexist with Europeans, asking simply to be treated as their equals under the law. Kenyatta and his allies used quiet protest, and political activism to build the Kenya African National Union into a formidable force in national politics. Kenyatta and the KANU used their knowledge of the political system, organizational ability and a new constitution to sweep the 1963 general elections. Whether despite or because of the Mau Mau uprising, Kenya became the 34th independent nation in Africa on December 12th, 1963. Jomo Kenyatta was her Prime Minister elect. The sincerity of Kenyatta's denunciations of the Mau Mau were called into question in the days after independence, when he appeared amicable with leaders of the uprising in many public forums.¹⁵

¹⁴ David Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged: The Dirty War in Kenya and the End of Empire* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2005) p. 2-8

¹⁵ Op Cit., Murray-Brown, 365-369

The story of the Gold Coast and Kenya is not a story of good and evil, it is not a story of sane and insane, and it is not a story of right and wrong. Rather, it is a story of two oppressed people, each living under unique circumstances, and their paths to self-rule. While the two nations differed in some respects, they were also very similar. In both nations there were those who believed that the injustice of colonial rule could not last another day. In both nations there were also those who believed that peaceful measures were the only avenues which would ensure lasting independence. Ultimately each nation would follow its own unique route to independence. Indeed, it can be said that colonial situation in Africa shaped the face of these decolonization movements; and that those who could find a way rise above their conditions would ultimately break the chains of colonial bondage.

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Pointing Fingers

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Bowling Green State University, March 26, 2012

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Dr. Forsyth
HIST 4540
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Pointing Fingers

In regards to the great conflict that later became World War I, there is more than one country upon which blame can be placed for the escalation of violence and poor diplomacy. The three obvious players on the world stage as this conflict erupted were Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Serbia. Each nation shares responsibility but it is the difference in exactly how much responsibility is allocated where that sets each nation apart from one another. Prior diplomatic relations and shifting alliances led to a devastating war with thousands of lives lost. The lasting effects of the war once it was over led to yet another conflict in Europe that got the United States much more heavily and obviously involved, and produced some of the most devastating circumstances the world has ever witnessed. It all started with this war, and this war had to have started with someone.

The nation most responsible for the First World War was Germany. Prior to the conflict, Otto von Bismarck was a key player in the German government. Through manipulation of his superiors he found himself eventually in the position of Prime Minister under King Wilhelm I (Dr. Beth Griech-Poelle, Class Notes 8.25.2010). Once he was in this position of power, Germany later found itself involved in the Three Wars of Unification (Class Notes, 8.25.2010) during which time the wars went by very quickly and successfully, thus giving the soldiers and the general population a false vision of how war normally went. The First and Second Wars were each over in a matter of weeks and the Third War took merely the summer of 1870 to be completed (Class Notes, 8.25.2010). If one were to now flash forward to the perception of war at the beginning of World War I, one would see that German men could not wait to enlist for battle. They were excited and certain that the war would be quick and easy. None other than Otto von

Bismarck and his manipulative ways influenced this attitude, which undoubtedly led to such a great loss of life. Also, through the Dreikaiserbund with Russia and Austria-Hungary of 1872-73, Bismarck emphasized the prevalence of family ties between rulers of different nations. It was through this that “Bismarck attained one of his ambitions: to make republican France appear to be the entity that threatened the stability of existing regimes in Europe” (Martel, p.18). This is yet another way that Bismarck took what could have started out as truth and spun it, in this case to incriminate another nation. Thankfully, he eventually gets fired; or as he would probably phrase it he “resigns”.

As pointed out by Gordon Martel, ‘the war guilt question’ or *Kriegsschuldfrage* became a popular school of thought (Martel, p.8). This idea was “following the treaty of Versailles, in which it was formally asserted that Germany and her allies were responsible for the war” (Martel, p.8) and that Germany, along with Austria-Hungary had pre-meditated the war. Prior to the beginning of the war, for example, Germany had begun to expand its navy. Prince Bernhard von Bulow once speculated that the challenge coming at Germany in such a situation was not so much if Germany could accomplish its goal, but if they were to be “‘the hammer’ or ‘the anvil’ of world politics” (Martel, p.12). The alliance between Austria-Hungary and Germany is one which Martel refers to as “one of the most surprising events in modern diplomatic history” (Martel, p.23) and was made in case of either nation being attacked by Russia (Martel, p.13). This is an accurate statement because Germany and Austria-Hungary had previously been in several struggles for power and territory in the late 19th century and into the 20th (Dr. Beth Griech-Polelle, Class Notes 9.1.2010). Patricia A. Weitsman states that the Dual Alliance sprung from “common interests, common enemies, and reciprocal antipathies” (Weitzman, p.65). Germany also had a fear that France, England, and Russia had ties with one another and the

Austria-Hungarian Empire was the only nation Germany felt it could trust enough with which to make ties (Dr. Beth Griech-Polelle, Class Notes 9.1.2010).

Germany also lacked strong leadership. Kaiser Wilhelm II was meek and in this respect very much unlike Bismarck (Class Notes 9.1.2010). He is notable for the “Blank Cheque” of July 5, 1914 in which he promised help to Austria “under any conditions” after having consulted with the chancellor Bethmann Hollweg (Martel, p.112). It was after Franz Josef had written to Wilhelm II that he “proposed to ‘eliminate Serbia as a power factor in the Balkans’” (Martel, p.74). This means that if Austria were to declare war on Serbia, for example, following the assassination of Franz Ferdinand, Germany would assist them in their efforts. Following the Serbians refusing to agree to one of Austria’s conditions, which would have avoided war, war in fact began. After the assassination on June 28, 1914, “a situation seemed to have presented itself that was tailor-made to suit German requirements: Austria-Hungary could ‘settle’ the Serbs” (Martel, p.74).

When it comes to Austria-Hungary’s being second most responsible for the eruption of war, a key moment sticks out in history. As Patricia A. Weitsman points out in *Dangerous Alliances*:

“The Austro-Hungarian chief of General Staff, Franz Conrad von Hotzendorf, had pushed for war for some time...In 1913, he expanded his military planning...In the months leading up to the July crisis, his attention was focuses on war plans against Montenegro, Romania, Russia, and Serbia. With the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, Conrad’s call to arms fell on more receptive ears” (Weitsman, p.137).

This observation would mean that Austria-Hungary was planning on taking military action on other nations before the assassination of Franz Ferdinand had even taken place. The assassination was merely an opening to do what von Hotzendorf had wanted to for a year. In

fact, Franz Ferdinand had publicly objected to Hotzendorf's urge to take action specifically against Serbia prior to his murder:

“If we take the field against Serbia, Russia will stand behind her, and we will have war with Russia. Should the Austrian emperor and the Russian tsar topple one another from the throne and clear the way for revolution?...War with Russia means the end of us” (Brose, p.34).

The ultimatum given to Serbia by Austria after the assassinations was written knowing that Serbia would not want to agree to every condition. There was an understanding that if Serbia did not agree to every point it would be considered an act of war (Dr. Douglas Forsyth, Class Notes 9.7.2010). Therefore, Austria essentially forced Serbia into a corner. Austria wanted a war and by manipulating Serbia in such a way, they ended up getting exactly what they wanted. Franz Josef made so clear his intentions to wipe Serbia out prior to Germany even giving him its full support. This is a clear indication that he had an agenda for conflict already in mind and he was just looking for a safety net from Germany, and an excuse to instigate conflict.

Austria-Hungarian politicians were also divided on whether or not they ought to engage in violence with Serbia; “the foreign minister, Berchtold, proposed to launch a surprise attack while the Hungarian Prime Minister, Count Tisza, insisted that some diplomatic preparation was necessary if Austria-Hungary were not to be branded the aggressor” (Martel, p.74). This statement by Martel makes clear that Count Tisza wanted to attack Serbia, but wanted to make sure that on the surface Austria-Hungary's action appeared to be just. He was worried about making sure Austria-Hungary looked like the victim, although they were certainly not entirely innocent.

Eric Dorn Brose points out in his book *A History of the Great War* that “Austria-Hungary's problem with disgruntled Serbians, Croatians, Rumanians, and other ethnic minorities menaced relations...and eventually triggered war” (Brose, p.41). This aspect is a result of the

ethnic nationalism that was prevalent in Europe, particularly in the Balkans, at this particular time (Brose, p.41). The increasing separation between ethnic groups such as the Pan-Serbs and Pan-Slavs merely added gasoline to the growing fire in the region, and thus made war seem like an eventual certainty rather than a possibility.

Lastly, Serbia shares in some of the blame for the war that ensued at this time. The key reason for this is that the Serbian government supported the secret organization that was responsible for the assassination of Franz and Sophie Ferdinand in Sarajevo. The Black Hand was created to unite all Serbs and its members included people who were lawyers, junior army officers, and journalists (Spartacus Educational). It was a secret society which turned to terrorist actions and which was supported by the Serbian military. This group also assisted another subgroup called Young Bosnia in obtaining weapons and forms of identification, and this was the group of which Gavrilo Princip, assassin of the Ferdinands was a part (Dr. Beth Griech-Poelle, Class Notes 9.1.2010). Had the government not passively supported such an organization, the assassination of Franz and Sophie Ferdinand might not have taken place and the entire course of history could have been completely altered.

The conflict of World War I was devastating and inevitable. There had been so many seemingly insignificant instances prior that snowballed into something that would eventually explode. Each country became too tangled up in the things that they wanted and the alliances that were made. Leadership was not up to par, and thus organizations such as The Black Hand took terrorist actions to fight the increasingly tense circumstances between ethnic groups. Although there were other nations involved in the treacherous war that ensued, Serbia, Germany, and Austria-Hungary were the most irrational and least responsible of all involved. Hunger for power unfortunately trumped common sense and good diplomacy and it is for that reason that so many

lives were lost. This war took a great emotional toll on the world and the wounds left behind have never fully healed. The world has never been the same.

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Kronstadt Naval Rebellion of 1921: A Moderate Revolution

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Kronstadt Naval Rebellion of 1921: A Moderate Revolution

The Kronstadt rebellion exposed the changes in the Russian Revolution. The sailors of Kronstadt exemplify both extremes of the revolution. Initially, they supported the Communist agenda and enforced the will of the Bolshevik party. However, they were never fully under the control of the Bolsheviks or the communists. When they eventually rebelled, their uprising was not a revolution of political extremes, but a moderate revolution. The rebels were tired of War Communism and the extremes of the Bolshevik party from roadblocks preventing food from getting into the cities to the onerous food requisitions in the countryside. The Kronstadt Rebellion was a moderate attempt at a revolution meant with only the suggestion of national reform, but more focused on independence.

Revolutionary activity in and around Kronstadt started with the 1905 rebellion. Between the revolutionary atmosphere and the anger over the Russo-Japanese war, the sailors only needed an excuse to revolt. At the height of the Revolution of 1905, encouraged by the mutiny aboard the *Potemkin*, the sailors rose in open revolt. After two days of rioting and general disorder, nearly 3000 mutineers were arrested. Many went to jail or into exile, but none were executed. Then, in 1906, the sailors rose once more. Again, this was less of an organized rebellion than a riot caused by rising discontent. This time, slightly more extreme sentences were meted out, including 36 executions. For a brief period after 1906, Kotlin Island was silent. Then in 1910, they rose again, and were summarily defeated. After that rebellion, they were relatively silent until 1917.

Regardless of their momentary silence, the sting of losing to the Japanese fleet stayed with the Baltic fleet. They fought hard for the in World War I and the Revolution at least in part to reclaim their honor and reputation. But the Revolution of 1917 brought Kronstadt more into the public eye than anything else. They started to act during this time period by simply talking about politics. These discussions helped the men of the Baltic Fleet form the political opinions that led to Kronstadters leading the charge for the Communist Party.¹ During the Bolshevik Revolution, the sailors not only defeated every force they confronted, they went on parade to encourage support for the Communists and almost blindly followed the orders of Trotsky. When other branches of the armed forces followed General Kornilov into revolt against the revolution, the Kronstadters stood with the Bolsheviks and defended the Winter Palace. Trotsky even called the sailors the “pride and glory of the revolution,” clearly showing their importance and their revolutionary fervor.²

After the end of the ensuing Civil War, the sailors started to get restless. Initially, they accepted the strong restrictions of War Communism, as they understood the need to keep certain functions running over others. However, the end of the Civil War cued the end of their tolerance. When the last general was vanquished, they wanted War Communism to follow the same path. However, Lenin and the Bolsheviks were not able to remove the system very efficiently. Instead, they allowed the requisitions to continue,

¹ D.A.Longley, “Officers and Men. A Study of the Development of Political Attituded among the Sailors of the Baltic Fleet in 1917,” (*Soviet Studies*, vol. 25, no. 1, 1973) pp.28-50.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/150941>.

