

**No Radical Hangover: Black Power, New Left, and Progressive Politics in the Midwest,
1967-1989**

By

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*Dedicated to Mom, Dad, Brandenn, Jeff, and K.C.,
all of the workers who have had their jobs stolen,
and to all of the activists searching for answers.*

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List of Abbreviations

ACLU	American Civil Liberties Union
Ad Hoc	Ad Hoc Action Group
AFDC	Aid to Families With Dependent Children
AFL	American Federation of Labor
BWC	Black Workers Congress
CBC	Congressional Black Caucus
CIO	Congress of Industrial Organizations
CORE	Congress of Racial Equality
DARE	Detroit Alliance for a Rational Economy
DDA	Downtown Development Authority
DLC	Democratic Leadership Council
DPD	Detroit Police Department
DRUM	Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement
DUL	Detroit Urban League
EDC	Economic Development Corporation
EGC	Economic Growth Corporation
FTGU	From the Ground Up
FSD	Federation for Self-Determination
GCGC	Greater Cleveland Growth Corporation
IPC	Indochina Peace Campaign
LDC	Labor Defense Coalition
LRBW	League of Revolutionary Black Workers
MCLL	Motor City Labor League
MNC	Multinational Corporations
NAACP	National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
NDC/I	New Detroit Committee/New Detroit, Incorporated
OMA	Ohio Manufacturers Association
OPEC	Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries
OPIC	Ohio Public Interest Campaign
PAR	People Against Racism
SCLC	Southern Christian Leadership Conference
SDS	Students for a Democratic Society
STRESS	Stop the Robberies, Enjoy Safe Streets
UAW	United Auto Workers
WCO	West Central Organization
WARN	Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act

Abstract

“No Radical Hangover” recovers the history of left-wing progressivism in the Midwest from 1967 to 1989. In response to the limited achievements of the New Left and black power revolutionary politics, left-wing progressives combined radical analyses of the 1960s urban rebellions, policing, the Vietnam War, and deindustrialization with pragmatic and reformist political strategies such as coalition-building, lobbying, policymaking, and electoral politics.

The study is organized around five case studies illustrating how progressives sought to address particular “focal points” for action—Detroit Reverend Albert Cleage’s attempt to take power after the 1967 rebellion, the city’s anti-police brutality campaign during the early 1970s, the Indochina Peace Campaign’s movement to end U.S. involvement in Southeast Asia, the Detroit Alliance for a Rational Economy (DARE) and the Ohio Public Interest Campaign (OPIC) attempts to respond to deindustrialization and economic recession during the late-1970s and early-1980s.

“No Radical Hangover” reveals the existence of a consequential left-wing progressive politics during the 1970s and 1980s. Progressives in Detroit and Ohio organized successfully around issues of police killings and war and empire. These campaigns successfully won debates around these issues in public discourse and rallied a coalition of different groups and constituencies to achieve their goals. Consequently, left-wing progressive activists did not succumb to sectarianism, neither did they focus on a narrow “identity politics.”

This study also uncovers the struggles that left-wing progressives experienced in their efforts to enact racial and economic justice. OPIC and DARE failed to implement their visions of economic democracy, but it was not due to a lack of political imagination. Rather, DARE and OPIC suffered from a lack of political power, especially in the economic realm. They were, however, successful in devising and articulating alternatives to deindustrialization.

Studying progressive politics in the Midwest during the 1970s and 1980s from comparative, social movement, intellectual, political, and urban perspectives allows one to see how movements against war and empire and police brutality help inform the resurgence of campaigns to confront plant closings.

Introduction

On October, 10, 1987, economic democracy emerged as an issue in the Democratic presidential primary when Reverend Jesse Jackson set out to distinguish his 1988 campaign from his 1984 run with an appeal to the most “disadvantaged” segments of American society and the nation’s workers.¹ While addressing a packed crowd at the Raleigh Civic Center in Raleigh, North Carolina, Jackson combined left-wing critiques of racism, poverty, deindustrialization, the drug trade, and U.S. foreign policy. During his speech, Jackson argued that, while racism remained a serious issue, “economic violence” had emerged as an overriding concern for workers. “Economic violence is the critical issue of our day! When plants close on workers without notice, and leave them without jobs or training for new jobs—that’s economic violence,” Jackson exclaimed.²

Jackson referenced plant closings and job loss several more times in the speech. He argued for “more jobs, less drugs” and connected corporate tax breaks with deindustrialization. Paraphrasing his late mentor, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Jackson declared, “slave labor anywhere is a threat to organized labor everywhere.” With his comments on plant closings, capital flight and corporate tax law, and job loss, Jesse Jackson highlighted deindustrialization as among one of the top concerns of his forthcoming presidential campaign. Job loss remained an issue on the campaign trail for Democrats as both Jackson and Massachusetts’s governor Michael Dukakis endorsed a provision in pending federal trade legislation that would become the

¹ Roger Bruns, *Jesse Jackson: A Biography* (Westport, Connecticut: 2005), 74.

² Jesse Jackson, “A Chance to Serve,” in *Keep Hope Alive: Jesse Jackson’s 1988 Presidential Campaign*, ed. Frank Clemente (Boston: Keep Hope Alive PAC & South End Press, 1988), 27.

nation's first law regulating plant closings—the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN).³ Jesse Jackson's 1988 primary campaign and the passage of the WARN Act in 1989 represented an extension of a movement for left-wing economic politics and to take on the challenge of deindustrialization that had begun during the 1970s.

Once the self-styled black militant, Jackson had first sought the Democratic nomination for the presidency in 1984. Inspired by Congressman Harold Washington's mayoral win in 1983, Jackson aimed to nationalize Washington's "rainbow coalition" strategy by appealing to the "disposed and disaffected."⁴ Still, African Americans comprised the bulk of Jackson's electoral base in the 1984 campaign. Jackson's connections with Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan and his "hymietown" reference to Jewish voters in New York City undermined his efforts to appeal to nonblack voters. In the period between the 1984 campaign and his 1987 announcement, Jackson worked to expand his base of support to include white industrial workers and farmers, gay and lesbians, students, Latino/as, Asian Americans, and left-wing activists. Jackson framed his second campaign in more populist terms and based it on progressive economic principles. Jackson's populist 1988 campaign represented a national culmination of a consequential movement around economic democracy. Like the scores of progressive activists and organizations such as the Ohio Public Interest Campaign (OPIC) and the Detroit Alliance for a Rational Economy (DARE) who advocated for progressive economic policies during the 1970s, Jackson's campaign, as *The Nation's* editors remarked, was "leading a movement for reform, not a revolution."⁵ Jackson's "movement for reform" and "not a revolution" contrasted

³ The WARN Act requires businesses with 100 workers or more to give 60 days notice in advance of a plant closing or layoff. Ronald G. Ehrenberg and George H. Jakubson, *Advance Notice Provisions in Plant Closing Legislation* (Kalamazoo: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, 1988), 5.

⁴ Quoted in Editors, "For Jesse Jackson and His Campaign," *The Nation*, April 16, 1988, 521.

⁵ Howard Brick and Christopher Phelps, *Radicals in America: The U.S. Left Since the Second World War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 258-259.

him, and other left progressives of the 1970s with the self-declared revolutionary movements against imperialism and for black liberation during the late-1960s and early 1970s. However, Jackson's, DARE's, and OPIC's visions of economic democracy was not new as it drew and built upon previous left-wing economic reform movements of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), the Popular Front, and the Poor People's Movement.

Deploying a political, intellectual, and social movement analysis, "No Radical Hangover" recovers this history of left-wing progressive politics in the Midwest from the late 1960s through the 1970s and into 1980s. In response to the limited achievements of the New Left and black power revolutionary politics, progressive activists and organizations continued to articulate radical analyses of imperialism, policing, and economics. Left-wing progressives combined their radical analyses with pragmatic and reformist political strategies such as lobbying, policymaking, and electoral politics. Jesse Jackson's populist 1988 campaign represented the nationalization not just of Harold Washington's 1983 mayoral campaign, but of a significant scaling up of the left-wing progressive politics of the 1970s and 1980s. Left progressives, especially in the Midwest, organized around issues such as urban planning and development, policing, empire, labor, and economic democracy.

These movements around economics, policing, and foreign policy in the Midwest arose in the midst of a national progressive upsurge. This upsurge included nationally-known activists such as Chicago's first black mayor, Harold Washington, Mel King in Boston, Ruth Messinger in New York City, and Tom Hayden in California. It also included national activists such as consumer advocate Ralph Nader. The aforementioned figures operated within the left-liberal realm of the Democratic Party, yet to the right of the feminist, black, and Marxist radicals still pursuing various forms of revolution. Organizers such as Heather Booth created national

institutions such as the Citizen-Labor Energy Coalition (CLEC) and the United Auto Worker (UAW) President Doug Fraser's Progressive Alliance.⁶

DARE and OPIC activists viewed industrial plant closings and economic recession as the most important issues facing progressives and Midwesterners during the 1970s and 1980s. Progressive organizations such as Massachusetts Fair Share and the Campaign to Keep GM Van Nuys Open emerged to confront economic recession and restructuring in other Rustbelt regions.⁷ OPIC and DARE offered their own alternatives to the discursive formation of free market economics and mainstream liberal growth-based urban development. Both organizations derived their visions of economic democracy from their analyses of U.S. society and prior social movement organizing around an array of issues such as police brutality, urban policy and development, and the war in Vietnam. Both organizations exemplified a progressive politics grounded in left-wing critiques of the U.S. political economy.

In "No Radical Hangover," I use the term left-wing progressive politics to refer to the pairing of radical political analysis and pragmatic strategies in the pursuit of social and economic reform. Left-wing progressives eschewed the politics and rhetoric of 1960s revolutionaries. OPIC avoided Marxist critiques of political economy. Left-wing formations such as Detroit's anti-STRESS activists, and organizations such as the Indochina Peace Campaign (IPC), DARE, and OPIC turned radical critiques of urban development, the carceral state, imperialism, and political economy into reformist political strategies. The aforementioned formations worked in coalitions with liberals and organized labor. Left-wing progressives of the 1970s and 1980s

⁶ Andrew Battista, *The Revival of Labor Liberalism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008); James Jennings, "Boston: Blacks and Progressive Politics," in *The New Black Vote: Politics and Power in Four American Cities*, ed. by Rod Bush (San Francisco: Synthesis Publications, 1984). Also see *Radical America's* double issue on black progressive politics during the 1980s: *Radical America*, Vol. 17, No. 6 & Vol. 18, No. 1 (1983-1984).

⁷ Eric Mann, *Taking on General Motors: A Case Study of the UAW Campaign to Keep GM Van Nuys Open* (Los Angeles: Center for Labor Research and Education, Institute of Industrial Relations, University of California, Los Angeles, 1987); Harry C. Boyte, Heather Booth, and Steve Max, *Citizen Action and the New American Populism* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986).

combined popular mobilization with electoral politics, lobbying, and policymaking to eradicate lethal policing and end the war in Indochina. The Ohio Public Interest Campaign and the Detroit Alliance for a Rational Economy advocated for economic democracy. OPIC not only devised and advocated for plant closure legislation, the group called for policies to ensure full employment, to curtail the power of corporations, and for greater democratic decision-making in the economy. DARE devised an urban redevelopment plan—rational reindustrialization—grounded in a mix of market and municipal socialism and worker- and citizen-control over the local economy.

Progressives during the 1970s and 1980s articulated populist critiques of corporate power and advanced a program of “economic democracy”—the establishment of an economy where workers, citizens, communities, and even municipalities would exercise control over production and investment of revenues generated by labor. Regarding progressives’ economic politics, as political scientist James Jennings explains, progressives “did not accept the accumulation or protection of capital as a greater priority than the needs of poor and working class citizens.”⁸ Left-wing progressives’ attempts to enact economic justice also entailed, but were not limited to, greater regulation of corporations, establishment of worker-owned enterprises, and public control over energy, utilities, and banking.

Context determined who opposed progressives in Detroit and Ohio. President Richard Nixon opposed the late antiwar movement that OPIC arose from while the Detroit Police Department and then-Detroit mayor Democrat Roman S. Gribbs sought to defend the city’s policing methods against the anti-police brutality movement’s left-wing. Capitalists—business and corporate leaders and organizations and private developers—resisted OPIC’s and DARE’s

⁸ James Jennings, “Boston: Blacks and Progressive Politics,” in *The New Black Vote: Politics and Power in Four American Cities*, ed. by Rod Bush (San Francisco: Synthesis Publications, 1984), 214-215.

policies. Business organizations such as the Ohio Manufacturers Association (OMA) and the Greater Cleveland Growth Corporation (GCGC) lobbied against OPIC's policies because they saw it as a threat to business' private property rights. In Detroit, Mayor Coleman Young and his labor-liberal-corporate coalition emerged as DARE's opponents. Young felt less threatened than the OMA and the GCGC. When Young criticized the organization, he often did so dismissively. Private sector opposition transpired in the context of a business offensive against organized labor and the left throughout the country during the 1970s. Private interests embarked on a broad strategy to confront left-wing and liberal economics that included political lobbying, influencing university and college curricula, and the media. This business offensive eventually helped discredited key aspects of postwar liberalism such as labor rights and the welfare state.

Historiography

“No Radical hangover” reshapes our understandings of the histories of the antiwar and black power movements, black radicalism, progressive politics, the war on crime, liberal social reform and black urban politics, and deindustrialization during this period. This study concentrates less on the fracturing of the left and more on how the left transformed between 1967 and 1988. Analyzing the left's transformation between 1967 and 1988 requires analyzing strands of new left and black power activism alongside each other. Also, in contrast to recent synthetic histories of the left that often focus solely on familiar national leaders and organizations, this study concentrates on local and state-based progressive organizations and their interaction with local, state, and national politics.

This study elucidates the development of black power and black radical politics after 1967.⁹ Many narratives of the black power movement suggest that black radical politics declined during the 1970s.¹⁰ However, “No Radical Hangover” shows that black radicals had a consequential impact on local politics, as well as in debates around policing, imperialism, urban development, and deindustrialization. Scholars such as political scientist Michael Dawson have highlighted how some leftists have misinterpreted black power and black radicalism during this period.¹¹ Rather than assuming that black radicals only pursued sectarian and/or a narrow identity-based racial politics, this study underscores the importance of the black power movement’s and black radicals’ willingness to engage in coalition and electoral politics during this period.¹² In the wake of the 1967 Detroit rebellion, black power activists such as Reverend

⁹ Debates around periodization in the “long” civil rights and black power movements tend to dominate scholarship. This conversation as pushed scholars to interrogate the meanings of “civil rights” and “black power” as concepts in African American and U.S. politics after emancipation and through the 1970s. However, the problem with the “long” frameworks is that they fail to deeply analyze the transformations of the civil rights and black power movements during the 1970s and 1980s. The progressivism of the 1970s developed within the periodization of the “long” civil rights and black power movements and this politics provokes questions about the relationship between electoral politics and progressive social movements. Black radical Kenneth Cockrel launched his campaign for city council four years after the Black Panthers entered local electoral politics. Mel King ran for mayor on a progressive “rainbow” platform in 1983 after participating in the city’s black power movement during the 1970s.

For work on the “long” civil rights and black power movements see, Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, “The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past,” *Journal of American History*, Vol. 91, No. 4 (Dec 2005); Peniel Joseph, “Black Liberation Without Apology: Reconceptualizing the Black Power Movement,” *The Black Scholar*, 31 (Fall 2001-Winter 2002): 3-4; Matthew J. Countryman, *Up South: Civil Rights and Black Power in Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006). For a critique of the long framework in civil rights and black power studies see Sundiata Keita Cha-Jua and Clarence Lang, “The ‘Long Movement’ as Vampire: Temporal and Spatial Fallacies in Recent Black Freedom Studies,” *The Journal of African American History* (March 2007).

¹⁰ These studies have added to our understandings about the political and structural forces that helped undermine some institutional forms of black radicalism during the 1970s and 1980s such as state repression, internal conflicts, the country’s rightward drift, and the emergence of a generation of black liberal officeholders. Cedric Johnson, *Revolutionaries to Race Leaders*; Adolph Reed, Jr.

¹¹ Michael C. Dawson, *Blacks in and Out of the Left* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2013), 126-174; Todd Gitlin, *The Twilight of Common Dreams: Why America is Wracked by Culture Wars* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 1995).

¹² Many social scientists argue that black politics drifted rightward, even took a neoliberal turn, during this period. Such arguments make sense considering the direction the larger political culture travelled. As historian Heather Ann Thompson remarked about black municipal politics, many African Americans voted for liberal mayors. Many African Americans, however, including Boston’s Mel King, Washington, D.C.’s Marion Barry, Chicago’s Harold Washington, and Congressman Ronald Dellums advocated for or supported progressive policies, politicians, and movements. Heather Ann Thompson, “Rethinking the Collapse of Postwar Liberalism: The Rise of Mayor Coleman

Albert Cleage, Jr. sought to build an intra-racial and multi-class coalition in the effort to push the city's political and business elites to "transfer" power back to the city's black residents. Black radicals from the League of Revolutionary Black Workers, on the other hand, worked with white radicals, as well as liberals, labor activists, civil rights organizations, and black nationalists in the effort to oppose the Detroit Police Department's (DPD), "Stop the Robberies, Enjoy Safe Streets" (STRESS) unit during the early 1970s. Rather than solely focusing on splits within black radical organizations such as the League of Revolutionary Black Workers, "No Radical Hangover," explores black radicals' decisions to engage in coalition and electoral politics.

"No Radical Hangover" also retells the history of the radical flank of the anti-war movement during the early-1970s. Antiwar radicalism did not end with the fracture of the Students for a Democratic Society in 1969. In fact, this investigation of the left argues that one cannot understand how the radical antiwar movement helped end U.S. involvement in Indochina without accounting for Indochina Peace Campaign's contributions.¹³ In response to the political failures of new left radicalism, left-wing progressives in the IPC such as Jane Fonda, Tom Hayden, and others organized across scale—local, regional, and national—to end U.S. military

Young and the Politics of Race in Detroit," in *African-American Mayors: Race, Politics, and the American City*, eds. David R. Colburn and Jeffrey S. Adler (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 223-225.

For the rightward drift in African American politics see Robert C. Smith, "'Politics' Is Not Enough: The Institutionalization of the African American Freedom Movement," *From Exclusion to Inclusion: The Long Struggle for African American Political Power*, eds., Ralph C. Gomes and Linda Faye Williams (New York: Greenwood Press, 1992), 112; Robert C. Smith, *We Have No Leaders: African Americans in the Post-Civil Rights Era* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1996); Reed, Jr., *Stirrings in the Jug*; Cedric Johnson, *Revolutionaries to Race Leaders: Black Power and the Making of African American Politics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007); Manning Marable, *Race, Reform, and Rebellion: The Second Reconstruction and Beyond in Black America, 1945-2006* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2007).

¹³ Charles DeBenedetti, *An American Ordeal: The Antiwar Movement of the Vietnam Era* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1990); Simon Hall, *Rethinking the American Anti-War Movement* (New York: Routledge, 2012); Penny Lewis, *Hardhats, Hippies, and Hawks: The Vietnam Antiwar Movement as Myth and Memory* (Ithaca: ILR Press, 2013); James Miller, *Democracy is in the Streets: From Port Huron to the Siege of Chicago* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987); Simon Hall, *Peace and Freedom: The Civil Rights and Antiwar Movements of the 1960s* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005). Surprisingly, the IPC remains understudied in the scholarship of the post-World War II antiwar movement. Charles DeBenedetti discusses the IPC substantively in his classic study of the antiwar movement, *An American Ordeal*.

involvement in Indochina. Left-wing progressives articulated a radical analysis of war and imperialism. Most importantly, they deployed “focal point theory” as a method of analysis and organizing. They also incorporated congressional lobbying into their campaign strategy. The study of the IPC also emphasizes how left-wing economic politics arose out of critiques of U.S. imperialism and foreign policy. Activists in OPIC considered the globalization of the 1970s as part of the same system.

The analyses of the fate of various 1960s social movements in “No Radical Hangover” asks scholars of social movements, including those of the “long” civil rights and black power movements, to reconsider how movements develop, interrogate the meanings of movement success, failure, and their periodization.¹⁴ Some scholars and activists argue that the left abandoned a universalist class-based politics after the 1960s in favor of “identity politics” and failed to devise a response to transformations in political economy.¹⁵ The truth of these arguments is only a matter of degree. Some leftist movements and organizations did split. However, out of the black power movement in Detroit, that city’s campaign against police killings, SDS, and the IPC, activists in Detroit and Ohio reconstituted themselves in progressive organizations in response to economic restructuring.

This study’s analysis of left-wing responses to the Detroit Police Department’s killings of its city’s residents complicates debates around black agency and war on crime policies during the

¹⁴ For work on the “long” civil rights and black power movements see, Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, “The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past,” *Journal of American History*, Vol. 91, No. 4 (Dec 2005); Peniel Joseph, “Black Liberation Without Apology: Reconceptualizing the Black Power Movement,” *The Black Scholar*, 31 (Fall 2001-Winter 2002) : 3-4; Matthew J. Countryman, *Up South: Civil Rights and Black Power in Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006). For a critique of the long framework in civil rights and black power studies see Sundiata Keita Cha-Jua and Clarence Lang, “The ‘Long Movement’ as Vampire: Temporal and Spatial Fallacies in Recent Black Freedom Studies,” *The Journal of African American History* (March 2007).

¹⁵ Todd Gitlin, *The Twilight of Common Dreams: Why America is Wracked by Culture Wars* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 1995); Gosse, *Rethinking the New Left*; Cowie, *Stayin’ Alive*. More scholars are challenging the identity-class and economic politics binary. See Marisa Chappell, *The War on Welfare* and Gordon K. Mantler, *Power to the Poor: Black-Brown Coalition & the Fight for Economic Justice, 1960-1974* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2013).

late-1960s and early-1970s.¹⁶ Recent scholarship seeking to explain the origins of the war on crime and mass incarceration tend to focus on policymakers' role in formulating and implementing policy. The post-World War II carceral state is conceived of as a long-term bipartisan political project, rather than a system driven by conservatism. In an attempt to restore black agency, Michael J. Fortner has suggested that African Americans were among the grassroots activists who demanded policies such as the Rockefeller drug laws that contributed to the growth of the carceral state during the 1970s and 1980s. "No Radical Hangover" captures a more nuanced picture of black responses to crime and racialized and violent policing. Moderate black leaders such as the Detroit Urban League's Frances A. Kornegay, as well as many black Detroiters, initially supported the Detroit Police Department's STRESS. But STRESS's deadly tactics provoked some black Detroiters to change their minds about the unity.

While many black Detroiters supported tough on crime initiatives, anti-black state violence also served as a catalyst for radical politics. The left-wing of the anti-STRESS campaign linked their analysis of the carceral state in Detroit to urban development, corporate power, and war. They reframed crime as a product of capitalism and racism rather than culture and behavior. They also refocused their analysis of crime on corporations such as Chrysler.

"No Radical Hangover" builds on the scholarship that contextualizes the history of black mayors and urban politics within the post-World War II structural transformation of cities that included deindustrialization, white flight, shifts in federal urban policy, urban fiscal crises, and

¹⁶ Heather Ann Thompson, "Why Mass Incarceration Matters: Rethinking Crisis, Decline, and Transformation in Postwar American History," *Journal of American History*, Vol. 97, No. 3; Elizabeth Kai Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime: The Making of Mass Incarceration in America* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2016); Donna Murch, "Who's to Blame for Mass Incarceration," *Boston Review*, October 16, 2015; Michael J. Fortner, "Historical Method and the Noble Lie," *Boston Review*, October 23, 2015.

the emergence of neoliberal governance.¹⁷ This study suggests that some liberal black mayors such as Detroit's Coleman Young did not turn towards austerity out of an adherence to a neoliberal ideology, but out of sheer pragmatism.¹⁸ Young and other black mayors challenged the federal government's stance toward struggling Northeastern and Midwestern cities during the 1970s. In the same year Gerald Ford's administration initially opposed a bailout of New York City, Ford also ignored Young's plan for massive federal investment in the nation's cities.¹⁹ Although Young successfully acquired federal resources from the Carter administration, the federal government's unwillingness to completely reconstruct America's cities also forced the mayor to continue his reliance on austere measures and private sector investment.

"No Radical Hangover" highlights the tensions between black liberalism and black radicalism in urban politics. After supporting Young's 1973 mayoral candidacy, and the mayor's dismantling of STRESS in 1974, black radical city councilman Kenneth Cockrel emerged as the chief critic of Young's administration. Cockrel argued that Young's development policies served

¹⁷ Political scientists have supplied many of the analyses of black mayors thus far. For a sample of this literature see William E. Nelson, Jr. and Philip J. Meranto, *Electing Black Mayors: Political Action in the Black Community* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1977); Michael B. Preston, Lenneal J. Henderson, Jr., Paul Puryear, *The New Black Politics: The Search for Political Power* (New York: Longman, Inc., 1982); Adolph Reed, *Stirrings in the Jug*.

Some historians have taken to studying black mayors as a group. Scholars such as David R. Colburn and J. Phillip Thompson, III have aspired to classify black mayors according to periodization, personal background, campaign platforms, and governance. See David R. Colburn and Jeffrey S. Adler, eds., *African-American Mayors: Race, Politics, and the American City* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2001); J. Phillip Thompson, III, *Double Trouble: Black Mayors, Black Communities, and the Call for a Deep Democracy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006). Matthew J. Countryman, "'Who Needs the Bullet When You've Got the Ballot': African American Big City Mayors and the Public Discourse of Black Power," Paper presented at the Eisenberg Institute for Historical Studies, University of Michigan (January 14, 2010). See Leonard N. Moore, *Carl B. Stokes and the Rise of Black Political Power* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002).

¹⁸ See Spence, *Knocking the Hustle: The Neoliberal Turn in Black Politics* (New York: Punctum Books, 2015); Lang, *Black America in the Shadow of the Sixties: Notes on the Civil Rights Movement, Neoliberalism, and Politics* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2015).

¹⁹ President Ford's administration initially opposed a bailout of New York City in 1975. For analyses of New York City's fiscal crisis see William K. Tabb, *The Long Default: New York City and the Urban Fiscal Crisis* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1982); Robert Fitch, *The Assassination of New York* (New York: Verso, 1993); Janet L. Lughod, *New York, Chicago, Los Angeles: America's Global Cities* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999); Soffer, *Ed Koch and the Rebuilding of New York City* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010); David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

business' and private developers' interests. Aware of the broader political and economic context, black radical city councilman Kenneth Cockrel and DARE devised and articulated a more radical proposal for revitalizing Detroit. *Rational Reindustrialization* represented the city's left response to fiscal deficits, deindustrialization, white flight, and economic recession.

The dissertation's analysis of 1970s left progressivism and economic democracy complicates analyses of transformations of political economy and culture during the 1970s and 1980s.²⁰ In past scholarship, the 1970s has been seen as a period characterized by the decline of the New Deal Order and the U.S. left.²¹ Recently scholars assert that the 1970s are pivotal in the shift from manufacturing to finance capitalism and the period when the American working class's significance in political culture declined. "No Radical Hangover" maintains that the period between 1967 and 1989 was consequential for the progressive left.²² Progressives in Detroit and Ohio influenced policing, helped end the war in Indochina, won elected office, and

²⁰ This project contributes to the growing field of scholarship that seeks to understand the transformations in U.S. politics and economics during the 1970s and 1980s. Scholars have deployed countless metaphors, phrases, and adjectives to describe and interpret post-1970s America. Judith Stein sees the 1970s as a "pivotal decade" where the U.S. political economy turned from an industrial to a financial-based economy. Jefferson Cowie echoes Stein's characterization of the 1970s, where he writes American society "really did move in a new direction." Natasha Zaretsky's analysis of the American family during the 1970s captures a collective sense of decline whereas Daniel T. Rodgers believes that the 1970s represented an "age of fracture." What is important about the new political history of the 1970s establishes what they consider the decade as its own period. New analyses state more than the obvious—that "something happened"—and challenge psychological understandings of the period. Scholars understand the period not as a narcissistic one devoid of political conflict, but one of political and cultural engagement, contention, uncertainty, and transformation, which is the case for any period. See Bruce J. Schulman, *The Seventies: The Great Shift in American Culture, Society, and Politics* (New York: Da Capo Press, 2001); Edward D. Berkowitz, *Something Happened: A Political and Cultural Overview of the Seventies* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006); Philip Jenkins, *Decade of Nightmares: The End of the Sixties and the Making of Eighties America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006); Natasha Zaretsky, *No Direction Home: The American Family and the Fear of National Decline, 1968-1980* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007); Laura Kalman, *Right Star Rising: A New Politics, 1974-1980* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2010); Dan Berger, ed., *The Hidden 1970s: Histories of Radicalism* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2010); Cowie, *Stayin' Alive*; Ferguson, et al., eds., *The Shock of the Global; Stein, Pivotal Decade*; Daniel T. Rodgers, *Age of Fracture* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2011).

²¹ Steve Fraser and Gary Gerstle, eds. *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order, 1930-1980* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989).

²² Judith Stein, *Pivotal Decade: How the United States Traded Factories for Finance in the Seventies* (New Haven: Yale University Press); Jefferson Cowie, *Stayin' Alive: The 1970s and the Last Days of the Working Class* (New York: New Press, 2010).

influenced discussions on economic restructuring and federal policy. To see the ways in which progressives sought to push the country left in the 1970s and 1980s, one must look at local and state politics whereas most political histories of the period focus on Presidential and national politics.²³ Local and state politics was where progressives tended to focus. Judith Stein argues that industrial policy must be national and come from the top-down.²⁴ Progressives, however, conceded that they did not have the political capital, nor the proper organization, to influence national domestic policy during the late-1970s and early-1980s. Organizations such as OPIC and DARE sought to build economic policy up from the state and local levels.

Studying progressives' responses to deindustrialization in the Midwest means analyzing how they addressed the contradictions in the political economy of New Deal liberalism. Economic and racial liberalism was grounded in the early-to-mid twentieth century fordist industrial economy. As scholars such as Judith Stein has shown, particular liberal tenets and economic forces like U.S.'s free market-based foreign policy and deindustrialization undermined aspects of the New Deal governing ideology.²⁵ This study demonstrates how left activists sought to make sense of how liberal policies grounded in an adherence to free markets and private property rights undercut the sustainability of a racially-integrated blue-collar middle class based upon semi-skilled industrial labor, the welfare state, racial integration into the U.S. economy, and the full realization of citizenship for racialized groups such as African Americans. What progressives had in common with conservative and centrist policymakers who saw free market

²³ Matthew Lassiter, "Political History Beyond the Red-Blue Divide," *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 98, No. 3 (Dec. 2011).

²⁴ Judith Stein, *Running Steel, Running America: Race, Economic Policy, and the Decline of Liberalism* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 249; *Pivotal Decade*.

²⁵ Judith Stein, *Pivotal Decade*. Oren M. Levin-Waldman also makes this argument in relation to deindustrialization in his book, *Plant Closure, Regulation, and Liberalism: The Limits to Liberal Public Philosophy*.

fundamentalism and the finance sector as the answer to the economic crisis was the recognition of the growing obsolescence of New Deal liberalism during the 1970s.

A Brief History of Economic Democracy

The progressive advocacy for economic democracy during the 1970s and 1980s is a key theme in “No Radical Hangover.” In contrast to New Deal liberalism and its emphasis on the use of macroeconomic policy to maintain the overall health of market capitalism, progressive economic political activists have long sought greater democratic control over local and regional economies within the American polity. Industrial plant closings, crises in energy, stagflation, urban fiscal crises, and the general unraveling of Keynesian economics all pushed activists to try to devise an economic politics distinct from New Deal liberalism and neoliberalism.²⁶

Progressives constructed a broad economic program that synthesized democratic socialist principles with aspects of New Deal policy to address deindustrialization. Fundamental to all of these programs was the demand for more accountability from the private sector and greater public control over economic institutions and natural resources.

Economic democracy is an intellectual and political descendant of early-to-mid twentieth century notions of industrial democracy. The concept of industrial democracy emerged in the midst of the Progressive Era in the early twentieth century.²⁷ After the economic turbulence of the late-nineteenth century, labor organizers, politicians, and progressive activists sought to rein

²⁶ Social scientist Lester Spence defines neoliberalism “as the general idea that society works best when the people and the institutions within it work or are shaped to work according to market principles.” Neoliberal ideology combines classical liberal principles—a belief in free markets, individualism, and private property rights—with a prerogative to privatize public services and institutions, dismantle the modern welfare state, and destroy the organized labor movement. Spence, 3.

²⁷ Douglass Rossinow, *Visions of Progress: The Left-Liberal Tradition in America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 6; Steve Fraser, “The ‘Labor Question,’” in *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order, 1930-1980*, eds. Steve Fraser and Gary Gerstle (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1989); Nelson Lichtenstein and Howell John Harris, eds. *Industrial Democracy in America: The Ambiguous Promise* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

in the power of growing corporations. They advocated different iterations of industrial democracy during this period. Expressions of industrial democracy ranged from Samuel Gompers's American Federation of Labor's (AFL) call for collective bargaining over wages, hours, and work conditions within a market economy to the Industrial Workers of the World's (IWW) syndicalist vision of worker-governed industries.²⁸ For advocates politically in between the AFL and the IWW, the concept suggested an infusion of democracy into industrial relations and collective ownership over production.²⁹

Industrial democracy percolated in U.S. political culture as the nation entered into a potentially grave economic crisis with the Great Depression. The concept boasted several features that extended beyond collective bargaining—greater decision-making power for workers, 'industrial jurisprudence,' and a social wage for all.³⁰ The Congress of Industrial Organizations promoted a robust notion of industrial democracy between 1935 and 1945. Trade unionists such as CIO President John Lewis advocated for restoring the balance between workers and employers in bargaining during the 1930s.³¹ He called for democratic decision-making in industry. "If we are to have political democracy in this land of ours, we must also have industrial democracy, democracy in our industrial establishments which will recognize that the rights of those who work for a living are equal to those who merely profit from the labor of those for a living," Lewis stated in the essay "The Struggle for Industrial Democracy."³² CIO trade unions used the strike weapon as a strategy for pursuing economic democracy, most notably in the 1936

²⁸ Milton Derber, "The Idea of Industrial Democracy in America, 1898-1915," *Labor History* (Fall 1966), 266.