² Leon Trosky, vol. 1 of *History of the Russian Revolution* (London: Sphere Books Limited, 1965) p. 401.
 Paul Avrich, *Kronstadt 1921* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970) pp. 55-58.

and those requisitions caused the peasants and industrial workers to grow angrier and angrier. Eventually, industrial workers in Petrograd struck, but their strike was swiftly broken up. The sailors across the bay, however, did not know the strike had ended so quickly, and rose to support their brothers in opposition to the stringent policies of War Communism. Aboard their ships in the Gulf of Finland, they penned a resolution with fifteen articles, mostly calling for the end of War Communism and the re-establishment of local soviet autonomy. When the Bolsheviks responded to these demands with scorn, the sailors sealed up the island, and prepared for war.³

The rebellion itself followed a predictable path. The sailors, who hated taking orders did not listen to the “military experts” that formerly held tsarist officer ranks, instead preferring to trust in the strength of their defenses. When the Communists finally attacked, they failed the first attempt because of adverse weather conditions, and inept planning that gave the Kronstadters time and lines of fire to repel the assault. The second attack succeeded because the Communists stopped worrying about casualties and simply sent waves of men at the defenses, crossing the well defended gulf on a metaphorical bridge of bodies. If the waters had thawed, or if the Kronstadters had possessed the fuel and ammunition to continue firing ceaselessly, the Communists could not have taken the forts. Only the ice and a war of attrition won the conflict for them. The men of Kronstadt fought to the end, and defended their program of reform with their lives.⁴

³Ibid., pp. 29-31, 37-39.

“The *Petropavlovsk* resolution which became the manifesto of the Kronstadt Revolt of March 1921,” in *Russia: Revolution and Counter-Revolution 1917-1924*, ed. John Daborn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1991), 122-123.

⁴ Paul Avrich, *Kronstadt 1921* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970) pp. 206-211.

The rest of Russia felt the repercussions of Kronstadt. While the Bolsheviks had labeled the sailors as White stooges, the Kronstadt demands struck a chord they did not want to hear. The sailors rebelled largely because of the War Communism and its forced requisitions. While Lenin planned to dismantle the structure, Kronstadt forced him to examine how much the country suffered under War Communism. Only days later at the Tenth Party Congress, Lenin proposed the New Economic Policy, which removed many of the issues the Kronstadters had opposed. The high level officials in the Party also regretted the extreme forced they needed to put down the rebellion. Perhaps this sorrow, and the rising awareness of social unrest, helped the NEP gain the necessary support at the Tenth Party Congress.⁵

Lenin may have used the Kronstadt rebellion to his advantage, but use was not his only thought. He had established a Bolshevik controlled soviet in Kronstadt back in 1917. But now, the regional governmental structure that he had built was under attack. Lenin had to react as the leader of an established state. With the very logical fear of Kronstadt becoming a landing point for groups such as the exiled general Baron P.N. Wrangel's armies, Lenin had to defend his fledgling state. Interestingly, he had support from the Turkish Republic in suppressing the revolt. The Turks saw an opportunity to gain influence with the fledgling Soviet power, and they hoped to benefit from trade with their northern neighbor. Therefore, General Cebesoy convinced the Tatar divisions in

⁵ Ibid., 220-222.

E.H. Carr, *The Bolshevik Revolution: 1917-1923* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1966) p.205.

Russia to help suppress the revolt.⁶ In addition the military efforts with Turkish support, Lenin undercut the revolution through another method. He undercut their efforts to gain support by saying that they no longer represented the “pride and glory of the revolution” because the men who were sailors in 1921 were a different group than the staunch allies of the Bolsheviks. He told the citizens of Petrograd that the sailors of 1921 were mostly immigrant Ukrainians forced into service, and were already subversive. They happened to have the same base as men who had once guarded the Revolution, but now they were a mongrel group who deserved their fates. The second way Lenin opposed Kronstadt was through military intervention. He sent the army to destroy this rebellion, and then after it was gone, tried to erase any mention of it. He suppressed the memory of the rebellion both through military force and by destroying records when he could.⁷

Kronstadt has generally been ignored by the historical community. Unlike other topics, there are only two major books in English, and a small number of major articles. The most important work is the book *Kronstadt 1921* by Paul Avrich. However, the story of Kronstadt has been told and retold, often just as a section in a larger work. Each work has contributed to the historiography of the rebellion, and each work deserves its consideration.

⁶Ivan Spector, “General Ali Fuat Cebesoy and the Kronstadt Revolt (1921): A Footnote to History,” (*International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 3, no. 4 1972) pp. 491-493.

⁷ Avrich, *Kronstadt 1921* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970) 218-220.
David Longley, “Some Historiographical Problems of the Bolshevik Party History (The Kronstadt Bolsheviks in March 1917),” (*Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, vol. 22, no. 4 1974) pp. 494-514.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/41044928>.

The first major work is Robert Daniels's "Study in the Dynamics of Revolution." This early work from 1951 exemplifies the *Annales* School. Daniels spent much of his essay trying to fit the events at Kronstadt into the larger context, and to emphasize the social uprising and peasant influence, very much acting in accord with the "history from below" aspects of the *Annales* School. Daniels essentially started the historical conversation. While the topic was known before him, he tried to make historians think about internal rebellions in the Soviet Union, and found Kronstadt an especially useful event. Daniels's article used a strong narrative style to build the information base of historians, and then reflects on how the rebellion at Kronstadt went on to shape the policies and ideology of the Soviet Union. His major contribution is the opening speech in an ongoing series.⁸

Only three years after Daniels wrote his article, Deutscher wrote a biography of Trotsky entitled *Prophet Armed: Trotsky 1879-1921*. While Kronstadt did not feature prominently, his biography began to portray a different side to both the rebellion and to the Soviet view thereof. His first major revision was about Trotsky. He depicted Trotsky as less of a bloodthirsty man than did Daniels. Additionally, he made the claim that the Politburo was not happy with the crushing of Kronstadt, instead lamenting the loss of those who once were patriots. Additionally, Deutscher discussed almost nothing except the military aspects of the rebellion. He explained the drive behind the Communist suppression by declaring the Kotlin Island as a potentially impregnable fortress, if only

⁸ Robert Daniels, "The Kronstadt Revolt of 1921: A Study in the Dynamics of Revolution," *American Slavic and East European Review*, vol. 10, no. 4 (1951), pp. 241-254. <http://0-www.jstor.org.maurice.bgsu.edu/stable/2432031>.

the ice would thaw. Deutscher acted as both a historical apologist for Trotsky, and as a historical revisionist. He claimed, unlike Daniels, that the Kronstadters were a group of mostly new recruits who, although of much the same mindset, and not the seasoned veterans who had won the revolution on the orders of Trotsky. Deutscher took Daniels's monologue and introduced another perspective, that of the opposition group. Now, the Communists had a voice in the debate, even if it was not yet very loud. Deutscher is responsible for opening the conversation to an entire train of thought and to a new line of questions and reasoning.⁹

Avrich wrote arguably the seminal work on Kronstadt an almost twenty years later, in 1971, with his book *Kronstadt 1921*. Avrich's work went into an unprecedented depth. First, he examined the peasant revolts that preceded the Kronstadt revolt, and also the industrial workers strikes. Avrich also acted in the *Annales* School's mentality, but he chose to delve not only into the social movements in Russia, but into the mindset of the Russian navy. Avrich's biggest contribution is his discussion of the Navy's behavior from the Russo-Japanese war, through World War One, and into the rebellion. He discussed their hatred of officers, and by extension of the aristocracy. Avrich made the point that they never acted under the influence of any Tsarist elements, or of any influence save their own. While groups attempted to subvert their rebellion, they stayed true to their desire simply to have the promises of the Bolshevik revolution granted. Avrich wrote to defend the actions of these men and of the whole population of Kotlin

⁹ Isaac Deutscher, *The Prophet Armed: Trotsky: 1879-1921*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1954).

Island. His inclusion of the industrial population, coupled with his study of the industrial uprisings in Petersburg set his work apart from the rest. He expanded the discussion to include entirely new groups.¹⁰

Voline's work was published soon after Avrich. His 1974 compendium, *The Unknown Revolution*, portrayed a radically different picture. First, Voline wrote his history in a strong narrative style, almost to the point that it sounded like a thriller. But Voline is important because of how he depicts the characters in his work. He almost demonized the Communists, very much in opposition to Deutscher's work. Indeed, Voline went in a far different direction than his predecessors. He attempted to explain how the nefarious Bolshevik party sneakily saw the possible revolution fomenting in Kronstadt, so they weakened the island by lowering the provisions they received, and when the Kronstadters finally rose in revolt, they crushed the sailors heartlessly, as fit with their almost demonic mindset. Voline very definitely intended his reader to hate the Communist party. He even neglected to mention a fact noted in almost every prior work. He said nothing about how many members of the Communist party opposed the crackdown against Kronstadt and how upset the nation was to see the fall of these men once hailed as the "pride and glory" of the revolution. Voline almost acted like a Hegelian historian, but rather than a successful synthesis, he depicted the ruthless destruction of an antithesis. Voline presents an extremely one sided narrative.¹¹

¹⁰ Paul Avrich, *Kronstadt 1921* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970).

¹¹ Voline, *The Unknown Revolution*, (New York: Free Life Editions, Inc., 1974).

Martin Durham's "British Revolutionaries and the Suppression of the Left in Lenin's Russia, 1918-1924," portrays the revolution from a novel perspective. Durham examined the rebellion from the British perspective. Rather than worrying about actions of each group inside of Russia, he looked at how the rebellion played on the world stage. His analysis reveals a far greater amount about the time than it does about the rebellion. The most important contribution by Durham is the thought of communication. He explained how the revolting sailors expected support from the industrial workers of nearby Petersburg, but never received it because, unbeknownst to the men on Kronstadt, the worker's revolt had been ended weeks earlier. Then, the world knew almost nothing about the events actually transpiring inside of the Russian borders. He specifically discussed how little the world learned from the rebellion and response. The knowledge of these events was neither well spread, nor significantly acted upon. The rebellion featured in papers like the New York Times, but only with small columns. "Only the most astute revolutionaries understood what the Kronstadt rebellion signified."¹²

Bruce Lincoln would not have agreed with Durham. Lincoln's book *Red Victory* declared that at least inside the Soviet Union, the importance of Kronstadt was clear. The sailors had a long history of discontent, and they were the elite of Lenin's armies, acting almost a praetorian guard to his government. Lincoln attempts to create a von Rankean examination of Kronstadt. He does not add drama, he never tries to fill in gaps in his

¹²Martin Durham, "British Revolutionaries and the Suppression of the Left in Lenin's Russia, 1918-1924," *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 20, no. 2 (1985), pp. 203-219. <http://0-www.jstor.org/maurice.bgsu.edu/stable/260531>.

information, he just tries to tell his reader how the revolt of 1921 came about and bases it on the facts he could compile. Lincoln does not contradict any of the previous authors very strongly, because he is trying not to add any interpretation to his work, instead, he only wants to build the knowledge base for other historians.¹³

Three years after Lincoln wrote his book, J. Neumann added an aspect to the conversation that many had considered, but none had explicitly examined. Neumann looked at the weather of the winter immediately preceding the revolt. He only provided information, and then said what he thought the information looked like. He said it was actually a rather mild winter for the region, as compared to the harsh, treacherous conditions most authors assumed. However accurate Neumann's data may be, he ignored one vital piece of the equation. While it may have been a relatively mild winter, it was still extremely cold on a scale with the rest of the world, and the island of Kotlin was supplied with almost no fuel or clothing to cope with any winter, let alone one on an island in the middle of the Gulf of Finland.¹⁴

Since Bruce Lincoln's book, the conversation had almost ceased, with a few exceptions. Tamara Eidelman is one of the most recent authors to examine the rebellion, with an article published in the *Russian Calendar* in 2006. Eidelman worries less about interpretation than about sharing facts. This author is very much in the mindset of Leopold von Ranke, but with the added perspective of the present. Unlike every author before, looks not only at the Kronstadt of 1921, but she asked how the men and women

¹³ Bruce Lincoln, *Red Victory: A History of the Russian Civil War*, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989).

¹⁴ J. Neumann, "A Note on the Winter of the Kronstadt Sailors' Uprising in 1921," *Soviet Studies*, vol. 44, no. 1 (1992), pp. 153-154, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/152253>.

living there today are affected by the events of that winter. Eidelman performs a task most historians avoid because of its difficulty and intimidation. She examined how and why the history of this short rebellion matters to the world and to the locals today.¹⁵

Most of the historiography of Kronstadt is trying to build the knowledge. These authors used many of the same primary sources, and mostly built on each other, rather than attacking another's ideas. Unlike many historiographies, Kronstadt's focuses more on teaching about the events of the rebellion than on arguing what the correct way is to view it.

The current literature fails to embrace the nature of the revolution. It was not a radical movement. The men of Kronstadt, mostly from peasant upbringing, behaved in a very predictable manner. They had always been militant. The Kronstadters had been used through Russian history to attack anything or anyone. So, they had been conditioned to be militant. Add to that their growing discontent about the state of the population, the rampant hunger, the lack of fuel, the extremely limited winter apparel, and a revolution could not have been more likely. Even the mild nature of that winter was not enough to quell discontent given the lack of fuel and warm clothing.¹⁶ The shortages of clothing were so severe that some of the rebelling sailors had not even been issued their boots for 1919.¹⁷ But this was not just angry sailors fighting everyone. Instead, the sailors recognized the source of the problem and addressed it. The sailors asked the Communists

¹⁵ Tamara Eidelman, "Rebellion in a Naval Fortress," *Russian Calendar* March/April (2006).

¹⁶ J. Neumann, "A Note on the Winter of the Kronstadt Sailors' Uprising in 1921," *Soviet Studies*, vol. 44, no. 1 (1992), pp. 153-154, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/152253>.

¹⁷ Evan Mawdsley, "The Baltic Fleet and the Kronstadt Mutiny," *Soviet Studies*, vol 24, no 4 (1973) p. 508.

for fifteen conditions. At Kronstadt, the Navy wanted the democracy Lenin had always promised. They wanted freedom of speech. The Kronstadters wanted the right to assemble. They wanted non-party conferences instead of Communist rule of the Petrograd province. The sailors wanted trials for people in jail... And they demanded that people be allowed to sell the things they made. The Kronstadters were not asking for the world. In any other contemporary country, such requests would have been laughable simply because they were already granted. Only the Communists oppressed people to such a degree, yet they claimed to be the party of the people. While the Kronstadters took a hard line, they were fighting for basic rights. They continued the Russian pattern of rebellions begging for rights. From the abolition of serfdom to the establishment of Communism, it appeared that the only way to obtain political change in Russia was through revolution. Therefore, they revolted.¹⁸

Each article of the *Petropavlovsk* Manifesto asked for a change. But none of the changes were radical. Most asked for the fulfillment of promises Lenin had made in the past, or begged him to undo policies that were harming the population. Each article bears a certain importance, and each one deserved to be addressed.

¹⁸ “The *Petropavlovsk* resolution which became the manifesto of the Kronstadt Revolt of March 1921,” in *Russia: Revolution and Counter-Revolution 1917-1924*, ed. John Daborn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1991), 122-123.

The first article called for “equal electoral rights for all, peasants and workers.” They wanted every citizen to vote the same, without favoritism due to party or status. The Kronstadters were calling for nothing more than basic democratic reform.¹⁹

The second article demanded “that in view of the fact that the present Soviets do not express the will of the workers and peasants, new elections by secret ballot be held immediately, with free preliminary propaganda for all workers and peasants before the election.”²⁰ The first piece of this article is a statement. They thought the Soviets, those local councils that Lenin called for “all power to...”²¹ were inaccurate representations of their electorates. The Bolsheviks had successfully eliminated their political rivals from these councils early in the revolution.²² The revolutionaries of Kronstadt could have looked at the Kronstadt Soviet, noticed the discrepancy between the number of Communists in the Soviet as compared to the proportion of Communists in the city, and easily exposed how un-democratically elected the Soviets were. With this knowledge, the sailors called for a government that listened to the will of the people and was subordinate to the people, rather than one that, in their eyes, exploited everyone. They wanted what they saw a fair government. They thought the secret ballots would allow the people to express their true will.

The third article demanded “freedom in law to seek food through free cooperative in order that the state does not have the possibility to exploit the hunger of the

¹⁹“The Demands of the Kronstadters,” in *The Russian Revolution: 1907-1921*, ed. Ronald Kowalski (London: Routledge, 1997), 230.

²⁰ “The *Petropavlovsk* resolution which became the manifesto of the Kronstadt Revolt of March 1921,” 122

²¹ Hélène Carrière D’Encausse, *Lenin: Revolution and Power* (London: Longman Books, 1982) p. 61.

²² Carr, 227.

workers.”²³ This demand responded to multiple stimuli. First, the Bolsheviks had earlier used food, or the lack thereof, as a way to break up strikes in Petrograd.²⁴ The sailors were asking only that the people be allowed to control their food, rather than rely upon a political group who had used the food supply as a control in the past. Though this did not occur before the Resolution, one superb example of food as a control occurred during the second assault of Kronstadt. The recruits that Trotsky used to attack the island were loyal Bolshevik cadets, but they were also given extra rations on the day of the attack to encourage them to assault what seemed to be an impregnable position. Food was used as a motivator for an assault force. What the Kronstadters wanted was a population who did not need to listen to their stomachs for advice about what to do and who to respect as the government.²⁵

The fourth article demanded “freedom of the press, to expose the crimes of officials and the abuses of the speculators.”²⁶ Given the strength of Bolshevik propaganda, this demand made perfect sense. If they had not demanded free presses, the Kronstadters knew that the Bolsheviks would have simply created propaganda about anyone outside the party running to be in the local soviets. The sailors had to try and set a fair stage for elections.

²³ “Demands of the Kronstadters” 230.

²⁴ Avrich, 41.

²⁵ Ibid, 198

²⁶ “Demands of the Kronstadters” 230.

The fifth article called for “freedom of expression and agitation so that every honest worker without fear can speak the truth.”²⁷ They wanted the freedom of speech that was so basic in every other developed country. The Kronstadters thought that with freedom of speech, the people could have the government they fought for in 1917. Oppression by the Bolsheviks had not been the reason the sailors supported the revolution. They wanted a country where the people were free. This demand was another piece of the freedom.

The sixth article called for “freedom of assembly.”²⁸ While this article makes sense for any democratic reform, the Kronstadters had a special connection. The Kronstadt rebellion functioned largely on a direct democracy that the Bolsheviks discouraged. The sailors would meet in Anchor Square and, by direct vote, determine every issue that needed to be resolved, from the creation of the Revolutionary Committee to the acceptance of the *Petropavlovsk* Resolution.²⁹ The sailors needed freedom to assemble because large assemblies were the manner they thought the people should inform the government of dissatisfaction and attempt to reform the system during such meetings.

The seventh article called for the “abolition of the death penalty, this vile institution of tyrants.”³⁰ To the sailors, the idea of the death penalty was far more extreme than calling for its repeal. While many European powers still permitted the death penalty

²⁷ Ibid. 230.

²⁸ Ibid. 230.

²⁹ Avrich, 75-76.

³⁰ “Demands of the Kronstadters” 230

during 1921, the sailors were only calling for what they saw as a basic human right, regardless of what other powers chose to do.

The eighth article called for “closure of all commissions of the secret police, and the retention of only a criminal police and judges.”³¹ They essentially wanted the legal ability to oppose the government without fear of arrest. The secret police had near unlimited power, and fear of these officers kept many in line. However, the sailors viewed it as a betrayal of the revolution. To them, the secret police fit more with the mindset of the overthrown Whites who had to protect themselves from the people, not with a government that had risen from the masses and devoted itself to the protection and prosperity of the people. Such a government would embrace opposition, because it meant the people needed more.

The ninth article demanded “abolition of all privileges of the Communists.”³² This demand was completely egalitarian. The Communists were favored to an unreasonable degree, and the sailors only wanted everyone to be treated equally. The revolution was not supposed to bring a new bourgeois party to power; it was supposed to make all men equal. Calling for the abolition of favoritism towards the Communists was simply a return to the revolution’s promises.

The tenth article called for “the freedom to move from one place of work to another.”³³ And this might have been one of the least radical demands of all. Only slaves

³¹ Ibid., 230.

³² Ibid., 230

³³ Ibid, 230

and serfs had to stay at one place of work. The sailors were demanding that people, whether peasant or industrial worker, have the freedom to change jobs, or even just move to a different workplace. To call this demand radical would be absurd. It was only asking for a basic right.

The eleventh article called for the “demobilization of the army, which is needed in the countryside.”³⁴ There were two elements to this demand. First, the demobilization. The presence of the army was no longer justifiable to the Kronstadters. The anarchists and White-ist generals had lost the war. In the eyes of the sailors, now the army did not have an enemy to fight and should go home. But the second piece of the demand was far more important. “Which is needed in the countryside.” While that statement does not sound vital initially, it made perfect sense to the sailors. Many of them had been peasants. Therefore, they knew how important the healthy young men, who were currently serving in the army, were to the farm. These young men were needed to keep the agriculture of the country running and to keep the countryside vital. With the best of the peasants serving in the army, there was no way for their families to keep their agricultural production as high as necessary.

The twelfth demand called for the “dissolution of the labour army – of this new form of enserfment of the worker and peasant...”³⁵ This demand blatantly dismissed the actions of the Bolshevik party as a new Tsar-esque regime. Calling the labor armies new enserfment implied that the members were forced in, could not leave, and had to work for

³⁴ Ibid, 230

³⁵ “Demands of the Kronstadters” 230.

almost nothing. The Kronstadters were calling for the dissolution of something directly against the spirit of the revolution.

The thirteenth article called for “freedom of travel for all citizens on the railways and rivers.”³⁶ This article was a direct response to the roadblocks imposed by the Bolsheviks. They were initially used to make certain there was no food smuggling, but the roadblocks became, at least to the sailors, just another tool of War Communism holding out after the last anarchists and Whites had been defeated. The sailors were calling for Lenin to dismantle one of the most widely hated incarnations of War Communism.

The fourteenth article “the right for workers to engage in direct commodity exchange with the peasants and the removal of anti-profitier detachments – these new highway robbers.”³⁷ While the Communists might have seen this as radical, especially the label of “highway robbers,” the people of Kronstadt saw it as another basic right they had lost to the Party. The need for an article demanding that workers and peasants not be harassed for the product of their own labor was absurd. The sailors needed to defend what they viewed as the basic right of people to own the things that they created, and to use those things how they wanted. While this demand tied slightly to capitalism, it could not have been too radical as something like it appeared in the New Economic Policy released only a short time after the rebellion.

³⁶ Ibid., 230

³⁷ *ibid.*, 231

The fifteenth article demanded “freedom for worker cooperatives to buy goods from abroad, in order to escape the mediation of government speculators who make millions from the sweat of workers.”³⁸ They wanted the workers to have the ability to function independently of government prices. This article was calling for nothing more extreme than the ability to buy goods at the best prices possible, even if those prices were outside of Russia. In the eyes of the Communists, this was radical. Part of the Bolshevik plan was to build up the nation to the point where everything would be produced internally, with no need to rely on external factors or powers to maintain the Russian economy.

The sixteenth article demanded “... payment of wages in gold, not in paper rubbish.”³⁹ Again, the Bolsheviks may have seen this article as radical. It showed the extreme distrust of the Kronstadt sailors in the Bolshevik economy. Kronstadt was calling for a currency system that did not rely upon the Russian economy under Lenin, but could be exchanged easily with the rest of the world. In a capitalist system, this demand may have been impractical, but at the time would have been reasonable, but under communism, this demand cut to the quick and exposed a strong lack of certainty and trust for Lenin’s government.