²⁹ Derber; "The Idea of Industrial Democracy in America, 1898-1915"; Nelson Lichtenstein and Howell John Harris, *Industrial Democracy in America: The Ambiguous Promise*; Joseph A. McCartin, *Labor's Great War: The Struggle for Industrial Democracy and the Origins of Modern American Labor Relations, 1912-1921*

³⁰ Lichtenstein, *State of the Union: A Century of American Labor* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 32.

³¹ Marc Stears, *Demanding Democracy: American Radicals in Search of a New Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 111-112.

³² John L. Lewis, "The Struggle for Industrial Democracy," *Common Sense*, (March 1937), 8.

UAW Flint sit-down strike. As part of President Roosevelt's New Deal, the 1935 National Labor Relations Act, or the Wagner Act, institutionalized collective bargaining.

The black radical tradition, with its emphasis on both Marxist and racial analyses of political economy and social relations, served as a crucial source of inspiration for progressive politics during the 1970s and 1980s. Advocates of the black radical tradition believe that racism, capitalism, and imperialism structures American society, especially the U.S.'s domestic and foreign policy. Black radical W.E.B. DuBois advocated for economic democracy—or a black cooperative commonwealth—during the 1930s and 1940s. As the Great Depression reinvigorated calls for industrial democracy among labor leaders and liberals, economic crisis provoked Du Bois to consider economic justice for African Americans. Drawing from his studies of Karl Marx, DuBois argued for the importance of democratizing industry. DuBois wrote in *Dusk of Dawn: The Autobiography of the Race Concept*:

But through the crimson illumination of war, I...saw even more clearly that so-called democracy today was allowing the mass of people to have only limited voice in government; that democratic control of what are present the most important functions of men: work and earning a living and distributing goods and services; that here we did not have democracy; we had oligarchy, and oligarchy based on monopoly and income; and this oligarchy was determined to deny democracy in industry as it had once been determined to deny democracy in legislation and choice of officials.³³

Similar to the radicals who challenged capitalists' private property rights in the Progressive Era, DuBois called on African Americans to organize a black cooperative commonwealth where they would construct a planned economy based upon communal property ownership. In an editorial entitled "Segregation," that appeared in the January 1934 edition of *The Crisis*, Du Bois articulated a separatist solution to racism and economic exploitation. As President Roosevelt's administration considered steps to address economic depression, Du Bois argued for African

³³ W.E.B. DuBois, *Dusk of Dawn: An Essay toward an Autobiography of a Race Concept* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1991), 285.

Americans to demand their fair share. “Groups of communities and farms inhabited by colored folk should be voluntarily formed. In no case should there be any discrimination against white and blacks. But, at the same time, colored people should come forward, should organize and conduct enterprises,” Du Bois wrote.³⁴

DuBois’s socialist vision of a democratic and cooperatively planned economy was distinctly different from the Nation of Islam’s economic program with its emphasis on privately-owned black businesses serving the religious organization. DuBois’s model influenced radical black journalist Robert L. Allen’s prescription for economic justice in his 1969 book, *Black Awakening in Capitalist America*.³⁵ Similarly, Detroit Reverend Albert B. Cleage, Jr. saw the construction of a black cooperative as the answer to the urban crisis in the city after its 1967 rebellion.

The idea of industrial democracy, as labor historian Nelson Lichtenstein argues, narrowed between the 1930s and 1950 when the United Auto Workers (UAW) signed its landmark contract with General Motors. The UAW launched a series of strikes in GM to develop leverage in negotiations. UAW President Walter Reuther sought a contract with the Big 3 automakers that comprised wide-ranging elements that included pensions, health care, and labor input on location decisions.³⁶ The “Treaty of Detroit” ensured income raises, health benefits, and pensions for union members. This arrangement served as a template for other organized labor unions. However, the firm would pay the aforementioned benefits rather than the federal government. Also, and most importantly for this dissertation, the collective bargaining regime

³⁴ W.E.B. Du Bois, “Segregation,” in *W.E.B. Du Bois: A Reader*, ed. David Levering Lewis (New York: Henry Holt & Company, 1995), 557-558; Zhang Juguo, *W.E.B. Du Bois: The Quest for the Abolition of the Color Line* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 114-115.

³⁵ Robert L. Allen, *Black Awakening in Capitalist America: An Analytic History* (New York: Doubleday, 1969), 234.

³⁶ Nelson Lichtenstein, *Walter Reuther: The Most Dangerous Man in Detroit* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997).

also reified corporations' private property rights. Corporations retained control over investment decisions, technology, and plant location. They emerged from the 1950 negotiations with their command over capital and scale intact.³⁷ The Treaty of Detroit's reification of management prerogatives underscored the fundamental dilemma facing economic progressives—how to acquire the power and resources to challenge capital's private property rights.

One of the links between the industrial democracy of the 1930's and the activism of OPIC and DARE can be found in the Students for a Democratic Society's (SDS) promotion of participatory democracy and economics in the 1960s. SDS viewed organized labor skeptically, seeing the trade union movement in the years after the Treaty of Detroit as too reformist and bureaucratic to push for a democratization of the economy. SDS sought to move beyond Old Left notions of industrial democracy and post-World War II bureaucratic unionism. Instead, new leftists sought to apply the term, "participatory democracy," to the economic as well as the political realms. "It is not possible to believe that true democracy can exist where a minority utterly controls enormous wealth and power," SDS declared. SDS's 1962 mission statement, *The Port Huron Statement*, advanced a politics that anticipated progressives' emphasis on the "public interest" during the 1970s. *The Port Huron Statement* called for greater government involvement in the economy and for "the public" to "determine economic development."³⁸

The movement for economic democracy of the 1970s, with its embrace of social democratic principles such as worker control over industry, thus had deep roots in American labor politics. OPIC and DARE both departed from the collective bargaining notion of industrial democracy of the mid-to-late twentieth century and returned to the CIO's tripartite goals of economic governance. 1970s progressives favored a recuperation of 1930s and 1940s industrial

³⁷ Lichtenstein, *State of the Union*, 123-124.

³⁸ Tom Hayden, *The Port Huron Statement: The Visionary Call of the 1960s* (New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 2005), 75 & 138.

democracy combined with updated commitment to racial justice. The left-wing progressivism of the 1970s called for using the state to regulate capital flight and make possible worker, citizen, and local government control over industry. Members of OPIC committed themselves to supporting the concept of full employment, even to the point of supporting liberal Democratic employment legislation. In contrast, DARE viewed worker and community ownership of industrial property as the most rational strategy to achieve full employment. Groups such as DARE challenged the assumption that rationality only existed in free market capitalism. Industrial capitalism, as practiced in Detroit and elsewhere, inevitably created job loss. Progressive organizations and activists believed communities were entitled to industrial property rights because of the role that their labor played in generating value for firms and as a way to protect local jobs. Progressives' embrace of economic democracy reflected their recognition that the U.S. political culture was drifting away from New Deal liberalism and Keynesianism during the 1970s and 1980s.

Economic democracy arose during the 1970s and 1980s in response to economic recession and restructuring and at the same time as neoliberalism and other free market orthodoxies.³⁹ “No Radical Hangover” contends that economic democracy experienced a resurgence in response to the period of tremendous economic turbulence between 1967 and 1989. The urban crisis came to a head during the mid-1960s as African Americans revolted in

³⁹ Harvey defines the term as “a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade. David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 3. For discussions of neoliberalism in urban history and policy, black politics, and feminism, see Jonathan Soffer, *Ed Koch and the Rebuilding of New York City* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010); Jason Hackworth, *The Neoliberal City: Governance, Ideology, and Development in American Urbanism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006); Clarence Lang, *Black America in the Shadow of the Sixties: Notes on the Civil Rights Movement, Neoliberalism, and Politics* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2015); Lester Spence, *Knocking the Hustle: Against the Neoliberal Turn in Black Politics* (Brooklyn: Punctum Books, 2015); Nancy Fraser, *Fortunes of Feminism: From State-Managed Capitalism to Neoliberal Crisis* (New York: Verso, 2013).

cities such as Chicago, Cleveland, Newark, and Detroit. While many white Americans benefited from the postwar boom, African Americans living in cities suffered from the effects of capital flight and suburbanization, as well as a from residential segregation, police brutality, and chronic unemployment. Inflation rates rose during the late 1960s as President Lyndon B. Johnson engaged in inflationary spending by simultaneously escalating of the war in Vietnam and maintain the Great Society.⁴⁰ The 1973 and 1979 oil shocks drove up energy prices in the United States and sent the manufacturing sector in the U.S. economy reeling. Auto, appliance, textile, furniture, and television manufacturers struggled. Energy shocks and ‘stagflation’ (simultaneous high levels of inflation and unemployment) provoked a national recession in 1974 and 1975.

The global political economy also underwent significant transformations during the 1970s. Keynesian economics entered into crisis starting in the early 1970s. President Nixon’s administration pulled out of the Bretton Woods international monetary system to compete with Japan’s and Germany’s cheap currency. The U.S. began reporting trade deficits for the first time since the late nineteenth century. Organized labor unions, leftist economists and scholars, and progressive organizations such as OPIC paid special attention to the growth of multinational corporations (MNC). MNCs were characterized by their greater command of productive scale and efforts to consolidate production and disparate markets into a single global economic unit. Postwar MNCs capitalized upon technological advances such as containerization and advanced communications which enabled them to move capital with less effort and manage labor and production on more of a global scale.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Wyatt Wells, *American Capitalism, 1945-2000: Continuity and Change from Mass Production to the Information Society* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2003), 69-70.

⁴¹ Richard J. Barnet and Ronald E. Müller, *Global Reach: The Power of Multinational Corporations* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1974); Judith Stein, “Politics and Policies in the 1970s and the Early Twenty-First Century: The Linked Recession,” in *Workers in Hard Times: A Long View of Economic Crises*, eds. Leon Fink and Joan Sangster (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2014).

The late 1970s and early 1980s were also plagued by economic turbulence and shocks and crises in cities and industries such as automobiles and steel. The fiscal crisis of the state threatened cities such as New York City and Cleveland, as they almost defaulted in 1975 and 1978 due to strained budgets. Scholars point to government and private responses to these crises as sources of the development of neoliberal governance with its emphasis on the privatization of what had previously been socialized.⁴² The Chrysler Corporation almost failed in 1979 after suffering staggering losses in 1978. Federal, state, and local entities enacted regulatory agencies that aimed to structurally reorient local governments away from public welfare spending. They also forced struggling corporations such as Chrysler to reorient itself towards lean, and more flexible, production, which often entailed shedding factories and workers. Structural adjustment, typically associated with global regulatory institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, sought to roll back welfare states, privatize services, and free capital from legal restraints.⁴³ New York City was forced to reorient the city away from providing services such as free college tuition, low-cost transportation, and welfare. City workers, as with laborers for Chrysler, were also expected to subsidize public and corporate debt. In 1978, a local bank, Cleveland Trust, demanded Cleveland Mayor Dennis Kucinich sell the city's municipal electric company to the private Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company in exchange for rolling over bank notes to cover the city's debt.⁴⁴ The steel industry also entered into crisis during the late 1970s as it shed thousands of jobs. The recessions between 1979 and 1982 straddled Ronald Reagan's election. U.S. Federal Reserve Bank chairman Paul Volcker helped initiate the

⁴² Hackworth, *The Neoliberal City*; Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*; William K. Tabb, *The Long Default: New York City and the Urban Fiscal Crisis* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1982).

⁴³ David McNally, *Another World is Possible: Globalization and Anti-Capitalism* (Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Publishing, 2002), 163.

⁴⁴ Todd Swanstrom, *The Crisis of Growth Politics: Cleveland, Kucinich, and the Challenge of Urban Populism* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1985), 154.

downturn by raising interest rates in 1979.⁴⁵ President Ronald Reagan’s administration also enacted austerity onto poorer and working Americans by cutting federal welfare spending.

During the 1960s, the politics of left-wing social movements—civil rights, black power, organized labor, the new left, and feminism—had been grounded in the New Deal political economy—a politics that emphasized integration into political and economic institutions and the redistribution of the fruits of economic growth. In the 1970s, however, progressives, along with conservatives and liberals, had to confront the fact that the American economy would not experience infinite growth. Policymakers and activists scrambled to address a crisis-prone economy. No post-capitalist future was on the horizon. 1970s left progressive economic politics was rooted in a politics of limits in industrial America. This politics emphasized control over declining cities and industries. Left progressives fought against corporations who had abandoned the post-war social contract. They also worked for community and state control over public goods (including industrial property) and industrial conservation and retention.

Progressivism and the Political Economy of the Midwest

Left progressive politics, especially expressions of economic democracy, took root in the Midwest. Scholars often point to the oil shocks and chronic stagflation as the most consequential economic crises of the 1970s.⁴⁶ Deindustrialization, however, constituted the more fundamental transformation in the political economy of the Midwest.⁴⁷ For most of the 20th century,

⁴⁵ David McNally, *Global Slump: The Economics and Politics of Crisis and Resistance* (Oakland: PM Press, 2010), 33.

⁴⁶ Charles S. Maier, “Malaise’: The Crisis of Capitalism in the 1970s,” in *The Shock of the Global: The 1970s in Perspective*, eds. Niall Ferguson, Charles S. Maier, Erez Manela, Daniel J. Sargent (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010), 29; Meg Jacobs, *Panic at the Pump: The Energy Crisis and the Transformation of American Politics in the 1970s* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2016).

⁴⁷ It is important to note that regional categories such as the North and South, Rustbelt and Sunbelt, are political and cultural constructions. As historians such as Andrew Highsmith and Matthew Lassiter have pointed out, these constructions often obscure histories of uneven economic development and structural racism within regions, states,

manufacturing, especially of automobiles, tires, steel, and durable goods, had served as the bedrock of the region's economy. Consequently, cities such as Gary, Indiana and Chicago, Illinois, and states such as Michigan and Ohio were particularly hurt by plant shutdowns, economic recessions, and international competition, especially from Japanese manufacturers during the 1970s and 1980s. Industrial plants closed at alarming rates during the 1970s and 1980s. According to scholar Pearl Kramer, the region lost 829,000 manufacturing jobs between 1977 and 1986.⁴⁸ The decline of Detroit's manufacturing base is infamous. Manufacturing employment in the city dropped by 63% between 1970 and 1990. The deindustrialization of Chicago is less known. Chicago lost 32.4% of its manufacturing jobs between 1979 and 1986. Between 1977 and 1979, Youngstown lost nearly 10,000 jobs due to steel mill closings. Cleveland lost 68,442 manufacturing jobs between 1979 and 1983. The steel crisis hit Youngstown during the late 1970s and it decimated Gary's economy in the next decade as U.S. Steel shed thousands of jobs.⁴⁹

As scholars have documented, many urban industrial centers suffered from steep population loss due to suburbanization and out-migration from the region after World War II. Gary, Indiana lost 35 percent of its population between 1960 and 1990.⁵⁰ Between 1970 and

and metropolitan areas. "No Radical Hangover" relies upon the U.S. Census Bureau's definition of the Midwest, which includes twelve states. This dissertation, however, mostly concentrates on the politics of activists in what is considered the East North Central Division of the region where Illinois, Michigan, and Ohio are located. The Midwest is contrasted with the "Rustbelt," as that region often includes Northeastern states such as New York and Pennsylvania and western cities such as Oakland, but does not include Midwestern states such as Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota. See Matthew Lassiter; Andrew Highsmith, *Demolition Means Progress: Flint, Michigan, and the Fate of the American Metropolis* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2015).

⁴⁸ Pearl M. Kamer, *The U.S. Economy in Crisis: Adjusting to the New Realities* (New York: Praeger, 1988), 20; Cleveland and Youngstown citations. John F. McDonald, *Urban America: Growth, Crisis, and Rebirth* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2008), 168; Midwest Center for Labor Research, *The Deindustrialization of Chicago* (Chicago: MCLR, 1989), 1.

⁴⁹ S. Paul O'Hara, "Envisioning the Steel City: The Legend and Legacy of Gary, Indiana," in *Beyond the Ruins: The Meanings of Deindustrialization*, eds. Jefferson Cowie and Joseph Heathcott (Ithaca: ILR Press, 2003), 230.

⁵⁰ U.S. Census Bureau, *Census of Population*, Vol. 1, Characteristics of the Population, Part 16, Indiana (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1973), 17; *1980 Census of Population*, Vol. 1, Characteristics of the Population, Part 16, Indiana (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1982), 23; *1990 Census of*

1990, Detroit's population declined from 32 percent. Chicago lost a little over 10 percent of its population during the 1970s. Cleveland's metropolitan area suffered a 9 percent loss in population during that period whereas the city lost 23.6 percent of its residents during the 1970s. In contrast, Southern and Western states grew by nearly 35 percent during the 1970s and 1980s.⁵¹ The black population grew after WWII. The black populations in Chicago, Detroit, and Cleveland during the 1970s. Chicago's black population increased from 32.8 percent to 39.5 percent during the 1970s. Cleveland's black population increased from 44 percent to 66 percent while Detroit's increased drastically from 44 percent to 63 percent during the same period.⁵² The demographic transformation of U.S. cities, especially of many Midwestern industrial urban centers, led to new opportunities for black Americans to ascend to political power in cities during the 1960s and 1970s.⁵³

Putting OPIC's and DARE's visions of economic democracy within a larger political context illustrates the depth of the progressive politics of deindustrialization. Scholars and activists have produced many useful case studies of workers' and community responses to factory shutdowns.⁵⁴ However, these case studies fail to draw connections between local struggles and the broader circulation of ideas within liberal and leftist political circles. Approaching progressive responses to deindustrialization and economic recession from comparative, social movement, intellectual, political, and urban perspectives allows one to see

Population, Vol. 1, Characteristics of the Population, Part 16, Indiana (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1992), 3.

⁵¹ Richard Bernard, "Introduction: Snowbelt Politics," in *Snowbelt Cities: Metropolitan Politics in the Northeast and Midwest*, ed. Richard Bernard (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 3.

⁵² McDonald, 161-171; Peter Gavrilovich and Bill McGraw, *The Detroit Almanac: 300 Years of Life in the Motor City* (Detroit: Detroit Free Press, 2000).

⁵³ Adolph Reed, Jr., *Stirrings in the Jug: Black Politics in the Post-Segregation Era* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 79-116.

⁵⁴ Mann, *Taking on General Motors*; Staughton Lynd, *The Fight Against Shutdowns: Youngstown's Steel Mill Closings* (San Pedro: Singlejack Books, 1982); Louis Moser Illes, *Sizing Down: Chronicle of a Plant Closing* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996); Sherry Lee Linkon and John Russo, *Steeltown, U.S.A.: Work and Memory in Youngstown* (Lawrence, Kan.: University of Kansas Press, 2002).

how movements against war and empire and police brutality informed anti-plant closing campaigns. “No Radical Hangover” connects OPIC’s and DARE’s economic analyses and politics to a progressive tradition that extended back to the early twentieth century, to the labor politics of the 1930s and 1940s, and to 1960s radical activism. Neglecting this important context obscures the ways that the work of progressive activists and organizations arose out of radical social movements of the 1960s.⁵⁵

Much of the recent historical literature analyzing the transformations of regional political economies during the mid-to-late twentieth century has focused on the rise of the South and West, the so-called “Sunbelt,” whose economy is grounded in conservative political structures and cultural values.⁵⁶ These studies are important since they chart how economies of oil, defense, and hi-tech have reshaped the geography of economic growth, political power, and culture in the U.S.⁵⁷ However, Sunbelt ascension narratives, as well as studies of urban crisis in cities like

⁵⁵ This is the problem with Michael Stewart Foley’s interpretation of Youngstown activists’ fight against shutdowns in the steel industry. He casts them as part of a “front porch politics.” Front porch politics emphasizes local campaigns and movements where participants are moved to act in response to an immediate crisis. According to Foley, these struggles “were often less motivated by predetermined ideological positions than by the promptings of their own experience.” While it is true that the Youngstown steelworkers Foley includes in his study sought to confront an immediate crisis, his frame downplays the activist histories of organizers such as Staughton Lynd and Gar Alperovitz. It also downplays how these struggles are reflective of historical confrontations between labor and employers, even if the workers did not frame them as such. Michael Stewart Foley, *Front Porch Politics: The Forgotten Heyday of American Activism in the 1970s and 1980s* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2013), 5; 181-200.

⁵⁶ Scholars who document the “rise” of the Sunbelt rightfully question what observers of the uneven economic development between the Northeast and Midwest and the South and West often called the “second war between the states.” Instead they assert cultural constructions tend to taper over intraregional uneven development and competition. “No Radical Hangover” illustrates how progressives organization such as DARE, OPIC, as well as Tom Hayden’s Center for Economic Democracy and the Washington, D.C.-based Conference of Alternative State and Local Public Policies sought to use progressivism and political and grassroots organizing to address interregional and intraregional conflict by trying to bind progressive activists together. See Elizabeth Shermer, *Sunbelt Capitalism: Phoenix and the Transformation of American Politics* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 11& 184; Highsmith, 15; Matthew D. Lassiter, *Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).

⁵⁷ Elizabeth Shermer, *Sunbelt Capitalism: Phoenix and the Transformation of American Politics* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013); Margaret O’Mara, *Cities of Knowledge: Cold War Science and the Search for the Next Silicon Valley* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005); Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

Detroit and Cleveland, often obscure workers', activists', and policymaker's responses to economic transformations after the 1960s.⁵⁸

Public Policy scholar Mark Rom reminds us that “there is no single Midwest.”⁵⁹ The region has generated various overlapping political traditions and demographics on the left and the right—early twentieth century progressivism, McCarthyism, and Reagan Democrats. “No Radical Hangover” contrasts Thomas Sugrue’s analysis of the resurgence of white working class conservatism with Midwestern traditions of radicalism and economic democracy.⁶⁰ Chicago represented a hub for New Left and Black Power activism. Cleveland State University boasted a very small population of student activists. Detroit’s radicalism is well known—Walter and Victor Reuther, and future mayor Coleman Young, all began their activist careers as labor radicals. Once collaborators with Trotskyists C.L.R. James and Raya Dunayevskaya, activist Grace Lee and James Boggs became mainstays of the city’s radicals. Black nationalist Reverend Albert Cleage sought to organize the city’s African American population in support of black-controlled urban development after the city’s 1967 uprising. Kenneth Cockrel helped found the Marxist-Leninist Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement and League of Revolutionary Black Workers.⁶¹

⁵⁸ The focus on the rise of the “sunbelt” also obscures racial and class inequalities in this region. According to John McDonald, several Southern and Western cities including Miami, Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston, and New Orleans also endured their own urban crises. McDonald, 185.

⁵⁹ Mark Rom, “The Political Economy of the Midwest,” in *The Midwest Response to the New Federalism*, eds. Peter K. Eisinger and William Gormley (Madison, The University of Wisconsin Press, 1988), 18.

⁶⁰ Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis*.

⁶¹ OPIC and DARE are descendants of the region’s, and the nation’s, radical and progressive tradition. This tradition includes Republican governor and U.S. Senator of Wisconsin, Robert LaFollette’s “Wisconsin Idea,” the SDS, and the University of Michigan’s 1965 antiwar teach-in and Black Action Movement. Douglas Rossinow, *Visions of Progress*; Karen Pastorello, *The Progressives: Activism and Reform in American Society, 1893-1917* (Chichester, West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons, 2014), 148-151; Eli Zaretsky, *Why America Needs a Left: A Historical Argument* (Cambridge: Polity, 2012), 122; Matthew Levin, *Cold War University: Madison and the New Left in the Sixties* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2013).

Left-Wing Social Movement Politics and Theory during the 1970s and 1980s

The left wing progressive politics of the 1970s and 1980s signified a shift in strategy and orientation from the new left radicalism of the 1960s. “There were faces from the 60s,” leftist journalists Alexander Cockburn and James Ridgeway remarked in “The New Progressives,” about a 1975 conference on local and state policy alternatives. But for these activists, seeking to pursue a strategy of electoral politics and democratic reform, there was “no radical hangover.”⁶² Progressives during this period combined a radical analysis of society with a political pragmatism. Essentially, they pursued reformist strategies to achieve their radical goals. They incorporated strategies such as electoral politics, lobbying, and grassroots policymaking in their pursuit of a progressive agenda around foreign and domestic policy. Unlike many of their radical counterparts who pursued a politics of revolution outside of the established political process, left progressives believed they could challenge lethal policing, President Nixon’s foreign policy, corporate power, capital flight, and deliver economic justice by mobilizing outside voices to participate within the established political system. Taking Cockburn’s and Ridgeway’s “hangover” metaphor seriously, 1970s progressives believed they had learned important lessons from the turmoil of the late-1960s and that that saw the political landscape more clearly in the 1970s.

Coalition Politics: From the late 1960s to the Rainbow Coalition

Coalition politics is a vital characteristic of the left-wing progressive politics that emerged between 1967 and 1988.⁶³ Reverend Albert Cleage’s Federation for Self-Determination, Detroit’s anti-police brutality campaign, the Indochina Peace Campaign, as well as DARE and OPIC worked in coalitions with various political groups. Cleage sought to build an intra-racial

⁶² Alexander Cockburn and James Ridgeway, “The ‘New Progressives,’” *The Village Voice*, 23 June 1975.

⁶³ This study builds upon the growing scholarship on the study of coalition politics during the 1960s and 1970s.

coalition of black nationalists and radicals around a strategy of self-determination that demanded that Detroit's white political and business establishment hand over resources to the city's black population. The Indochina Peace Campaign worked with anti-war Democrats in Congress and anti-war organizations such as the National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy (SANE) to end the war in Indochina. The left-wing of the anti-STRESS movement worked with liberal organizations such as New Detroit, Incorporated, black nationalists such as the Republic for New Afrika, organized labor, and the black police organization, the Guardians. The left flank of this movement also supported State Representative Coleman Young's mayoral run in 1973. The Ohio Public Interest Campaign built a coalition of left-wing, liberal, organized labor, civil rights organizations, and religious groups to press for statewide plant closing legislation.

OPIC's coalition politics reflected civil rights legend and social democrat Bayard Rustin's vision of a labor-liberal-civil rights-religious coalition. In his famous 1965 *Commentary* essay, "From Protest to Politics," Rustin outlined his vision to remake the Democratic Party around the "March on Washington" coalition comprising liberals and religious, labor, and civil rights groups.⁶⁴ Rustin argued that the civil rights movement had approached a crossroads in strategy after the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Rustin's conception of party realignment reflected his desires to build a national progressive majority. Conversely, OPIC decided to organize a state-based coalition that included labor unions, religious, and civil rights organizations because they thought building a progressive majority would be difficult in the midst of the crisis in liberalism. Jesse Jackson's Rainbow Coalition adhered both to Rustin's aspirations of building a liberal-labor-black coalition and of realigning the national Democratic Party around progressive politics.

⁶⁴ Bayard Rustin, "From Protest to Politics," *Commentary* (February 1965),

In contrast to the early- and mid-twentieth century progressive movements for economic democracy where whites predominated, DARE and OPIC aimed to incorporate African Americans activists and workers alongside whites into their coalitions. While both groups enjoyed some successes in this area, they remained mostly white. OPIC's statewide Rustinian coalition garnered some support from labor and civil rights leaders. DARE's cadre of activists rooted their racial politics in the aftermath of Detroit's 1967 rebellion. Black and white members of DARE developed racialized analyses of capitalism and policing that viewed black workers and residents as agents of revolutionary struggle. They also presumed that black workers and residents were also targets of containment. However, neither DARE nor OPIC were able to articulate a distinct racial analysis of plant closure. Members of OPIC remained mum while their black coalition members often raised the issue of race. Perhaps more surprisingly, DARE failed to employ a racial analysis in response to the 1979 Chrysler bailout. DARE thus operated in the Marxist-tradition that viewed class alone as the foundational identity, hindering organizing efforts in a black-majority. Coleman Young, in contrast, focused his campaign for a federal bailout of Chrysler almost exclusively on the need to save black jobs.⁶⁵

Progressive Campaigns in the 1970s and 1980s

Between 1967 and 1983, left progressives in the Midwest relied upon campaign strategies to pursue their political goals. Distinct from social movements in their scope and duration, campaigns are concentrated periods of organizing around a single issue in pursuit of a clear, identifiable goal.⁶⁶ The Indochina Peace Campaign, the anti-STRESS movement, and OPIC built

⁶⁵ Gregory D. Squires, "Civil Rights in the '80s," *New York Times*, December 11, 1980.

⁶⁶ According to social scientist Charles Tilly, social movements are sustained collective efforts around similar grievances that make "claims on target authorities." Social movements often include multiple campaigns. Furthermore, activists and organizations deploy various strategies and tactics such as marches and demonstrations. Midwestern activists and organizations during this period relied upon lobbying lawmakers, policy construction and

successful progressive campaigns during this period. For members of Detroit's anti-STRESS movement, the goal evolved from reforming STRESS operations to eradicating the program. Activists in IPC sought to end U.S. involvement in Indochina. The anti-STRESS and IPC campaigns ended once the groups achieved their goals.

In the midst of these campaigns, progressive activists and organizations engaged in discursive framing, raising questions about prevailing narratives on race, American expansion and exceptionalism, crime, and the economic development.⁶⁷ They produced pamphlets, newspapers, and documentaries to disseminate their ideas both to their supporters and to broader audiences. Progressive social movements and activists rearticulated ideas—the absorption and recasting of concepts articulated by activists in the past or by advocates living in other locales and participating in unrelated struggles.⁶⁸ Activist-intellectuals also crafted and told histories of their own movements.

advocacy, electoral politics, petitions and pledges, and lawsuits. Activists and organizations also used in political education to raise awareness and cultivate a critical consciousness around the issues most pertinent to the movement. Charles Tilly, *Social Movements, 1768-2004* (Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2004), 3-4. For more on social movement theory see Doug McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999); Aldon Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement: Black Communities Organizing for Change* (New York: Free Press, 1984); Jeff Goodwin and James M. Jasper, eds. *Rethinking Social Movements: Structure, Meaning, and Emotion* (New York: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. 2004); Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s* (New York: Routledge, 1994). For more discussions of campaigns, especially as they are distinct from social movements, see Richard Flacks, "Knowledge for What?: Thoughts on the State of Social Movement Studies," in *Rethinking Social Movements: Structure, Meaning, and Emotion*, eds. Jeff Goodwin and James M. Jasper (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2004).

⁶⁷ Sekou M. Franklin, *After the Rebellion: Black Youth, Social Movement Activism, and the Post-Civil Rights Generation* (New York: New York University Press, 2014).

⁶⁸ Sociologists Michael Omi and Howard Winant describe the process of rearticulation as the process by which movement participants create new subjectivities "by making use of information and knowledge already present in the subject's mind." Since movement politics are not created in a vacuum, I also suggest that participants recreate politics out of already-established understandings of identity, power, and organizing, but they also look to concepts external to their communities and organizations for inspiration. The vital question arising out of such a process is whether or not external concepts are congruent with activists' political context. Omi and Winant, 99-101.

“Focal point” Organizing

In the pursuit of campaign goals, activists and organizers need to identify clear targets and take advantage of political opportunities. IPC activists called this process of analyzing power, locating targets and pressure points, and exploiting opportunities, “focal point theory.” As IPC activist Tom Hayden explained to the Ann Arbor chapter of the Indochina Peace Campaign, “The focal point method is an activist’s way of seeing that the best way to have an effect is to mobilize strength against the weak point of a system you’re trying to change.”⁶⁹ The concept, as articulated by Hayden, reflects radical and foreign origins. Hayden cited North Vietnamese Communist leader, Trường Chinh, as immediate inspiration for the concept. Focal point theory also recalls the “foco” theory of armed struggle, which presumed that smaller mobile guerilla forces could initiate revolutionary change.⁷⁰

The “focal point” concept is a theme that runs through “No Radical Hangover.” It highlights progressives’ analyses of political opportunities and the targets, or power structures, that they made the focus of their political activism. For black power activists such as Detroit’s Reverend Albert Cleage, the urban rebellions of the 1960s revealed a weak point in the American political system. Even liberal policymakers and corporate leaders identified focal points for action. For them, the black hard-core unemployed, especially black men, represented targets in trying to prevent urban rebellions. For the IPC, the U.S. wars in Indochina represented a focal point for rolling back U.S. imperialism; the Congressional appropriation process was the pressure point that gave antiwar activists the means to stop military intervention. The Ohio chapter of the IPC extended focal point organizing to domestic policies when it decided to make

⁶⁹ “Indochina: focal point 1975,” *Ann Arbor Indochina Peace Campaign*, January 1975.

⁷⁰ Tom Hayden, *Listen, Yankee!: Why Cuba Matters* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2015), 93. Hayden later linked foco theory to Vladimir Lenin: “Lenin argued that a small, willful vanguard could ‘detonate’ the czarist status quo if its force was targeted at its weakest link.” Argentine Marxist revolutionary Che Guevara also sought to operationalize foco theory in struggles in Congo and Bolivia.

plant closures the focus of its efforts to rein in corporate power. OPIC activists saw state government as the best target for addressing deindustrialization.