The seventeenth article called for the “destruction of political departments – those surveillance organizations of the tyrants.”⁴⁰ This article again called for political freedom. The sailors would have understood the need to investigate people during the

³⁸ Ibid, 231

³⁹ Ibid. 231

⁴⁰ Ibid., 231

Civil War, but now, they would want freedom. The types of conversation that political departments investigated had aided the rise of the revolution. Indeed, the sailors had often discussed politics and these discussions had led to more than one uprising under the tsar. Now, they wanted the ability to freely discuss politics once more, even if the discussions began to criticize the Communists.

The eighteenth and last article called for “the immediate re-election by secret ballot of all soviets and the government.”⁴¹ Perhaps calling for an immediate re-election was impractical and radical, but the reasoning that led to this demand was not at all radical. The sailors saw that the current government and soviets did not accurately reflect the desires of the population, so they called for a new election that would be secret, and therefore more likely fair.

Other than their demands, the most important defense for the rebellion as moderate was their treatment of their prisoners. During the revolution, they took many communists prisoner, but the prisoners were always treated humanely, and never tortured. They received the best treatment the sailors could muster. Even when Trotsky was storming the island, the sailors did not attack their prisoners. The sailors may have taken the boots and coats from their prisoners, but that was only because they did not have enough for their troops on patrol.⁴²

Kronstadt was only radical in one way. They acted with military force. Their demands, their actions on their island, and their attempts to spread the word of their

⁴¹ Ibid., 231

⁴² Avrich 187-188.

rebellion were all done reasonably and without aggression. Only their self-defense could be construed as aggressive, and even that only happened when they were attacked. The sailors had demonstrated their ability to act in non-combative ways during the July Days when they acted as the stars of a demonstration in Petrograd.⁴³ The sailors of Kronstadt did not rise up as the stooges of the anarchists or the Whites. They rose up because the Communists had betrayed the revolution and they wanted the rights they had been promised.

⁴³ Leon Trosky, vol. 2 of *History of the Russian Revolution* (London: Sphere Books Limited, 1965) p. 46. Paul Avrich, *Kronstadt 1921* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970)

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Organized Crime in the Soviet Union

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Organized Crime in the Soviet Union

“We have no Mafia in the Soviet Union” (Vaksberg 1). Many would take this statement as either an attempt at propaganda, or simply a misguided and inaccurate judgment. However, upon asking what the Russian Mafia is and how it came to be, many would either describe some “Russified” version of the Italian Mafia in America or abroad, or else admit that they have no idea what the Russian Mafia really is or does. With all the sensationalism surrounding organized crime in the last half-century, many misconceptions and misgivings have developed in American popular culture. Such films as *Eastern Promises*, *Red Heat*, *Lord of War*, *RocknRolla*, *We Own the Night*, *Boondock Saints*, and *Training Day* (Lealos) have inculcated the terrifying gangster image of Russian organized crime that survives in the mind of the American public today. However, two things are very significant about these depictions: they are all set outside of the USSR and they all occur after 1980. These depictions show nothing of what goes on in the Soviet Union or how organized crime has developed throughout the last century. But what is the Russian Mafia? Where did it come from? Did it really exist in the USSR?

One of the leading experts on Russian and Eastern European organized crime, Patricia Rawlinson diagnoses a “chameleon syndrome” to Russian organized crime. She describes this syndrome as the tendency of organized crime in Russia to change form and function in order to remain compatible with the changes in state and social hegemonic structures throughout Russian history (Rawlinson 28-32). In the interest of demystifying and unraveling the mysterious chimera of Russian organized crime, this essay will explore the various ways in which Russian organized crime changed and adapted to the social, economic, and political watersheds throughout the history of the Soviet Union. For the sake of brevity, clarity, and simplicity, the focus of this essay will be on the so-called “Russian Heartland” that extends east from the Dnieper River,

west from the Ural Mountains, north from the Caucasus Mountains, and south from the Barents Sea. This area has long been home to the majority of the Russian population, as well as being the most ethnically and culturally Russian region of the Soviet Union (Moss 8 & 120-121).

The most appropriate place to begin this investigation is in turn-of-the-century Tsarist Russia on the eve of the Bolshevik Revolution. At this time, Russia had various organized crime rings in the traditional sense. These organizations had their own vernacular, customs, and codes of conduct. The Russian words for the professional criminals that composed these organized crime rings is “Vory v Zakone” (Воры в Законе), which literally means “Thieves professing the code” (Chalidze 45). The Vory v Zakone considered themselves a separate society from the whole of Russian society and saw any cooperation with or subservience to the State as a betrayal of the criminal social code. Anyone who betrayed the code, including by cooperating with the state or entering into forbidden social relations with non-thieves was considered a “scab” and was murdered outright for their disloyalty. These organizations were divided into regional groupings known as “artels” (артелы). Within an artel, one had a responsibility under the code to be honest, fair, and true to fellow vory v zakone. However, anyone outside of a thief’s own artel was not protected by this code. Additionally, the artel tended to divvy up spoils in principle, but hold property communally in practice. The social demand on thieves of the same artel to take care of one another lead them to egalitarian practices within the criminal hierarchy. Such was the state of underground criminal society in Tsarist Russia. (Chalidze 37-48)

Although the tradition of organized crime in Tsarist Russia is important for examining Soviet organized crime, the social climate and attitudes towards crime in Russian society at large are of even greater importance. In 1913, eighty percent of the population of the Russian Empire was peasantry (Moss 333). Consequently, the social mentality and practices of peasant Russia

inevitably affected those of the Soviet Union. It should first be noted that thieves in the peasant Russian tradition have typically been glorified and romanticized rather than reviled. There existed a deep-rooted fantasy in Russian peasant culture that a powerful band of thieves could overthrow the oppressive aristocracy and give all the land to the peasants who work it (Chalidze 4-8). This would prove instrumental in how the Bolshevik Revolution came to be portrayed by Soviet propaganda.

Another concept that was central to peasant Russian thought was that of the “samosud” (самосуд). In his *History Today* article, “Criminal Russia: the Traditions Behind the Headlines,” Russian criminal history expert Mark Galeotti defines the concept of samosud as “judging for oneself.” This refers essentially to the tradition of communities (usually peasant villages) not relying on the government to provide discipline to local criminal activity, but instead forming bands and settling matters themselves. Often these bands took the form of lynch mobs and group dynamics, superstition, and public opinion played prominent roles in quotidian justice. In larger cities or communities that did have officials whose job it was to resolve crime and enforce public order, they were not paid by the government, but were subsidized by the tradition of “kormlenie” (кормление). Literally meaning “feeding,” kormlenie was given to officials by those who sought their services. Policemen would thus earn a living through the payment of individuals who hired them to resolve a complaint. Galeotti points out that this is reflective of the Russian proverb, “law and money flow from the same spring.” In these ways, the Russian people were used to taking the law into their own hands, and the line between lawful and criminal activity was nowhere near as clear as that of western imperial societies. (Galeotti 12-13)

The tradition of brigandry and the notions of liberation that it brought came into play during the rise of Bolshevik power, mixing potently with a history of autocratic pragmatism. In

Valery Chalidze's 1977 book *Criminal Russia: A Study of Crime in the Soviet Union*, he explains that the Bolsheviks, "...were not all of one mind about pillage and violence (so-called partisan activities), but on the whole they energetically supported them" (Chalidze 21). He goes on to explain that Bolsheviks (namely Lenin) flaunted the fact that they stole from the government and viewed it as vindicating what rightfully belonged to the people in the first place in order to liberate them from bourgeois class domination (Chalidze 22). This seemed to be exactly the dream that the Russian peasantry had been fantasizing when they romanticized brigandry. Although Lenin's hands were by no means clean, Joseph Stalin took a much more hands-on approach in crime throughout the early days of Bolshevik consolidation of power. Most noteworthy of Stalin's criminal subordinates was Semyon Terpetrosyan- an Armenian who operated under the pseudonym "Kamo." Under the direction of Stalin, Kamo and others carried out many criminal activities including robbery, inciting mob violence, and encouraging dissent that worked to consolidate Bolshevik power and demoralize opposition. (Chalidze 21-23)

Employing a morality that is exclusive to members of the party, the Bolshevik justice structure bears a striking analogy to the Tsarist artel criminal organizations. Along this line of reasoning, various artels would often dispute claims to certain territories. These disputes often led to fighting between the parties involved (Chalidze 45). However, the Bolsheviks were laying claim to at least the whole of Russia (some, most notably Trotsky, saw their duty as extending to the whole of humankind (Trotsky)). This meant that the existing criminal artels were encroaching on their territories and had to be either incorporated or eliminated.

Once in power, the Bolsheviks systematically undertook the process of incorporating existing criminals and eradicating opposition. Stalin was the man who orchestrated this decided and meticulous process that would not reach completion until after Lenin's death. His first move

to ensure Bolshevik monopolization on power was to erase unpalatable ties that the party had with previously existing underground entities. The criminals that once were tools of the Bolsheviks now became its unknowing quarry. One notable incident in this is the mystery surrounding the death of Kamo, presumably a victim of Stalin's purge of criminal ties (Chalidze 22).

It is important to note that although the Soviets got rid of criminal ties that were politically dangerous, they did not stop the use of extralegal activity as a means of protecting their territorial gains. This is manifest in the early years of Bolshevik rule through the secret police known as the "Cheka" (Чeka) (Moss 207), and later as the NKVD (Moss 255-256). The role of these secret police forces was to ferret out and neutralize any opposition to Bolshevik power. According to Dr. Walter Moss of Eastern Michigan University, one Cheka official said that in 1918 and the first half of 1919, the Cheka had executed more than 8,000 people in just twenty Russian provinces (Moss 357-358). The secret police was the enforcement branch of the Bolshevik criminal organization that had become the state. Being the most organized and ambitious of all the criminal groups in Russia during the early years of the twentieth century, the Bolsheviks now moved to increase their power by ingesting the various existing criminal organizations. Only one thing stood in their way- it was against the criminal code to cooperate with the government. This problem would be solved quite serendipitously.

The complete subjugation of criminal societies came after Stalin had risen to power. During World War II, criminals as well as non-criminals were drafted to fight in defense of the Soviet Union. This posed a perilous dilemma for criminals. They were forced to choose which social code to violate- the state's or the criminal underworld's. Violation of either would result in death. Most, perhaps fearing Stalin's power to enforce more than the criminal underworld's,

chose to betray the criminal code and become subservient to the state by fighting in the war. This created a massive schism in the criminal underworld. After the war, those who refused to bow to the government began to seek out and kill those “scabs” that had betrayed the thieves’ code. As the “scabs” realized that they were being targeted for disloyalty, they retaliated, banding together to ultimately exterminate the non-scabs in what has come to be called the “Scabs’ War” (Chalidze 68-72). Thus, somewhat accidentally, the state induced the eradication of traditional thieves and their non-compliance with the government. The Scabs’ War gave rise to a new generation of criminals that had ties to society and the government alike.

With the subjugation of the criminal underworld and the newly-formed connection between the criminal societies and the state, the avenue of upward mobility in the Communist Party became open to criminals. The number of possible positions exponentiated after the Great Purge from 1936-1938, in which Stalin imprisoned and executed hundreds of thousands of civil servants and government officials (Moss 255-257). In combination with the general pragmatic attitude of the Soviet government, the social upheaval and criminal background of many officials lead to widespread criminal activity within the government. However, this by no means gave criminals free, unbridled run of government offices. There was no formal structure that could be traced through the government, but there still remained a hierarchy based in the Kremlin that directed and manipulated criminal activity (Rosner 7-9). Although much of the organized crime in the Soviet Union was rooted in government offices, there were periodical upheavals and vying for power that involved attacks on corruption, particularly in the years that Adryopov was head of the KGB (1982-84) (Moss 428-431).

After Stalin, the NKVD became the enforcing agency of the government criminal hierarchy. Although Khrushchev’s “Secret Speech” in 1956 denouncing Stalinism prevented the

secret police from simply executing people (Moss 395-402), the NKVD still made arrests and sent people who were seen as dangerous to the Soviet way of life to prison camps (Moss 359). In these camps and in prisons, particularly one known as “The White Swan,” political and cultural dissenters were put in cells with dangerous criminals who would either kill them or dehumanize them in various ways (Lambert). In this way, while the Soviet Union appeared to be getting more respectful of “human rights,” they were still brutally eliminating those challenging their power in ways that were less innocuous.

Another consequence of unifying the organized crime artels under the government was that full-time criminals were no longer separated from society. This worked in tandem with existing peasant mentalities, such as *samosud* and *kormlenie*. There began to emerge a class of “everyday” criminals who dealt on the “na levo” or black market and committed various forms of fraud, bribery, theft, and extortion. Due to economic strains and the scope of criminal activity in the Soviet Union, it was virtually impossible to not participate in criminal activity. Russian society was divided into three main categories of criminals. At the top level were party officials who were the social and political elite. The second tier was composed of full-time criminals who were involved in more serious crimes such as arson or murder. At the lowest level were the everyday criminals. These everyday criminals bought, sold, stole, or bribed using anything and everything in order to get what they needed or wanted for everyday life. This three-tiered criminal social structure was by no means a rigid with definite positions and authorities. There were no special ties that dictated a hierarchy and deals were, especially at the lower levels, extemporaneous. In these ways, the traditional mafia, in the sense of a criminal organization based on familial ties and decided order, truly did not exist in the Soviet Union. (Rosner 1-31)

In 1991, when addressing the question of whether there was a Mafia in the Soviet Union under Brezhnev (General Secretary of the Central Committee, Communist Party of the USSR 1964-1982) and Gorbachev (General Secretary of the Communist Party of the USSR 1985-1991), author Arkady Vaksberg claimed that there both was and was not. There existed, he explained, no structure separate from state authority that operated under direction of an organization outside of the Communist Party. However, he continued, the Soviet government operated as much like a Mafia as any western counterpart through the political tyranny of Leninism and Stalinism (Vaksberg 18-20). A hegemonic structure of criminal activity certainly existed in the Soviet Union, albeit one that did not match up with the western notion of “Mafia.”

From the aforementioned accounts of socio-political watersheds in Soviet Russia, we can contextualize some of the misgivings in the conception of Russian crime abroad. The traditional conceptualizations of crime and justice in Russia contrast baldly with the western notions and frameworks. Extralegal action has long been part of the struggle for survival in Russia, evident in such concepts as *samosud*. When the Russian immigrant finds herself or himself in a foreign system, being of the Russian tradition, they look for ways of beating the system. Thus, when communities of Russians band together with a common heritage and a common aim to manipulate the legal system to better their situation, the result is a criminal group with loose ties that only superficially resembles western conceptions of the mafia (Rosner ix-xii). This could account for the peculiar portrayal of Russian criminal organizations abroad. In the western tradition (particularly the Anglo-American tradition) so heavily steeped in the sanctification of laws, extralegal activity is socially scorned. These power regimes legitimate their authority through ontological claims about rights rather than Machiavellian power assertions (Foucault

229-262). This fundamental difference may be the root to the misgivings between these two thought regimes.

In these ways, organized crime in the Soviet Union shifted and adapted to the various changes in political policy and social practice. Although the ineptitude of Tsarist Russian Imperialism allowed the traditional structures of familial and regional ties to organized crime, the collectivization of Soviet State Socialism did not allow for such structures. Once all aspects of society were consolidated and heavily monitored under Stalinism, organized crime could not survive in its traditional form. It thus adapted by taking the only avenue that promised to sustain it- the Communist Party. Conversely, in the process of overwhelming traditional organized crime, the Soviet system ingested the old criminal tradition and rudimental criminal desires recapitulated in centralized party authority. This resulted in a system tolerant to extralegal dealings. When constituents of this extralegal tradition, so commonplace in the Soviet Union, would be taken from their original context and placed anew in a system hostile to extralegal activity, aggregate ties allowed them to fulfill their individual agendas. The result of this was the creation of pseudo-mafias abroad and in the Russian Federation after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Understood in its proper historical context, the Russian criminal tradition has changed and adapted precisely as necessary to its preservation.

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Volksgemeinschaft: The Rise of Nazi Ideology

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Nazi ideology is perhaps one of the most difficult philosophies to study because of its complex makeup. The idea of the *Volksgemeinschaft*, or the “people’s community” was especially difficult to understand, even by the Nazis themselves. What constituted as Nazi ideology? How did the Nazis view politics and economics? The aspects of Nazi ideology must be explored. After all, even Hitler himself admits that a movement could only be successful if it had a strong ideology.¹ Many now ask how and why the Nazis rose to power and why the German people accepted their ideology. There are always many different views and explanations on the issue. However, most can agree today that it is a combination of the multiple explanations. One scholar, Theodore Abel, picked three factors, although each of those factors contain multiple reasons within themselves, and said that they worked together to bring Nazism, and later Hitler, to power. Abel argued that

no movement can succeed unless: first, it’s adherents are motivated by a persistent, prevalent, and wide-spread discontent with a state of affairs...; second, it set’s forth a goal that is novel in its aspirations but based on deeply-rooted sentiments as well; and third, it has a charismatic leader with a an efficiently organized group of dedicated followers.²

Most scholars agree that either dissatisfaction with the government, the Nazis having new, or at least what appears to be new, ideas, and strong leadership, or a combination of any of these factors helped encourage the people to join the Nazi cause. Each of these will be examined in turn, as well as other factors that lie within the reasons given by Abel. However, one factor seems to link all of the other reasons together: Leadership. Nazism rose to power through the efficiency of its leadership. Without strong leaders, who caused dissent among the people through their speeches and writings, the Nazi party could not have gotten the support it did.

¹ Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1943), 373.

² Theodore Abel, *The Nazi Movement: Why Hitler Came to Power* (New York: Therton Press, 1965), Atheling Introduction.

Nazism has an interesting history itself, rising in popularity with each passing year between the two world wars. It seemed as if the Nazi Party grew overnight. The idea of National Socialism, which the Nazis identified their ideology as, existed before World War I, through Fredreich Naumann's party in 1896 called *National-Sozial*. National Socialism started through Anton Drechsler, who founded the party that would become the Nazis. Drechsler believed in socialism, but was less than enamored by Social Democrats. Originally this group was called the German Workmen's Party. Hitler would later be invited to join in its early years of formation.³ In his book, *Mein Kampf*, Hitler believed it was vital to be involved in these early stages of the party's formation. He thought "this was a time in which anyone who was not satisfied with ... the existing parties felt called upon to found a new party."⁴ He would choose to work in propaganda after he had decided to join the party. However, there were other nationalist and anti-Semitic groups to choose from at this time. There was the *Thule Gesellschaft* (Thule Society), the *Schutz-und Trutzbund* (Defensive and Offensive Alliance), and the *Einwohnerwehr* (Inhabitant Defense). However the *German Worker's Party* was becoming the most popular. It would later change its name to the National Socialist Party in 1918. By the spring of 1921, Hitler, through his work in propaganda, had helped recruit thousands to the party. Some of this propaganda work included invading popular socialist locations and taking over and delivering speeches especially designed to evoke emotions of dissatisfaction with the government and opposing parties.⁵ The *German Worker's Party* would grow to become the most popular of Nationalist parties in due time.

So who exactly made up this party that would come to power? One local National Socialist party called the *Ortsgruppen* surveyed the statistics of its members. According to its

³ Ibid, 54-144.

⁴ Hitler, 218.

⁵ Abel, 60-145.

lists, the majority of their group was primarily made up of lower middle-class workers between the ages of 17 and 32, who had only public school education, and had served in World War I.⁶ Farming peasants also made up a large part of the NSDAP, or German National Socialist Workers Party. Despite many appeals to the lower-class industrial workers, these workers still turned to other means of representation, like unions.⁷ This study was not necessarily the case for all members in Germany, but the study showed that the majority of the people following the NSDAP were young members of the middle-class.

The party really leaped up in membership after a speech Hitler made on February 21, 1920. Hitler laid out what Nazi doctrine was, in the form of the 25-Point Program of the Nazis, and 2,000 people attended. The result of this speech was the *German Worker's Party* becoming the leading counter-revolutionary group in Munich. It received most of their funding from the *Reichswehr* by this time as well. The party also began expanding their functions. In the year 1921 the fighting groups in the party that would later be called the *SS* and *SA* began. Hitler also establishes himself as Leader of the Party and claims to be the only leader, for he refused to work with other Nationalist groups to get their message across.⁸ However, the party's popularity did not last long.

The situation of the NSDAP became more difficult as the effects of the Depression were felt. By 1923, the exchange rate for the Deutschmark was four million to one American dollar. Hyperinflation made funding for the party very difficult. In September of that same year, Hitler agrees to a coalition with a group planning on a political coup. In November, Hitler makes a coup attempt in what would become known as the Beer Hall Putsch. Unfortunately for Hitler,

⁶ Ibid, 81.

⁷ Roderick Stackelberg, *Hitler's Germany: Origins, Interpretations, Legacies*, 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 1999, 20-21.

⁸ Abel, 62-64.

his coup was stopped by soldiers and he was arrested and later imprisoned in Landsberg Fortress. In prison, Hitler dictated *Mein Kampf*, which would later be used as an important piece of Nazi propaganda. However, during his sentence, the party broke up and its members sought power in other groups and parties.⁹ The fracturing of the NSDAP made the recruiting of new members much more difficult. After this difficult spell though, Nazism would be on the rise once more.

In August of 1923, politician Gustav Stresemann became Prime Minister of Germany. During his premiership, Stresemann would call a political state of emergency and ask the *Reichswehr*, or the German military, to eliminate extremist parties. This action would only succeed in silencing Communist and other left-leaning parties, as the military broke up primarily these groups. A little over a year later, Hitler was released from prison. Since his imprisonment, he had learned that to get the National Socialists to power, he would have to work through government systems. His failed *putsch*, had shown him that he could not get power by force alone. He would need to get the party into the parliament. Also playing to their favor, the ban on the National Socialist party is revoked between 1924 and 1925.¹⁰ The National Socialists now had the opportunity to grow.

Party membership and votes increased since then. In 1925, party membership had reached a total of over 27,000 and increased to well over 100,000 by 1928. With such a majority, the National Socialists were finally becoming members of the German Parliament. In the 1928 *Reichstag* elections the party received 2.6% of the total vote, or 810,000 votes. Just a year later in local elections, they increased to 11.3% and put their first minister into office. In 1930, the party had received over 6 million votes or over 18% of the vote for the Reichstag and became the

⁹ Ibid, 67-74.

¹⁰ Ibid, 74-77.

second largest party. Prior to 1930, no one had really paid much attention to this small party¹¹. No one had really taken the Nazis too seriously until it was too late to stop them.¹² From this point, the NSDAP could not be ignored in the German government.

With the new attention came new fear. Many tried to stop the rise of the party in the years before Hitler came to power. From 1930 to 1932 an attempt was made to forbid all membership in National Socialists and Communist parties. In March of 1931, Chancellor Brüning tried to stop the party by banning all mass meetings and the wearing of uniforms. He would also start a program to monitor and censor all pamphlets and propaganda material. In October of that same year, the police were used to shut down meeting halls to prevent meetings of the NSDAP. In April of 1932 laws were made to disband military groups, such as the group that would later become the SA. These actions were to no avail though and on January 30, 1933, Hitler was made chancellor of Germany. The election results made the views of the people of Germany clear. Hitler received 13 million votes, or over 36% of the popular vote in the election. By 1932, the National Socialists was the party with the most seats in the Reichstag.¹³ The combination of Hitler as leader and having his party on top in the government made the course of events to follow seem bright to the National Socialists.

After coming to power, the Nazi's first problem was to get those who were opposed to them out of the Reichstag and without political power. The Nazis wanted a one-party government so that no group could compromise their ideology with ideas that supposedly came from the Jews. By early 1933, the Communist party was banned in the German Parliament.

¹¹ Ibid, 91-93.

¹² Michaela Hönicke Moore, "American Interpretations of National Socialism, 1933-1945" in *The Impact of Nazism: New Perspectives on the Third Reich and its Legacy*, eds. Daniel E. Rogers and Alan E. Steinweis (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press: 2003), 4-5.

¹³ Abel, 78-111.