Detroit activists, on the other hand, saw local government as the strategic opening. Left-wing activists in the Anti-STRESS campaign argued that transforming society required controlling public institutions such as city hall and the city's courts. Yet, pragmatism determined activists' decisions to run for elected office; they would only run if they could win. This proved to be the case as radical lawyer Justin Ravitz ran as a Marxist for Recorder's Court Judge in 1972 on a platform promising to change the ways in which justice was administered. Rumors that Black radical lawyer Kenneth Cockrel would run for mayor circulated before the 1969 and 1973 mayoral elections, however he declined to run both times, due to a belief that he may not have been able to win. After Coleman Young's mayoral election in 1973, Cockrel ran and won a seat on city council in 1977.

Organizing Across Scale

Left-wing progressives paid close attention to scale in their organizing. They organized on the local, state, and national level, sometimes simultaneously. Between the 1940s and 1970s, various civil rights organizations and black leaders applied pressure on the judicial, legislative, and executive branches of federal government to challenge de jure segregation. This did not mean that civil rights activists did not conduct local campaigns or seek change at the local level. However, organizations such as the NAACP and the SCLC relied upon national strategies when local authorities refused to acquiesce to their demands. Black power activists saw the neighborhood, the city, and the factory as the spaces for organizing. The IPC paid close attention to the national electoral map as they developed a practice strategy for overturning President Nixon's military strategy in Indochina. The IPC leadership thought it best to organize opposition

to the war in Midwestern battleground states such as Ohio, Illinois, Pennsylvania, and Michigan. The organization deployed a national and local strategy to end U.S. military involvement in Indochina.

During the 1970s, progressive activists viewed municipal and state government as a crucial lever in struggles against police killings and plant closure as well as the quest for economic democracy. This development is significant not only because of liberalism's retreat on a national level, but also because it was a response to the "new federalism" programs of Presidents Nixon, Carter, and Reagan that devolved power from the federal government to state governments. DARE activists pursued a city-based strategy while OPIC sought to organize on the state-level. OPIC's state-based organizing represented an innovation that underscored the importance of state government in implementing national urban policy and setting the tone for urban economic development. The larger left-wing progressive movement also conceived of their politics in these terms. Progressives held its first Conference for Alternative State and Local Policies in Madison, Wisconsin in 1975 where they gathered scores of likeminded activists, policymakers, and elected officials to devise strategies on issues such as energy, taxes, and urban development and governance.

Movement Success, Failure, and Defeat

Analyzing progressive politics during the 1970s and 1980s complicates understandings about movement success and failure. Progressives organized successfully around police brutality and ending the war. Whereas they influenced conversations about deindustrialization and economic recession, business leaders and elected officials defeated progressive efforts to enact anti-plant closure legislation and to restructure Detroit's economy. Thus, assumptions that leftists

failed because they abandoned a class politics, adopted an “identity politics,” or neglected to devise alternative strategies misses the political and structural obstacles progressives faced during this period. They encountered several obstacles. First, OPIC and DARE did not acquire the political capital or power that would be necessary to defeat capital and local governing coalitions. DARE remained politically isolated in a city with a strong black liberal mayor with a long-standing commitment to redistributionist policies. Coleman Young constructed a local governing coalition that included organized labor, developers and business leaders, and much of the city’s African American population. Although Mayor Young had to confront structural factors such as a declining manufacturing and tax base, as well as changes in federal urban policies, he was in a better position than DARE to rehabilitate Detroit. While OPIC successfully built a coalition of civil rights and labor leaders and community organizations in Ohio on plant closing legislation, they could not successfully replicate IPC’s lobbying strategy to acquire congressional support needed to pass the Community Readjustment Act. Business leaders and Republicans in Ohio rallied to defeat OPIC’s legislative efforts.

Both organizations, like many progressives who advocated for economic democracy, confronted larger political, cultural, and legal structures. DARE found itself in a position similar to black power activists who had advocated both for a black economy during the 1960s. Could marginal political actors create alternative economies in a system of capitalist accumulation? DARE was reticent about the possibilities of building socialism in one city, or neighborhood. DARE’s rational reindustrialization plan depended upon business and corporate leaders to turn over private property in order for workers to develop. This was the same problem that black power activists encountered when they argued for whites to transfer land or provide investment capital without strings attached. They recognized they would eventually need more political

power on a national level to acquire the capital from the federal government needed to implement rational reindustrialization. Yet, federalism also presented a problem. Presidents Nixon, Ford, and Reagan embarked on a process of devolving power and resources back to the states, making state politics more important. Federal and state urban policy also may have prevented DARE from implementing economic democracy as the aforementioned administrations, including Jimmy Carter's, tied funds to project development.⁷¹ Cockrel and DARE long understood that taking state power was a necessary precursor to implementing economic democracy, but movement-building and winning local elections was the first step the organization could not move beyond. There was a mismatch between DARE's analysis of capital flight, their political capacity, and legal impediments in implementing their vision of economic democracy.

"No Radical Hangover" highlights the importance of assessing the impact of social movements while remaining aware of the fundamental structural obstacles activists faced. As historians Howard Brick and Christopher Phelps illustrate, the left in the U.S. tends to vacillate between the margins and mainstream of American political culture.⁷² There are moments where leftists in Detroit and in Ohio were able to break into the mainstream of local and state politics. Kenneth Cockrel, a black radical socialist, could get elected to city council in Detroit, but he was the only one. Activists from OPIC like Ira Arlook were talking about organizing against "economic globalization" in 1975.⁷³ The movement produced and featured several labor activist-intellectuals such as OPIC's Ed Kelly who helped frame the issue of deindustrialization during

⁷¹ David B. Walker, *The Rebirth of Federalism: Slouching toward Washington* (New Jersey: Chatham House Publishers, Inc., 1995); Roger Biles, *The Fate of Cities: Urban America and the Federal Government* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2011).

⁷² Brick and Phelps, 7.

⁷³ Ira Arlook, "Program Proposal for the New Foreign Policy Campaign, 1975-76," James K. Miller Papers, Box 12, Folder 268. Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio.

the 1970s. These movement intellectuals successfully influenced national conversations around plant closings with their analyses.⁷⁴ But activists struggled to actually reform the system.

Progressives were successful when they joined coalitions to organize against war and police brutality. Some of them could even win elected office. Yet, they were unable to defeat business and their allies politically or to challenge the private property rights of corporations. As Phelps's and Brick's model makes clear, the left could influence the mainstream on foreign policy and urban policing, yet they simultaneously swim against the nation's political currents on economic issues. Business and political leaders in Ohio supported the free market orthodoxy that was resurgent in economic development. Even Detroit Mayor Coleman Young had to adjust to new realities of competing with other cities for urban development on corporatist terms.

DARE's and OPIC's focus on the industrial sector also reflected masculine politics. It is true that women worked in auto and steel production. However, members of DARE and OPIC failed to articulate concerns that women industrial workers may have had in their movements. Their politics reflected a traditional focus on the structural unemployment on black men. By the mid-to-late 1970s, DARE and OPIC were even neglecting this analysis of black male unemployment.⁷⁵ OPIC and DARE tried to develop a universal politics of economic democracy, one which would establish state-supported economic citizenship for everyone. One of the problems that these two organizations, along with many progressives, had during the 1970s and

⁷⁴ Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison, *The Deindustrialization of America: Plant Closings, Community Abandonment, and the Dismantling of Basic Industry* (New York: Basic Books, 1982). For a brief discussion of 1970s and 1980s labor intellectuals, see Austin McCoy, "Resisting Rust: Campaigns Against Plant Closings & the Call for Economic Democracy in the U.S. during the 1970s and 1980s," *Social History Blog*, accessed May 3, 2016, <http://socialhistoryblog.com/resisting-rust-campaigns-against-plant-closings-the-call-for-economic-democracy-in-the-u-s-during-the-1970s-and-1980s-by-austin-mccoy/>.

⁷⁵ Roderick Ferguson, *Aberrations in Black: Toward a Queer of Color Critique* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), 110-137. For more discussion of the intersections of gender, race, and class in conversations about poverty and unemployment during the 1960s and beyond, see Alice O'Connor, *Poverty Knowledge: Social Science, Social Policy, and the Poor in Twentieth-Century U.S. History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Marisa Chappell, *The War on Welfare: Family, Poverty, and Politics in Modern America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010); Robert O. Self, *All in the Family: The Realignment of American Democracy* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2012); Ferguson, *Aberrations in Black*.

1980s was that they relied upon vague populist rhetoric. They sought to replace Marxian notions of the working class with ambiguously defined notions of the “public interest,” “citizen politics,” and “the community.”⁷⁶ While DARE’s and OPIC’s developed and promoted left wing analyses of politics and economics, their political expression of those analyses were often deradicalized. Progressives’ jettisoning of the language of socialism appeared to be one of the costs of trying to build a popular movement. If politics appeared to become more slippery and incoherent among progressives, it was a product of an explicit rhetorical strategy, rather than just a byproduct of the fracturing of political discourse⁷⁷

OPIC and DARE activists also failed to deal with the gendered implications of the emerging prominence of the service industry in the Midwest. The gender politics of both groups was primarily masculine even as they both featured women in publicly-visible positions. DARE’s Sheila Murphy emerged as a key organizer and intellectual in the anti-police brutality movement. She managed white Marxist Justin Ravitz’s successful campaign for Recorder’s Court Judge in 1972 and Kenneth Cockrel’s 1977 City Council Campaign. Jane Fonda helped found the Indochina Peace Campaign in 1972. She used her celebrity to bring publicity and legitimacy to the IPC’s efforts. Sandy Buchannan also worked on OPIC’s staff and MaryLynne Cappelletti served as OPIC’s legislative director. Black women’s presence in the two groups was mostly invisible. DARE revolved around a single charismatic male leader, Kenneth Cockrel whose personality had chafed at some left-wing activists going back to the movement against police violence. DARE’s existence depended upon Cockrel’s city council seat and his mayoral

⁷⁶ Boyte, Booth, and Max, *Citizen Action and the New American Populism* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986).

⁷⁷ The progressive politics of the 1970s contrasts with Jefferson Cowie’s argument about individualism winning out in reform during this period. While individualism remained salient in political culture, progressive activists and organizations OPIC and DARE maintained the importance of collective politics. See Jefferson Cowie, *The Great Exception: The New Deal and the Limits of American Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 183-184.

aspirations. The organization did not survive Cockrel's decision not to run for re-election in 1981.

Historian Van Gosse has argued that the left of the 1970s and 1980s “had no coherent alternative to the extraordinarily sophisticated, rationalized, world of global corporate capitalism.”⁷⁸ In contrast, “No Radical Hangover” demonstrates that the left's problem was not an absence of ideas or the poverty of its analysis, but rather a lack of political power. Progressives sought to mount an intellectual and political challenge to economic restructuring and global capitalism.⁷⁹ For some scholars, the left and liberals either remained mired in the New Deal or sought a “post-economic” politics.⁸⁰ “No Radical Hangover” contradicts these arguments. It is true that progressives' conceptions and expressions of economic democracy did not transform mainstream political culture. Yet, the left's problem was not the absence of ideas. What progressives suffered from was a lack of the political power needed to implement their policy ideas.⁸¹

Chapter Outline

Chapter 1 focuses on the conflict among various approaches to addressing the urban crisis in Detroit after the 1967 uprising. For black power activists such as Reverend Albert Cleage, Jr., structural racism in American cities represented the focal point for the movement. Conversely, for the New Detroit Committee—an urban coalition of Democrats, business leaders, African Americans, and organized labor—the focal point for addressing the urban rebellions was

⁷⁸ Gosse, 210.

⁷⁹ Judith Stein, “Conflict, Change, and Economic Policy in the Long 1970s,” *Rebel Rank and File: Labor Militancy and Revolt from Below*, eds. Aaron Brenner, Robert Brenner, and Cal Winslow (New York: Verso, 2010), 85; Cowie, *The Great Exception*, 183; Van Gosse, *Rethinking the New Left: An Interpretive History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 188.

⁸⁰ Judith Stein, *Pivotal Decade*; Cowie, *Stayin' Alive*.

⁸¹ Political and legal structures such as federalism and private property rights would have also inhibited the institutionalization of economic democracy during the 1970s and 1980s

the “hard-core unemployed.” Consequently, liberals in local and national politics pursued a range of strategies in response to the urban crisis. President Lyndon Johnson and other liberals advocated for a cocktail of policies that included addressing structural unemployment—hiring the “hard-core unemployed,” developing coalitions of activists, policymakers, and business leaders to implement jobs policies, and focusing on the war on crime. Cleage’s Federation for Self-Determination called for a black-led reconstruction of black neighborhoods grounded in the principles of black self-determination. To pursue this strategy, the FSD unsuccessfully sought to pressure New Detroit and the city’s power structure to “transfer” power and resources to the city’s black residents.

Chapters 2 and 3 concentrates on successful progressive campaigns and the transformations in leftist politics in Detroit and in Ohio during the 1970s. In September 1971, a coalition of civil rights activists, black nationalists, labor organizers, liberals, and black and white radicals arose to defeat the Detroit Police Department’s Stop the Robberies, Enjoy Safe Streets Unit (STRESS). This coalition aimed to reform, and then later, abolish STRESS. Leftists developed a radical critique of city police power that connected STRESS to downtown development, war and empire, the drug trade, and the racist and classed nature of the local criminal justice system. With STRESS representing the focal point, the left-wing viewed municipal politics as the pressure points for action. The left wing pursued the abolition of STRESS in the courts and through electoral politics. Left-wing electoral politics in Detroit culminated with Mel Ravitz and Kenneth Cockrel’s elections to public office in 1972 and 1977.

Chapter 3 analyzes the Indochina Peace Campaign’s successful movement to end the war in Indochina. The IPC emerged out of Tom Hayden’s and Jane Fonda’s tour of battleground states in the fall of 1972. While the IPC comprised a network of chapters in various states and

cities including Chicago, New York, and Santa Monica, this chapter focuses specifically on the actions of the Ohio branch and national leadership. IPC represented an example of progressive politics—radical analysis and reformist strategy. Believing that the radical left—SDS, Progressive Labor, and the Weathermen—had failed in their efforts to bring down American empire, the organization mounted a campaign to pressure policymakers to defund U.S. military intervention. The organization developed “focal point theory”—locating the particular institutions, policies, or politician that made the whole system vulnerable. IPC argued that ending U.S. military involvement in Indochina would halt imperialism.

Chapters 4 and 5 interrogate unsuccessful movements for economic democracy that emerged in response to deindustrialization and economic recession in Detroit and Ohio. Between 1975 and 1981, DARE and OPIC challenged business’s private property rights, revived Progressive Era and 1930s-style call for citizen and worker control, and sought to rescue an industrial economy undergoing crisis and restructuring in the Midwest. OPIC’s state-wide plant closing bill—the Community Reinvestment Act—and DARE’s critique of the 1979 Chrysler Corporation Loan Guarantee and the group’s economic plan, *Rational Reindustrialization*, reflected an appeal to what scholar-activist Staughton Lynd called the “community right to industrial property.”⁸²

Chapter 4 investigates the defeat of the Ohio Public Interest Campaign’s effort to enact the Community Readjustment Act. By the mid-1970s, the focal point shifted from imperialism to confronting what activist Ira Arlook called “corporate globalization” and multinational corporations’ abilities to freely move capital out of cities.⁸³ OPIC saw state government, rather than the federal government, as the focal point for action. Thus, the group built a state-based

⁸² Staughton Lynd, *Living Inside Our Hope: A Steadfast Radical’s Thoughts on Rebuilding the Movement* (Ithaca ILR Press, 1997), 160.

⁸³ Ira Arlook, phone interview by author, April 19, 2013.

Rustinian coalition of labor, religious, and civil rights activists advocate for the anti-plant closure bill. They grounded their arguments for the bill in terms of workers' and communities' rights to economic decision making and industrial property. While OPIC activists drew from IPC's analysis of U.S. empire and global capitalism, they mobilized around rather vague terms such as "citizen" and "public interest." Ohio business organizations such as the Ohio Manufacturers Association, Democratic legislators, and Ohio's Republican Governor, James Rhodes defeated OPIC's campaign for the CRA.

Chapter 5 analyzes DARE's construction and articulation of rational reindustrialization. It illustrates how the organization sought to intervene in a national conversation around deindustrialization and declining cities just as Reverend Cleage had aspired to do during the mid-to-late 1960s. DARE combined radical analyses of liberal urban development, the 1979 Chrysler loan guarantee, and deindustrialization with popular mobilization, electoral politics, and policymaking in their attempt to enact economic democracy in Detroit. Instead of Mayor Coleman Young's and his allies' downtown development strategy, DARE advocated for creating a "public enterprise sector" where municipal government and the city's workers and citizens would share ownership. DARE drew simultaneously from progressives' arguments for economic democracy and from the conservative concept of enterprise zones. DARE's vision of rational reindustrialization represented the left-wing alternative to industrial policy measures that arose out of the Carter and Reagan administrations, as well as from policy advocates like financier and New York City fiscal crisis manager, Felix Rohatyn.

DARE's fate differed from OPIC's. The organization suffered from political isolation. Detroit Mayor Coleman Young led a coalition of organized labor, corporate leaders, liberal organizations, developers, and the city's black residents. DARE missed an opportunity to

broaden its base when Poletown residents opposed Coleman Young's work to enable General Motors to construct a plant in that neighborhood. Cockrel was the sole representative of the city's left loyal opposition in city government. Since DARE's fate was tied to Cockrel's, the group disintegrated once he left the City Council. Still, DARE's plan garnered attention from local business leaders and the progressive left.

The conclusion, "Reflections on Left-Wing Progressive Politics during the 1970s and 1980s," assesses the five case studies of progressivism. I evaluate the performance of Albert Cleage's Federation for Self Determination, the Anti-STRESS movement, Indochina Peace Campaign, and the Ohio Public Interest Campaign and the Detroit Alliance for a Rational Economy. In addition to reflecting on the meanings of progressive politics during this period, I consider the efficacy of combining social movement and electoral strategies. In addition to considering DARE's electoral strategy, I briefly analyze Reverend Jesse Jackson's 1984 and 1988 presidential campaigns and his Rainbow Coalition. Jackson's campaigns and efforts to transform the Democratic Party represent a nationalization of 1970s and 1980s progressive politics. However, Dukakis's defeat of Jackson in 1988, the triumph of centrist politics embodied by the Democratic Leadership Council (DLC), and Jackson's decision to demobilize the Rainbow Coalition in favor of pursuing elite brokerage politics raises questions about whether or not progressive social movements can include successful electoral wings.

Chapter 1

“Transfer of Power”: Black Power and Liberal Coalitions as Responses to the Urban Crisis

On January 8, 1968, Detroit’s Federation for Self-Determination announced that it was splitting with the city’s newly-formed urban coalition—the New Detroit Committee (NDC). After the July 1967 rebellion, Reverend Albert Cleage and the FSD had demanded that Detroit’s white political and economic establishment “transfer” power to the city’s black population. Cleage demanded that whites place institutional and financial resources under black control. The New Detroit Committee—a liberal interracial urban coalition comprised of white business, political, and labor leaders and black activists and established in the wake of the rebellion—offered to supply funds to FSD and another black organization, the Detroit Council of Organizations, for urban redevelopment. However, Cleage and the FSD turned down NDC’s offer because they were still bound to NDC’s funding guidelines. Cleage viewed the arrangement as a betrayal of what he called the “transfer of power” strategy.

That day, FSD’s Cleage and the national director of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), Floyd McKissick, held a press conference in Detroit regarding the FSD’s decision to sever ties with the New Detroit Committee (NDC). McKissick charged the NDC with “paternalism” and called the committee “a failure” because it “failed to recognize that the principle of black self-determination is lesson one, page one in the subject of black power.” Cleage also drew upon prevailing leftist/black nationalist discourses of colonialism to criticize

the NDC's offer. "We're tired of charity, colonialism, and plantation thinking," Cleage declared. "Black people must make the decisions affecting their lives just like most whites do."¹

Kenneth Cockrel, a black radical lawyer and community activist, supported Cleage's decision. Cleage criticized the NDC's strategy of dealing with the urban crisis as corporatist. "Their thing is profit, and the only way the government can get these companies to go into the ghetto is by guaranteeing them profit." Cockrel, like other radicals and black power activists, saw the urban crisis as failure of liberalism broadly. Cockrel's connected the NDC-FSD fiasco to the marginalization of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party at the 1964 Democratic National Convention and suggested that a lack of political power was the problem. In contrast to black social democrats such as Bayard Rustin who sought the transformation of the national Democratic Party, Cockrel advocated the creation of radical and independent political formations. He advocated for an electoral approach to radical politics that carried over into the 1970s. "Politics with a big P is necessary—we must begin to behave politically, and establish networks between people who operate on the same premise. You are going to see the formation of a national revolutionary political apparatus," Cockrel declared.²

The NDC-FSD split raised several fundamental questions about how best to respond to the urban crisis of the 1960s that extended beyond the city of Detroit: Who should direct the reconstruction of America's cities? What political and economic strategies should activists, business leaders, and government deploy to rebuild predominately black neighborhoods that had been the sites of rebellion such as Watts, Detroit's Twelfth Street, or Cleveland's Hough neighborhood? Lastly, how should the rebuilding be funded—through the federal government, private sector, a mixture of both, or reparations?

¹ Quoted in "Traditional Leadership, Corporations Get a Slap," *Michigan Chronicle*, January 13, 1968.

² Carol Schmidt, "Young Blacks Agree Only Way Left for U.S. is Violent Revolution—And They're Ready," *Michigan Chronicle*, January 20, 1966.

This chapter seeks to address these questions by examining the post-1967 black power politics and the establishment of the liberal New Detroit Committee (NDC), a coalition of business, labor, civic leaders, and black residents, particularly the fraught relationship between the NDC and Albert Cleage's Federation for Self-Determination. Historian Devin Fergus argues in *Liberalism, Black Power, and the Making of American Politics, 1965-1980* that liberals, especially in North Carolina, "created the operational space for the state's developing Black Power movement."³ This chapter complicates Fergus's argument. NDC's and FSD's relationship confirms that Detroit's liberals sought a similar course—the NDC sought a relationship with the FSD, which included the New Detroit Committee providing funds to the FSD as long as it adhered to particular guidelines about political participation. The NDC-FSD split departs from Fergus's insights about the relationship between black power and liberalism because Cleage's commitment to his brand of black power politics, which stressed the transfer of power and complete independence from white-dominated institutions, short-circuited the arrangement. Cleage's influence began to wane afterwards, however, as other black power organizations such as the League of Revolutionary Black Workers emerged.

The urban rebellions of the 1960s generated black power-inspired and liberal urban coalitions around particular strategies for redeveloping America's cities. Both groups identified their own focal points for action. Liberal coalitions—embodied by the New Detroit Committee and the National Urban Coalition—saw the hard-core unemployed as their focal point.⁴

³ Devin Fergus, *Liberalism, Black Power, and the Making of American Politics, 1965-1980* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009), 2.

⁴ Many of the programs designed to address the urban crisis revolved around different types of black subjectivities. These categories were contested. Often raced and gendered as black men, liberals concentrated on rehabilitating the hard-core unemployed, and criminals. In pre-1966 discussions of the structurally unemployed, Detroit activist James Boggs pointed to a group of workers that was becoming obsolete—the "outsiders." Progressives and some leftists such as Rustin and the Black Panthers referred to Karl Marx's lumpenproletariat as the key agents of urban revolt. Some of the racial nationalists in the black power movement such as Cleage, envisioned black men and women as agents of revolution and eventual citizens of the black nation.

Providing jobs to structurally-unemployed black Americans represented the key to preventing urban uprisings for liberals. Consequently, business leaders in the New Detroit Committee such as Ford Motor Company's Henry Ford, II instituted programs to hire the hard core unemployed. The NDC also aimed to support black-led organizations such as Cleage's Federation for Self-Determination and the liberal Detroit Council of Organizations (DCO) in their redevelopment efforts.

Black power activists and organizations such as the Federation for Self-Determination saw the black neighborhood, or the black city, as the focal point for action. For black power activists in Detroit and throughout the U.S., the urban rebellions were a problem of racist and economic exploitation, if not "internal colonialism," which rendered blacks powerless. The solution to the urban crisis, according to Cleage and other black power advocates, lay in white-dominated institutions transferring power and resources to African Americans and black communities. Consequently, Albert Cleage called for the construction of a cooperative economy. Building such an economy, according to Cleage, would address a central problem that black power activists and progressive activists in the 1970s often encountered—the lack of capital needed to create economies owned and controlled by either African Americans, workers, or communities. Yet, Cleage's inability to compile enough resources from organizations such as NDC hindered his cooperative economic vision. After Cleage refused NDC's funds in January 1968, he was no longer seen as the preeminent black power leader in the city. The political center of gravity shifted toward a small group of black radical workers—Kenneth Cockrel, General Baker, Mike Hamlin, John Watson, and others—who were the founders of the Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement (DRUM) and the League of Revolutionary Black Workers.

Ultimately, gaps between liberal analyses, prescriptions, and strategies for rehabilitating the hard core unemployed also arose. Nationally, the Kerner Commission called for the creation of 2 million jobs—one million in the private and public sectors each—however, it appeared that such a large scale job program was never really on the table. President Johnson shelved the Kerner Report. The Johnson administration's narrowing concentration on Vietnam threatened the War on Poverty at home. Johnson also focused much on his response to the urban rebellions on policing black ghettos. Nixon's election in 1968 meant a continuation of the war in Indochina and the escalation of Johnson's war on crime. These circumstances provided the national context for the development of two social movement campaigns—one in Detroit around police brutality, where the city's police department acquired federal funding, and the other, based in Ohio, to end the war.⁵

The liberal response to Detroit's rebellion also transformed between 1967 and 1971. The 1969 economic recession wiped out the jobs programs. Additionally, as members of Detroit's business and corporate community advocated for jobs programs, they continued to close enterprises and move them outside of the central city. The changes in local priorities—from black empowerment and jobs programs to increased policing and a focus on downtown development—roughly matched the national political shift as the Nixon administration focused on law and order and limited forms of black capitalism.

⁵ Another gap in many of the analyses and responses was policymakers' and activists' lack of attention to deindustrialization. In conversations about structural unemployment during the 1960s, many liberal and left activists pointed to how automation in the manufacturing sector was pushing out workers. Automation also placed a cap on the number of unskilled workers employed in production jobs. Yet, especially in cities such as Detroit, that first began to experience plant closings in the aftermath of World War II, black power activists, new leftists, and liberals often failed to mention the role play by deindustrialization, which in tandem with discrimination helped create the conditions of chronic joblessness that many saw as a central cause of the civil disturbances in cities such as Detroit, Newark, and Cleveland. Thomas Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

“The ‘New’ Urban Coalition: The Liberal Response to the Detroit Rebellion

By the summer of 1967, the nation’s long hot summers had come into full swing. Police encounters with black Americans in Newark and Detroit sparked uprisings a week apart. On July 12, Newark police officers Vito Pontrelli and Oscar De Simone stopped 40-year-old black cab driver John Smith. Bystanders said that the officers assaulted him even though the police charged him. After 9:30 P.M. witnesses saw police officers drag Smith out of the car and into the police station. As bystanders gathered across the streets from the station, other black cab drivers began communicating to each other about Smith’s beating. Police, members of CORE, and some unidentified members of the community implored for the growing crowd to disperse. Someone, or some people, hit the police station with Molotov cocktails. Violent protests ensued for the next five days. The rebellion left 26 dead.⁶

In the early hours of the morning of July 23, Detroit police sergeant Arthur Howison led a police raid on a well-known “blind pig” establishment located in the heart of one of Detroit’s largest black neighborhoods. When Howison announced the police action, a brawl between black patrons and the police ensued. Once the brawl ended, Howison and the rest of his detail (vice squad) arrested and detained the 85 people who were inside the blind pig.⁷ The fight between the police and black patrons spurred to the Detroit rebellion. It was the most destructive uprising in US history. Forty-three people died, 1,189 were injured, and 7,231 people were arrested. The city suffered close to \$40 million in property damage.⁸

⁶ National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, *Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders* (New York: Bantam Books, 1968), 61-62; I will refer to this document as the *Kerner Commission Report*. Komozi Woodard, *A Nation within a Nation: Amiri Baraka (LeRoi Jones) and Black Power Politics* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 78-84; Kevin Mumford, *Newark: A History of Race, Rights, and Riots in America* (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 98.

⁷ Sidney Fine, *Violence in the Model City: the Cavanagh Administration, Race Relations, and the Detroit Riot of 1967* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1989), 159.

⁸ Kerner Commission Report, 115; Herbert G. Locke, *The Detroit Riot of 1967* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1969), 51.

In an essay for the August 1, 1967 edition of *Dissent Magazine* entitled “War, Riot, and Priorities,” a group of liberal congressional Democrats argued that President Johnson had neglected addressing the causes of the urban crisis. Michigan representative John Conyers, Jr. and nine other congressmen criticized Johnson’s pursuit of the Vietnam war and pleaded for a redistribution of resources from war to the cities, “The crisis of our ghettos,” the statement read, “is more urgent than the war in Vietnam. To bring real and lasting peace to our cities, we must end the war in Asia.” They also articulated a progressive solution—one that stood politically between Democrats and the New Left and Black Power radicals—to the crises in Vietnam and at home, one that drew from the progressive political tradition of full employment. The congressmen echoed National Urban League President Whitney Young’s call for a “Marshall Plan” for U.S. cities, “We must begin, in effect, a Marshall Plan for the cities, a redistribution of American affluence and a new plan for the full participation of this nation’s deprived in reconstructing every ghetto in every city of this country.”⁹

The Newark and Detroit uprisings provoked President Johnson and other national political and business leaders to seek explanations for the urban crisis at a time when the War on Poverty came under scrutiny by civil rights leaders such as Martin Luther King, Jr.¹⁰ On July 29, President Johnson called a meeting to organize a probe of the causes of the civil disorders. The commission of public leaders charged with examining the wave of riots consisted of civil rights leaders and a bipartisan group of legislators including the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People’s (NAACP) Roy Wilkins, New York City Mayor John Lindsay, and the chairman of the newly formed group, Illinois Governor Otto Kerner. Johnson charged the

⁹ “War, Riot, and Priorities: A Statement by Ten Congressmen,” *Dissent Magazine*, Vol. 14, Issue 5 (August 1, 1967), 527; Whitney M. Young, Jr., “A Domestic Marshall Plan,” *New York Amsterdam News*, September 2, 1967.

¹⁰ Martin Luther King, “A Time to Break the Silence,” in *A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings and Speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, ed. James M. Washington (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1986).

commission with investigating the nation's riots without regard to the Administration's views on urban affairs. "Let your search be free," Johnson insisted.¹¹ The Kerner Commission, as observers eventually dubbed it, undertook a massive study of the history of racism and inner city conditions that contributed to the rebellion. Members of Detroit's civic and business communities also created a coalition—the New Detroit Committee—to address the conditions that gave rise to the city's revolt. Calls for a massive reconstruction of riot-torn cities, new strategies for addressing black male joblessness, and the establishment of "new" urban coalitions of the public and private sector arose from the ashes of the riots in Detroit and other American cities during the late 1960s.

The most destructive riot in U.S. history caught Detroit's business leaders off-guard. Ford Motor Company's Henry Ford, II pointed to the business leaders' aloofness on race relations as a cause of the civil disorder. Ford admitted, "I thought I was aware...but I guess I wasn't." Chrysler executive Lynn Townsend declared, "We'd better make an extra effort. Detroit is the test tube for America. If the concentrated power of industry and government can't solve the problems of the ghetto here, God help our country."¹² It also led the business, civic, and political leaders to organize. Four days after Detroit's uprising, Republican Governor George Romney and Detroit Mayor Jerome Cavanagh summoned local business owner, J.L. Hudson to organize the New Detroit Committee.

J.L. Hudson, Jr.'s participation on the New Detroit Committee was an extension of his family's civic work in the city. The Hudson family had been an institution in the city since the late nineteenth century. J.L. Hudson's great-uncle, Joseph Lowthian Hudson founded the furniture store, what would become J.L. Hudson Company, in 1881. Hudson donated time and

¹¹ Roy Reed, "President Calls for Free Inquiry on Nation's Riots," *New York Times*, 30 July 1967.

¹² Quoted in Fine, 320.

resources to local organizations such as the Detroit Institute of Arts. J.L. Hudson, Jr. went to work for the Hudson Company in 1950. He also started working for the family's foundation, the Hudson-Weber foundation in 1956. J.L. Hudson, Jr. became president of the family's furniture company in 1961 at the age of 29.¹³

The rebellion raised the stakes for Cavanagh's political career. Detroiters had elected the 33-year-old Cavanagh to City Hall in 1961. Up until July 1967, Cavanagh appeared as the model mayor for the model city. The new mayor addressed the city's financial deficit in one year. He successfully acquired over \$230 million in federal money for the city between July 1962 and August 1967. Cavanagh governed as an integrationist, either appointing black Detroiters to important positions in city government, or selecting white officials that the city's black population favored.¹⁴ The mayor even fought poverty before President Johnson declared war on it in 1964. The Cavanagh administration concentrated on addressing the problem of the "hard core unemployed" in the early 1960s. He commissioned a study on youth unemployment and delinquency in 1962. He established youth programs such as the Special Youth Employment Project to address unemployment. These programs, alongside others concentrating on redevelopment, comprised what the Cavanagh administration later referred to as the Total Action against Poverty (TAP).¹⁵ Despite the national attention that Cavanagh's handling of race relations and poverty attracted attention, conditions for African American residents of Detroit continued to deteriorate from years of capital flight, residential and job discrimination, and racial violence.¹⁶

¹³ Michael Hauser and Marianne Weldon, *Remembering the Hudson's: The Grand Dame of Detroit Retailing* (Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia Publishers, 2010), 7; Jennifer Chambers, "Detroit booster Joe Hudson, Jr. lauded for leadership," *Detroit News*, December 1, 2015.