Around the same time, Hitler was officially given complete power under the Enabling Act.¹⁴

The Enabling Act would be renewed one more time on January 30, 1937, so that Hitler continued to have his dictatorial power.¹⁵ In the summer of 1933, the Socialist Party, the SPD, was also banned from political participation. On July 14, 1933, the Nazis became the only legal party allowed in the German government.¹⁶ In May of that year, the Nazis began trying to implement some of their government plans by breaking up labor unions, which were considered a tool of the Communists and the Jews, and beginning their own labor representation group, the German Labor Front.¹⁷ A little over a year later, President Hindenburg died and Hitler took his place now fulfilling the roles of both Chancellor and President of Germany.¹⁸

For the Nazis to be elected into Parliament, and to eventually have one of their own as Chancellor, they had to have a winning ideology that the people would want to vote for. At the top of Nazi ideology was the idea of *Volksgemeinschaft*. It was an idea of state “combin[ing] the meaning of ‘unity’, ‘devotion to community’, mutual aid, brotherly love, and kindred social values”¹⁹. In other words, it was supposed to be the ideal community where there was no such thing as class, or distinctions between workers and employers. Everyone would live in harmony because they were all of German blood. All Germans, no matter their age, class, gender, or country of birth, were to all come together as German people and live in this perfect society created by the National Socialists. Some would have argued however that the *Volksgemeinschaft* was not intended to change actual social statuses, but rather to change the mentality of the

¹⁴ The Enabling Act would allow Hitler to have both the powers of the President and Chancellor should the current President Hindenburg die.

¹⁵ Roderick Stackelberg, *The Routledge Companion to Nazi Germany* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 13.

¹⁶ Stackelberg, *Hitler*, xv-xvii.

¹⁷ Stackelberg, *Routledge*, 11.

¹⁸ Stackelberg, *Hitler*, xv-xvii.

¹⁹ Abel, 137.

citizens to feel as if they were equal.²⁰ However, this idea was to only apply to the German people and no one else.²¹ An idea such as having non-Germans become Germans was impossible. Hitler described how “it [would be] a scarcely conceivable fallacy of thought to believe that a Negro or a Chinese, let us say, could turn into a German.”²² If a person did not have German blood, which the Nazis would make up the specifications for what constituted as German blood, they were not a German. To be a citizen in this new community, one had to be born in Germany, of the German race, and physically healthy.²³ This community would revolve around the pillars of “protection of the people and race, social justice, realizing that all of this can only be carried out and preserved through one power, on the idea of national self-defense.”²⁴ The only job of the state was to protect the “purity” of the German race in this new community. Other aspects of Nazi ideology circulated around this idea.

However, this ideology was very confusing. *Völkish* thinkers often disagreed with each other in how they envisioned the “people’s community.” Sometimes, thinkers even contradicted their own beliefs. Scholars have accepted that “*Völkish* ideology was not a coherent set of ideas and ideals, but rather a cauldron of beliefs, fears, and hopes that found expression in various movements.”²⁵ An attempt will be made nonetheless to sort through and come up with a concise body of what made up the majority of the idea of *Volksgemeinschaft*.

Among the earliest thinkers on the idea of “community” was the writer Johann Gottfried Herder. He wrote his own philosophy on what a community was and who could fit in the

²⁰ David Schoenbaum, *Hitler’s Social Revolution: Class and Status in Nazi Germany 1933-1939* (Garden City: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1966), 59.

²¹ Abel, 130-138.

²² Hitler, 388-389.

²³ Ibid, 438-439.

²⁴ Gregor Strasser, Joseph Goebbels, et al., “Draft of a Comprehensive Program of National Socialism” in Lane and Rupp, 63.

²⁵ Petteri Pietikainen, “The *Volk* and its Unconscious: Jung, Hauer and the ‘German Revolution,’” *Journal of Contemporary History* 35 (2000): 524.

community. To Herder, “language, art, literature, common history, [and] kinship” defined a community.²⁶ These were all aspects which could make people feel connected to each other if they shared them. He was also one of the first few to start using the language of the *Volk* and seeing the community as an organism, both of which would be large parts of the plan of *Volksgemeinschaft*. Despite all these similarities though, Herder, was not one to use race as a factor of who could and could not be a part of the community. To him, no one race was better than the other, but must be viewed within its own historical and cultural context.²⁷ Nonetheless, the Nazis were using some of his thinking, such as a community semi-based on shared culture and the importance of the average people, the *Volk*, to design their “people’s community.”

The anti-Semitic agenda of the Nazis was just one part of Nazi ideology that tied into *Volksgemeinschaft*. The idea of a community could only work if someone or some group could be excluded. Racism would determine who would be excluded from the community.²⁸ To unite the German people politically, the Nazis needed to unite them culturally. Thus, they said that Germans, German blood, and German culture were better than that of the rest of the world in that they were the “chosen” race and that everything they created was “pure.” Blood was especially important. If one did not have “German blood”, they were not part of the nation. Hitler and other Nazi thinkers were associating nationality with race, which would set up the qualifications for who was in and out of the “people’s community.” Hitler believed that “nationality or rather race [did] not happen to live in the language, but in the blood.”²⁹ Naturally, if the Germans were the perfect race, than others were inferior. Therefore, to keep foreigners out, the German open-

²⁶Howard M. Bahr, Matthew T. Evans and Suzanne L. Maughan, “On Diversity, Empathy, and Community: The Relevance of Johann Gottfried Herder,” *Rural Sociology* 73 (2008): 507.

²⁷ Ibid, 509-516.

²⁸ John Connelly, “The Uses of Volksgemeinschaft: Letters to the NSDAP Kreisleitung Eisenach 1939-1940,” *The Journal of Modern History* 68 (1996), 905-923.

²⁹ Hitler, 389.

borders policy for people of other nationalities to enter had to go.³⁰ However they targeted Jews as the worst of all races.³¹ They used these ideas to promote an even bigger idea: that to improve the survival of the country, German blood should be preserved, or kept “pure,” and that of weaker races should be eliminated.³² The Jews were not useful to the *Volksgemeinschaft* and were, therefore, easily disposable.

The Nazis also believed that the Jews were in charge of the entire Socialist movement and behind the Bolshevik Revolution. On one hand, the Germans did believe it was necessary to dismantle the Czarist state, but on the other hand, the Bolsheviks were not a better replacement. These Socialists were going to lose all their power to the Jews who were running it, the Nazis figured. At the same time, the Nazis feared they too would suffer the same fate if they let the Jews roam freely and have positions in high places. After all, the socialists were run by Trosky, a Jew. The Kronstadt Sailors, a Bolshevik military group, were run by Roschal, another Jew. If this kept up, the Soviet Union and perhaps later on, Germany would have their government overrun by Jews.³³ This fear of Communism spreading, as tool of the Jews, would be used by the Nazis to attract more people to their cause.³⁴ Something had to be done. *Volksgemeinschaft* could only be created by taking away this supposed power from the Jews.³⁵

Volksgemeinschaft also had an idea as to how to form the government. Nazism believed in a government structure where only Germans were to represent the German people. All other nationalities were excluded from government.³⁶ Some like Gottfried Feder imagined two government bodies in the new German state. One would be the House of the People, which

³⁰ Ibid, 396.

³¹ Judaism is a religion and an ethnicity, but the Nazis put it under the category of “race.”

³² Abel, 154-155.

³³ Rosenberg, “The Russian Jewish Revolution” in Lane and Rupp, 13-15.

³⁴ Stackelberg, *Hitler*, 23.

³⁵ Hitler, 453.

³⁶ “Guidelines for the German Worker’s Party” in Lane and Rupp, 10-11.

worked specifically for the politics of the people. It would be made of a pyramid-like hierarchy, where the people would directly elect representatives, who would elect representatives to represent them, to ensure that every representative would stand for the people. The other would be a Central Council which would look after the economic interests of the people. Every business would be represented with one representative from both the bosses and the workers who would regulate the control and development of companies and solve wage problems.³⁷ Although this structure was supposed to represent the people, the Nazis had a mentality that the nation must suit the needs of only the best and hardest working people, as would be determined by the highest authority. And therefore, the state needed to be lead by only the best people. The *Volksgemeinschaft* did not need parliament or rule by majority.³⁸ What it needed was an absolute ruler at the top. To get away from the materialist world of capitalism and Communism, there needed to be a strong authoritarian state to force the people to follow orders.³⁹ One leader did not have to consult a mass of various parties with differing agendas and where nothing would be accomplished. One ruler would allow for the Nazis to get the actions they wanted accomplished done. The Nazi regime needed absolute power over the German people.

The Nazis also had a plan for improving and solving all economic problems as well. The overall economic view of the Nazis was an anti-capitalist/anti-Marxist economy where working meant more than owning.⁴⁰ They would tax everyone to help pay for the war, but they would put a heavier tax burden on those who owned land.⁴¹ There was also a strong dislike of loan interest by the Nazis, claiming it was a tool of the Jews. Usury, or the collecting of interest on loans, was considered a lazy way to make money since no one worked for that money. This idea had gone

³⁷ Gottfried Feder, "The Social State", in Lane and Rupp, 34-39.

³⁸ Hitler, 449.

³⁹ Stackelberg, *Hitler*, 47-48.

⁴⁰ Gregor Strasser, "Thoughts about the Tasks of the Future" in Lane and Rupp, 89-90.

⁴¹ Lane and Rupp, 10-11.

back to the Middle Ages, and usury had been banned by the Catholic Church. Jews, however, were not subject to Catholic law, and their religion had no such restriction. Ever since then, usury and loan interest had been associated with the Jews. The Nazi ideal to solve the interest problem was to eliminate it, have only one bank running German money, and the state taking lands all to curb inflation.⁴² The Nazis also believed that their economy would pay off all their war debts better than the Weimar Republic. All Germans would be working for the greater good of the German people. Those who profited from the war would have their wealth stripped of them and companies would be in the hands of the state so that all profits could be divided evenly.⁴³ They also envisioned a new foreign economy that included a European Union that would have one system of currency.⁴⁴ The economic problem then could be solved with a combination of authoritative leadership, peace among peoples and nations, and the running of businesses efficiently.⁴⁵ Big businesses did like this ideology, and thought that even if all of the ideas did not appeal to them, they could hopefully have control over the Nazis. The businesses had the money to be pulling the reigns they thought. Instead, businesses would find that they were being controlled by the Nazis.⁴⁶

The Nazis also needed a plan to help industrial workers as part of their new economic plans. Because the Nazis tried to appeal to the working class, they appeared to the low to middle-class citizens that they were not a party for the rich and won over more voters from those statuses.⁴⁷ They could use unions to their advantage they believed. If they created Nazi-sponsored unions, then they would be promoting the classless ideology among workers, by

⁴² Gottfried Feder, "Manifesto for Breaking the Bondage of Interest" in Lane and Rupp, 27-29.

⁴³ "The Program of the NSDAP" in Lane and Rupp, 41-43.

⁴⁴ Gregor Strasser, Joseph Goebbels, et al., 84.

⁴⁵ Hitler's Speech to the Reichstag on March 23, 1933 in "The Speeches of Adolf Hitler: April 1922-August 1939," Vol II, ed and trans Norman H. Baynes (London: Oxford UP, 1942), 1017.

⁴⁶ Ian Kershaw, *The Nazi Dictatorship: Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation* (London: Edward Arnold Ltd., 1985), 59.

⁴⁷ Stackelberg, *Routledge*, 112.

having these unions' primary function be to teach Nazi ideology, and employers they wanted and countering Marxism by replacing their unions. Existing unions, as part of the Marxist groups, would not be useful.⁴⁸ Organizations like the German Labor Front would be created, but it would mostly serve the purpose of teaching Nazi ideology, not actually helping workers.⁴⁹ The Nazis also needed to increase the efficiency of workers. If workers increased how much they worked, then there would be an increase in purchasing, which would benefit the wealthy and the workers.⁵⁰ So long as Germans only bought from Germans, and not from Jews, the plan could work perfectly.⁵¹ However, once the Nazis came to power, they did not offer much to help the workers. Yet the workers coped with it because they felt that it was at least better than the depression, because some jobs were offered through Nazi programs like the *Autobahn*, or highway system, and they no longer had any effective ways of organizing against the Nazis.⁵² The Nazis had only succeeded in their plans in eliminating existing unions, which would be all they needed to do to keep hold their power over the workers.

Also along economic lines, for the Germans to expand as a people and an industrial power, the Germans needed territorial room to grow. The Nazis believed that meant the Germans needed more land.⁵³ Where would this new land come from? The *Volksgemeinschaft* was supposed to be beneficial to "all" Germans, even those in other countries. Those of German blood in Austria, Hungary, and Poland all needed to come together under the German nation. If Germany is made up of all Germans, then life will be perfect, in that the *Volksgemeinschaft*

⁴⁸ Hitler, 598-605.

⁴⁹ Agreement between Dr. Robert Ley, Reich Ministries, and Representatives for Hitler in Economic Affairs in *Nazism 1919-1945: A Documentary Reader*, J. Noakes and G. Pridham, eds., Vol. 2 (Exeter: A. Wheaton & Co. Ltd.), 1984, 338.

⁵⁰ Hitler to Siemensstadt in Berlin on Nov 10, 1933 in Baynes, 1141.

⁵¹ Dormond Local NSDAP Department Store Boycott in Noakes and Pridham, 304.

⁵² Hartmut Berghoff "Did Hitler Create a New Society? Continuity and Change in German Social History Before and After 1933" in *Weimar and Nazi Germany: Continuities and Discontinuities*, ed. Panikos Panayi (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2001), 89-90.

⁵³ "The Program of the NSDAP", 41-43.

would be created through these measures, the Nazis thought.⁵⁴ The Germans needed new land that would be controlled by the state that farm corporations could use to grow more food.⁵⁵ If getting more land meant having to fight other nations for it, then the Germans would stop at no cost to get it.⁵⁶ The people they took the land from did not matter. The writer, Otto Strasser, explained that the Germans did not wish to rule over the foreign people they took over. The land would be used for the benefit of the German people.⁵⁷ The land would be run only by Germans for Germans. With all the new land they hoped to acquire, the Germans planned to not have to import as much food as they normally would, and would as a result not be dependant on other countries for survival and they would save money, which would result in improving the economy. Those of German stock would also be allowed to take land away from the non-Germans inhabiting it.⁵⁸ Once again, the most important part about the *Volksgemeinschaft* was that the people in the community were “pure” Germans.

With the addition of land, the Nazi party wrote statements on how to protect the rights of the farmer. Before the Nazis came to power, farmers suffered heavily from the depression. The Nazis were able to gain more votes from the peasantry because farmers had “higher taxes and limited credit, foreign competition, and falling commodity prices.”⁵⁹ The Nazis wanted to provide the farmers with economic protection and education since they were important to feeding the German population, which could mean the new Aryan race would survive for

⁵⁴ Reichstag Speech in Baynes, 1019.

⁵⁵ Gregor Strasser, Joseph Goebbels, et al., 84-87.

⁵⁶ Hitler, 426.

⁵⁷ Otto Strasser, “The Fourteen Theses on the German Revolution” in Lane and Rupp, 107.

⁵⁸ “Official Party Statement on Its Attitude toward the Farmers and Agriculture” in Lane and Rupp, 118-122.

⁵⁹ Stephen G. Fritz, “The NSDAP as *Volkspartei*? A Look at the Social Bias of the Nazi Voter,” *The History Teacher* 20 (1987): 381-382.

generations to come.⁶⁰ The state would control the food market prices to insure proper wages for farmers. These proper wages would result in more tax revenue for the Nazi state.⁶¹

Nazi military policy was certainly created in response to the disarmament provision of the Treaty of Versailles. The Nazis would rearm, against the articles of the treaty and would show that their idea of peace would only come at the end of a barrel of a gun. Gregor Strasser believed that everyone else should have to disarm if the Germans had to disarm. However, if the rest of the world was not going to disarm, then the Germans had a right to rearm themselves for the defense of their nation.⁶² It was also believed by historians like Ian Kershaw that “moulding of a people in the image of an army-disciplined, resilient, fanatically single-minded, obedient to death for the cause- was [the Nazis’] intention.”⁶³ These appeals for rearmament would help get the German armies and the weapons industry on the side of the Nazis.⁶⁴ These ideas though, contradicted the idea of a “people’s community” where the Germans supposedly went back to the “good old days” of rural life. The Nazis reasoned that while it was nice to go back to a time before industrialization, to keep up as a military power with the world around them, they needed to arm themselves with the most modern and technologically advanced weapons.⁶⁵

The Nazis also had unique views on the value of people, women especially. The Nazis quickly realized that they could benefit more in votes and loyal citizens if they could appeal to women.⁶⁶ Women were going to preserve the “Aryan” race. One of the changes the Nazis believed in was making the institution of marriage more vital to the preservation of the race than

⁶⁰ R.W. Darré, “The Farmer and the State”, in Lane and Rupp, 132.

⁶¹ Gregor Strasser, “Work and Bread!”, in Miller Lane and Rupp, 141-143.

⁶² Gregor Strasser, “The Nature and Aim of the National Socialist Idea” in Lane and Rupp, 129-130.

⁶³ Kershaw, 141.

⁶⁴ Ibid, 52.

⁶⁵ Pietikainen, 527.

⁶⁶ Gregor Strasser, Draft, 90-92.

as a means to boost social status.⁶⁷ It was also important to believe that women should not try to be equal to men. Each had their own little niche in the *Volksgemeinschaft*. The woman's niche was to have, raise, and care for the future Aryan race.⁶⁸ Her place was *Kinder*, *Küche*, and *Kirche*, or children, kitchen, and church.⁶⁹ Women were considered vital to the *Volksgemeinschaft* since they would produce the next generation of National Socialists.

Caring and educating the future National Socialist youth was to become vital to promoting the Nazi agenda. The perfect "Aryan" race, after being created, needed to be properly educated. Instilling self-confidence, or rather the idea of superiority of the German race, would become all-important in the education programs of the Nazis.⁷⁰ The idea of *Volksgemeinschaft* would be instilled into the minds of the children. They would be taught to forget such things as class and status so they could be capable of living in the classless *Volksgemeinschaft*. If children were going to be resistant to such a plan, then they would be placed in the training for the SA and the SS and would not release them until they were firm believers in the perfection of the *Volksgemeinschaft*.⁷¹ Children would be taught what the Nazis deemed important such as being the perfect race physically as well as mentally. Frequent exercise, especially geared towards military training, would be added to the curriculum of schools.⁷²

On one hand, all of the aforementioned plans seemed beneficial to the lower and middle classes. The *Volksgemeinschaft* would "offer mobility and advancement through merit and achievement, not through inherited social rank and birthright."⁷³ On the other hand, if one looked closely into the ideology, one could see that to achieve these goals, many of the people's rights

⁶⁷ Hitler, 402.

⁶⁸ Hitler's speech to National Socialist Women in September, 1934 in Noakes and Pridam, 449.

⁶⁹ Stackelberg, *Hitler*, 147.

⁷⁰ Hitler, 404-411.

⁷¹ Hitler's Speech at Reichenberg on Dec 4, 1938 in Noakes and Pridam, 417.

⁷² Hitler, 407-418.

⁷³ Kershaw, 140.

of opinion and voting would be taken away. So just how did this party and its ideology become so popular? The German people had to support the ideology to support the party somehow.

Scholars for the many years after the war would offer multiple explanations.

One reason for the popularity of *Volksgemeinschaft* is that people were just tired of the government they already had. The Germans had been hit with losing the war, having to pay reparations, and suffering from the depression. With the fall of the Weimar Republic, the Nazis quickly had come to power, indicating the people's opinion of their old government. Weimar had attempted to help the people, but had failed. They tried to create unions for the working classes, but the workers still felt they had no voice. Weimar's acceptance of the Versailles Treaty also did not work in their favor. The acceptance of so called "Guilt Clause" saying Germany had started and was solely responsible for the war, united the people in hatred of the Weimar Republic.⁷⁴ People had a tendency to blame the government as the problem. The Weimar Republic was disorganized, had too many parties, which led to too many political scandals and disagreements, and never could seem to solve the problems of the German people.⁷⁵ Most Germans believed that all the people in the multiple parties did was try to promote themselves and hold their position in government.⁷⁶ Many Nazi writers did not believe that the government was concerned with the needs of the people and focused on their own personal problems with other members of parliament.⁷⁷ Other party members believed that other officials in other parties would make concessions in their policies, at the expense of the needs of the people, to get more votes in the next election.⁷⁸ National Socialism fed off that dislike of the

⁷⁴ Stackelberg, *Hitler*, 68-76.

⁷⁵ Kershaw, 121-127.

⁷⁶ Dietrich Eckart, "Men!" in Lane and Rupp, 3.

⁷⁷ Feder, "The Social State", 34.

⁷⁸ Albert Krebs, *The Infancy of Nazism: The Memoirs of Ex-Gauleiter Albert Krebs*, ed. and trans. William Sheridan Allen, (New York: New Viewpoints, 1976), 15-16.

government, and their movement gained success from it. As the scholar Theodore Abel had put it:

No matter how skillfully an orator plays upon the emotions of his audience, he cannot long maintain his hold unless he evokes convictions and deep-felt needs which the listeners...harbored long before coming face to face with the spell binder.⁷⁹

The National Socialists not only pointed out these flaws in the government. They stated that they knew how to fix all these problems, which may have made the people more willing to accept the ideas of the Nazis.

The Weimar Republic was not only ineffective at solving the problems of the people; it had also failed in trying to cut off the Nazi power before it became too strong. Chancellor Brüning had attempted to suppress the party by banning its existence. That worked only in keeping the NSDAP out of the Parliament temporarily. Chancellor von Papen tried to allow the party small positions in the government without giving them too much power. He had hoped to control the Nazis by keeping them from having too much power, but at the same time using their votes in Parliament to get his policies enacted. Instead, he found the Nazis had enough power to use him to get even more power. President Hindenburg was perhaps the politician who failed the most at trying to stop the Nazis, perhaps because he himself agreed with some of their views. He too thought he could use the Nazis to his advantage by placing Hitler in a place of power, so long as he had control over Hitler.⁸⁰ Hindenburg, like von Papen, would find the Nazis were not willing to be controlled. The republic was overall failing to prevent the Nazis from coming to power.

⁷⁹ Abel, 120.

⁸⁰ Stackelberg, *Routledge*, 114.

The Nazis not only blamed the government. They blamed the Jews as responsible for starting World War I. The Jews and the Communists seemed to be the perfect scapegoat the Nazis could use also to arouse dissatisfaction in the government especially if they believed the Jews were pulling the government strings. The Jews were also thought to all be part of the Communists and were responsible for Germany's loss in the war.⁸¹ Dietrich Eckart, a prominent writer on Nazi ideals, believed it was usury, of which Jews were commonly accused of doing, which cost Germany the war. Because the Jews were only trying to make money, they led the Germans into the war for more money and bought peace at the cost of the reparations the "pure" Germans had to pay. Many like him believed it was "not by the presumption of the military were [they] betrayed, but above all by usury, again, by usury, and a third time through usury did [they] lose [their] power!"⁸² Capitalism was the enemy of the Nazis along with Communism. Citizens associated Communism and Marxism with the SPD, the leading party in the Reichstag before the Nazis came to power. The Nazis, advertising themselves as an anti-Marxist party, were seen as the saviors from the "Communist threat."⁸³ The Jews were considered the ones who were the biggest Capitalists and Communists in their eyes.⁸⁴ Many historians believed this racism, along with nationalist pride, helped attract others to the Nazi ideology.⁸⁵

With the German economy in bad shape, the German people also wanted a new government that would fix Germany's financial woes. The hyperinflation had been hard on the not-so-wealthy public and led to even more dissatisfaction with the republic. Some scholars even argued that the Great Depression had even sped up the fall of the Weimar Republic. The

⁸¹ Stackelberg, *Hitler*, 77.

⁸² Dietrich Eckart, "The Twister" in Lane and Rupp, 7.

⁸³ William Sheridan Allen, *The Nazi Seizure of Power: The Experience of a Single German Town, 1930-1935*, (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1965), 26-27.

⁸⁴ Eckart, "Twister", 7.

⁸⁵ Stackelberg, *Hitler*, 21.