¹⁴ Laurence G. O'Donnell, "Detroit's Mayor Cavanagh Opts Out," *The Wall Street Journal*, June 30, 1969; Fine, 18.

¹⁵ Fine, 75.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 34; Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis*.

Governor Romney, Mayor Cavanagh, and J.L. Hudson announced the formation of the New Detroit Committee on Tuesday, August 1 at Detroit's City-Council Building. Much of the committee at the founding comprised of the city's business leadership. The meeting, however, did not proceed without controversy. Congressman John Conyers criticized the composition of the meeting and charged that Cavanagh, Romney, and Hudson had failed to include any black Detroiters from the riot zone. Conyers pointed out that "the voiceless of the community" were unrepresented. "I didn't hear anyone off of 12th Street...Anyone poor or black. And that's what triggered this as I understand it," said Conyers.¹⁷

Addressing job discrimination and unemployment remained consistent with the prevailing liberal understanding that black male unemployment, the denial of a male breadwinner wage, and black family disintegration, were among the root causes of racial inequality, crime, and the urban crisis.¹⁸ The "problem of jobs," historian Guian A. McKee writes, "struck Northern, urban African Americans with particular ferocity."¹⁹ Detroit's blacks experienced more from unemployment than the city's whites. The black unemployment rate—18.2 percent—more than doubled the city's total unemployment rate in 1960.²⁰ The black unemployment rate declined to 8% in 1967, but it measured around 15 percent in the riot area.²¹ Detroit's blacks also suffered from income inequality. A white high school graduate earned \$1,600 more per year than a black graduate.²² Detroit's black unemployment reflected national trends. While black unemployment decreased from 12.6 percent in 1958 to 8.2 percent in 1967,

¹⁷ Quoted in Fine, 320.

¹⁸ Chappell, *The War on Welfare: Family, Poverty, and Politics in Modern America* (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 2010); Robert O. Self, *All in the Family: The Realignment of American Democracy Since the 1960s* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2012).

¹⁹ Guian A. McKee, *The Problem of Jobs: Liberalism, Race, and Deindustrialization in Philadelphia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 12.

²⁰ Sugrue, 151.

²¹ Steve Babson, *The Color of Law: Goodman, Detroit, and the Struggle for Labor and Civil Rights*, (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2010), 378.

²² *Kerner Commission Report*, 90.

the black unemployment doubled that of whites despite the nation's economic growth during the 1960s.²³ According to *Newsweek*, one in three black Americans seeking jobs could not find work.²⁴ Blacks also tended to work in the lowest-paying and most menial jobs as a result of discrimination in hiring and in unions.²⁵

Riot surveys also focused on the employment status of participants in the civil disturbance. In the Detroit Urban League's survey of 437 African Americans living in the riot zone, 22 percent of them were male and 12 percent female. Thirty-five percent of the rioters who participated in the survey were between 15-24 years of age, whereas 15 percent of rioters were between the ages of 25 and 35 years of age. The survey concluded that rioters "were more likely to have been unemployed. Fifty-six percent of rioters who were breadwinners told the interviewers they had been unemployed for at least a month during the past two years." The DUL also identified a correlation between rioting and length of unemployment. "Those who had been jobless for more than a year were more than three times as likely to be rioters as those who were unemployed for only a month..."²⁶ This profile matched the Kerner Commission's generic profile of a riot participant. The typical rioter was black and an unmarried male who was between 15 and 24 years of age. If he worked, "he was more likely to be working in a menial or low status job as an unskilled laborer. If he was employed, he was not working full time and his employment was frequently interrupted by periods of unemployment."²⁷

Looking for ways to create a more representative and well-functioning committee, Hudson consulted Kent Mathewson, President of the Metropolitan Fund, an organization devoted

²³ "Jobless Rate Posts Sharpest Rise in 5 Years," *Wall Street Journal*, October 12, 1967; A.H. Raskin, "Negroes: 'Being Trained for Unemployment,'" *New York Times*, December 10, 1967, *Kerner Commission*, 253.

²⁴ "What Must Be Done: The Cold Fact is that the Negro in America is Not Really in America," *Newsweek*, (November 20, 1967), 41.

²⁵ *Ibid*, 41; McKee, 12.

²⁶ Detroit Urban League, *A Survey of Attitudes of Detroit Negroes After the Riot of 1967* (Detroit: Detroit Urban League, 1967), 1-2; 6.

²⁷ *Kerner Commission Report*, 128-129.

to “seeking public and private alternatives for solving the many region-wide problems in metropolitan Detroit.”²⁸ Hudson also conferred with Hugh White and James Campbell. White and Campbell were members of the Detroit Industrial Mission, an organization which Hudson had previously supported.²⁹ White and Campbell pushed Hudson to approach some of the city’s black organizations about participation in the budding committee. More significantly, though, White and Campbell urged Hudson to include black militants in the process. Hudson eventually asked West Central Organization leader, Alvin Harrison of the Afro-American Unity Movement, Lorenzo Freeman and the eighteen-year-old Norvell Harrington to serve. Yet, they represented one-third of the black membership and a fraction of the committee’s total membership. The other black committee included the local NAACP executive secretary Robert Tindal and local school official and future NAACP President Arthur Johnson.³⁰ Also Hudson chose not to invite one of the city’s most prominent black militants to join the committee—Reverend Albert B. Cleage. Black militants’ token inclusion into the committee would soon empower Cleage and the rest of the city’s militants.

Cavanagh offered no clear objective for NDC. Cavanagh charged Hudson with establishing an organization that could “bring together a group of citizens to help produce and coordinate the public and private resources necessary to help rebuild the social and physical fabric” of Detroit.³¹ Hudson later told historian Sidney Fine, “The committee didn’t have a charge or a mission, a goal-objective, a precedent; it was really a matter of—we need help, we need private sector leadership to begin to focus on these problems and to help us redress these

²⁸ Helen M. Graves, “New Detroit Committee/New Detroit Incorporated: A Case Study of an Urban Coalition, 1967-1972” (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 1975), 42-43.

²⁹ J.L. Hudson, interview by Sidney Fine, October 2, 1984, Detroit Riot Oral History Transcripts, 1984-1985, Bentley Historical Library (BHL), University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI.

³⁰ James Mudge, “Detroit Rebuilding Committee Asks Help of Community,” *Detroit Free Press*, August 2, 1967.

³¹ Quoted in Graves, 42.

things.”³² Cavanagh’s failure to provide a clear charge induced a sense of confusion about the organization’s aims and powers that affected its ability to interact with other groups like the black militant Federation for Self Determination.

The New Detroit Committee would eventually bill itself as the “first urban coalition” because its formation preceded the establishment of the National Urban Coalition on August 24, 1967. More than 800 mayors, business, labor, and civil rights leaders including Bayard Rustin, New York City Mayor John Lindsay, and David Rockefeller assembled in Washington to devise a national public and private response to the urban rebellions. Like New Detroit, the NUC also advocated for the federal government to “reorder national priorities” and to institute a massive jobs program.³³ New Detroit and the NUC foreshadowed the founding of numerous coalitions in U.S. cities. By 1968, forty-two coalitions existed in cities from Cleveland and Minneapolis to New York and Newark, New Jersey.³⁴ These coalitions envisioned themselves in the broadest fashion, consisting of labor, civil rights, political, and business leaders. Members of local and the national coalition, like A. Philip Randolph, Henry Ford, II., and chairman John Gardner saw urban coalitions as a bulwark against racial and political polarization and as an institutional advocate for the nation’s cities.³⁵

The New Detroit Committee’s corporate leaders saw tackling the problem of the hard-core unemployed as paramount. The first NDC report reflected this understanding, “To many, jobs are the key to the solution of the urban crisis. While the Detroit riot of July 1967 was unique in that many of those arrested did have good jobs, many others did not...Even in Detroit, surveys

³² Fine, Interview with Hudson

³³ Robert B. Semple, Jr., “Urban Coalition Urges U.S. Spur Jobs for Million,” *New York Times*, August 25, 1967; “The nation seeks ways to cool it,” *Business Week*, August 5, 1967; Graves, 593.

³⁴ National Urban Coalition, *First Annual Report* (Washington, D.C.: National Urban Coalition, 1968) New Detroit, Inc. Collection, Box 145, Folder 15, Walter P. Reuther Library (WPRL), Wayne State University.12.

³⁵ National Urban Coalition, *First Annual Report*.

disclosed chronic unemployment to be a major and continuing source of discontent.”³⁶ The city’s business leaders moved to hire those systematically excluded from the economy—the “hard-core unemployed” –by establishing affirmative action job programs. Local businesses and national corporations such as Joseph L. Hudson’s J.L. Hudson Company and the Ford Motor Company relaxed normal hiring stipulations and, in some cases, established outposts in the riot zone. Business leaders like Hudson and Henry Ford, II, and corporations such as General Motors and Chrysler, saw their hiring programs as part of a burgeoning strategy to aid blacks in their struggle for civil and economic rights.

In October, 1967, Ford Motor Company declared that it would launch a job program that would hire 6,500 workers from the inner city.³⁷ Ford set up “community action centers” in the riot area to recruit and hire workers and revised its hiring requirements to accommodate inner-city workers. The city government assisted Ford with its hiring program by lending staff from the Mayor’s Committee for Human Resource Development (MCHRD) to in the “community action centers.” Company representatives or members of the MCHRD assisted prospective workers with their applications and performed interviews. They considered criminal records on a case-by-case basis. MCHRD provided medical personnel to perform physicals. The company also “temporarily” discontinued the written test for applicants.³⁸ They gave hired workers without transportation bus tickets to travel to work and offered \$5 weekly advances if needed. For those who Ford did not hire, they referred them to social workers who could help them find other jobs.³⁹

³⁶ New Detroit Committee, *Progress Report*, April 1968, 54.

³⁷ “Ford Opens Drive to Hire 6,500 from the Inner City,” *Detroit Free Press*, 27 October 1967;

³⁸ Conot, *American Odyssey* (New York: Bantam Books, 1975), 780-781; New Detroit Committee, *Progress Report*, April 1968, 56-57; Graves, 56.

³⁹ Lawrence A. Johnson, *Employing the Hard-Core Unemployed* (New York: American Management Association, 1968), 58-59.

The following month, the J.L. Hudson Company established a job training program that would ultimately hire 500 people—250 “hard-core unemployed people” and 250 students who were at risk of dropping out of school. General Motors similarly sought applicants in Detroit’s inner city. GM collaborated with the city’s Urban League to hire the Urban League’s 250 hard-core unemployed referrals in their “Operation Opportunity” program.⁴⁰ The program waived several normal hiring requirements such as the employment test, minimum attainment of a high school diploma, and relaxed restrictions on hiring people with previous criminal records.⁴¹

Aware of the presence of the hard-core unemployed in the city before the rebellion, the Detroit chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) tried to address job discrimination several months before the riot. It called for the city to create 10,000 jobs for the “hard core unemployed.”⁴² The Greater Detroit Board of Commerce created a Manpower Committee to undertake such a task. Yet, the riot threw a wrench into the Manpower Committee’s plans. Members of the NDC responded to the NAACP’s challenge in the aftermath of the rebellion. The NDC teamed with the Board’s Manpower Committee to work towards the 10,000 job goal set by the NAACP. The two organizations set up recruitment centers within the riot zone while Ford, General Motors, Chrysler, and the Hudson Company also instituted their own programs to hire the hard core unemployed.

Discussions of the hard-core unemployed after riots in Detroit and Watts were not new. They stemmed from an almost decade-long national conversation about structural unemployment. Economists Kenneth Galbraith and Gunnar Myrdal, and socialist Michael Harrington had published influential texts investigating the persistence of unemployment among

⁴⁰ Graves, 56.

⁴¹ “Big Detroit Store Plans to Hire 500 in Ghetto Program,” *New York Times*, November 12, 1967; *Wall Street Journal*, November 19, 1967.

⁴² New Detroit Committee, *Progress Report*, April 1968, 55.

the nation's impoverished in what many considered as the "Age of Affluence." All of the authors articulated elements of pathological explanations for the existence of the hard-core unemployed. Even as Galbraith recognized particular pathologies among the poor such as "mental deficiency" and "an inability to adapt to the discipline of industrial life," Galbraith argued that the liberals' pursuit of growth and abandonment of redistributionist economic policies left the chronically unemployed behind.⁴³ Myrdal in *Challenge to Affluence* attributed structural unemployment to technological changes in industrial production, such as automation, demographic changes in the workforce, as well as "the emergence of an 'underclass,'" who was politically apathetic and "so mute and so devoid of initiative."⁴⁴ Harrington called the underclass "the rejects of the affluent society," many of which were expelled from the economy due to their obsolete skills.⁴⁵ Both Myrdal and Harrington anticipated the famous Moynihan thesis when they argued that the structurally unemployed were caught in a cycle or culture of poverty.⁴⁶ Cultural and behavioral assumptions also undergirded further discussions about, and policies for, the hard-core unemployed in Detroit.

Assistant Secretary of Labor Daniel Patrick Moynihan's report—*The Black Family: The Case for National Action*—became a focal point for national conversations around race, gender, and joblessness when it leaked in March 1965. The Moynihan Report not only picked up on the theme of jobs as an answer to crime and poverty, but it sought to chart the next direction for the Johnson Administration's civil rights agenda. The difference between Moynihan and the aforementioned writers was that Moynihan, in *The Black Family*, racialized and gendered the victims of racial discrimination in the U.S. economy. Moynihan identified black family

⁴³ Alice O'Connor, *Poverty Knowledge: Social Science, Social Policy, and the Poor in Twentieth Century U.S. History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 147.

⁴⁴ Gunnar Myrdal, *Challenge to Affluence* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1963), 40-45.

⁴⁵ Michael Harrington, *The Other America: Poverty in the United States* (New York: Macmillan, 1962), 25.

⁴⁶ Myrdal, 48; Harrington, 21-23.

breakdown as “the fundamental problem” plaguing black Americans. The report articulated the gendered aspects of both the problem of poverty and crime in a way that was only implied in newspaper reports and policy speeches about criminal activity.

Moynihan’s analysis and conclusions about the crisis of the black family rested upon normative assumptions about the heterosexual nuclear family—that it was the primary institution for socializing youth and instilling proper norms for social reproduction and mobility. Building on decades of poverty research, especially from black social scientists such as E. Franklin Frazier, the Moynihan Report argued that centuries of enslavement and racial discrimination destroyed the black family. As a result, these forces produced and reproduced “abnormal” black families, whom were mostly headed by black women. He wrote, “In essence, the Negro community has been forced into a matriarchal structure which, because it is so out of line with the rest of American society, seriously retards the progress of the group as a whole and imposes a crushing burden on the Negro male and, in consequence, on a great many of Negro women as well.”⁴⁷

Moynihan’s report assumed that all successful upwardly mobile families featured a male breadwinner who serves as the head of the household. Black men, according to Moynihan, were denied this possibility. Consequently, he contended that, over time, black men suffered from psychic injuries as a result of having to cope with the loss of prestige in the black family in a patriarchal society. The injuries suffered by black men and the presence of black female-headed families produced what Moynihan called a “tangle of pathology” that seemed to reproduce itself independently from white racism. “At this point, the present tangle of pathology is capable of perpetuating itself without assistance from the white world. The cycle can be broken if these

⁴⁷ Daniel Patrick Moynihan, *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action* (Washington, D.C.: United States Department of Labor, 1965), 29. I will refer to *The Negro Family* as the Moynihan Report.

distortions are set right.”⁴⁸ Moynihan identified a combination of deviate behaviors in this cycle, or culture of poverty, such as crime and illegitimacy.

Ultimately, the problem of poverty and family breakdown for Moynihan was a problem of black male unemployment. Moynihan thought that many black men suffered from structural unemployment. Moynihan reported that 75.8 percent of men of color participated in the national labor force, as opposed to 78 percent of white men. While he stated that a percentage point could be attributed to long-term physical and mental illness, it was “reasonable to assume that the rest of the difference is due to discouragement about finding a job.”⁴⁹ Moynihan’s behavioral analysis of structural employment is consistent with his contemporaries’ analyses of hard-core unemployment. It also downplayed macroeconomic explanations of the issue by individualizing structural unemployment. According to Moynihan, they especially experienced higher rates of unemployment in comparison to black women. Black women, Moynihan reported, were more educated and more likely to find employment than their male counterparts.⁵⁰ As a result, the status of the black woman as head of the household and primary breadwinner “undermines the position of the father.”⁵¹ These circumstances, along with strict welfare rules, often pushed black men out of the home. To address the crisis of the black family, Moynihan concluded that the federal government needed to devise and implement policies that would restore black men to their “natural” position as breadwinners.⁵²

Moynihan’s analysis articulated the fundamental assumptions undergirding both the local responses to urban rioting, street crime, and unemployment. The report’s behavioral and individualistic focus attributed poverty to behavior and culture. It also joined the racialization of

⁴⁸ Moynihan, *Moynihan Report*, 47.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 44.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 32.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 25.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 29.

poverty and crime. The report contained elements of the discourse regarding the “hard-core unemployed” that would regain currency in the aftermath of the uprisings in Watts, Detroit, and elsewhere. While local manifestations of national crime policy would eventually stigmatize and target the black men who mostly made up the hard-core unemployed, Moynihan’s concept of the self-perpetuating “tangle of pathology” informed discussions of poverty in Detroit before and after the 1967 riot. The solution to these issues did not necessarily lay in an explicit assault in racial discrimination, but in addressing the psychic injuries of black men by providing employment.

At the same time, the tangle of pathology explanation for black poverty, and black male unemployment, placed the rehabilitation of black masculinity and the black family beyond the reach of policy. If the problems of structural unemployment lay in repairing what liberals such as Moynihan saw as fatalistic behavior, then would post-riot policies to hire the hard-core unemployed even work? Would training programs work if black men were unmotivated, let alone uneducated and lacking in skills? Moynihan’s behavioral and cultural analysis of the problem of the black family and black male unemployment also elided macroeconomic problems that also rendered black men vulnerable in the labor market. Vague calls to strengthen the black family by providing employment ignored the fact that black Americans were more vulnerable to production slowdowns, the threat of inflation, and economic downturns due to racial discrimination.

The discourse pathologizing black men and women had been percolating in the city of Detroit since at least the early 1960s. In 1964, Detroit Mayor Jerome Cavanagh’s Committee on Community Renewal hired Greenleigh Associates, Inc. to conduct a study of Detroit’s “low-income households” and the city’s social services. Between July 1964 and January 1965,

Greenleigh Associates interviewed a random sample of 2,081 households. Two-thirds of the households were black, and according to the report, were poorer than white ones.⁵³ They studied the various ways that poverty affected black and white families in numerous areas including employment, family, education, housing and health. Many of the households featured high unemployment, with blacks comprising a greater unemployment rate than whites—22.3 to 15 percent. The Greenleigh report anticipated Moynihan’s findings about the black family. It concluded that the black family tended to exhibit more families with “abnormal” structures. Black Detroiters suffered from higher rates of family break down and out-of-wedlock births. The Greenleigh studies exhibited a narrow focus on the problem of poverty and what they called “family functioning.” Unlike Moynihan, the Greenleigh studies of low-income families did not account for larger social forces, such as racism, or the transformation of the city’s economy. It is possible that narrowly focusing on the city’s social welfare system led Greenleigh Associates to propose solutions reinforcing psychological and behavioral understandings of poverty.

The Greenleigh studies highlighted family “abnormalities,” generally, and the disproportionate rates of family breakdown and dysfunction and illegitimacy among black Detroit families. According to the *Home Interview Study*, over half of the families had one or more children. Yet, one out of three families had one parent. More than two-thirds of one-parent families were black.⁵⁴ The Greenleigh studies also report that black Detroiters tended report more out-of-wedlock births. According to the studies, 24.9 percent black families reported children born out of wedlock compared to 4 percent of whites. Instead of emphasizing black male victimhood, the Greenleigh studies appear to attribute the blame for this development to

⁵³ Greenleigh Associates, Inc., *Home Interview Study of Low-Income Households in Detroit, Michigan* (New York: Greenleigh Associates, Inc., 1965), 3.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 7.

black men. “In addition, the Negro male finds it more difficult to support a family than the white male. For this reason marriage is less likely to take place even if there are children.”⁵⁵

Greenleigh’s suggestions for reforming the city’s welfare system reinforced the sort of psychological explanations for the existence of low-income black families that permeated discussions about structural unemployment and poverty. The report concluded that “counseling services” needed “to be at the core of a program of services” to address family breakdown.⁵⁶ Placing counseling improvements at the center of reform depoliticized poverty and emphasized individualistic behavioral solutions. “Counseling services, that is skilled professional help, were most frequently required to assist households in obtaining and using other community resources and to make some kind of plan that would help them and their children take steps to escape from their world of poverty.”⁵⁷ While the studies did acknowledge the impact of economic change and the importance of raising incomes, they did not include any recommendations for economic development beyond rehabilitating the city’s poor population. Their call for job training and “vocational counseling” underscored individualistic approaches to solving the unemployment problem among the city’s low-income families.

The Detroit Urban League drew from the Greenleigh study and echoed much of Moynihan’s comments about poverty, the degradation of black masculinity, matriarchy, and black family breakdown in their 1966 report, *The Detroit Low-Income Negro Family*. The DUL report illustrates how the response to urban crisis before the city’s rebellion relied on the validation of patriarchy, stigmatization of black women, and the rehabilitation of black masculinity. Relying on both the Greenleigh and Moynihan reports, the DUL contended that slavery and historical racial discrimination caused black family breakdown. Black men,

⁵⁵ Greenleigh Associates., 29, 70.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 8.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 8.

according to report suffered a dual psychological injury—from the impact of racial discrimination in the job market and from the presence of black female-headed households.

Although the Detroit Urban League did not refer to the “hard-core unemployed” explicitly, they assured their readers that they were referring to the structurally disadvantaged. “The point that many fail to see is that while many Negroes...have been able to move into positions of reasonable security, another group has not been able to do so. For one reason or another these people have remained disadvantaged and have not been as visible to most people as has been the rising Negro middle class.”⁵⁸ The difference between the DUL’s report, past discussions of the structural unemployed, and even Moynihan’s, was the lack of attention paid to the processes that caused lower class African American Detroiters to endure poverty and remain disadvantaged. The DUL reports the growth in the city’s black population, but nothing on the causes of joblessness. No discussion of the history of racial discrimination in employment, automation, or industrial decision-making appears in the document.

In their report, the Detroit Urban League mobilized a discourse of black male victimhood bound up in a “culture of poverty” frame that pathologizes black men and stigmatizes black women. Detroit Urban League’s executive director, Francis Kornegay, argued in the Introduction that slavery had made the African American male “less than a man.” When discussing the inequality between black and white male incomes, the report reiterates Young’s point about black male victimhood. “The inability of the Negro male to compete equally with the white male has a great deal to do with family disorganization.” In the conclusion, the report states, “Past and present injustices in employment, housing, and education are showing their effects on the low-income Negro family. The Negro male is the prime victim of this set of factors. The low-income

⁵⁸ Detroit Urban League, *The Low-Income Black Family* (Detroit: Detroit Urban League, 1966), 6. Detroit Urban League Papers, Box 65, Folder: Low Income Negro Families, BHL, University of Michigan, MI.

Negro family tends to be wife-dominated, the male loses a great deal of self-respect and his family loses respect for him.”⁵⁹ The reiteration of the Moynihanian understanding of black urban poverty casts a critical eye on black female breadwinners. “The absence of the father and the forced employment of the mother (which, incidentally, keeps her away from the home much of the day) is not a healthy situation by any standpoint,” the report states.⁶⁰ It also led to a disproportionate attention to the victimhood of black men and the institution of the heterosexual black male-headed family.

The Detroit Urban League did not invoke the trope of the “hard-core unemployed,” but they focused on advocating for more jobs for black men as a means to instituting patriarchy, and thus rehabilitating black men. Out of their twelve recommendations, three were devoted to employment. The DUL advanced the customary calls to eradicate racism in hiring, promotions, and layoffs. They also called for labor unions to halt discrimination within their ranks. The seventh recommendation illustrated the link between racial liberalism and gender conservatism hovering over debates about poverty and the black family. The organization explicitly demanded programs that would “allow the low status Negro male to develop into a responsible, contributing husband and parent.”⁶¹ The DUL only advanced one, and rather important, recommendation for explicitly to help assist black mothers—making day care available for black women who had to work.⁶²

Henry Ford II’s drive to hire the hard-core unemployed also exhibited his, and the NDC’s, growing belief that American business had a special responsibility to respond to social

⁵⁹ Detroit Urban League, *The Low-Income Black Family*, 15, 33.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 20.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 24.

problems. On multiple occasions, Ford argued publicly that he, and other business leaders, had a duty to use available resources to address black unemployment and dismantle job discrimination. He told the National Urban League on November 17, 1967 that “the achievement of genuinely equal opportunity” was “the most urgent task” for business. Ford also advanced a business-led affirmative action policy: “It is not enough to provide technically equal opportunities. Management should be willing to go directly into the city, to seek out the unemployed, to make sure that hiring standards are not unnecessarily or unrealistically restrictive, and to lend a helping hand in adjusting to the work and the work place.”⁶³ Ford echoed his call for business to take affirmative action to help integrate blacks into the national economy at an annual meeting of the company’s shareholders in June 1968. However, this time he grounded his call in the language of corporate self-interest: “Your company and members of its management are engaged in such activities because we believe that business and industry have an obligation to serve the nation in times of crisis, whether the crisis is internal or external...Prudent and constructive company efforts to help overcome the urban crisis are demanded not only by your company’s obligations as a corporate citizen, but by your management’s duty to safeguard your investment.”⁶⁴ Blending his civil rights rhetoric with that of corporate self-interest allowed Ford to demonstrate that investing in confronting job discrimination and hiring what some may consider as “unemployable” workers protected the corporation from potential violent reprisal.

Ford’s, and NDC’s, advocacy of corporate hiring programs occurred within a larger conversation about the corporation’s role in addressing social problems from racial discrimination and the urban crisis to the environment. Mayor Cavanagh and President Johnson

⁶³ Ford Motor Company, “News Release: Remarks by Henry Ford, II,” WPRL, New Detroit, Inc. Papers, Box 135, Folder 17; “Henry Ford tells U.S.: ‘Freedom or Failure,’ *Michigan Chronicle*, November 25, 1967.

⁶⁴ Quoted in Laurence G. O’Donnell, “Ford, After Quashing Multitude of Rumors Sees ’68 Net Near High, Auto Price Boost,” *Wall Street Journal*, May 24, 1968; John Edwards, “Ford’s Job Program ‘Highly Successful?,”” *Michigan Chronicle*, June 8, 1968.

encourage corporations and their leaders to take on a larger role in addressing poverty and black joblessness. Johnson tapped Ford to oversee a national jobs program in February 1968. Ford would lead a newly formed National Business Alliance (NAB) “to find jobs for a half million hard core unemployed men and women over the next three years...”⁶⁵ Johnson charged Ford with finding 200,000 jobs in the private sector during that summer with the intent to create 700,000 jobs in the following years.⁶⁶ Other corporate leaders and economic observers expressed weariness. Robert E. Slater, president of John Hancock Mutual Life Insurance thought his organization may have been doing “too damned much” in urban affairs.⁶⁷ Some business leaders considered social responsibility too much of a financial risk. R.A. Peterson, Bank of America’s president, worried that corporations stood to lose money if they invested capital in some of the nation’s cities. Peterson went as far as to calling such socially-responsible investment a “dangerous illusion.”⁶⁸

While one could see business leaders’ apprehension about investing in the nation’s inner cities as based in a pragmatic desire to please stockholders, it also reveals an ideological position about how business and “markets” should operate. Marketing scholar Reavis Cox published an editorial in the *Wall Street Journal* in October 1969 wondering if business should invest its resources in addressing social issues. Cox ultimately concluded that doing so would unfairly raise expectations, possibly contributing to “new tensions with which business and the market as a market are not really prepared to cope.”⁶⁹ Conservative economist Milton Friedman answered the question of whether or not corporations had the duty to address social problems in an emphatic editorial. Friedman argued in “A Social Conscience for Business?” that corporations

⁶⁵ Ethel L. Payne, “National Business Alliance Gets Underway,” *Michigan Chronicle*, March 30, 1968

⁶⁶ William Martin, “Cites Retention of ‘Hard Core’ in Local Program,” *Michigan Chronicle*, February 17, 1968.

⁶⁷ “Big Companies Venture Their Talent and Money in Ciil Rights Effort,” *Wall Street Journal*, June 14, 1968.

⁶⁸ “Leading Banker Warns American Businesses On Urban Investments,” *Wall Street Journal*, January 16, 1969.

⁶⁹ Reavis Cox, “The Business of Business Is...?,” *Wall Street Journal*, October 15, 1969.

did not have the obligation to act for the common good if it meant hiring a particular group of people. In fact, Friedman argued that Ford and other businessmen who advocated such responsibilities for corporations were “preaching pure and unadulterated Socialism.” Friedman articulated a vision of political economy that distinguished clearly between the roles of the government and private sector. He contended that corporate executives like Ford could devote their personal time and energy to advocating particular political causes, but one could not spend the stockholders’ money while doing so. The corporate executive, according to Friedman, only had the duty to generate a return on the stockholders’ investment, not spend their money on “government functions.”⁷⁰ Ford, Hudson, and other NDC business leaders, on the other hand, thought that investing corporate money was worthwhile because integration would protect their stockholders’ investments.

“Transfer of Power”: The Black Power Response to the NDC

The 1967 uprising and the dispute with the New Detroit Committee raised Albert Cleage’s profile in Detroit and national politics. “For six months—from October 12, 1967 to April 18, 1968,” journalist Hiley H. Ward wrote, “Albert Cleage was the “visible, titular head of the 660,000 Detroit black community.”⁷¹ During this period, Cleage sought to rally and organize the city’s black leaders and residents to implement a black power program for the rebuilding of Twelfth Street and other affected areas. Cleage, like many black power activists, reasoned that the rebellions highlighted the racial, economic, and cultural exploitation of black communities by white-dominated institutions. The uprisings, he believed, did not arise out of a lack of jobs or criminality. Instead, Cleage saw the lack of black political power and of control over local

⁷⁰ Milton Friedman, “Noted Economist Says ‘No’: A Social Conscience for Business, *Chicago Tribune*, September 13, 1970.

⁷¹ Hiley H. Ward, *Prophet of the Black Nation* (Philadelphia: Pilgrim Press, 1969), 190.

institutions as the problem. Consequently, Cleage grounded his vision of black power in a demand for the city's power structure to transfer power to two black organizations that he helped establish after the uprising—the Citywide Citizen's Action Committee and the Federation for Self-Determination.

While various aspects of black power politics had circulated in the north and south for two decades, Stokely Carmichael popularized the slogan after taking over James Meredith's one-man March Against Freedom in June 1966.⁷² As historian Peniel Joseph points out, "Black Power scandalized America in the 1960s, the concept of black power remained difficult to define, even for Carmichael."⁷³ In a 1966 CBS News special report on black power, journalist Mike Wallace asked Carmichael, "And the means you will use to achieve all of this?" "Any means necessary," he replied. Wallace pressed Carmichael: "Spell that out. What does that mean?" "It means we will develop tactics as we go along. And whatever those tactics are, we will use them." "Tactics? That means you got to buy the buildings. You got to buy the businesses. You got to train the people. How are you going to do that by yourselves? How are you going to do it without the help of the white community?" Carmichael responded, "Well, the first help we need of the white community is to just turn over those buildings to us...turn them over."⁷⁴

Black power activists and civil rights leaders throughout the country struggled to define concept's ideological and political content during this period. In a speech before the NAACP in July 1966, President Roy Wilkins denounced black power as "antiwhite" that "leads to a black

⁷² Timothy Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press); Matthew Countryman, *Up South: Civil Rights and Black Power in the South* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2006).

⁷³ Peniel Joseph, "Rethinking the Black Power Era," *The Journal of Southern History*, Vol. 75, No. 3 (August 2009), page.

⁷⁴ *CBS Reports: Black Power/White Backlash*, Columbia Broadcasting System, Directed by Joe Gorsuch, Written by Helen Moed, September 27, 1966.

death.”⁷⁵ Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who initially expressed dismay at the slogan, accepted the black power movement’s “psychological call to manhood,” its advocacy for racial pride, and its argument for independent black electoral politics during the summer of 1967.⁷⁶

Black power activists advocated for a vision of racial solidarity and self-determination—the power to define one’s political fate as a group. However, some black power activists such as the Black Panther Party, Detroit’s Republic for New Afrika, and the League of Revolutionary Black Workers sought to synthesize black nationalism with Marxist-Leninism, or an anti-capitalist, politics. Conservative manifestations of black power also arose during the mid-to-late 1960s and early-1970s. Floyd McKissick’s CORE eventually advocated for black capitalism and viewed President Richard Nixon as a political ally. The west coast organization, US, represents a more conservative manifestation of black power that emphasized black cultural expression, the restoration of heteronormative gender roles, and political organizing as a strategy for liberation.

Many black radicals and nationalists deployed the “colonial analogy” to explain the roots of revolt. This concept rhetorically captured the combination of racial and economic exploitation of predominately black neighborhoods in cities, or ghettos. Inspired by movements and wars for national liberation in third world colonies such as Algeria and Ghana, black power activists and intellectuals such as Stokely Carmichael and members of the Black Panther Party likened racial and economic oppression to colonialism. Even non-black power activists such as psychologist Kenneth Clark and I.F. Stone used the analogy to describe the circumstances of inner-city African Americans.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ “Wilkins Says Black Power Leads Only to Black Death,” *The New York Times*, July 6, 1966.