Versailles Treaty made the German economic situation worse. At the end of the war, Germany had lost 13% of its land, three-fourths of iron ore deposits, 26% coal and 38% of its steel.⁸⁶ Not only did the Germans have to pay such high reparations, they also had lost much of their natural resources that could have helped them pay the reparations. Because the Weimar Republic had accepted those terms, they were unable to pull Germany out of the depression. The Nazis made the claim that they could do better and fix the economy, and some of their projects did make the German economy better. After the “loss of savings and financial security, as well as utter desperation, and the host of other problems associated with the depression, [the Nazis] attracted many [people] to vote for [the Nazis].”⁸⁷ The public works projects created by the Nazis like the *Autobahn*, or highway system, did provide more jobs for people. From 1941 to 1942, the Nazis made improvements to the German health insurance and pension plans, leading to an increase in worker’s morale.⁸⁸ Actually, the depression most affected workers, but it was mostly the middle class who supported the Nazis. Even though the middle classes were not suffering nearly as much as the workers, they feared the depression lasting and affecting them next.⁸⁹ Even if the Nazis did not solve all economic problems, they were at least solving some, and the people thought the Nazis actually cared about their plight.

Also, it seemed as if the German government before the Nazis came was accepting or validating Nazi economic policies. During the depression, German political parties began to turn more “rightward” to solve the problem, according to scholars. This action showed the German people that the NSDAP was an acceptable political party, making them feel more comfortable

⁸⁶ Richard Overly, “The German Economy, 1919-1945 in Panayi, 36.

⁸⁷ Lisa Pine, “Women and the Family” in Panayi, 200.

⁸⁸ Stackelberg, *Hitler*, 80-141.

⁸⁹ Allen, 23-24.

with voting for them.⁹⁰ If even the government made the Nazis appear like a legitimate political party, in that their policies were in agreement with other political parties at the time, then the citizens would vote for them. However, it would take a leader to voice all grievances against the government and the economy to the people to make the people realize they did not like the current government.

Propaganda is also believed to have played a strong part in bringing Nazi ideology to the masses. If propaganda could be used effectively, the Nazis believed it would spread their ideology better.⁹¹ The media would become the property of the Nazis and be used only for the purpose of spreading Nazi Ideology.⁹² New means of media that had the capabilities of spreading ideology further and to more people had come into existence at this time. The Nazis were willing to use the new technologies of the day, such as film and radio, helping to allow their rise.⁹³ The Nazi propaganda showed what the ideal Germany was, making National Socialism and *Volksgemeinschaft* more appealing. With so many new tools of propaganda for the Nazis to use, the citizens “had been convinced that a vote for Nazism meant a vote for new times.”⁹⁴ People believed that the Nazis would solve Germany’s problems and that these “new times” were for the benefit of the German citizenry. Even if creating the *Volksgemeinschaft* was a failure, propaganda would at least make the citizens believe it was a success.⁹⁵ Propaganda also did the job of covering up or hiding some of the more negative aspects of Nazism such as killing millions and taking away freedoms from its citizens.⁹⁶ This propaganda would especially appeal to the young and easily malleable youth because they were already believing that the old parties

⁹⁰ Fritz, 383.

⁹¹ Hitler, 579-586.

⁹² Joseph Goebbels to German Radio on March 25, 1933 in Noakes and Pridam, 385.

⁹³ Panikos Panayi, “Continuities in German History, 1919-1945”, in Panayi, 15.

⁹⁴ Allen, 192.

⁹⁵ Schoenbaum, 66-67.

⁹⁶ Allen, 193.

and parliament were only parts of a failed system.⁹⁷ Actually, the propaganda of the Nazis was able to appeal to a multitude of groups. The Nazis could speak the language of

“‘worker’, ‘farmer’, ‘soldier’, [and] ‘socialism.’ Each of [those languages were] undefined in varying degrees but all of them were positive in their associations and as such beyond criticism.”⁹⁸

They had promises for youth, farmers, industry, and many other people. Some people, like students, were not offered much from the Nazis since they were considered part of the intellectuals and the old bourgeois who believed they were better than everyone else, which resulted in a decline of scientific research.⁹⁹ Nonetheless, the mass media and propaganda the Nazis used may have contributed greatly to the people’s acceptance of their policies. The leaders of the Nazi party knew that to reach the amount of people they wanted, they would need the most advanced media technology. Nonetheless, the success of the propaganda was due to strong leaders deciding to use it, whereas other political parties did not use effective propaganda to have the nation supporting it.

Nationalism, or the idea of uniting all Germans together, has also been considered a strong reason the people turned to Nazism. Historian Lawrence Birken argued that the seeds of Nazism’s idea of nationalism came from the ideas established by the Enlightenment. When people believed they should rule for themselves instead of kings in the Enlightenment, the Germans would later take that to mean they should rule over all Germans.¹⁰⁰ This idea of leading over all Germans would be a big part of the ideas of taking land in Nazi ideology. It was believed that the Weimar Republic could do nothing to help the Germans who were separated

⁹⁷ Krebs, 142.

⁹⁸ Schoenbaum, 51-52.

⁹⁹ Berghoff, 75-78.

¹⁰⁰ Lawrence Birken, *Hitler as Philosopher: Remnants of the Enlightenment in National Socialism* (Westport: Praeger, 1995), 24-25.

from the rest of Germany. That government could not solve internal problems within Germany, let alone help the ethnic Germans outside Germany. The Nazis on the other hand claimed they could provide help and bring all Germans under them. But nationalism also created a sense of unity among the people. The nationalist aspect of *Volksgemeinschaft* made the people feel that they were important because most of the ideology preached that the German people were essential to making the community work and to maintain it for generations to come, that their voices should be heard, and that their needs should be met. *Volksgemeinschaft* was something that was not so easily defined by the Nazis and could be interpreted many ways by many different types of people to suit the image of a perfect community they wanted.¹⁰¹ Because the idea could be defined differently by different people, it would mean that different people would expect different outcomes from the *Volksgemeinschaft*. Scholars argue that these nationalist tendencies existed in the German people for a long time, but it would take leaders like Hitler to awaken these nationalist views through effective speeches.

It is also possible that some people did see *Volksgemeinschaft* as ideal because it could be useful for the people. If average people used the principle of “people’s community,” then they could see their personal needs, such as good housing and proper health care, met. Social stratification could be reversed if low and middle-class people were using Nazi ideology to get ahead.¹⁰² Because the poor could be included in the *Volk*, or people, the poor saw *Volksgemeinschaft* as more appealing.¹⁰³ For example, because motherhood was so vital for the *Volksgemeinschaft*’s future population, nurses could claim new favorable conditions needed to exist in hospitals to insure that future mothers and their Aryan offspring would be safe and

¹⁰¹ Moritz Föllmer, “The Problem of National Solidarity in Interwar Germany,” *German History* 23 (2005), 203-217.

¹⁰² Connelly, 901-903.

¹⁰³ Stackelberg, 54.

healthy.¹⁰⁴ Small-scale workers like small manufacturers, postal workers, and transportation workers, may have also molded *Volksgemeinschaft* to their definition. Workers in these areas had no, or very little, “sense of class, ideological, or political identity.”¹⁰⁵ They could easily accept the classless society concept of the Nazi ideology. People may have truly believed that whether the Nazi idea of *Volksgemeinschaft* would work or not, people could still use the idea to gain a better life. They still invoked the names of leaders in these pleas for better housing and health care saying that these leaders would want these situations changed. Not only then did the Nazis use their leadership to bring the people under their rule, the lower and middle-class citizens used leadership as a means of getting a better standard of living.

Perhaps most importantly though in getting support was that the party needed a strong leader to move the people into supporting them. Hitler would prove to be that charismatic leader. Leadership was so important because “submission to a leader acting for the common good would weld the nation into a unit, eliminate injustices, and internal strife.”¹⁰⁶ To have dissatisfaction in the government, one needed a strong leader who could eloquently bring out those grievances. Hitler himself before he became powerful believed that a movement could only succeed if its leadership was strong.¹⁰⁷ A strong leader would be able to spread their ideas to the people by using the most modern media and propaganda to get the people to their side.¹⁰⁸ Hitler did not have to be the only leader who would accomplish this task, although some scholars seemed to think so. They considered Hitler as the one who brought the German people together

¹⁰⁴ Connelly, 910.

¹⁰⁵ Fritz, 390.

¹⁰⁶ Abel, 147.

¹⁰⁷ Hitler, 580.

¹⁰⁸ Fritz, 393.

as one nation and one race.¹⁰⁹ Indeed, some scholars believed that “without question, Hitler played a personally vital part both in the rise of Nazism and in the character of Nazi rule.”¹¹⁰

What really mattered was the concept of a strong leader, the idea of the *Führer*. Some Nazi thinkers saw no state, but the *Führer*, as what would make the *Volksgemeinschaft* work.¹¹¹ The *Führer* would not work for the party; the party would work for him. The job of the party after the rise of the Nazis was to do the *Führer*’s bidding and to get more people to support him.¹¹² The *Führer* would be the absolute leader the Nazis called for. The Nazi “law...authorized the *Führer*... as the effective agent not only of the state but of society to limit or expropriate property at will.”¹¹³ The leader of the Nazis would have not just the power over government and the laws that were passed, he would even have the power to tell who could and could not own land and how much they received. It was also important to portray the *Führer* as the perfect German. Hitler, as leader of Germany, was made to appear as the epitome of the *Volksgemeinschaft*.¹¹⁴ However, that was not the only use for the concept of the *Führer*. He would also be used to arouse the enthusiasm of the people to join the Nazi cause. His authority, whether it was true or not, could be invoked by party members to get certain actions and laws to be approved. In the German government, “it [proved] difficult to find any political figure who attracted quite the same amount of adulation as the *Führer*.”¹¹⁵ Just the authority of a leader proved to be important to the German people, and the Nazi party.

As the Nazis stated in their ideology, the party thought it needed one ruler at the top to determine how the *Volksgemeinschaft* would be created and who would be allowed in and out of

¹⁰⁹ Moore, 7.

¹¹⁰ Kershaw, 41.

¹¹¹ Ernst Rudolph Huber in Noakes and Pridham, 199.

¹¹² Hitler in the Conference of Gaueiters in Noakes and Pridham, 235.

¹¹³ Schoenbaum, 154.

¹¹⁴ Stackelberg, *Hitler*, 154-155.

¹¹⁵ Pnayi, 15.

the community. Their leadership policies also involved having only one party in Parliament: the Nazis. With one party, the Nazis would be able to make sure all of their policies were enacted. The Nazis would also not have to worry about trying to negotiate with other parties, whose only concern was getting re-elected. In other words, the Nazi leadership would be having the Nazis in complete control of all functions of German government and having one leader to administer all of these functions.

The strong leader that was going to oversee every aspect of German government would have to have certain qualities. He would have to be capable of getting to the top of German government if he intended to be leader. That meant that the leader would have to be effective at winning the German citizenry over to the Nazi party. They would have to be an effective speaker and could be used as an example for the perfect German racially. He would also have to be able to manage the government and see that all its functions worked towards establishing the *Volksgemeinschaft*. Hitler would prove to have those capabilities. He was a strong speaker and effectively used his speeches to win over more votes for his party. Hitler was also a leader who could appeal to many different types of people. Party officials would describe Hitler as capable of putting on many different faces to address workers, farmers, women, and children.¹¹⁶ As mentioned earlier, he was frequently used as an example of the perfect German throughout Nazi propaganda. He was then a preferable choice for the position of the *Führer*.

In conclusion, the Nazi ideology of the “people’s community,” or *Volksgemeinschaft*, was accepted by the German people through many reasons, but most importantly by a leader, or at least the concept of a leader. Nazi ideology was very contradictory and confusing and it needed a leader who could speak the many languages of the various farmers, businesses, and workers to at least fool people into believing their ideas were simple. The *Volksgemeinschaft*

¹¹⁶ Krebs, 160-161.

tried to appeal and work for all groups and societies, making a strong leader vital to its survival.

While the failure of the Weimar Republic, the depression, nationalism, or even propaganda may have helped the Nazis rise to power, a powerful leader who could bring all these reasons together would prove to be the most important to bringing the Nazis to the very top of the German government.

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