⁷⁶ Martin Luther King, Jr., *Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967), 38; “King Defines Black Power,” *New York Times*, June 11, 1967.

⁷⁷ I.F. Stone, “People Without a Country,” *The New York Review of Books*, August 18, 1966.

Black intellectual Harold Cruse was among the first to use the colonial analogy in his explanations of black nationalism taking hold in the country in the early 1960s. In two essays, “Negro Nationalism’s New Wave” and “Revolutionary Nationalism and the Afro-American,” Cruse argued that the U.S. had a semi-colonial relationship with black Americans. He also maintained that black Americans held a semi-colonial relationship to the United States. The historical experiences of slavery and racial oppression marked black Americans as colonial beings. The difference between the traditional and domestic varieties of colonialism, Cruse asserted, was that black Americans experienced citizenship during the 1960s in name, and due to living in the “home” country; they were in close proximity to the dominant group.⁷⁸ Psychologist Kenneth Clark asserted in his 1965 book, *Dark Ghetto: Dilemmas of Social Power*, that the “dark ghettos are social, political, educational, and—above all—economic colonies.”⁷⁹ Activist Stokely Carmichael and political scientist Charles V. Hamilton argued that black Americans “have a colonial relationship to the larger society, a relationship characterized by institutional racism” in their 1967 book, *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation*.⁸⁰

The colonial analogy contained an analysis of power, oppression, and space. Activists often pointed to independence or a redistribution of power and resources as the means of resolving unequal power relations and exploitation. Black power activists often disagreed on the means and the scope of the goal. For black revolutionary nationalists such as the Black Panther’s Eldridge Cleaver, African Americans needed to rely upon guerilla violence in their attempts to win independence from the U.S. government. Albert Cleage, in contrast, called on whites to hand

⁷⁸ Cruse, *Rebellion or Revolution?* (New York: Morrow, 1968), 68, 78.

⁷⁹ Kenneth Clark, *Dark Ghetto: Dilemmas of Social Power* (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), 11.

⁸⁰ Stokely Carmichael and Charles V. Hamilton, *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation* (New York: Random House, 1967), 6.

over power, institutions, and other resources to African Americans living in predominately-black neighborhoods and cities.

Many black power activists, including Cleage, Cleaver, and Carmichael, also articulated a spatial analysis of black power. For them, neighborhood and city in which African Americans comprised the majority represented the base of struggle and the space whereby black self-determination would be exercised. Most of these areas where black Americans were predominant were economically underdeveloped as a result of their colonial relationship to adjacent white communities and institutions. These inner-city calamities were akin to Fanon's depictions of "settler zones" in *The Wretched of the Earth*.⁸¹ Defining this colonial relationship as institutional racism, Carmichael explained that a system of state policies, including urban renewal and highway clearance programs, housing and school segregation, as well as a series of exploitative relationships between blacks and merchants, landlords, and welfare institutions, created black ghettos.⁸² Ultimately, the effects of institutional racism were measurable when one looked at certain disparities between African Americans and whites in areas such as employment and education.

Many activists agreed that structural trends such as post-World War II black in-migration into the cities and white flight helped create the circumstances by which African Americans were primed to take over local political institutions. The Black Panther Party advanced a spatial conception of the "dispersed" black colony that was distinct from the visions of a black nation

⁸¹ Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1965), 39.

⁸² Carmichael and Hamilton, *Black Power*, 17-18, 20, 155-62. There has been a vast amount of scholarship focusing on ghetto formation. For more information see Clark, *Dark Ghetto: Dilemmas of Social Power*, Kenneth Kusmer, *A Ghetto Takes Shape: Black Cleveland, 1870-1930* (Urbana and Chicago: The University of Illinois Press, 1976); Arnold R. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940-1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), Komozi Woodard, *A Nation Within a Nation*; Sheryll Cashin, *The Failures of Integration: How Race and Class are Undermining the American Dream*. (New York: Public Affairs, 2004), 237-261; Joe Feagin and Harlan Hahn, *Ghetto Revolts: The Politics of Violence in American Cities* (New York: Macmillan, 1973), Robert O. Self, *American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003).

comprised of the southern black belt states.⁸³ For Carmichael, the Panthers, and Cleage, the black nation need not be geographically contiguous. The black nation already existed in the multitudes of black-dominated cities and neighborhoods dispersed throughout the U.S. “The colonies of the United States—and this includes the black ghettos within its borders, north and south—must be liberated,” Carmichael declared in a 1966 *New York Review of Books* article.⁸⁴

The focus on the city and the neighborhood as a focal point and space for political organizing also reinforced black power advocates’ focus on subjectivities other than the proletariat, or the industrial working-class. Some, such as the Black Panther Party, targeted Karl Marx’s concept of the lumpenproletariat—criminals and other members at the bottom of society who possessed counterrevolutionary impulses—as agents of revolt and potential revolutionaries.⁸⁵ Racial nationalists such as Cleage did not coin a new term to describe their agents of change as much as they infused new meanings into what it mean to live as a black man or woman in the midst of the black power movement.

The internal colonialism analysis, however, had its shortcomings, including a tendency to overlook the particular issues pertaining to the industrial economy such as automation and deindustrialization.⁸⁶ Internal colonial theory envisioned a ghetto completely devoid of industrial economy and capacity. Many black power critiques of economic exploitation focused more on

⁸³ Kathleen Neal Cleaver, “Back to Africa: The Evolution of the International Section of the Black Panther Party (1969-1972),” in *The Black Panther Party Reconsidered*, ed. Charles E. Jones (Baltimore: Black Classic Press, 1998), 216.

⁸⁴ Stokely Carmichael, “What We Want,” *The New York Review of Books* (September 1966).

⁸⁵ Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (New York: International Publishes, 1926), 83.

⁸⁶ Carmichael and Hamilton admitted that the colonial analogy contained inadequacies. Yet, it was distinct from liberals’ analysis of race, poverty, and unrest that concentrated on pathology and family breakdown. The colonial analogy reflected two goals of black power activists: first, to identify with revolutionary struggles abroad. The second goal was to rebuke postwar racial liberalism and to place the responsibility of black powerlessness and poverty onto what they viewed was a white system of oppression. Carmichael and Hamilton wrote, “To put it another way, there is no ‘American dilemma’ because black people in this country form a colony, and it is not in the interest of the colonial power to liberate them... Thus, institutional racism has another name: colonialism.” Even if some male black power activists accepted Moynihan’s call to restore heteronormative black families, they still saw white political and economic power in the U.S. as the enemy. Carmichael and Hamilton, 5-6.

African Americans' consumer power than on questions of employment or industrial production. Black power activists often charged white merchants with overcharging black consumers. Cleage also criticized white businesses for job discrimination. Only the Detroit-based League of Revolutionary Black Workers grounded their black power analysis in an analysis of African American workers "at the point of production." Yet, the League's analysis did not rest upon a colonial frame. And while black nationalists' calls for economic power and the creation of black cooperative businesses implied controlling production of goods to be sold, activists such as Cleage often failed to detail what kind of economy—capitalist, communist, socialist, or mixed—they viewed as fit for the dispersed black nation.

Cleage's conception of black power—captured in his "transfer of power" plea—represented a local example of seeking to operationalize Carmichael's demand for whites to hand over institutions and resources to African Americans. Cleage called for total black control of rebuilding Twelfth Street and the rest of Detroit's predominately-black neighborhoods. He envisioned a city run by a black executive, black control over the education system and police department, as well as a cooperative-based economy. He thought the cooperative approach would address the problems of the lack of start-up capital. Twelfth Street, and the rest of black Detroit, would serve as a model for black self-determination throughout the country, especially the dispersed black "nation within a nation" Cleage often outlined.

Cleage began articulating his demand for a "transfer of power" in his column for the state's leading black newspaper, the *Michigan Chronicle*. In his August 26 column, "Unite or Perish," Cleage stated the goal for the black power movement in Detroit "can be simply stated: self-determination for the black community or the transfer of power from the white establishment to the black community." Cleage continued,

It means that we must control the political life of our community, including the police department and the courts. It means that we must control the business life of our community, including our own shopping centers, stores, housing, cooperatives, and development corporations. It means that all federal funds spent in our black community must be under the control of black people. [...] No white man, no white businesses, no white organization and no white politicians will be permitted to exploit the black community any longer.⁸⁷

Cleage's transfer of power represented a comprehensive answer to the urban crisis. Cleage's articulations of the transfer of power concept was similar to Carmichael's and Hamilton's, prescriptions articulated in *Black Power*.

Cleage presented his most cogent explanation of all of the facets of his "transfer of power" concept in an article published in the March 1968 edition of *Center Magazine*. He reiterated the importance of black control of the city's politics. However, Cleage advanced a nuanced analysis of black control over municipal institutions. He acknowledged the need to elect a black mayor sooner than later, "Normally, if we followed the gradual evolution of our power in the city we could wait for, not the election in 1969, but the one after that. However, it not seems almost a necessity for us to elect a black mayor in 1969..." Yet, Cleage, like other black power activists and organizations, assumed that black control of City Hall would ensure black nationalist governance. Cleage contrasted his idea of black political power with Gary, Indiana's Gary Hatcher and Cleveland's Carl Stokes's elections. Cleage did not see the black power embodied by Hatcher and Stokes as a legitimate expression of black power. Instead, he called "ornaments" of black power because whites aided in their election. Even as Cleage predicted Coleman Young's election in 1973, he did not explain how electing a black mayor in Detroit would be any different than Hatcher's and Stokes's elections.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ Albert Cleage, Jr., "Unite or Perish," *Michigan Chronicle*, August 26, 1967.

⁸⁸ Cleage, "Transfer of Power," *The Center Magazine*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (March 1968), 47.

In “Transfer of Power,” Cleage argued, “Politics is only one aspect, however. It is also necessary for blacks to have economic control of their community.”⁸⁹ Cleage advocated for the construction of a black cooperative economy for Twelfth Street. This strategy, according to Cleage, would address the fundamental problem of not possessing the wealth and capital necessary to pursue urban development independently. “In Detroit we are trying to invent strategies for this, such as the development of co-op retail stores, co-op buying clubs, co-op light manufacturing, co-op education, and similar undertakings that can become possible when large numbers of people with a sense of unity and a sense of cause can put together small individual amounts of money to create enough total capital to establish businesses with some degree of security and possibility of success.” It was often unclear whether or not Cleage’s vision of cooperative economy was one grounded in private property and capital accumulation or a communist or socialist conception of economics. Republic of New Afrika leader, Milton Henry, presumed that Cleage envisioned the black cooperative economy upholding private property rights, unlike the RNA’s revolutionary nationalism that sought to undermine capitalism. “Cleage’s Nation within a nation is private property,” Henry claimed.⁹⁰ Cleage disavowed support for radical politics such as communism and socialism. Cleage declared in a speech to the Socialist Workers Party, “I am not a Marxist—I do not pretend to be, I don’t even pretend to know anything about it.”⁹¹

Cleage’s call for a “transfer of power” and the recognition of black communities and cities as autonomous spaces still allowed for white entrepreneurs to operate within these areas. Thus, Cleage reasoned that black Americans would need to rely upon selective patronage,

⁸⁹ Cleage, “Transfer of Power,” 47.

⁹⁰ Quoted in Ward, 19.

⁹¹ Quoted in Angela Dillard, *Faith in the City: Preaching Radical Social Change in Detroit* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007), 274.

boycotts, and picketing to ensure white businesses operated fairly. This meant that white-owned firms had to adhere to a racial and residential quota. “We must get the white man who is doing business in the black ghetto to recognize that if 85 per cent of his business is with black people, he will have to hire 85 per cent of his employees from the black community,” Cleage stated.⁹² These tactics and demands were not new. Black Americans had relied upon these tactics to challenge segregation in public accommodations, job discrimination, and consumer exploitation.⁹³

Cleage’s transfer of power vision, however, did not directly address two contributing factors to the urban crisis—automation and deindustrialization. While it seems that Cleage’s answer to black unemployment was the creation of a black cooperative economy grounded in individuals’ private property rights, his conception of economic exploitation did not account for black industrial workers’ experiences in the auto plants, nor did it recognize the impact of the decentralization of the auto industry on black workers in Detroit. Cleage’s conception of economic exploitation fit within the nationalist, colonial frame, in which white merchants exploited black consumers and extracting profits from black neighborhoods.

While Cleage’s dispersed nation would not formerly separate itself into a black nation-state, Cleage maintained that the federal government would have to interact with it as if it were an autonomous sovereign state. Cleage’s desires for a dispersed black colony throughout the U.S. raises questions about the non-nation-state expression of black nationalism. Cleage’s brand of black power seems occupy a space between advocating a black nation-state and the expression of black electoral power. Twelfth Street, and other predominately-black neighborhoods and cities, would be ran by black Americans, would be autonomous, and yet would remain within the U.S.

⁹² Cleage, “Transfer of Power,” 47.

⁹³ Cohen, 166-191.

Would these spaces constitute city-states? If the federal government agreed to Cleage's arrangement, would it build on the type of federalism facilitated by the War on Poverty where the federal government would extend resources directly to the cities. The difference between the OEO dealing with Chicago's Mayor Richard Daley and the federal government dealing with Cleage is that the federal government would recognize the legitimacy of black control over particular urban spaces. The result would have been a race-based federalism designed to benefit black Americans rather than whites.

In some cases, white leaders tried appropriating black power discourse in an effort to deradicalize and redirect it in a moderate and business-friendly direction. Henry Ford, II expressed a vision of black power consistent with black leaders such as the Urban League's Whitney Young. He stresses equal opportunity, nonviolence, and black voting and economic power. Ford stated in front of the National Urban League on November 17, 1967:

"It is good that Negroes are increasingly determined to take control of their own destiny, to demand what is theirs by right and to seek the power to enforce those demands. But real Black power is not violence in the streets or self-imposed segregation. Black power is the power of the purse and the vote, of knowledge and skill, of self-discipline and self-confidence. Black power is black people and white people working together and voting together to elect Mayor Stokes in Cleveland and Mayor Hatcher in Gary and Mayor White in Boston. This is the kind of power the Urban League has been working for more than a half a century to build. It is the kind of power that will enable Negroes to participate effectively in the revision of national priorities we must have before we can achieve victory over poverty, discrimination, and slum living."⁹⁴

Ford eschewed violence and separatism. He declared that "insurrection can lead only to anarchy and repression" and that separatism does not represent a "real alternative." Instead, Ford echoed Whitney Young's call for "responsible militancy." The goal of business and blacks, Ford argued, should not be gradualism, but "the fastest possible progress toward genuinely equal opportunity."

⁹⁴ Ford Motor Company, "News Release: Remarks by Henry Ford, II," New Detroit, Inc. Papers, Box 135, Folder 17; WPRL; "Henry Ford tells U.S.: 'Freedom or Failure,' *Michigan Chronicle*, November 25, 1967.

Part of this coalition's task is to redirect "irresponsible" and "violent" militancy into "constructive and practical action."

Cleage's Attempt to Engineer a Transfer of Power: The FSD-NDC Split

On August 9, 1967, two weeks after Governor Romney, Mayor Cavanagh, and Joseph Hudson announced the formation of NDC, over 1,000 members of the city's black population descended upon the County-City building to devise a response to the formation of the Detroit's liberal urban coalition. According to prominent local activists, Grace Lee and James Boggs, "every layer of the black community, top, middle and bottom," were represented.⁹⁵ Many of the city's prominent black activists attended such as Kenneth Cockrel, Edward Vaughn, Norvell Harrington, Nadine Brown, and Rev. Albert Cleage, Jr. Writers from the local leftist publication, *The Fifth Estate* remarked about the event, "It was undoubted the first time that 'Soul' had ever had possession of the chambers which it built and owns for even a few hours."⁹⁶ Within those chambers, the city's black militant leadership did not just question the legitimacy of the NDC's leadership, they gathered to announce that they should lead the city's reconstruction efforts.

Black power captured the crowd. The crowd shouted down black moderates. When the executive secretary of Detroit's NAACP, Robert Tindal had the floor, the crowd drowned out his remarks and some yelled "forget it." The provocative rhetoric emanating from the meeting resembled that of black power activists nationwide. Some speakers alluded to the prospects of future violence if whites did not turn over control of Detroit to the city's black population. Black power militant Edward Vaughn announced to the enthusiastic crowd, "We must control our community or there won't be a community." UAW official, Nadine Brown declared, "We

⁹⁵ Grace Lee Boggs and James Boggs, "Detroit: Birth of a Nation," *The Guardian*, October 7, 1967.

⁹⁶ "a NEW Detroit?," *The Fifth Estate*, August 29, 1967.

are going to get half or there won't be anything for anyone else to have.”⁹⁷ General calls for black power and organization also arose from the meeting. Attorney Milton Henry declared, “We want freedom to control our lives in all its activities... There will be hell. We will live in constant fury until we're free.”⁹⁸ Local CORE Chairman Clyde Cleveland critiqued the composition of the NDC, arguing that the “Hudson Committee needs a black man as head” and “that not a single black businessman or resident of the 12th street area was included.” Henry also called for the formation of an organization that would “give orders to the J.L. Hudson New Detroit Committee...”⁹⁹

The cheering crowd also voiced its support for other measures including Governor Romney's plan to outlaw housing segregation. They also supported the construction of a black-led post-riot governing coalition larger than the one that the NDC had conceived. Speakers called for “cutting off federal funds to the city unless the Hudson committee is placed in a secondary, advisory capacity to their new committee.” They also demanded “that all plans developed by any group for the inner city be brought before the new committee for approval.”¹⁰⁰ The raucous crowd began naming potential nominees to lead the burgeoning organization. They nominated several including Henry, Vaughn, and Cockrel. Rev. Cleage was eventually selected to chair the new organization. Cleage used his remarks to announce the arrival of a new black coalition and to appeal to racial unity. He called the audience “the new black establishment.” He chided black moderate “Toms,” presumably black integrationists such as Tindal and the NAACP. Cleage pleaded for them to “come home.”¹⁰¹

⁹⁷ Quoted in Fine, 373.

⁹⁸ Quoted in “a NEW Detroit?”

⁹⁹ “New Black Establishment Insists It Give the Order,” *Michigan Chronicle*, August 19, 1967.

¹⁰⁰ Carol Schmidt, “New Black Establishment Insist it Give the Order,” *Michigan Chronicle*, August 19, 1967.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.; Quoted in Fine, 373; Hubert Locke, “Riot Aftermath: New Dimensions of the Racial Struggle,” Albert B. Cleage Papers, Box 6, Folder: Locke – The Detroit Riots of 1967; BHL, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

Nine days later, Cleage, Brown, and others formally established “the new black establishment”—the Citywide Citizens Action Committee. Cleage, Brown, Clyde Cleveland, and activist Glanton Dowdell, comprised the organization’s leadership. Cleage envisioned the CCAC as an organizational embodiment of black power. Publishers of the National Urban Coalition’s *City Magazine* called it “possibly the most broadly based Black Power organization in any city.”¹⁰² The organization charged itself with leading “the rebuilding of the 12th Street area and other areas in Detroit damaged by the Detroit riot to insure that [the] new buildings, businesses, and other constructions” were “owned and operated by Negroes.”¹⁰³ CCAC’s sought to advance black community control as the answer to Detroit’s urban crisis. Cleage declared later in August, the CCAC’s “basic goal can be simply stated: self-determination for the black community or the transfer of power from the white establishment to the black community.”¹⁰⁴

The CCAC represented the latest organizational expression of black power and advanced a comprehensive approach to addressing Detroit’s ills. They articulated an economic politics distinct from the corporate-led plans devised by the NDC business leaders. They believed that the organization could foster a more cooperative form of black economic development within the capitalist system.¹⁰⁵ Members of the CCAC concentrated on constructing cooperatives like the Black Star Co-Op, Inc. Consistent with his understanding of a “transfer of power,” Cleage viewed white private and government funds as potential sources of investment. In the August 26, 1967 edition of the *Michigan Chronicle*, Cleage stated that “all federal funds spent” in Detroit’s

¹⁰² “Detroit seeks to bring constructive changes out of the summer’s chaos,” *City Magazine*

¹⁰³ United States Senate, Ninetieth Congress, First Session Riots, *Civil and Criminal Disorders, Part 6* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1967), 1419.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid*; While stating that black power reflected “a mood rather than a program,” the Kerner Commission recognized the centrality of black independent and community control in the black power strategy. The report defined the economic strategies of black power in mostly capitalist terms. *Kerner Commission Report*, 233.

¹⁰⁵ See Cleage’s views on communism in Dillard, 274.

black community “must be under the control of black people.”¹⁰⁶ Regarding developing black businesses, Cleage stated, “our main hold up is getting funds for small business development. We have found some white, private investors who are interested in our cooperatives. They are willing to let us use their money but allow us to direct the course of our business. We have not found resistance to our plans in either the white or black community.”¹⁰⁷ The issue of black community control and white investment was not inconsistent with many black power activists’ understanding of black capitalism. Both Cleage and Hudson saw a sort of black power as crucial to the reconstruction project of Detroit, only with a slight difference—who would ultimately control the resources necessary to govern black life in the city.

Joseph Hudson did not object to the formation of the CCAC. Hudson met with Cleage privately in the aftermath of the rebellion.¹⁰⁸ He and Ford also extended overtures to Cleage in an effort to work with the CCAC. Hudson declared “that New Detroit would ‘recognize, welcome, and cooperate’ with the new ‘Black Establishment Committee.’”¹⁰⁹ Hudson also met with Cleage before announcing his intentions of working with Cleage. Ford was drawn to the argument that “traditional” black leadership failed to represent the best interests of the city’s black population. He also visited Cleage at his church to discuss a potential working relationship.¹¹⁰

Cleage and the CCAC entered into the business of the Detroit’s revitalization to some fanfare from some black Detroiters and the city’s business leadership. However, they still struggled to construct an all-black coalition broad enough to operate with the authority they believed was needed to take control over the city’s reconstruction process. In fact, the CCAC intended to enlist integrationists in the organization, but moderates, according to scholar Richard

¹⁰⁶ “Unite or Perish,” *Michigan Chronicle*, August 26, 1967.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁸ Fine, Hudson Interview, 10.

¹⁰⁹ Fine, 373.

¹¹⁰ William Serrin, “Cleage’s Alternative,” *The Reporter*, May 30, 1968.

W. Thomas, “held a special resentment for Cleage, who many moderates saw as ‘Johnny-come-lately’ to the black movement.” In August 1967, President of the Council of Black Ministers, Roy Allen, formed a moderate black organization to rival Cleage’s CCAC, the Detroit Council of Organizations (DCO).¹¹¹

The rivalry between the CCAC and the DCO spilled into the open in September and October 1967. While speaking at a gathering that the Booker T. Washington Business Association (BTWBA) organized that month, both Cleage and DCO member James S. Garrett acknowledged the need for black unity. Garrett even agreed with Cleage that black self-determination was the central aim.¹¹² However, Garrett took to an editorial in the *Michigan Chronicle* to defend the aims of the DCO and make distinctions between their organization and the CCAC.¹¹³ While maintaining his support for black unity, Garrett wrote, the “CCAC has advocated separatism. DCO does not, but rather endeavors to make Negroes an integrated part of the total community.” The DCO uttered particular aspects of black power publicly. However, it maintained that black integration into the city’s political and social institutions represented the best path towards rebuilding a post-riot Detroit whereas the CCAC continued to advocate for black control over the reconstruction process.¹¹⁴ While the CCAC continued to operate into

¹¹¹ Richard W. Thomas, “The Black Community Building Process, 1967-1997” in *African American Urban Experience: Perspectives from the Colonial Period to the Present*, eds. Joe W. Trotter, Earl Lewis and Tera W. Hunter (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 218; New Detroit Committee, “Evaluation of Detroit Council of Organizations,” New Detroit, Inc. Records, Box 152, Folder 24, WPR, Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan.

¹¹² “Garrett, Cleage Explain Purposes of their Groups,” *Michigan Chronicle*, 7 October 1965; “Garrett, Cleage Call Self-Determination Key,” *Michigan Chronicle*, 4 November 1967.

¹¹³ Thomas, 219-220.

¹¹⁴ Darden and Thomas, 17.

Darden and Thomas outlining the DCO’s and CCAC’s roles in the black community process seem limited, at least when one considers the CCAC’s and Albert Cleage’s desire to ultimately take control over the whole city. The authors’ speculation about whether or not the DCO and CCAC could have worked together “if New Detroit had not influenced the interaction between militants and moderates” corroborates the larger point of the NDC functioning as sort of an “internal colonial” institution. However, their speculation seems to contradict their point that the DCO and the CCAC had ideological differences that at least kept DCO’s leadership from working with Cleage and the CCAC. Hudson also stated that it would have been easier to support black-directed rebuilding efforts if both organizations

1968, the failure of the organization to attract moderate blacks to its coalition led Cleage and other black leaders to decide to form a new federation of black organizations.

More than seventy-five black Detroiters “representing a cross-section of local organizations” gathered at the office of the WCO to form a black organization with a broader base than the CCAC and DCO on December 1. Despite the meeting’s small attendance, organizers saw the new organization that emerged from this meeting as the representative of the city’s black community. This new organization would engineer the “transfer of power” that Cleage and other militants desired.¹¹⁵ As the organizational representative of black Detroit, the new organization would serve the primary negotiator with the NDC. President of the BTWBA and black businessman, Edgar Brazelton, oversaw the affair. Cleage was voted chair and Lorenzo Freeman of the WCO was elected vice-chairman. The attendees named the new organization the Federation for Self-Determination, which saw itself as “non-sectarian” and “non-partisan,” charged itself with fostering “unity in the inner-city.” Brazelton declared at the meeting, “Such an organization will give a true and representative voice of the powerless neighborhoods and communities through the Detroit area.”¹¹⁶ Their proposal to the NDC advanced a larger goal: “to improve[e] the political, social, and economic stature of black people... to eradicate[e] racial prejudice, and to develop... self-determination for black people in all areas of community life.”¹¹⁷

Cleage, Brazelton, and other saw the FSD as a coalitional body that would help lead in Detroit’s reconstruction. Their proposal to the NDC outlined an ambitious, yet rather ambiguous,

could have worked together. See Darden and Thomas, 18; “New Detroit Approves ‘Concept’ of Federation, Delay’s Funding,” *Michigan Chronicle*, 23 December 1967.

¹¹⁵ Cleage, Gregory and others thought the FSD would engineer a “transference of power” from the NDC to the city’s black community. Sidney Fine interview with Karl Gregory. Detroit Riot Oral History Transcripts, 1984-1985, BHL.

¹¹⁶ “A Voice for Community,” *Michigan Chronicle*, December 9, 1967; Fine, 377.

¹¹⁷ Federation for Self-Determination, “A Proposal for Financing a Federation of Black Organizations and Individual Members,” New Detroit, Inc. Files, Box 148, Folder 1, WPRL, Wayne State University.

structure.¹¹⁸ The organizers did not envision the FSD as a community development organization, per se.¹¹⁹ The purpose of the FSD, Wayne State University economist, Dr. Karl Gregory announced was to serve as “a forum for gathering, exchanging, and disseminating information, discussing priorities and promoting cooperation among members.”¹²⁰ The FSD requested funding for staff and offices as well as for the institution for an urban research center. The FSD would focus on organizing the urban research center as its first endeavor. The urban research center, according to Gregory, “would be a complete compilation of services to members,” which “would enable the Federation to serve as a referral agency and also to identify gaps in private and public services...”¹²¹

In contrast to the CCAC, the FSD did enjoy some participation from the city’s moderates. The FSD garnered participation from some members of the Booker T. Washington Business Association and the Wolverine Bar Association. According to Sidney Fine, even the NAACP’s Robert Tindal and James Garrett worked with the Federation for Self-Determination. However, it failed to garner support from the DCO. Fine reports that Roy Allen refrained from joining the FSD because he thought he would have to follow the dictates of the FSD or be “eliminated.”¹²² Ultimately, the FSD mostly drew from the city’s militant activists and organizations such as the Citywide Citizens Action Committee, the West Central Organization, and CORE.

¹¹⁸ According to Fine, members of FSD consulted Hudson before establishing the group. *Ibid.*, 377.

¹¹⁹ Federation for Self-Determination, “A Proposal for Financing a Federation of Black Organizations and Individual Members.”

¹²⁰ “A Voice for Community,” *Michigan Chronicle*, December 9, 1967.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² Quoted in Fine, 377. It is not really clear what Allen meant by getting “eliminated.” It seems that Allen was alluding to some sort of social ostracism or physical retribution for not participating on FSD’s terms.

At the December 14 meeting, the NDC “endorsed the concept of a federation” and considered contributing the necessary resources to fund the FSD’s six month plan.¹²³ The Federation requested \$137,000 for the initial development phase and another \$200,000 a year for the following two years.¹²⁴ The FSD also requested fundraising assistance from the NDC for the first phase. Both Hudson and Henry Ford, II supported the FSD plan and were ready to grant the organization \$32,000 in start-up money. However, the NDC’s black moderate and white members of the NDC decided to delay funding the FSD.¹²⁵ The DCO also sent a telegram to New Detroit before the December 14 meeting arguing that supporting the FSD “would preclude an opportunity for other Negro organizations having a stake in Detroit’s future to concretize and present their proposals on the federation concept and allied matters.”¹²⁶ The DCO even threatened to boycott stores ran by any of the NDC’s membership if Hudson’s committee did not consider DCO’s concerns. The coalition of moderate black and whites on the NDC and DCO’s actions led to further tension between the black militants and some of the black moderates and white committee members. Norvell Harrington walked out of the meeting, accusing the NDC of selling out the black militants and signaled that he may resign if the NDC could not work out “its problems.”¹²⁷

NDC’s decision to delay the FSD’s funding allowed the DCO to compose and submit its own proposal before NDC’s January 4 meeting.¹²⁸ Due to DCO’s pressure, the NDC agreed to provide \$100,000 to both the DCO and the FSD for its first year of operations. Both

¹²³ “New Detroit approves ‘concept’ of federation, delays funding,” *Michigan Chronicle*, December 23, 1967; New Detroit Committee, “Meeting Agenda, January 4, 1968,” New Detroit, Inc. Files, Box 148, Folder 1, WPRL, Wayne State University.

¹²⁴ “New Detroit approves ‘concept’ of federation, delays funding,” *Michigan Chronicle*, December 23, 1967.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*; Graves, 67; Fine, 377.

¹²⁶ Quoted in “New Detroit approves ‘concept’ of federation, delays funding,” *Michigan Chronicle*, December 23, 1967; Fine, 377.

¹²⁷ Quoted in *Ibid.*, “Traditional Leadership, Corporations Get a Slap,” *Michigan Chronicle*, January 13, 1968; Fine, 377-378.

¹²⁸ Graves, 70.

organizations also had to raise the matching funds. Further stipulations also accompanied the award. The NDC stated that both organizations had to work with William Patrick, the city's first black councilman and the executive director of the NDC. According to Hudson, Patrick would serve as an "interlink," or liaison between the NDC and the two organizations. Also, because the funds ultimately came from the Ford Foundation, neither organization was allowed to use the money for "direct political activity."¹²⁹

NDC's proposal incensed Cleage and other members of the FSD. The organization voted 78 to 52 to decline the NDC grant. The FSD subsequently voted unanimously to sever all ties with the NDC. They saw NDC's proposal in direct opposition to their understandings of black power. Instead of "transference of power," the FSD argued that the NDC sought to dictate the terms for black self-determination. According to the January 4 meeting minutes, "Mr. Joseph L. Hudson made statements which appeared to place the Federation for Self-Determination in a subordinate position and to distort its image to such a degree that the Federation appeared to be giving up self-determination."¹³⁰

The FSD issued multiple press releases in the ensuing days explaining why it decided to relationship with the NDC. In the January 5 press release, the organization announced that Renny Freeman and Norvel Harrington, two black militants serving on the NDC, had resigned in protest.¹³¹ The FSD called the NDC's terms for the grant "unacceptable." The FSD understood that its actions had national significance given the NDC's status as the "first" urban coalition. The FSD declared, "The Federation herewith refuses the \$100,000, or sixteen cents per black person of Detroit, which with the best of inten[t]ions would be insufficient, but as offered, would

¹²⁹ "'Traditional Leadership, Corporations Get a Slap," *Michigan Chronicle*, January 13, 1968; Graves, 71.

¹³⁰ Federation for Self-Determination, "Meeting Minutes January 4, 1968," New Detroit, Inc. Papers, Box 148, Folder 1, WPRL.

¹³¹ Federation for Self-Determination, "New Release," January 7, 1968. Albert B. Cleage Papers, Box 5, Folder: Federation for Self-Determination, BHL.

set an example nationwide, mortgaging the freedom of black people and playing havoc with their self-respect.”¹³² The FSD argued that the NDC acted paternalistically when it awarded the FSD the grant with strings attached. In the press release issued by the FSD on January 7, it stated, “Whites have tried to absorb blacks paternalistically and then on terms set by whites.”¹³³ The following week, Cleage argued “We're tired of charity, colonialism, and plantation thinking. Black people must make the decisions affecting their lives just like most whites do.”¹³⁴

Some prominent black power activists thought Cleage’s and FSD’s refusal of NDC’s resources had national significance. CORE director Floyd McKissick visited Detroit on January 8. McKissick explained during a press conference,

“Detroit—to black militants throughout the nation—means far more than the community of Detroit. It means the recognition of the industrial empire and Detroit represents that industrial empire for the nation. The New Detroit Committee represents the first attempt in this country to deal on a respectable, honorable, egalitarian basis with the black people in this country. This committee has met with failure. This committee has proceeded to follow the normal paternalistic methods of dealing with the black community. The New Committee of Detroit has failed to recognize that the principle of black self-determination is lesson one, page one in the subject of black power... We have come to this community and have to support Rev. Cleage’s Self-Determination group because without white people understanding the principle of self-determination, I think we are going to let a major problem go unsolved. So what happens in Detroit right now is more important than Newark, more important than Chicago, New York, and San Francisco, Los Angeles and Denver. We in the struggle recognize this overall importance.”¹³⁵

CORE’s Roy Innis stated, “Only when black people have strength based upon power can there be a meaningful coalition. The dilution of power in the black community either through continued oppression or paternalism must come to an end.”¹³⁶

¹³² Federation for Self Determination, “Press Release,” January 5, 1968. Albert B. Cleage Papers, Box 5, Folder: Federation for Self-Determination, BHL.

¹³³ Federation for Self Determination, “New Release,” January 7, 1968, Albert B. Cleage Papers, Box 5, Folder: Federation for Self-Determination, 1967-1968, BHL, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI.

¹³⁴ Quoted in “Traditional Leadership, Corporations Get a Slap,” *Michigan Chronicle*, January 13, 1968.

¹³⁵ “Excerpts of the Press Conference of Floyd McKissick, CORE Director in Detroit,” January 8, 1968, Joseph L. Hudson Papers, BHL, Box 1, Folder: Relations with Black Organizations: Federation for Self-Determination.

¹³⁶ Federation for Self Determination, “New Release,” January 6, 1968.

McKissick's and Innis's charges of paternalism reflected radical critiques of the urban coalitions. Carmichael and Hamilton viewed white control of black labor and the inner city's social institutions within inner cities as examples of "the colonial situation."¹³⁷ They also maintained that coalitions with whites were counterproductive as long as whites possessed economic and political power. Activist scholars Richard Cloward and Frances Fox Piven called the urban programs of coalitions in Detroit and Cleveland "corporate imperialism for the poor."¹³⁸ Documenting the FSD-NDC breakdown, Michigan Chronicle journalists Bill Gilliam and Carol Schmidt referred to FSD's denial of funds as "a direct slap...to what is being called corporate imperialism."¹³⁹

Cleage, Freeman, Cockrel, and the rest of the FSD voted to disband on in April 1968 after failing to raise the necessary funds to operate the organization. The member organizations and individuals also thought disbanding the Federation was "necessary...in order to establish a realignment among militant organizations. Black organizers also desired to focus on their, or their organizations, individual endeavors. The FSD decided to allocate the remaining funds—a mere \$250—to John Watson's Inner-City Voice newspaper.¹⁴⁰

Some black militants lamented the lost potential of the FSD and pointed to the failure of the organization's leadership as a source of fracture. One anonymous militant may have been referring to Rev. Cleage when s/he pointed to the "lack of integrity and the personal ambitions of those who had the responsibility of making the Federation operative."¹⁴¹ Rev. Cleage's reputation as lightning rod affected the FSD's ability to attract a diverse black membership and outside resources. Karl Gregory noted in a later interview, "One of the big obstacles to getting

¹³⁷ Carmichael and Hamilton, 3-32.

¹³⁸ Frances Fox Piven and Richard Cloward, "Corporate Imperialism for the Poor," *The Nation*, October 16, 1967.

¹³⁹ Bill Gilliam, "Traditional Leadership Corporations Get a Slap," *Michigan Chronicle*, January 13, 1968.

¹⁴⁰ Albert Dunmore, "Militants to Enter New Cycle," *Michigan Chronicle*, April 27, 1968.

¹⁴¹ Dunmore, "Militants to Enter New Cycle."

leaders together was some of the traditional ministers viewed Rev. Cleage as a Black Nationalist and the titular head and some people couldn't abide with that." Gregory mentioned how the FSD sought to acquire resources from "some foundation folks" in New York, but "Cleage was a little bit too radical for foundation folks."¹⁴² At the same time, some black militants within the FSD did not see Cleage as sufficiently militant. According to a story in the May 11, 1968 edition of the Detroit Scope Magazine, Detroit's black militants "rejected" Rev. Cleage. The "rock-hard militants," according to the article, "helped kill the Federation for Self-determination" and had went 'underground.'¹⁴³ William Serrin, correspondent for *The Reporter*, wrote, "...the next step may well be militancy at its extreme: black warfare. Already some of his young followers are leaving Cleage because he is not prepared for that step. As a result, the Federation for Self-Determination has been disbanded."¹⁴⁴

Conclusion: Downtown Development and the War on Crime Triumphs

The rebellions in Newark and Detroit in 1967 spurred the imagining and construction of various coalitions. The radical and social democratic visions did not gain traction. Cleage's "transfer of power" strategy failed when he disbanded the Federation of Self-Determination after declining New Detroit's grant. Under fire from the left, Rustin's plans to organize a coalition of liberals and labor, civil rights, and religious organization around the "Freedom Budget" failed to materialize. Even the liberal coalitions changed after the late-1960s. The New Detroit Committee, although initially charged with leading the private sector's response to the urban crisis, settled into the role of advocacy—calling on the private sector to fulfill its social

¹⁴² Sidney Fine, "Interview with Karl Gregory," July 12, 1984. Detroit Riot Oral History Project, 1984-1985, BHL.

¹⁴³ "Power Struggle Among the Militants," *Detroit Scope Magazine*, May 11, 1968. One could also find this article in Leonard Gordon, *A City in Racial Crisis: The Case of Detroit Pre- and Post-1967 Riot* (Iowa: WM. C. Brown Company Publishers, 1971).

¹⁴⁴William Serrin, "Cleage's Alternative," *The Reporter*, May 30, 1968.

responsibility to address unemployment by creating jobs and calling on government to enact fair housing laws, educational reforms, and better police-community relations. The NDC also emerged as an organization that could help integrate the city's black population. The NDC, in effect, became a facilitator of resources. In the name of black self-determination, the NDC sought to redistribute money to the city's black organizations as long as those black organizations adhered to certain parameters and reported back to the NDC.

There was also a mismatch between the NDC's plans to rebuild the city and some of their members' business prerogatives. Between 1967 and 1970, the NDC could brag about creating jobs despite the national recession. NDC's advocacy for the creation of jobs revealed a glaring paradox—Ford, Hudson, and others sought to stimulate the job market while they moved many of the city's firms into the suburbs and beyond. The Budd Company and K-Mart moved to the suburb of Troy. Ford Motor Company began building a complex in Dearborn while the Chrysler Corporation sought to construct facility in near Troy.¹⁴⁵ Many of Hudson's department stores were located in the suburbs.¹⁴⁶ Larger economic and political conditions also hindered the NDC-sponsored job programs.

The 1969 economic recession affected Detroit business' efforts as well. Many of the businesses who participated in job programs cut jobs. Ford silently closed its two inner-city hiring centers after it reduced production earlier in 1969.¹⁴⁷ This problem with NDC's job programs reflected a national trend. Many of the companies who instituted hiring programs in the aftermath of the rebellions could not retain their workers. According to scholars Lipsky and

¹⁴⁵ Robert Conot, *American Odyssey*, 786-787; Nelson Lichtenstein, *Walter Reuther: The Most Dangerous Man in Detroit* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 413.

¹⁴⁶ Jacoby, 243.

¹⁴⁷ Laurence G. O'Donnell, "In Motown, Caution Proves Successful," *Wall Street Journal*, July 11, 1969.

Olson, many of the 100,000 recruited in the National Alliance of Businessmen's JOBS program lost their jobs after employers collected their subsidies from the federal government.¹⁴⁸

As early as the summer of 1968, members of New Detroit's Economic Development Committee also began exploring other means of redeveloping the city of Detroit. The EDC's Fred Kaiser began soliciting the opinions of other business leaders about how to revitalize the city as early as June 1968. Their conclusions had national implications. The business and political leaders articulated a single argument—the city, the NDC, and its allies would have to work to establish a “better business climate” if they hope to retain and attract more businesses and stop capital flight. Strand even argued that the city focused too much on “minority group interests” and failed to pay attention to the city's business community. Robert L. Gage, area manager of Michigan Consolidated Gas Company wondered if the business community could pressure city government “to conduct their affairs so as to reflect an understanding of the problems of industry...” Strand even anticipated then corporate lawyer Lewis Powell's call for business leaders to advocate for their interests in government. “The business interests, too, must stand up and be counted,” Strand wrote.¹⁴⁹ Leaders in the private and public sector who believed in market-based solutions to economic crisis in the Midwest adhered to this logic.

Downtown development remained a viable solution in Detroit. The EDC's efforts to pursue the physical construction of the city's downtown district found greater organizational expression when Max Fisher resigned from New Detroit to create the Detroit Renaissance, Inc.

¹⁴⁸ Olson and Lipsky, *Commission Politics: The Processing of Racial Crisis in America* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1977), 141.

¹⁴⁹Letter from Letter from George Catlin to Fred Kaiser, June 25, 1968; Letter from Thomas L. Disk to Fred Kaiser, July 1, 1968; Robert L. Gage to Fred Kaiser, July 2, 1968; Letter from Forrest Strand to Fred Kaiser, October 3, 1968, New Detroit, Inc. Papers, Box 32, Folder 19 & 20. For a discussion of Powell's Memo see Kimberly Phillips-Fein, *Invisible Hands: The Making of the Conservative Movement From the New Deal to Reagan* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2009), 156-65.

in 1970. The organization comprised the city's "business and economic elite."¹⁵⁰ According to Detroit Renaissance's first report, the city's business leaders established the organization aimed to address industrial flight from the city. Detroit Renaissance's strategy concentrated on redeveloping the city's downtown. In other words, the organization sought to institutionalize Robert A. Gage's advice to Kaiser: improve Detroit's business climate by transforming the city's image. Generally, "revitalization, growth, and renewed prosperity" represented the organization's broad goals.¹⁵¹ Detroit Renaissance, Inc. did not just offer an urban development program for the city's future mayors to implement, it also served as a target of Detroit's left-wing activists.

The decline of the job programs, as well as NDC's failures to build a broader working coalition with some of the city's black militants, left crime fighting as another strategy for revitalizing Detroit. Those supporting downtown development exhibited an ambivalence around race and gender in urban revitalization policy. Instead of trying to recruit and hire the hard-core unemployed, business leaders instead endorsed more aggressive policing of downtown. The focus on black criminality produced new laws and police tactics stigmatizing black men and women in Detroit during the late 1960s and early 1970s, sometimes to deadly results. Activists from the city's black revolutionary worker movement and white left took note and responded to police brutality.

¹⁵⁰Fine, 449.

¹⁵¹ Detroit Renaissance, *A Three Year Report* (Detroit: Detroit Renaissance, Inc., 1973).

Chapter 2

“Detroit under STRESS”: Coalition Politics in the Campaign to Stop Police Killings in Detroit

On the morning of September 23, 1971, more than 1,000 Detroiters gathered at Cass Park to march in protest against the slaying of two black teenagers—15-year-old Ricardo Buck and 16-year-old Craig Mitchell—by white undercover police officer patrolman, Richard Worebec. Worebec served in the city’s undercover police unit—STRESS, or Stop the Robberies, Enjoy Safe Streets—that Police Commissioner John Nichols instituted to combat street crime in January 1971.¹ The predominately African American march swelled to four thousand as the demonstrators walked from Woodward to Gratiot and then to the Wayne County Jail to demonstrate their solidarity with those incarcerated. Prisoners staying on the Gratiot and Clinton

¹ Detroit protesters carried signs expressing solidarity with political prisoner Angela Davis and the prisoners involved in the Attica uprising. California Governor Ronald Reagan ordered that the University of California-Los Angeles fire Davis because of her membership in the U.S. Communist Party in 1969. The FBI unsuccessfully connected her to a California shootout that led to the death of a judge in 1970. Black prisoners in Attica took over the state prison in September 1971 with the intent of improving living conditions. New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller called in the National Guard to put down the uprising. On September 13, four days before officer Worebec shot and killed Buck and Mitchell, national Guardsmen killed twenty-nine prisoners and the ten guards they held hostage. “Summary of Findings and Recommendations From Michigan Civil Rights Commission Investigation of STRESS Unit – Detroit Police Department,” 6 December 1971, Box 5, Folder 22, Kenneth V. and Sheila M. Cockrel Collection, Walter P. Reuther Library (WPRL), Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan. (Hereafter, Cockrel Collection); Manning Marable, *Race, Reform, and Rebellion: The Second Reconstruction and Beyond in Black America, 1945-2006* (Jackson, University of Mississippi, 2007), 124-128.

sides of the jail cheered the marchers as they passed. If any of the prisoners could have caught a glimpse of the marchers, they would have seen placards expressing support for Angela Davis, the Attica Prisoners, and the slain teens.²

Many onlookers stood, with their arms raised and fists clenched, as they listened to an array of speakers representing the broad black-led coalition that organized the demonstration. The speakers included *Michigan Chronicle* columnist, Jim Ingram, who served as one of the mediators during the Attica prison rebellion; Lonnie Peek, black student leader at Wayne State University; Cokwe Lumumba of the black nationalist Republic of New Africa (RNA); Tom Moss, president of the Guardians of Michigan, a black police organization; and the presidents of the local branches of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Activist Adrean Davis read a letter from the “political prisoners” in the county jail. Kenneth Cockrel, one of the founders of the Labor Defense Coalition (LDC), called for the end of STRESS and spoke on the burgeoning movement. “We’re going to show them discipline the man never knew existed in the black community,” Cockrel declared.³

The demonstration made an impression on the local media and even the police. The conservative-leaning *Detroit News* called the gathering “one of the best organized Detroit demonstrations in several years” and Nadine Brown from the city’s black newspaper, the *Michigan Chronicle*, remarked on the protest’s orderliness. When referring to the marchers’

² Nadine Brown, “To Combat all Forms of Repression,” *Michigan Chronicle*, 2 October 1971.

³ Peter Cain, “4,000 Join in Orderly Protest against STRESS Killing of Pair,” *Detroit News*, September 24, 1971; Nadine Brown, “To Combat all Forms of Oppression,” *Michigan Chronicle*.

discipline, one white DPD intelligence officer told the *Detroit News*: “This has got to be the best demonstration ever.”⁴

The demonstration boasted a broader agenda—it connected local concerns with police violence against black Detroiters with national political and economic developments. The march highlighted political repression of blacks (and leftists) in the U.S. and President Richard Nixon’s economic agenda.⁵ The Federal Bureau of Investigation’s (FBI) work with local law enforcement agencies to harass and disrupt black and white radical organizations during the late 1960s and early 1970s is well known. The police riot at the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago, the 1969 police killing of Black Panthers Fred Hampton and Mark Clark in Chicago, and the May 4, 1970 shootings at Kent State all represented products of the prevalent calls for law and order in U.S. cities.

The march not only represented the largest black-led and non-labor union protest in Detroit since the aftermath of the 1967 uprising, it sparked a three year political struggle against STRESS and signaled the emergence of a broad-based left, liberal, labor, and black power coalition around police violence against black Detroiters. Liberal civil rights organizations such

⁴ Cain, “4,000 Join in Orderly Protest against STRESS Killing of Pair”; Nadine Brown, “To Protest Slayings Here, N.Y.,” *Michigan Chronicle*, September 25, 1971.

⁵ The march coincided with President Richard Nixon’s visit to Detroit on the same day where he discussed his economic program with the Economic Club of Detroit, a prestigious organization comprised of the city’s economic elites. In August, Nixon had imposed a ninety day wage and price freeze as part of his broader strategy to address rising unemployment and inflation. September 23, 1971 was significant, the protestors argued in their flyer “because Nixon will be developing the economic component of the oppression that Rockefeller enforced in a brutal military way on the prisoners at Attica.” The organizers’ connection of political repression with a racial and economic analysis refutes the notion that leftists turned to “identity politics” during the 1970s. The Detroit’s Anti-STRESS coalition’s economic analyses of crime, drug use, and the relationship between policing black bodies and urban development foreshadowed the left urban progressive’s integrated ideological outlook that they would articulate throughout the 1970s. Judith Stein, “Conflict, Change, Economic Policy,” in *Rebel Rank and File: Rebel Rank and File: Labor Militancy and Revolt from Below During the Long 1970s*, eds. Aaron Brenner, Robert Brenner, and Cal Winslow (New York: Verso, 2010), 91-92; Leo Panitch and Sam Gindin, *The Making of Global Capitalism: The Political Economy of American Empire* (New York: Verso, 2012), 141; Labor Defense Coalition, “Protest the Murders of Buck and Craig by STRESS Flyer,” 1971, Box 5, Folder 37, Cockrel Collection, WPRL; Todd Gitlin, *Twilight of Common Dreams: Why America is Wracked by Culture Wars* (New York: Holt, 1995).

as NAACP, SCLC, and New Detroit, Incorporated, black radical organizations like the RNA and the Black Workers Congress (BWC), white left organizations such as the Motor City Labor League (MCLL) and From the Ground Up (FTGU), the multiracial LDC, and organized labor locals such as the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) all lent support to the Anti-STRESS coalition. The existence of such a broad coalition challenges the notion of that liberalism, civil rights, black power, and the new left fractured. Detroit's Anti-STRESS movement illustrates the ways in which local conditions can provoke the reconstitution of political coalitions and the roles that left progressives played in urban politics.

This chapter uses the Anti-STRESS coalition's campaign to stop the police killings of Detroiters to illustrate a successful example of progressive politics. The left wing of the Anti-STRESS movement—comprising radical black power activists and white new leftists—accomplished two overlapping goals that turned out to be in real tension. First, it helped build a vast coalition of organizations and leaders around police brutality. This development contrasts with Heather Ann Thompson's frame for understanding Detroit politics between 1967 and 1973 in *Whose Detroit?: Politics, Labor, and Race in a Modern American City*. Rather than political conflict among conservatives, liberals, and radicals characterizing the city's political culture, a closer examination of the Anti-STRESS coalition reveals how the Labor Defense Coalition, a multiracial organization led by radical lawyers, helped construct a coalition that incorporated liberal civil rights groups such as the NAACP and organized labor.⁶

⁶ Heather Ann Thompson, *Whose Detroit?: Politics, Labor, and Race in a Modern American City* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001).

Second, the left wing of the Anti-STRESS coalition developed and articulated a radical analysis of crime and policing built from the activism of the 1960s and early-1970s.⁷ The organization interpreted the police killings, and policing in general, as a product of both racism and class exploitation. Rather than pointing to pathology and behavior as the reasons for criminal activity, black and white leftists took a structural approach. They grounded their critiques of police repression, and the rise of crime and drug use, in an anti-capitalist, anti-racist, and anti-imperialist analysis. According to Cockrel and others, crime rose as jobs and capital fled the inner city. According to the campaign's left-wing, STRESS and downtown development served only to bolster private capital. Essentially, urban growth depended upon policing black bodies. By the late 1970s, their multifaceted analysis of urban development, crime, and repression gave way to the anti-corporate critique of urban development they would later articulate as members of DARE. Their economic and anti-racist critique of police repression and downtown redevelopment illustrates how "identity" and economic politics were not mutually exclusive.

Members of the coalition's left wing pursued a reformist campaign strategy that incorporated a variety of tactics. STRESS, Detroit's Mayor Roman Gribbs, Police Commissioner John Nichols, and Wayne County Prosecutor William Cahalan represented the campaign's focal points. Radical lawyers such as Justin Ravitz and Kenneth Cockrel sought to use the legal system to pressure Gribbs, Nichols, and Cahalan into abolishing STRESS. The Coalition's left-wing also engaged in electoral politics. Cockrel, Ravitz, and other leftists saw taking over public institutions as a viable strategy for eradicating lethal policing and transforming the local criminal justice system. Most importantly, the left's participation in the coalition was consequential. They helped publicize STRESS's excesses. The Anti-STRESS left worked to elect Justin Ravitz

⁷ For more on the history of radical criminology see David F. Greenberg, ed., *Crime and Capitalism: Readings in Marxist Criminology* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993).

Recorder's Court Judge in 1972. State Representative Coleman Young rode the coalition's support into city hall in 1973. Young disbanded STRESS upon entering office. Cockrel built upon the Coalition's efforts and Ravitz's election in his successful city council campaign in 1977. The left wing of the Anti-STRESS coalition laid the ideological and organizational foundations for future progressive coalition politics.

Analyzing Detroit's Anti-STRESS coalition complicates histories of crime and law and order policing.⁸ This investigation of the campaign against police violence in Detroit during the early-1970s suggests that the excesses of law and order policies—surveillance and police killings—created coalitions of liberals and radicals in cities during a moment when scholars have argued that leftists entered into sectarian politics. It also created the space for left-wing activists to advance radical critiques of policing and to pursue electoral politics. The issue of racialized police repression and state violence brought together two Detroiters who would later disagree about how to address the city's deindustrialization and decline in the late-1970s and early-1980s—Kenneth Cockrel and Coleman Young—into the same movement.

The Detroit Police Department's implementation of STRESS illustrates the array of black responses to crime and law and order policing. It is true President Lyndon Johnson and federal policymakers and elected officials helped engineer racialized law and order policies, as scholars who seek to explain the political origins of the war on crime have illustrated. This chapter, however, is a reminder that black responses to illegal activity and the implementation of these policies in cities fall along a spectrum.⁹ Some black Detroiters chafed at what they perceived as

⁸ Heather Ann Thompson, "Why Mass Incarceration Matters: Rethinking Crisis, Decline, and Transformation in Postwar American History," *The Journal of American History* (December 2010); Elizabeth Kai Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime: The Making of Mass Incarceration in America* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press).

⁹ For the debate about black agency in the rise of mass incarceration in Donna Murch, "Who's to Blame for Mass Incarceration"; Michael J. Fortner, "Historical Method and the Noble Lie."

the racist application of stop and frisk. Some, such as the *Michigan Chronicle*'s Bill Black, roundly criticized black criminal activity and called for tougher policing. And while this chapter devotes much attention to black leftist opposition to STRESS, even some black residents such as Detroit Urban League Executive Director Francis A. Kornegay, initially welcomed the police unit. It was not until the Anti-STRESS coalition began pressuring the DPD and city leaders and the Rochester Street shootout before skeptics such as Kornegay began reconsidering the unit.

A closer investigation of the left wing Anti-STRESS coalition highlights the complex development of left politics in Detroit. Kenneth Cockrel, Sheila Murphy, Frank Joyce, and Jack Russell all cut their political teeth in Detroit's black power movement or while working for white leftist organizations. Murphy's, Joyce's, and other white new leftists' participation in the Anti-STRESS coalition represented an successful execution of Stokely Carmichael's, and other black power activists', demand for whites to organize other whites to fight against racism. Murphy, Joyce, and other white leftists supported black activists and residents in their fights against police brutality before the implementation of STRESS. They continued their work by devising and articulating anti-capitalist and anti-racist critiques of STRESS, running for elected office, and executing the left-wing's political education strategy.

Much of the literature on civil rights, black power, and the new left rely on declensionist understandings to explain the fate of these movements.¹⁰ This literature presumes that black and white radicals were disinterested in working in coalitions with liberals because radicals viewed them as embedded in the power structure. Scholarship on the new left, especially, emphasize

¹⁰ For declensionist explanations of the fate of the civil rights, black power, and new left movements see Gitlin, *Twilight of Common Dreams: Why America is Wracked by Culture Wars*; Clayborne Carson, *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995); Michael Kazin, *American Dreamers: How the Left Changed a Nation* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011); Van Gosse, *Rethinking the New Left: An Interpretive History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Jefferson Cowie, *Stayin' Alive: The 1970s and the Last Days of the Working Class* (New York: New Press, 2010); Eli Zaretsky, *Why America Needs a Left: A Historical Argument* (Cambridge, Mass.: 2012).

white radicals' decisions to cast their lot with either revolutionary violence or the Third World Marxist-inspired New Communist Movement. A more complex explanation of the development of the progressive left during the 1970s emerges out of an analysis of the leftists who participated in the Anti-STRESS coalition. Instead of limiting the fate of the left to sectarianism and fracture, this chapter illustrates another path that leftist activists took in the wake of the 1960s leftist social movements. Cockrel, Murphy, Joyce, and others saw their political fates and aspirations tied to building a left-liberal coalition around confronting repressive policing. Yet, despite their aims to developing a larger political base than their leftist contemporaries such as ex-League of Revolutionary Black Workers-turned New Communists General Baker, the LDC also simultaneously helped build a left progressive politics that developed outside of traditional labor-liberal coalitions.¹¹

The War on Crime and Police Repression in Detroit

Detroit's last white mayor before 1973 took advantage of the political turmoil generated by the 1967 uprising and voters' desires for law and order into city hall. In the 1969 election, Wayne County Sheriff Roman Gribbs squared off against Wayne County Auditor, Richard Austin. Austin's professional record made him a formidable candidate. He was the first black American in Michigan to become a certified public accountant. Austin was Wayne County's first black auditor. He was a moderate who aspired to continue the labor-liberal-corporate coalition. Austin received endorsements from the UAW, Teamsters, the local steelworkers' union, the *Michigan Chronicle*, and the *Detroit Free Press*. Gribbs's victory can be explained by the salient issues of race and crime, as well as Austin's lack of stature among Detroiters. White Detroiters,

¹¹ Max Elbaum, *Revolution in the Air: Sixties Radicals Turn to Lenin, Mao, and Che* (New York: Verso, 2002), 104-105.

according to a Detroit Free Press survey, saw crime, welfare, and black political power as the most significant issues as well. Gribbs's experience as sheriff lent him more legitimacy among whites who may have been skeptical of a black mayor and who desired a mayor who emphasized strong policing. Gribbs's desires to incorporate the use of Mace in policing angered many black Detroiters.¹² And while Gribbs was a moderate, he took advantage of whites' sentiments with his appeals to law and order.¹³

However, despite winning the primary, Austin lost the general election by a little over 7,000 votes.¹⁴ Gribbs appealed to white fears of crime while Austin sought to downplay the issue of race.¹⁵ He also attempted to redbait Austin by accusing him of employing a black radical on his campaign staff. Similar to the case in Cleveland where business interests threw their support behind candidates such as Carl Stokes in 1967 whom they believed could maintain order, the city's financial leaders backed Gribbs. Gribbs garnered much financial support from suburbanites.¹⁶

While Gribbs's election signaled a retrenchment in law and order politics in Detroit, Austin's strong campaign foreshadowed the ascendancy of black political power in the 1970s. However, black Detroiters needed more than just demographics to take City Hall. They also needed political opportunity to mobilize an electoral coalition that could vote a black American into City Hall. The Detroit Police Department's STRESS shootings created such a crucible for a broad based left-liberal coalition and black political power.

¹² Sidney Fine, *Violence in the Model City: the Cavanagh Administration, Race Relations, and the Detroit Riot of 1967* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1989), 456; Joe T. Darden and Richard W. Thomas, *Detroit: Race Riots, Racial Conflicts, and Efforts to Bridge the Racial Divide* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2013), 95-96.

¹³ Darden and Thomas, 95-96.

¹⁴ Thompson, *Whose Detroit?*, 80-81.

¹⁵ Darden and Thomas, 96.

¹⁶ Fine, 456; Darden and Thomas, Detroit, 96; Wilbur Rich, *Coleman Young and Detroit Politics: From Social Activist to Power Broker* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1996), 96.

Aggressive policing through policies such as its stop and frisk and the Detroit Police Department's institution of its STRESS unit represent an example of the city's gendered response to the urban crisis. The DPD and both mayors Jerome Cavanagh and Roman Gribbs undertook policies that criminalized black masculinity. Both mayors supported stop and frisk and increased downtown policing whereas the STRESS unit often targeted "suspicious" black men, often with deadly force. The unit killed fifteen black Detroiters, mostly young men, between January 1971 and March 1972. The establishment of STRESS not only reflected national trends in law enforcement policy, it reflected the presumption that policing black men, the criminalization of urban space, and urban revitalization were linked. In effect, the city's institutions adoption of these measures exemplified the connections between the war on poverty and liberal anti-crime politics and the ways they were both rooted in discourses of black pathology and the regulation of black bodies.

Detroit's identity as "the motor city" began to transform due to its declining tax base and industrial economy and rising criminal activity between 1967 and 1974. Journalists began to refer to the city as the "murder city" and the "capital of crime." In 1969, Detroit endured 488 murders. The city earned its "murder capital" moniker in 1974 when it recorded over 800 murders. In 1974, there were a reported 39,300 robberies, up from 35,700 in 1972.¹⁷ That year, the New York Times reported on how the "benign neglect" of the federal government contributed to the city's rising crime rate. The failure to redevelop inner city houses designated

¹⁷ Jacoby, *Someone Else's House*; U.S. Department of Justice, *Criminal Victimization Surveys in Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, New York, Philadelphia: A Comparison of 1972 and 1974 Findings* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1976), 30; "Detroit Seen Losing Infamous Title of U.S. 'Murder Capital,'" *Atlanta Daily World*, 5 January 1978.

for urban renewal had left a built environment for city residents who were participants in the city's illicit drug and crime economy.¹⁸

White and black middle class flight, deindustrialization, the demise of liberal post-riot job programs, and the economic downturn of the late 1960s all set the stage for the city's growing drug trade and rising murder rate, and thus the creation of the STRESS police unit. The 1969 recession erased post-riot job creation. Whites fled the city in droves. Black Americans moved into 7,000 to 9,000 previously white-owned homes a year.¹⁹ Mayor Jerome Cavanagh's successor, Roman Gribbs, warned of budget cuts in the face of declining tax revenue growing deficits.²⁰

One of the consequences of uneven development, white flight, deindustrialization, and the general erosion of inner city jobs was the creation of illegal underground economies and increasing instances of violence against persons and property. The Kerner Commission Report reminded Americans of how racial and class segregation created the conditions for elevated criminal activity in low income, racially-segregated neighborhoods in 1968. When comparing crime statistics among various racial and income districts, they found that "variations in the crime rate against persons within the city are extremely large. One very low-income Negro district had 35 times as many serious crimes against persons per 100,000 residents as did the high-income district." Greater strife between the city's police force and its black community

¹⁸ Agis Salpukas, "Abandoned Homes Shelter Urban Crime," *New York Times*, 2 October 1972; Dan Georgakas and Marvin Surkin, *Detroit: I Do Mind Dying: A Study in Urban Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass.: South End Press, 1998), 167.

¹⁹ June Manning Thomas, *Redevelopment and Race: Planning a Finer City in Postwar Detroit* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 100.

²⁰ John Oppedahl, "Gribbs Warns of More City Layoffs: Send Help, He Wires Congress," *Detroit Free Press*, May 14, 1972.

accompanied the rise in criminal activity in low-income, racially segregated neighborhoods, the Commission argued.²¹

Developments in national urban policy helped shape policing in Detroit. President Lyndon Johnson had declared a war on crime in 1965 at the same time his administration was trying to wage wars on poverty and in Vietnam. President Johnson oversaw the passage of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968. President Richard Nixon's administration increased funding to LEAA programs.²² The LEAA received \$63 million in 1969 and \$268 million in 1970. LEAA's allocation jumped to over \$698 million in 1972. The 1968 Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act created the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, which provided state and local law enforcement agencies with financial resources needed to modernize their police forces. The state of Michigan received almost \$7.6 million between 1969 and 1971, with local police forces getting 38% of the funds. In 1972-1973, Detroit devoted 70% of its LEAA funding to officer training, police aviation, resource management, and radio communications.²³

Detroit's county—Wayne— was a major beneficiary of LEAA funding. Wayne County received hundreds of thousands of dollars for drug treatment, drug use prevention, fighting organized crime, and other measures to improve their courts, resource management, and technology. The LEAA also listed an unspecified \$35,000 grant for STRESS. The report referred to the program as the city's "most dramatic" and bragged about the unit's efficacy. "In the first 4 months of the STRESS project, a 10-percent drop in street crimes has been realized in Detroit."²⁴

²¹ National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, *Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders* (New York: Bantam Books, 1968), 266-268. I refer to this report as the Kerner Commission Report.

²² Thompson, "Why Mass Incarceration Matters," 730.

²³ From the Ground Up, *Detroit Under STRESS* (Detroit: From the Ground Up, 1973), 39-40; Lee Webb, "Repression—a Growth Industry," *The Guardian (NY)*, 27 December 1969.

²⁴ Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, *3rd Annual Report of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration Fiscal Year 1971* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1972), 172-173.

The Nixon administration strengthened Johnson's national crime policy while weakening the previous administration's anti-poverty policy. While the Johnson Administration sought to link the wars on crime and poverty, Nixon separated the efforts when he abandoned the Great Society during the early 1970s.²⁵ The Nixon Administration consolidated into block grants—the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)—many of the Great Society-style urban programs that had allowed cities to tap into various agencies for money, Nixon's new federalism emphasized “revenue sharing” among cities, thus also distributing federal funds more widely than had Johnson's war on poverty.²⁶ The Great Society had tended to extend most of its resources to northeastern and midwestern cities whereas Nixon's urban policies funneled more money to the growing cities of the south and west.²⁷

With the support of the police department, the Detroit Common Council (city council) passed a controversial Crime Control Ordinance—otherwise known as the stop and frisk law—in early July 1968 in an effort to curb street crime.²⁸ The Detroit Free Press criticized the law as an instrument criminalizing blackness. Earlier in the year, the editors at the Detroit Free Press declared that the law “aimed at black punishment.” They argued that the law “should come as no surprise in a society which insists on punitive measures in an attempt to halt ‘crime on the streets’ ...”²⁹ Mayor Cavanagh, however, supported the measure. He mobilized crime statistics and the sort of “crime in the streets” discourse embedded in calls for law and order in the mid-1960s in an address to the city council. “There is no more important issue in this city, or in the nation, today than the mounting crime and lawlessness on our streets. Women are afraid to walk

²⁵ See Hinton's *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime* for a study of how the Johnson administration coupled both initiatives.

²⁶ David B. Walker, *The Rebirth of Federalism: Slouching Toward Washington* (New Jersey: Chatham House Publishers, Inc., 1995), 135; Timothy J. Conlan, “The Politics of Block Grants: From Nixon to Reagan,” *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 99, No. 2 (Summer 1984), 252-253.

²⁷ Thomas Anton, *Federal Aid to Detroit* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1983), xii.

²⁸ “Detroit's Frisk Law Praised by Police,” *Detroit News*, February 27, 1970.

²⁹ “Stop and Frisk Aimed at Black Punishment,” *Detroit Free Press*, 4 January 1968.

in broad daylight for fear of purse-snatchers, and even strong men will not venture into many areas of our city after dark. Disrespect for the law is growing, and particularly among the young.” He attributed part of the city’s declining economy to crime. Downtown businesses failed, Cavanagh maintained, because “people are unwilling to come into the city after dark.” Cavanagh addressed criticisms that the law disproportionately targeted the city’s black population. “The murders, the rapes, the assaults are not evenly spread throughout this city, but are concentrated in the five inner-city precincts. It is the people in this part of the city who are suffering the most from crime. Thus, rather than being an ordinance which could penalize the Negro community, this is an ordinance which will enable the Police Department to protect more effectively the true victims of the city.”³⁰

Black Detroiters demonstrated a range of responses to tougher policing. Some black Detroiters supported the stop and frisk measure.³¹ Others, however, sent letters and petitions to Cavanagh arguing that the law unfairly criminalized African Americans. Petitions and stock letters indicate some organizing on behalf of Detroit residents against the law. Eloise Anderson sent a copy of such a letter to Cavanagh, “We the undersigned are against the Stop and Frisk Ordinance recently passed by the Common Council. It is our feeling that this was a mistake due to the fact that it is another means of intimidating black citizens.”³² Some letter writers told their own stories about stop and frisk and relayed others’ experiences with police frisking. Reverend William J. Fitzpatrick told the mayor of how the police stopped one of the members of his church. The image of respectability did not protect the victim as Fitzpatrick indicated: “This was

³⁰ Jerome Cavanagh, “Address to City Council, July 5, 1968,” Jerome Cavanagh Papers, Box 585, Folder 2. WPRL.

³¹ Thomas C. MacCalla, Jr. wrote Cavanagh to voice his support for stop and frisk despite experiencing police harassment himself. Thomas C. MacCalla, Jr., Letter to Mayor Jerome Cavanagh, July 29, 1968, Jerome Cavanagh Papers, Box 412, Folder 14. Walter P. Reuther Papers, Wayne State University. The total of Detroiters who registered their support for stop and frisk to the mayor were in the minority, generally. Only 37 of the 160 responses found in Cavanagh’s files supported the measure.

³² Eloise Anderson, Letter to Mayor Cavanagh, July 3, 1968, Cavanagh Papers, Box 412, Folder 14. WPRL.

a well-dressed citizen.” Fitzpatrick, like many others who wrote to express their dissatisfaction with the law, warned of its potentially deadly implications. “This is an example of what this search and seizure or stop and frisk is going to do for the Negro people of our city. It is going to cause serious trouble and perhaps some killing.”³³

However, the stop and frisk policies were not enough for Detroit Urban League’s Francis Kornegay. In a 1969 report on the Urban League’s anti-crime efforts in the city, he, stated, “It is a shocking reality. It is worsening. A more serious consequence, while the community is aware of the alarming menace of crime and all of its attending effects – the fact remains, there is nothing being done to combat it – to declare war against it – to arouse total community efforts to curb it – to reduce it to a larger degree.” Kornegay called for 1,000 more police officers, more security guards for “underground garages, public hearings and for extra security work in high crime areas, and a law to curb drug trafficking.”³⁴ Kornegay continued his support for increased policing into the following year. In March 1970, according to a TV2 report, “As League Executive Francis Kornegay puts it, ‘The lack of safety of the citizen and his property has reached such proportions that fear, if it continues to develop, can destroy the best in our city.’” They recommended more police and a “relentless attack” on drug trafficking.”³⁵

Kornegay’s call for tougher policing highlights how some black civic leaders helped drive the war on crime. The Detroit Urban League saw safety and crime fighting as a priority after the city’s uprising. In addition to calling for increased law enforcement and stricter drug laws, the Urban League organized the Citizen’s Campaign for Crime Prevention and Leadership Development and the 12th Street Academy to address safety concerns, train youths, and prevent

³³ William J. Fitzpatrick, Letter to Mayor Jerome Cavanagh, July 9, 1968, Cavanagh Papers, Box 412, Folder 14. WPRL, Wayne State University.

³⁴ Kornegay, 3.

³⁵ Lawrence M. Carino, “The Urban League Attacks a Priority Problem,” *WJBK-TV2*, March 30, 1970,

crime. These initiatives grew out of the national organization's "new thrust" or "ghetto strategy" to address the city's urban crisis.³⁶ The goal of DUL's crime program was to build closer relationships between the city's black populations and the DPD.³⁷ The organization sought to mobilize "human resources – the citizen with many resources ready to be used but really not asked."³⁸ Kornegay called for a voluntarist approach where black residents would work in tandem with the police department to stop unlawful activity. This entailed the formation of block clubs, neighborhood associations, and a neighborhood watch where citizens would notify the police "on suspicious actions." While the DUL admitted that a mix of factors—structural and pathological—gave rise to crime in Detroit's black communities, this aspect of the organization's "new thrust" plan sought to enlist volunteers as de facto agents of the local state.³⁹

State violence and repression reigned during the late 1960s and early 1970s in many U.S. cities and college and university campuses where radical activists and organizations operated. The Federal Bureau of Investigation's counterintelligence program, or COINTELPRO, served as the main arm of state repression. Created in 1956 to combat communism. Embodied by the FBI's director, J. Edgar Hoover, the program spied on and sought to disrupt the civil rights movement. COINTELPRO famously harassed Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. for his personal infidelities, even suggesting that he should commit suicide.⁴⁰ After 1965, COINTELPRO focused much of its efforts on neutralizing the black power movement. The goal of the new effort was to "expose, disrupt, misdirect, discredit, or otherwise neutralize the activities of black nationalist, hate-type

³⁶ National Urban League, "Building Ghetto Power for Urban Change: A New Thrust for the Urban League Movement," Francis Kornegay Papers, Box 14, Folder: New Thrust 2, Bentley Historical Library (BHL), University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI.

³⁷ "Detroit Urban League's New Thrust Proposal for 1970," Kornegay Papers, Box 14, Folder: New Thrust Proposal, BHL.

³⁸ Francis A. Kornegay, "Leadership Development: Total Citizens' Campaign Against Crime in the Streets," February 9, 1969, Kornegay Papers, Box 18, Folder: Organizations: Crime Survey, BHL.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁴⁰ Joshua Bloom and Waldo E. Martin, Jr., *Black Against Empire: The History and Politics of the Black Panther Party* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013), 200.

organizations and groupings, their leadership, spokesmen, membership and supporters.”⁴¹ In 1969, the FBI declared the Black Panther Party “the greatest threat to the internal security of the country.”⁴² The Panthers suffered from a loss of members due to imprisonment and deaths including Bobby Hutton, Fred Hampton and Mark Clark in Chicago, and George Jackson in San Quentin State Prison in California at the hands of law enforcement.

States also conducted repression in prisons. Angela Davis, George Jackson, and the Attica uprising served as inspirations for many in the Anti-STRESS coalition. California Governor Ronald Reagan fired communist Angela Davis from the University of California-Los Angeles in June 1969. The following year, the FBI implicated Davis in the August 7 shootout between George Jackson’s little brother, Jonathan, and San Quentin guards after Jonathan Jackson and a group of prisoners took Judge Harold Haley, district attorney Gary Thomas, and others hostage.⁴³ On August 21, 1971, San Quentin guards shot and killed George Jackson, a Black Panther activist who had struck a correspondence with Davis.⁴⁴ On September 9, prisoners rebelled and took control over the prison. The prisoners demanded more humane treatment and requested that the Black Panthers negotiate with the state. New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller responded with force, sending in the National Guard. Soldiers, state and local police, and police guards attacked the prisoners, killing them and the ten guards they took hostage. The state of New York’s suppression of the 1971 Attica uprising illustrated the lengths at which officials were willing to go to stamp out black resistance.⁴⁵

⁴¹ Ibid., 201.

⁴² Quoted in Ibid., 211.

⁴³ Dan Berger, *Captive Nation: Black Prison Organizing in the Civil Rights Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 122-124.

⁴⁴ Bloom and Martin, 374-375.

⁴⁵ Bloom and Martin, 378-379; Manning Marable, *Race, Reform, and Rebellion: The Second Reconstruction and Beyond in Black America* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2007), 126-127.

Tensions between Detroit activists, many of the city's black residents, and the police department escalated after several incidents of violent repression. One incident involved the Midwest branch of the SCLC's Poor People's Campaign. On May 3, 1968, members of the Poor People's Campaign descended upon Cobo Hall for a demonstration. The campaign's leaders met to ensure that the demonstration proceeded in as orderly and organized a fashion as possible. The action proceeded "peacefully and orderly until a car stalled," Georgakas and Surkin reported.⁴⁶ The stalled automobile apparently agitated the mounted police and they launched a charge into the crowd of demonstrators. Sam Dennis, a Department of Justice official, corroborated the unprovoked nature of the police attack: "I saw old ladies being pushed and manhandled, grabbed by the collar and pushed out doors. I saw young men beaten with billy clubs...I saw officers ride horses into a crowd which I judged to be under control. In addition, I saw officers strike individuals for no apparent reason."⁴⁷

In October, black and white protestors against George Wallace's presidential candidacy clashed with white Wallace supporters and the DPD. Over a 1,000 assembled at Cobo Hall to demonstrate their disapproval of Wallace. The demonstration turned into an anti-black race riot reminiscent of those inflicted on black Americans in the aftermath of World War I. A fight ensued after a Wallace sympathizer sprayed chemicals at a black protestor. The DPD intervened and, according to observers, directed much of their violence at the protestors. The DPD also beat bystanders and reporters on the scene.⁴⁸

The police abuse continued a few days later when DPD officers beat a number of black youths at the Veterans Memorial Hall. Members of a police wives' organization held a dance at the hall on the same night as an Ebenezer AME Church-sponsored youth dance. Some of the

⁴⁶ Georgakas and Surkin, 158; Thompson, 77; Darden and Thomas, 41.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 158;

⁴⁸ Georgakas and Surkin, 159.

white women complained of the black harassment. Two black teenagers, according to Darden and Thomas, asserted that some of the white police officers hurled racial slurs. An attack by DPD officers led to the hospitalization of the seventeen year old son of the director of a local YMCA, James Evans. A subsequent investigation determined that the black teenagers were innocent. Nine police officers were suspended and the assistant Wayne County prosecutor declared that the offending officers “threatened and assaulted the Negro youths without provocation or justification.”⁴⁹

For many black residents, the incident at the New Bethel Baptist Church on March 29, 1969 further demonstrated police force run amok. In March 1968, the Detroit Police Department raided the New Bethel Baptist Church, where the nationalist Republic of New Afrika (RNA) held its meetings. The DPD engaged members of the RNA in a shootout. After what became known as the New Bethel Incident, one white police officer lay dead and another was injured in the raid. The DPD arrested 142 people. Crockett drew the department’s ire by holding bond hearings for those arrested that night. Crockett’s actions led to a state investigation of his actions. To the dismay of many whites, the DPD, and Mayor Cavanagh, Judge George Crockett, who before his election to the bench had a long history a labor and radical attorney, released all but two of the suspects in a trial that he held in the police station.⁵⁰

The DPD’s STRESS program would eventually demonstrate the Kerner Commission’s correlation between increasing crime and police-community strife. Police Commissioner John Nichols created STRESS in January 1971 to prevent street robberies. STRESS operations included “intelligence” and “decoy” tactics. STRESS officers often posed as hippies, drunks, or

⁴⁹ Quoted in *Ibid.*, 161.

⁵⁰ Thompson, *Whose Detroit?*, 75-77; Darden and Thomas, 43-49.

“some other likely robbery victim.”⁵¹ Interactions often produced violent confrontations between the decoys and the targets, who tended to be black, of such operations. The “decoy” tactics proved most controversial because they often led to deadly outcomes. The unit was responsible for ten fatal shootings between its establishment in January and October 1971.⁵²

At first, many black Detroiters welcomed the STRESS program. Detroit Urban League President Francis Kornegay, the editors of the *Michigan Chronicle*, the local African American newspaper, and the black Ministerial Alliance all declared their support for STRESS.⁵³ Black Detroiters supported it for good and pragmatic reasons—those who lived in low income and high crime areas had a greater risk of being a victim of a violent crime. Intensified policing also had a positive impact in the city’s fight against crime. By September 1971, the police had confiscated 370 handguns and the *Michigan Chronicle* was reporting “a significant drop in street robberies.”⁵⁴

The establishment of STRESS also accompanied Detroit’s corporate sector’s refocusing on downtown development as a primary urban revitalization strategy. Max Fisher, Henry Ford, II, Mayor Gribbs, and other economic elites formed Detroit Renaissance, Inc. in 1970. Fisher and Ford saw a need for a private sector response to deindustrialization once the Detroit Renaissance’s organizational predecessor, New Detroit, Inc., decided to concentrate more on addressing social issues. The group inspired Ford’s plans to revitalize the city’s riverfront to the

⁵¹ “Detroit Police Department STRESS Program,” 9 July 1971, Detroit Committee on Community Relations/Human Rights Department Collection, Box 66, Folder 34, WPRL, Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan. (Hereafter DCCR Collection)

⁵² Ibid.; “Summary of Findings and Recommendations from Michigan Civil Rights Commission Investigation of STRESS Unit – Detroit Police Department,” Cockrel Collection, Box 5, Folder 22, WPRL; The Editors, “Dear Commissioner Nichols: STRESS Can Stay But Patrolman Worobec Has Got to Go,” *Michigan Chronicle*, October 3, 1971; FTGU, *Detroit Under STRESS*; Jacoby, 308.

⁵³ Editors, “Dear Commissioner Nichols”; The Editors, “Control STRESS or Drop It, Gribbs Told,” *Michigan Chronicle*, 1 April 1972; Bill Black, “Alliance of Ministers Backs ‘New’ STRESS, Cite City Crime Wave,” *Michigan Chronicle*, April 8, 1972.

⁵⁴ Paula Hankins, “STRESS Death Knell?” *Michigan Chronicle*, March 18, 1972; Editors, “Dear Commissioner Nichols.”

tune of \$500 million. While the members of the organization did not publicly comment on crime in the city, several of the city's business leaders understood that greater policing could help build a favorable business climate. The issue of crime emerged in internal discussions among business leaders in the New Detroit, Inc.'s Economic Development Subcommittee, a committee Fisher helped established as a member of New Detroit, Inc. in 1968. Thomas L. Disk of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway company argued that Detroit needed to contain its "criminal element," calling "rowdyism" "serious problem" if a firm sought to invest in Detroit. Coupling crime fighting with downtown development was not a redevelopment strategy specific to Detroit. This form of urban governance developed in cities such as Los Angeles and Atlantic City.⁵⁵ The further stigmatization of black, and mostly male, bodies was one consequence of the linkage between downtown developments and increased policing.⁵⁶ The glaring irony behind private sector development organizations such as Detroit Renaissance, Inc., is that Henry Ford, II, and other corporate members of Detroit Renaissance, Inc. would not invest in the city's neighborhoods or in new manufacturing jobs in the city.⁵⁷

The Development of the Left-Wing of the Anti-STRESS Coalition

In April 1971, members of the Black Workers Congress, Motor City Labor League, and the National Lawyers Guild established the Legal Defense Coalition (LDC) to respond to police

⁵⁵ Jonathan Simon, *Boardwalk of Dreams: Atlantic City and the Fate of Urban America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004); Alison Isenberg, *Downtown America: A History of the Place and the People Who Made It* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004); Daniel Widener, *Black Arts West: Culture and Struggle in Postwar Los Angeles* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010).

⁵⁶ Commission on Community Relations, "Detroit Police Department's STRESS Program," 2 October 1971, Box 5, Folder 22, Cockrel Collection, WPRL.

⁵⁷ "Henry Ford's Project Will Revitalize City," *Michigan Chronicle*, 27 November 1971; Thomas L. Disk, Letter to Fred Kaiser, July 1, 1968, New Detroit, Inc. Papers, Box 32, Folder 1, WPRL.

Max Fisher also served as Chairman of the Economic Development Subcommittee from February 1968 until he and other business leaders formed Detroit Renaissance, Inc. in 1970. See Helen M. Graves, "New Detroit Committee/New Detroit Incorporated: A Case Study of an Urban Coalition, 1967-1972" (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 1975), 143.

repression. Defined as a radical-led interracial coalition, the LDC aimed “to combat acts of institutionalized repression throughout all arms of the administration of criminal justice.”⁵⁸ LDC lawyers—Kenneth Cockrel, Justin Ravitz, Ted Spearman, Marc Strickland, William Goodman, Neal Bush, Jeff Taft, and M. Gerald Schwartzbach—sought to defend individual victims of police brutality and confront various aspects of what they considered an unjust municipal court system. Their greatest contributions to the broad-based Anti-STRESS movement and to the development of a left independent progressivism were the LDC’s efforts to prosecute STRESS in public opinion and in the courtroom and Justice Ravitz’s 1972 campaign for Records Court Judge.

The constituent elements of the left wing of the Anti-STRESS coalition—Black Workers Congress and Motor City Labor League—emerged out of several post-rebellion black and white leftist organizations. Several of the key members—Kenneth Cockrel, Sheila Murphy, and Justin Ravitz—cut their political teeth in struggles around labor and police brutality and efforts to build a socialist movement in Detroit after 1967. The stories of leftist organizations such as the League of Revolutionary Black Workers, Ad Hoc Action Group, and From the Ground Up illustrate the process by which a segment of the city’s left fragmented and reconstituted itself in a broad-based coalition against police brutality.

Kenneth Cockrel served as the instrumental architect of what would become the city’s Left Anti-STRESS Coalition’s politics and strategy. He rose to prominence as a political organizer in his participation in black worker struggles and as a defense lawyer for black activists before working in the Anti-STRESS coalition. He was born in 1949 in the Royal Oak suburb of Detroit. His mother was a housewife while his father worked at the Ford Highland

⁵⁸ Labor Defense Coalition, “Labor Defense Coalition: A Legal Action Program,” Box 6, Folder 1, Cockrel Collection, WPRL.

Park plant. After his parents died, Cockrel moved to the city to attend Northwestern High School. He transferred to Central High School before dropping out in 1955 and worked as a weapons technician in the Air Force. Upon returning from his service in the Air Force, Cockrel earned his high school equivalency credentials and attended Wayne State University where he received a B.A. in political science in 1964 and his Juris Doctorate in 1967.⁵⁹

Cockrel expressed a vision of left independent black politics even in the aftermath of the 1967 rebellion and Cleage's rejection of an alliance with the NDC. While sitting on a panel with several black militants, including John Watson, Cockrel voiced his support for a form of black power independent from white corporate and foundation money and outside of the purview of the local labor-liberal coalition. Cockrel supported Reverend Albert Cleage's rejection of the NDC approach to redevelopment and race relations management. Yet, Cockrel argued that white-backed self-help approaches to black economic development had failed after Cleage refused the NDC's money. Instead, he urged for blacks to concentrate on armed struggle and to participate in revolutionary party politics with a "big P." Watson, on the other hand, provided the audience with the target—capitalism and racism.⁶⁰

The League of Revolutionary Black Workers emerged out of the proliferation of the black revolutionary workers' movements in the city's auto plants in 1968 and 1969. Black workers endured the brunt of manufacturing speed ups, automation, and labor in "the hardest, dirtiest, and most dangerous jobs" since the mid-1960s.⁶¹ More than 4,000 workers responded to the speed ups by participating in a wildcat strike that paralyzed the Dodge Main plant in

⁵⁹ Sidney Fine, interview with Kenneth Cockrel, Detroit Riot Oral History Transcripts, 1984-1985, BHL.

⁶⁰ "Young Blacks Agree Only Way Left is Violent Revolution—And They're Ready," Michigan Chronicle, January 20, 1968.

⁶¹ Kieran Taylor, American Petrograd: Detroit and the League of Revolutionary Black Workers," in *Rebel Rank and File: Labor Militancy and Revolt from Below*, ed. Aaron Brenner, Robert Brenner, and Cal Winslow (New York: Verso Press, 2010), 312.

Hamtramck on May 2, 1968.⁶² Dodge disproportionately held black workers responsible, firing and suspending dozens.⁶³ Immediately after the strike, Cockrel, General Baker, Jr., Mike Hamlin, John Watson, Luke Tripp, and others formed the Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement (DRUM) to defend the fired black workers. DRUM founders sought to organize black workers in the city's Dodge plants against racism in Chrysler plants and in the United Auto Workers (UAW) union. The success of DRUM led other black workers in other plants to create their own revolutionary union organizations.⁶⁴ The spread of RUM's led to the DRUM leadership's creation of an umbrella organization, the League of Black Revolutionary Workers (LBRW) in 1969.

Auto worker and activist General Gordon Baker personified the organization's mix of nationalist, Marxist-Leninist, and worker consciousness. Baker was a Detroit native—born on September 6, 1941. He started working in the Ford Motor Company's stamping plant in Dearborn in 1963 and at the Dodge Main Plant the following year.⁶⁵ He worked with several local radical groups—the Garveyist African Nationalist Pioneer Movement, the Revolutionary Action Movement, and UHURU. He also participated in the Detroit Robert F. Williams Defense Committee in 1962.⁶⁶ Baker's 1964 trip to Cuba also led him to revise his earlier black nationalism and to adopt a third wordlist Marxist-Leninism. After the rebellion, according to Hamlin, the decision to organize in Dodge Main arose out of the meetings that Baker had facilitated with other black autoworkers in the offices of the *Inner City Voice*, a black radical

⁶² Ernie Allen, "Dying From the Inside: The Decline of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers," in *They Should Have Served that Cup of Coffee*, ed. Dick Cluster (Boston: South End Press, 1979), 71.

⁶³ Taylor, "American Petrograd," 318.

⁶⁴ See Georgakas and Surkin and Allen, "Dying From the Inside: The Decline of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers," and Taylor, "American Petrograd" for critical histories of the organization.

⁶⁵ Richard Thomas, "Interview with General Baker: September 24, 1980 in Detroit, Michigan," *Catalyst*, No. 9/10 (1980), 59.

⁶⁶ Ahmad Muhammad, *We Will Return in the Whirlwind: Black Radical Organizations* (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr Publishing Company, 2007), 242.

newspaper founded in the wake of the rebellion in September 1967.⁶⁷ Mike Hamlin, born to a sharecropper in Mississippi in 1935, moved with his family to Ecorse, a southwest suburb of Detroit, after his father found a job working in construction in 1947.⁶⁸ Hamlin served in the Army before coming back to Detroit in 1960. John Watson was a Detroit native, attending Cass Technical High School. Watson's strengths lay in his intellectual and editorial abilities. According to Hamlin, Watson "was a genius," and a devoted Marxist. Watson would participate in political rap sessions with Hamlin and Cockrel while working for the *Detroit News*.⁶⁹

Wayne State University and the *Detroit News* served as the early crucibles for this cohort's intellectual and political development. Hamlin, Watson, and Cockrel met while working for the more conservative *Detroit News*. Cockrel, Hamlin, and Baker all were politically active on Wayne State's campus. Wayne State University, known for its radical tradition, served as a crucial base for black organizing and activity. Wayne State enrolled between 2,500 and 3,500 black students. Wayne State's black student body outnumbered that of the Big Ten universities.⁷⁰ Baker participated in police brutality protests held at Wayne State during the 1960s. Watson, Cockrel, Hamlin, and the rest of the burgeoning black radical cohort took advantage of this milieu after the rebellion.

John Watson's control over the school's student newspaper—the *South End*—represented an early attempt of independent black radical institutional control. A student committee selected Watson to run the newspaper for the 1968-1969 academic year. As editor, Watson enjoyed a command over resources and scale that would make most political activists jealous. He controlled a \$100,000 printing budget. He earned a salary and he could employ staff. The South

⁶⁷ Georgakas and Surkin, 23.

⁶⁸ Mike Hamlin, *A Black Revolutionary's Life in Labor: Black Workers Power in Detroit* (Detroit: Against the Tide Books, 2013), 6.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁷⁰ Georgakas and Surkin, 44.

End's circulation of around 18,000 copies also allowed Watson and his cohort of activists to reach large numbers of Detroiters. He employed Hamlin and Luke Trip to help fulfill his radical vision for the newspaper. As evidenced by Watson's first editorial, the *South End* would devote itself to "promoting the interests of impoverished, oppressed, and exploited, and powerless victims of white, racist monopoly capitalism and imperialism."⁷¹ Watson's goals of addressing monopoly capitalism and imperialism reflected the ideological and political standpoint of black and white activists in the black power movement and the more radical wing of the Students for a Democratic Society. Their concerns with racism, capitalism, and imperialism percolated in the League's politics. Hamlin and others used the university paper as an organizing tool and resource for the cadre. Paid staff often doubled as *South End* workers and community organizers. Watson's takeover of the *South End* represented the type of politics that Cockrel would advocate for as a member of the Anti-STRESS coalition and as a city councilman in the late 1970s.

The spread of revolutionary union movements in Detroit led to the DRUM leadership's creation of an umbrella organization, the League of Black Revolutionary Workers (LRBW) in 1969. The League characterized itself as both Marxist-Leninist and nationalist. In doing so, they reflected the revolutionary nationalist trend in 1960s and 1970s black radicalism. Cockrel often voiced his disagreements with what he believed to be the Black Panther Party's narrow focus on self-defense. According to Historian Ahmad Muhammad, the League disagreed with the BPP's public projection of itself as a paramilitary force. Still, the two organizations shared a similar ideological outlook, emphasizing interlocking critiques of racism, capitalism, and imperialism.⁷² And like the Black Panther Party, the league sought to mobilize a particular segment of the black community. Only instead of focusing on the lumpen proletariat, the League concentrated on

⁷¹ Ibid., 45-46.

⁷² Muhammad, 266.

organizing the black working class. Following black radicals such as W.E.B. Du Bois, C.L.R. James, and James Boggs, they constructed an analysis that emphasized the centrality of black labor to the history of U.S. economic development.

Unlike Cleage, the Panthers, and Stokely Carmichael, who organized their nationalist politics around mobilizing predominately-black communities and cities, the League articulated a spatial politics that centered on the factory and the community. The organization argued that blacks were strategically located “at the point of production.” Blacks’ position within the industrial economy offered them a source of potential power. If black workers organized themselves, the League contended, then they could bring “all production to a halt,” thus striking a blow against racism and capitalism.⁷³ As observers noted, the League’s awareness of the centrality of black workers in production reflected an awareness of their positionality within the regional, national, and global political economy of industrial capitalism. Detroit Organizing Committee member Jim Jacobs declared, “To seize control of the political economy of the Midwest is to seize control over the political economy of imperialist America.”⁷⁴ The League’s emphasis on the importance of the Midwest anticipates Tom Hayden’s and Jane Fonda’s Indochina Peace Campaign’s (IPC) vision of disrupting U.S. military intervention in Indochina during the early-1970s. The IPC grounded its view of the Midwest in U.S. electoral politics as they sought two objectives: first, try to convince Midwesterners to vote against Richard Nixon in the 1972 election, and then to mobilize grassroots support for ending the war in Indochina.

⁷³ League of Revolutionary Black Workers, “General Program,” in *The Black Power Movement, Part 4: The League of Revolutionary Black Workers*, ed. Komozi Woodard (Bethesda, M.D.: University Publications of America, 2000), 6.

⁷⁴ Jim Jacobs, “The Midwest and the League,” in *Our Thing is DRUM!* (Boston: New England Free Press, 1972), 1.

The League built upon theories of black labor articulated by radicals such as James Boggs.⁷⁵ They renamed automation “niggermation” and railed against it.⁷⁶ The concept describes the racialized nature of the automation and speed up of production. Hamlin explained in an interview with *Leviathan*,

The bourgeois response to the fact that 650,000 production workers in auto in 1947 produced 4.5 million cars and now 650,000 workers are producing 10 million cars is what? Automation. [...] I mean in no way is automation responsible for the increase. What is responsible for that increased output is what we would call ‘niggermation.’ And what it means is that they will speed up on a particular job. If a guy can’t make it, or refuses to work at that rate: fire him. Then they’ll bring a new guy off the street and tell him the rate they have established via the speed up is the actual rate on that job.⁷⁷

Instead of focusing on how automation displaced industrial workers and created a group of unemployable “outsiders,” as Boggs referred to this group in his 1963 book, *The American Revolution*, the League focused on technology’s effects on workers in the plants.⁷⁸ The concept also came to symbolize the poor working conditions that black workers often had to endure while working in the plants.

The League’s view of the black worker contrasted sharply with that of urban liberals during the same moment. Liberals viewed the “hard core unemployed” as the focal point in rebuilding riot-torn cities. The league, however, saw black workers as the primary agent for the revolution against capitalism and imperialism. Simultaneously, law enforcement agencies came to view the hard-core unemployed and black activists as threats to political stability. Local law enforcement agencies and developers in Detroit came to see black activists and the poor as not just threats to the local stability, but as threats to urban growth. These conditions gave birth to

⁷⁵ James Boggs, “The American Revolution: Pages from a Negro Worker’s Notebook,” in *Pages from a Black Radical’s Notebook: A James Boggs Reader*, ed. Stephen Ward (Detroit: Wayne State University, 2011). 109.

⁷⁶ Georgakas and Surkin, 102.

⁷⁷ Jim Jacobs and David Wellman, “An Interview with Ken Cockrel and Mike Hamlin of the League for Revolutionary Workers,” in *Our Thing is DRUM!* (Boston: New England Free Press, 1972), 21.

⁷⁸ James Boggs, *The American Revolution*.

STRESS and explained the increased in political repression of activists and workers that DRUM and the League sought to defend.

The League's critique of labor unions laid a foundation for an adversarial relationship between Cockrel that would haunt his and DARE's efforts to appeal to black workers during the 1970s. Although the League expressed its willingness to work with white radicals, the organization levied a ruthless critique against white workers and labor unions. League workers derisively referred to the UAW as "You Ain't White." They argued that organized labor—AFL-CIO, UAW, United Mine Workers, and the Steel Workers represented the "antithesis of the freedom of black people...and the world." The League contended that the racism that permeated these organizations contributed to the further exploitation of black workers. They also linked an anti-imperialist critique of the unions, arguing that U.S. military interventions such as the war in the Philippines during the late-nineteenth century supported "the demands of white labor." The League also pointed to labor's support for the Vietnam War as further evidence of its conservative foreign policy stance. The League's critiques of organized labor and the members' struggles against the UAW for union leadership affected Cockrel's and DARE's attempts to organize Detroit workers during the late 1970s.⁷⁹

Taking control over unions and the state represented the ultimate goals for the league. The League's critical view of the UAW contributed to the League's efforts to take control over another institution—union locals in the various plants within the city. Their efforts to take exert influence in locals mostly resulted in failure. Ron March entered into a preliminary election for trustee of the UAW's Local 3 in the Dodge Main plant against Joe Elliot, a white man who enjoyed the support of the local's leadership. March won the preliminary election despite suspicion of voter irregularities and harassment of March supporters. March lost the October

⁷⁹ Jacoby, 204.

runoff, however. UAW leaders Walter P. Reuther and Irving Bluestone saw DRUM as a threat. The Local's leadership mobilized support from Polish retirees. The UAW warned workers about the prospects of a DRUM success. A March win would result in a cut of retirement benefits. DRUM members also contended that police harassment contributed to voter suppression as well. RUM organizations continued to participate in union electoral work, but they continued to encounter similar obstacles.⁸⁰ Ultimately, the UAW defeated the League in their effort to take over unions, but the call to take power persisted through the left-wing of the Anti-STRESS movement and Cockrel's run for city council during the 1970s.

In the 1970s, Cockrel began pushing for a strategy that combined coalition politics with taking power of local institutions. Rather than demanding that the white power structure hand over resources, as Cleage had, or focusing an organizing strategy solely on the auto plants, as the LRBW had, Cockrel turned to coalition politics—a combination of direct action, leftist politics, and electoralism—as the best strategy for taking control over the city.⁸¹ Cockrel articulated this vision at a 1970 anti-repression conference organized by the Ad-Hoc Action Group, People Against Racism, the West Central Organization, and the LRBW.⁸² In this speech, Cockrel argued that the ultimate goal of the League, and for others in the city's left, should be to win control over the city's public institutions. "We also understand that the only way you end oppression is not by circulating petitions, not by writing letters to the attorney general... We say that the only means whereby you can do this is to run the police department and run the city. So we say we're committed to running the city," he declared.⁸³

⁸⁰ Heather Ann Thompson, *Whose Detroit?*, 161-170; Taylor, 320.

⁸¹ Kuniko Fujita, *Black Worker's Struggles in Detroit's Auto Industry, 1935-1975* (Saratoga, C.A.: Century Twenty One Publishing, 1980).

⁸² "Police State—American Style Flyer" Cockrel Papers, Box 3, Folder 23, Cockrel Collection, WPRL.

⁸³ Kenneth Cockrel, "From Repression to Revolution," *Radical America*, Vol 5, No. 2 (March-April 1971), 88; Surkin and Georgakas, 165-67

Cockrel then proceeded to outline a strategy that foreshadowed the one he would seek to execute as a city councilmember and as a member of the Detroit Alliance for a Rational Economy during the 1970s: “In order to do this we’ve got to develop a political machine.” And as he would as a member of the left-wing of the Anti-STRESS movement, Cockrel dismissed any notions that a synthesis of direct action and electoral politics signified mere reformism. “We don’t engage in superficial discussions between the cats relating to electoral politics. That’s bullshit. We relate to whatever’s going to give us the power to create and widen the sphere within which we can function to bring about the destruction of this country.”⁸⁴

Cockrel discussed taking political power in an interview that he and Mike Hamlin gave for the radical publication, *Leviathan*, during the same year. In this dialogue, Cockrel told the interviewers that the LRBW had considered running Cockrel for mayor in 1969. “During the last race for mayor there was some serious discussion of the possibility of the League having a candidate. And I was probably going to be that candidate and we would relate to, like running for elective office man, and taking over the city. We are relating concretely to the ’73 campaign in the city of Detroit.” However, Cockrel’s position on electoral politics remained nuanced. “The League does not take the position, and never has asserted and never will assert, that the resolution of the kinds of questions which impel us to engage in the struggle is going to come from litigation, or from participation in electoral politics. The position we take, however, is this—that we’re about the business of acquiring resources. The resources we want to acquire in Detroit is, you know, monopolistic control of the use of force.”⁸⁵

⁸⁴ Ibid., 88.

⁸⁵ Although Hamlin discussed the importance of community control, he did not address the question of electoral politics, which could have reflected the emerging division among the League’s leadership on the issue. *Our Thing is DRUM*, 16.

The League formed an alliance with civil rights veteran James Forman after he delivered his “Black Manifesto” speech at the Black Economic Development Conference (BEDC) in April 1969 in Detroit. The Manifesto demanded \$500 million in reparations from the nation’s churches. The BEDC envisioned using the funds to construct a southern land bank, publishing houses, job training centers, among other ventures.⁸⁶ Cockrel, Watson, and fellow League member, Mike Hamlin served on BEDC’s leadership committee.

The LBRW’s work with Forman led to a series of internal disputes. Cockrel, Watson, Hamlin and others bristled at what they perceived to be the narrow nationalism of others in the league’s leadership.⁸⁷ According to Cockrel, the question of engaging in electoral politics also divided the group. Eventually, Cockrel, Watson and Hamlin joined with Forman to form Black Workers Congress in June 1971. Two years later, schisms within the BWC led to its demise as well. Forman’s tendency towards autocracy and personality politics provoked critiques from Cockrel.⁸⁸

The participation of Cockrel and other veterans of the LRBW in the BEDC represented their first attempt to address economic development issues on a national scale. The major lesson that Cockrel drew from this experience, however, was the need for the creation of an independent multiracial political organization ideologically flexible enough to participate in various forms of activism.⁸⁹

Despite this history of intra-organizational factionalism, Cockrel’s work as a defense counsel for legally embattled black Detroiters laid the foundation for the legal tactics of the

⁸⁶ Georgakas and Surkin, 78-83.

⁸⁷ Taylor, 330-331.

⁸⁸ Mike Hamlin concurred in a later interview about the issue of electoral politics serving as a wedge among the leadership. Hamlin argues, though, that the BWC leadership fractured along four lines, with Baker and his supporters leaving, Cockrel leaving and pursuing the Anti-STRESS work, and then lastly with Forman. The BWC also kicked out Michelle Gibbs, Ted Spearman, and Greg Hicks. The BWC continued to work for the LDC, but in a supportive manner. Hamlin, 29-31.

⁸⁹ “Politics in Detroit: An Interview with Ken Cockrel,” *Socialist Review*, No. 49 (January/February 1980), 78.

emerging left-wing of the Anti-STRESS coalition. Cockrel earned his reputation as a silver-tongued black socialist lawyer with his successful defenses of black nationalist activists in New Bethel One and New Bethel Two cases, as well as James Johnson's murder trial.⁹⁰ In these cases, Cockrel demonstrated an ability to connect the defense of his clients to the large social issues of racism, police brutality, and worker exploitation. Cockrel famously proclaimed that he "would put Chrysler on trial for damages to this man caused by his working conditions" in the James Johnson's trial in 1970."⁹¹ For Cockrel, these cases represented examples of what an inside-outside political approach could accomplish. When discussing his prospects for sitting on city council, Cockrel credited this strategy for his courtroom successes, "what we're able to do in court was influenced by our ability to generate support for alternative approaches to legal problems in the community from which the jurors came."⁹²

White leftists in organizations such as Ad Hoc Action Group (Ad Hoc), People Against Racism (PAR), and the Detroit Organizing Committee (DOC) provided human and institutional support for black radicals and Detroiters who suffered from police brutality. White veteran activists such as Sheila Murphy, Frank Joyce, Jim Jacobs, and Jack Russell were central the development of the anti-racism wing of the city's white left. With their supporters, they co-sponsored and co-organized various demonstrations as well as political education events such as the "From Sun-Down to Sun-Up" political education forums with the Labor Defense Coalition. They were also instrumental in developing a left interpretation of police repression, crime, drug use, and electoral politics in their pamphlets and newspapers—including the Motor City Labor League's *Changeover* and From the Ground Up's *Groundwork*.

⁹⁰ Thompson, 144.

⁹¹ Quoted in Taylor, "American Petrograd," 325.

⁹² "Aware of the Limitations," *In These Times*, 8.

Born in 1947, Sheila Murphy “grew up in the Detroit Catholic Worker movement.”⁹³ Her Irish-American Catholic parents cared for the poor as they opened and worked in Houses of Hospitality during the 1930s. Her father was a conscientious objector during World War II and wrote for the Detroit-based anarchist paper, *Catholic Worker*. Murphy started her work as a secretary in 1966 in the West Central Organization (WCO)—one of the city’s numerous neighborhood-based political organizations, for which her parents served as board members.

Boasting a multiracial membership, the WCO adopted its political organizing strategy from the famed neighborhood organizer, Saul Alinsky. The organization predicated itself on Alinsky’s concerns for developing power and autonomy among neighborhood residents. The WCO struggled for fair housing during Mayor Jerome Cavanagh’s administration during the 1960s. They organized opposition around Mayor Cavanaugh’s urban renewal plans and the expansion of Wayne State’s campus. Murphy first met Cockrel while working for the WCO. It is possible that Murphy’s and subsequently DARE’s pragmatic outlook on participating in electoral politics comes from Alinsky’s pragmatism that permeated this organization.⁹⁴

Subsequently, the twenty-one-year-old Murphy helped found the predominantly-white Ad Hoc Coalition in 1968 in response to the city’s police department’s excessive and brutal policing. For the organization, the answer to the urban crisis lay in radically changing police-community relations. In an untitled report, the organization called for community control in police-community relations. “There must be Community Control in bringing about a revolutionary change in Police-Community Relations. It is urgently necessary that such a program be made feasible on a level that will bring significant social change. This urgency is a

⁹³ Robert H. Mast, *Detroit Lives* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994), 181.

⁹⁴ Todd C. Shaw, *Now is the Time!: Detroit Black Politics and Grassroots Activism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009), 53-54; Mast, 181-82.

manifestation of the ‘urban crisis’ that permeates American life,” the organization declared.⁹⁵ They organized a police observation program to support black Detroiters.

Ad Hoc practiced a racial allyhood politics, which entailed practicing anti-racist politics on black power activists’ terms. Ad Hoc’s political education program helped shaped the left wing of the anti-police brutality movement. Calling police repression one “of the fundamental problems facing white America,” the organization accepted Carmichael’s and Hamilton’s challenge to try to educate and organize other whites. They quoted black power activists in their report, “‘one of the most disturbing things about almost all white supporters is that they are reluctant to go into their own communities—which is where the racism exists and work to get rid of it.’”⁹⁶ According to the group, alienation and paternalism represented barriers towards effective white anti-racist politics. However, Ad-Hoc failed to identify the source of alienation. Ad-Hoc claimed a broad reach with a mailing list of 600 and a 150 person crisis unit.⁹⁷⁹⁸

One of the organization’s most significant endeavors was its support for members of the Republic of New Afrika (RNA) and civil rights activist and Recorder’s Court judge, George Crockett, Jr. in the New Bethel cases. Murphy and Ad Hoc assisted the city’s Black United Front with organizing a 3,000 person rally in defense of Crockett.⁹⁹ Murphy remained active in Ad Hoc until 1970 where she shifted her focus to working with other whites in the Motor City Labor League (MCLL), a multi-issued organization.

Frank Joyce, born in the Royal Oak suburb of Detroit, and graduated from the same high school as Tom Hayden, Dondero High School. Authors Dan Georgakas and Marvin Surkin state

⁹⁵ Ad Hoc Action Group, “Report—Final Rough Draft,” (no date) Cockrel Collection, Box 4, Folder 5, WPRL.

⁹⁶ Quoted in Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ellen Karasik, “The Middle Class ‘Ad Hoc Action’ Group,” *Detroit Scopes*, May 24, 1969.

⁹⁸ Ad-Hoc Action Group, “Report—Final Draft,” Cockrel Papers, Box 4, Folder 5, WPRL.

⁹⁹ Geogakas and Surkin, 55-57; Mast, 183; Thompson, *Whose Detroit?*, 75-77.

that Joyce's "personal style was very much in the mode of SDS-type radicals of the 1960s."¹⁰⁰ He involved himself in civil rights and anti-Vietnam work. He worked for the Northern Student Movement during the mid-1960s, which was an organization that supported civil rights activism in the south and employed white college students to work in northern cities.¹⁰¹ Joyce also sought to practice a white anti-racism that accepted the dictates of 1960s black power racial politics. He supported the NSM's decision to become an all-black organization. He stopped working for the NSM and founded People Against Racism as a white anti-racist organization with the purpose of supporting the work of NSM and other black power organizations. Additionally, PAR aspired to confront racism among whites. Jim Jacobs participated in the Students for a Democratic Society before working for the local Detroit Organizing Committee.

In 1970, Black labor radical Mike Hamlin led the formation of the MCLL. The MCLL was an umbrella group that included Ad Hoc, People Against Racism, and the Detroit Organizing Committee. While it fashioned itself as Marxist-Leninist group struggling to institute socialism, the MCLL was primarily an educational and cultural organization. For the MCLL, Murphy organized a book club that focused on "local radical history, mass culture, and the use of media." The MCLL also established a publication, *Journey*, which featured poetry and fiction. Jack Russell, who eventually became one of Cockrel's closest political advisors on economic development, got involved with From the Ground Up in 1972, an organizational off-shoot comprised of ex-MCLL members. Jack and Michelle Russell also founded the radical From the Ground Up Book Store.¹⁰²

Soon after the Detroit's branch of the National Lawyers' Guild, the Motor City Labor League, and the BWC created the Labor Defense Coalition, Cockrel began calling for a coalition

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 125.

¹⁰¹ Mast, 277.

¹⁰² Georgakas and Surkin, 126-127.

politics for the Anti-STRESS movement.¹⁰³ In an internal document written in May 1971, the LDC declared that the coalition “will be comprised of large number of persons of a variety of colors and political beliefs ranging from Marxist-Leninists to liberals.” In a later statement, the LDC affirmed, “The program of LDC is specifically designed and projected to comport with the views and aspirations of hundreds of thousands of people in this City.”¹⁰⁴ The LDC also sought to build a left coalition within the broader Anti-STRESS coalition. They worked closely with two white left organizations—the Motor City Labor League and From the Ground Up. The left wing’s coalition strategy illuminates one of the many paths that leftists took in the wake of the black power and new left social movements of the 1960s. In contrast to his former colleagues in the League of Revolutionary Black Workers who joined “New Communist” groups in the aftermath of the League’s collapse in June 1971, Cockrel emphasized the importance of building a broader base of supporters around the focal point of racist and violent policing, as part of the drive to defeat the DPD’s STRESS program as well as to build a foundation for future political endeavors.¹⁰⁵

Anti-repression sentiment extended beyond the city’s radical left. While the city’s radicals led the LDC, black and white liberals also voiced their opposition to police repression. State Senator Coleman Young, Dr. Charles E. Morton of the Inner City Business Improvement Forum, Congressman John Conyers, and members of New Detroit, Inc. were among those who opposed police surveillance of the LBRW and other black radicals. In a May 1971 statement supporting Cockrel’s and LDC’s efforts, Young said, “We want to wipe out all spying, finks, stoolpigeons and wire tappers and put them (the policemen who conduct these surveillance

¹⁰³ Labor Defense Coalition, *Case Complaint*, Box 5, Folder 26, Cockrel Collection, WPRL.

¹⁰⁴ Labor Defense Coalition, “Working Paper (Outline) for General Staff Meeting,” May 20, 1971, Box 6, Folder 5, Cockrel Collection; Labor Defense Coalition, “Statement to National Lawyers Guild,” June 13, 1972, Box 6, Folder 5, Cockrel Collection, WPRL.

¹⁰⁵ Elbaum, *Revolution in the Air*.

activities) back on the streets to fight crime.” Young also called Detroit Mayor Gribbs “a puppet of the police.” Lawrence P. Doss, President of New Detroit, Inc. and the Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO and also expressed their reservations with STRESS in the wake of the September 1971 shooting deaths of Ricardo Buck and Craig Mitchell.¹⁰⁶ A chasm between the city’s radicals like Cockrel and liberal politicians such as Young would grow after 1973. But in this moment, police surveillance, brutality, and killings brought liberals and radicals closer together.¹⁰⁷¹⁰⁸

Other developments galvanized public opinion against STRESS after the September 1971 killings. The Wayne County prosecutor’s office cleared Officer Worobec of any wrongdoing in less than two weeks following the September 17 shooting. On October 4, the Detroit City Council invited Commissioner Nichols to discuss STRESS’s activities. The meeting swirled with contention. While acknowledging the ten deaths at the hands of STRESS, Nichols stressed the unit’s 1,747 arrests between January and September 30 as well as a general decline in robberies. He also read portions of the DPD’s training manual that explained when officers should resort to deadly force. Councilmen Nicholas Hood and Mel Ravitz supported the program, but not the killings. Hood declared, “We are all concerned about ways to lessen crime so we have a city where it is safe for people to walk the streets...The problem is, and this is the dilemma I face, how can we lessen crime and yet remove the impression that this is an execution squad.” A group of white homeowners presented the council with a petition supporting STRESS. Kenneth Cockrel and others attended in anticipation of council members allowing more Detroiters to

¹⁰⁶ New Detroit, Inc., “Press Release,” September 24, 1971, Box 206, Folder 39, New Detroit, Inc. Records, WPRL; Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO, “Press Release,” October 5, 1971,” DCCR Records. WPRL.

¹⁰⁷ “Black coalition asks abolition of Detroit police spy system,” *Detroit News*, May 4, 1971.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

testify. Yet, city council members adjourned the meeting without allowing anyone else besides Nichols to testify, angering many of the black attendees.¹⁰⁹

While Nichols's reliance on crime statistics appeared to illustrate STRESS's effectiveness, crime statistics can be manipulated, not only to justify police killings, but to racialize a particular group. In effect, Commissioner Nichols was resorting to what historian Khalil Gibran Muhammad has called the "condemnation of blackness." in his constant references to crime statistics that stigmatized African Americans. Nichols and the DPD rationalized the excesses of STRESS by citing high rates of criminal activity in high crime precincts, many of them populated by black Detroiters. Nichols admitted that STRESS officers deployed a racial understanding of space to decide how to configure their teams: "Depending on the time of day and the ethnic characteristics of the neighborhood, the race of the officer may give him away, so this is important in team composition." Moreover, Nichols's claim that STRESS was the cause of declining crime rates was questionable. The Detroit Commission on Community Relations (DCCR) pointed to other likely factors to explain drop in crime rates such as a citizen's unwillingness to report a crime "because of a feeling of futility or a fear of the police" and a reluctance to walk city streets because of a fear of crime.¹¹⁰ It is possible that a fear of police violence could also deter a black Detroiters from walking the streets.

Cockrel and the lawyers of the Anti-STRESS coalition embarked on their strategy of using the courts to challenge the STRESS program when they took on Nathaniel Johnson's case in December 1971. Johnson was charged with assault with intent to rob STRESS officers after a

¹⁰⁹ "Commissioner Nichols's Remarks to Common Council STRESS Hearing (Copy)," October 4, 1971; Box 66, Folder 34, DCCR Records. WPRL; Bill Black, "Press for Open Hearing on STRESS Unit Slayings," *Michigan Chronicle*, October 16, 1971; Judy Diebolt, "STRESS Officer Cleared in 2 Killings," *Detroit Free Press*, September 30, 1971.

¹¹⁰ Police-Community Relations Committee and Staff, "Detroit Police Department STRESS Program," October 2, 1971, Cockrel Collection, Box 5, Folder 22, WPRL.

deadly encounter between the officers and Johnson and Clarence Manning, Jr. STRESS officers Michael Worley, who posed as a “hippie”, and Raymond Peterson shot and killed Manning after Worley baited him into conversation. Officer Richard Worobec pursued and apprehended Johnson.¹¹¹

In his defense of Nathan Johnson, Cockrel utilized the same strategy that had made him famous in his defenses of the New Bethel One, Two, and James Johnson, Jr. trials—he attacked the institutions responsible for the killing. “The real case here is the case against STRESS,” Cockrel declared. He continued, “The real case is against those four men out there who committed cold-blooded murder. We are not defending a criminal case here—we are prosecuting STRESS. The four STRESS officers involved in this incident are cold blooded, murdering liars.” He then urged the jury not only to acquit Johnson, but to call for the abolition of STRESS. The jurors delivered a non-guilty verdict after fifteen minutes of deliberation. Of course, Cockrel and the LDC lawyers knew that the jurors could not issue any resolutions regarding STRESS outside of delivering the non-guilty verdict. Yet, the non-guilty verdict for Johnson provided another victory for the Left Anti-STRESS coalition as momentum began to build towards its goal of abolishing STRESS.¹¹²

The Radical Criminology of the Left Wing of the Anti-STRESS Coalition

Members of the Left Anti-STRESS coalition began to articulate their left-wing critique of STRESS, the justice system, crime, and drug use in early 1972. Sheila Murphy, Brian Flanigan, Margaret Borys, and Kenneth Cockrel all published articles in their organization’s publications.

¹¹¹ Labor Defense Coalition, “Excerpts from Anti-STRESS Lawsuit,” Box 5, Folder 26, Cockrel Records; FTGU, *Detroit Under STRESS*; Thompson, *Whose Detroit?*, 144-145.

¹¹² Bill Black, “STRESS Trial ‘A Courtroom Classic,’” *Michigan Chronicle*, January 8, 1972

The coalition also held educational forums where they also developed their outlook. The left wing developed a radical criminology critiquing the state's definitions of crime. They also grounded their analyses of criminal activity and the drug trade in an anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist framework.

Historians and scholars rightfully concentrate on the popular and legal challenges to STRESS. But the left-wing's policy analysis of STRESS is often overlooked. The problem with STRESS, according to the Left Anti-STRESS coalition, was that the unit really did not protect people, nor did it address the problem of crime. They presented a structural analysis of repression and crime that distinguished themselves from the Urban League, *Michigan Chronicle*, and the city's ministers whom supported the idea of a special unit to address crime, but not the brutality of the STRESS program. Criminal behavior, the radicals argued, had to be seen as a product of racism's and capitalism's destructive impulses—deindustrialization, corporate power, exploitation of workers, and discrimination against black Americans. Consequently, crime represented a social and economic problem, not just a failure of the individual. The liberal analysis of crime, as expressed in Daniel Patrick Moynihan's report on the black family and the Kerner Commission report, did acknowledge the role that racial discrimination and ghettoization played in producing crime and proposed economic solutions. But, the liberal interpretation also focused on cultural deficiencies and pathologies such as family breakdown, matriarchy, and the absence of a male breadwinner.¹¹³

The left wing of the coalition developed their views of crime along the same vein of other radical criminologists. Radical criminology reemerged in the midst of the New Left and Black

¹¹³ U.S. Department of Labor, *The Negro Family: the Case for National Action* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1965); Kerner Commission Report; For more extensive analyses of the liberal position on family, see Marisa Chappell, *The War on Welfare: Family, Poverty, and Politics in Modern America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010) and Robert O. Self, *All in the Family: the Realignment of American Democracy Since the 1960s* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2012).

Power movements and the urban rebellions where leftist activists began questioning liberal assumptions undergirding crime and poverty. Radical criminologists such as Anthony Platt, sociologists Herman and Julia Scwendinger, prisoner-activists George Jackson and Angela Davis, and organizations such as the American Friends Services Committee argued that it was impossible to establish a proper system of criminal justice in a capitalist system. Rather than focusing on pathological and behavioral theories of criminal activity, radical criminologists argued for an anti-capitalist systemic approach. State definitions of crime downplayed white collar and corporate crimes along with what radicals considered crimes of the state such as war and imperialism. Criminal justice, for this group of intellectuals and activists, would be grounded in “a socialist, human rights definition of crime,” which would view “the state and legal apparatus” as a “central focus of investigation as a criminogenic institution.”¹¹⁴ Ultimately, the solution to eradicating crime lay in radically restructuring society “and the elimination of economic and political systems of exploitation.”¹¹⁵ The left wing of the Anti-STRESS Coalition thus anticipated the formation of journals such as *Crime and Social Justice* that would serve as a platform for radical criminology.¹¹⁶

MCLL activist Sheila Murphy expressed the left critique of STRESS and crime in an article published in the January-February 1972 edition of *Changeover*. After blasting the program’s questionable recruitment practices, she wrote, “crimes of violence against people must be stopped. But how? The causes of such crimes must be understood. The DPD does not ask what the causes are or how, we, as a society can eliminate them.” Murphy then proceeded to link what she perceives as capitalism’s tendency to maximize profits at the expense of employment to

¹¹⁴ Platt, “Prospects for a Radical Criminology in the United States,” *Crime and Social Justice*, No. 1 (Spring-Summer, 1974), 6.

¹¹⁵ Platt, 6.

¹¹⁶ See American Friends Services Committee, *Struggle for Justice* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1971); FTGU, *Detroit Under STRESS*.

the rise of crime. “Historically capitalist societies have not achieved full employment of the work force. This inability flows from the basic economic principle that in order to maintain the proper profit margin, it is necessary that an unemployed segment of the work force exist to keep wages down...Those who do not [work] are denied access to the means of survival.” Without the ability to earn a living legally, Murphy states, one must rely on crime and violence to survive.¹¹⁷

Murphy’s analysis reflected what would become a policy concern among many progressives and liberals towards the end of the decade—that of full employment. Her analysis also points to the crucial question confronting liberals and progressives on the local level—how should left-wing activists respond to deindustrialization? And, while Murphy and others would not confront this issue until the late 1970s when they worked for DARE, this analysis provoked them to wonder if constructing a full employment economy would ever become a viable option in the context of corporate-led and driven urban development.

From the Ground Up built upon Murphy’s analysis in its 1973 pamphlet, *Detroit Under STRESS*. According to the pamphlet, the STRESS program demonstrated an understanding of crime as a product of deviant behavior. Specifically, it connected rising crime to the damaging effects of growing inflation on the nation’s workers and poor, the declining city economy, and the absence of social services and job opportunities.

Life in Detroit, as elsewhere in the country, means...food costs that are skyrocketing out of all proportion to income. [...] It means housing which is either inadequate, unfit to live in, or priced beyond one’s ability to pay, particularly because interests rates grow dialing more prohibitive. It means poor and inadequate educational opportunities and even poorer and more inadequate healthcare. [...] Faced with such pressures, it is small wonder that some persons resort to ‘street crime.’ Such people mistakenly view burglary, auto theft, or larceny as a way to begin to bridge the gap between the ‘haves’ and the ‘have nots.’ Unfortunately, some are even driven to assault, rape or murder by their inability to cope with the frustrations of their life situation. One cannot speak of ‘high crime areas’ in Detroit. The entire city is such an

¹¹⁷ Shelia Murphy, “STRESS: ‘I thought he had a gun...’” *Changeover*, January-February 1972.

area, though sections of the center city, riddled with poverty, police complicity in drug traffic, and double high rates of unemployment, are, to be sure, the ‘highest crime areas.’¹¹⁸

From the Ground Up’s analysis also reminded readers of the contradictions caused by chronic unemployment, inflation, creative destruction and the perpetuation of normative gender roles. While the crisis in the male breadwinning family may not have been a direct cause crime, it contributed to what the activists perceived as a growing willingness to participate in illicit economic activities: The document challenged the normative gender roles that undergirded family life and labor in the U.S. capitalist economy: “constantly bombarded by advertising in the media and elsewhere with that standard of life which the American culture demands that the ‘good father’ (or mother) provide for his family. One’s role as a man or woman, as a provider...is defined by dynamics of socialization which are far beyond the control of the ordinary individual as are the economic means to fulfill that role.”¹¹⁹

Leftists in the Anti-STRESS coalition also sought to redefine crime. Viewing STRESS as a product of racial and class domination, they argued that the program’s terribly ineffective focus on “street crime” obscured the criminal damage inflicted by the wealthy. The writers of the pamphlet asserted that “crime is no stranger to this class of people.” Members of the coalition had several prominent examples of government and corporate criminality at their disposal. They referenced Watergate, “massive tax evasion,” and “devastation of the environment” as “crimes which have far greater economic impact on the society than burglary, auto theft or the like.”¹²⁰ FTGU member Margaret Borys published an article about 328 Detroiters suing the Chrysler

¹¹⁸ FTGU, *Detroit Under STRESS*, 9

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 9

¹²⁰ FTGU, *Detroit Under STRESS*, 10.

Corporation over pollution under the Michigan's Environmental Protection Act of 1970. The plaintiffs and Borys deemed the Chrysler Corporation "a public menace."¹²¹

According to the left wing of the Anti-STRESS coalition, the police state and downtown development also worked in tandem. STRESS represented a far cry from the basic job programs that GM, Ford, and other businesses established in the aftermath of the rebellion. Despite New Detroit's race relations advocacy and management, the combination of police repression and downtown redevelopment emerged to replace a concern for the "hard core unemployed." The Left coalition observed,

"In recent years, it has become increasingly clear that revitalization of the center city is a requirement of Detroit's profitable future. Renaissance Center...stands as the tangible manifestation of the decision of the affluent to effect the rebirth. [...] Set against this background, the function of STRESS as a tool of those in power becomes clear. The intimidation of the black community, the fostering of racial tension and division, the ostensible effort 'to make the streets safe' in the center city, all represent an attempt to perpetuate the existing structure of the society."¹²²

The authors of the pamphlet did not present any evidence to back up their claim, but they noticed that STRESS and Detroit Renaissance, Inc. had emerged within a year of each other. Left wing Anti-STRESS activists may have been correct to see increased policing and downtown development as linked considering how Max Fisher's New Detroit, Inc.-Economic Development Subcommittee argued that creating a favorable business climate rested on containing criminal activity in 1968.¹²³

Ultimately, the radicals argued, STRESS and the city's corporate community resorted to both the condemnation of blackness and the "criminalization of urban space" to address the

¹²¹ Margaret Borys, "Chrysler—Public Menace," *Changeover*, September 15, 1971.

¹²² FTGU, Detroit *Under STRESS*, 10-11.

¹²³ Thomas L. Disk, Letter to Fred Kaiser, July 1, 1968, New Detroit, Inc. Papers, Box 32, Folder 1, WPRL.

city's problems with crime and declining economy.¹²⁴ In other words, corporate downtown development depended upon subjecting urban African Americans to increased policing. Coalition leaders implied that policies aiming at returning workers and the poor back to the center of economic development reflected the best strategy instead of hoping for developers to redistribute revenues from office buildings and luxury apartments back to the city's workers. Cockrel argued, "STRESS does not re-order the priorities of an economy in which Chrysler Corporation announces that its first year quarter earnings are triple that of last year."¹²⁵ Their recognition of the connections among municipal, corporate, and police power led members of the coalition to challenge these forces directly in court and in electoral politics beginning in the spring of 1972.

Spring 1972: The Turning Point in the Fight against STRESS

Anti-STRESS sentiment among black Detroiters reached its peak in the spring of 1972. Ironically, the event that garnered the most attention was a shootout between black STRESS officers and Wayne County Sheriff deputies on March 9. That night black STRESS officers Virgil Starkey, Ronald Martin, and James Harris saw an armed man enter into an apartment at 3120 Rochester Street where Wayne County Sheriff Aaron Vincent and his deputies were playing a poker game. Martin and Harris followed the man into the apartment after calling for reinforcements. The STRESS officers entered into the apartment "with guns blazing." The officers executed Deputy Henry Henderson while he tried to identify himself as law enforcement and wounded three other deputies. The "Rochester Street Massacre," as the Left Anti-STRESS coalition called it, finally forced Mayor Gribbs and Commissioner Nichols to reform the unit. They instituted a wide range of reforms including more rigorous psychological testing of

¹²⁴ Thompson, "Why Mass Incarceration Matters," 706.

¹²⁵ Cockrel, "STRESS: Abolish It!," *Changeover*, April/May 1972.

STRESS personnel, reducing the amount of teams in the unit, and providing more helicopters for support. Psychiatrists would also examine any officer involved in a fatal shooting. The reforms reflected Gribbs and Nichols's stubborn commitment to the program in the face of growing black anger. Gribbs argued that major crimes had continued to decrease for a sixth month when faced with questions about whether or not he should abolish the program. In practice, the reforms provided greater protection for the STRESS officers. Nichols planned on adding more manpower to "provide better coverage" and "more effective" protection of the program's decoys. They also failed to address the lack of safety and accountability of the police department to the city's black citizens.¹²⁶

The Rochester Street incident signaled a watershed moment for Anti-STRESS sentiment among black Detroiters. State Representative Daisy Elliot called for Nichols to investigate the March 9 shootout. Lawrence Doss of NDI called for the suspension of STRESS until the DPD established further reforms including more comprehensive psychological screening of officers, the establishment of a "special training program" for STRESS officers, and the assignment of sergeants to each STRESS unit.¹²⁷ Detroit Urban League executive director Francis Kornegay even reconsidered his prior support for STRESS. On March 17, he issued a press release calling for Gribbs and Nichols to enact more substantial reforms or to get rid of the unit. For some black Detroiters, Mayor Gribbs's reforms were out of the question. On March 26, over 2,000 people rallied in support of abolishing STRESS. At a press conference, a range of black organizations such as members of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the black police

¹²⁶ "Statement by Mayor Roman S. Gribbs – March 17, 1972," Box 5, Folder 35, Cockrel Collection; Bill Black, "Blacks Lukewarm to 'New' STRESS: But It's Here to Stay: Gribbs," *Michigan Chronicle*, 25 March 1972.

¹²⁷ New Detroit, Inc., "Press Release," March 28, 1972, Box 72, Folder 68, New Detroit, Inc. Records.

organization, the Guardians, the Pan African Congress, and the Michigan delegation to the Gary Convention all demanded for the unit should be abolished.¹²⁸

Subsequently, Cockrel, Spearman, Ravitz, and the LDC filed a civil lawsuit against Gribbs, Nichols, and Wayne County Prosecutor William Cahalan in Wayne County Circuit Court demanding the indefinite suspension of STRESS. The LDC sought to use the suit to bring public attention to the excesses of the STRESS program. Specifically, they sought to subpoena Nichols, Gribbs, and Cahalan in an effort to place the police unit on trial. The complaint detailed fifteen deaths that allegedly were the responsibility of STRESS. The suit also called for the appointment of a special prosecutor to prosecute Gribbs, Cahalan, and Nichols “where proper” and others “found to have engaged in criminal offenses.”¹²⁹

Thirty organizations, citizens, and activists signed on as plaintiffs to the LDC suit, underscoring the breadth of the Anti-STRESS coalition. Consistent with the LDC’s goal of building a coalition that spanned from liberals to the left, the lawsuit contained members of the city’s civil rights, labor, and left wing communities. Many of the moderate organizations that supported the September 1971 demonstration, such as the NAACP and the Guardians of Michigan, signed on as plaintiffs of the case. Other liberal organizations such as the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and the Coordinating Council on Human Relations signed onto the lawsuit as well. White leftists Frank Joyce and Sheila Murphy lent their names whereas

¹²⁸ Detroit Urban League, “Press Release,” March 17, 1972, Box 71, Folder “S.T.R.E.S.S.,” Detroit Urban League Records, Bentley Historical Library (BHL), Ann Arbor, Michigan; “Rep. Elliot Lambasts STRESS Officers,” *Michigan Chronicle*, 18 March 1972; Arnold Burtney, “Coalition Nixes STRESS Changes, Presses Removal,” *Michigan Chronicle*, 18 March 1972; Julius Dial, “STRESS: Incurable Disease,” *Michigan Chronicle*, 18 March 1972; Lawrence Ford, “Disband STRESS,” *Michigan Chronicle*, 18 March 1972; Paula Hankins, “STRESS Sentiment Has to Go Sentiment Increasing,” *Michigan Chronicle*, 1 April 1972.

¹²⁹Labor Defense Coalition, “Press Statement,” June 7, 1972, Box 5, Folder 26, Cockrel Collection, WPRL; Quoted in Paula Hankins, “Suit Aiming to Reveal STRESS Unit’s ‘Illegalities,’” *Michigan Chronicle*, 15 April 1972; Michael Brogan, “STRESS suit stayed,” *Detroit News*, 8 May 1972; Thompson, *Whose Detroit?*, 144-145.

AFSCME, Foundry Workers for Action Caucus, and the Wolverine Worker's Alliance were among the labor organizations that supported the lawsuit.¹³⁰

Nichols, Gribbs, and Cahalan had good reason to fear the case would proceed because it appeared on Judge Edward Bell's docket. Bell was a black judge who was willing to hear the case. However, Cahalan, Gribbs, and Nichols all successfully petitioned the Michigan State Court of Appeals to have their names eliminated from the lawsuit and to protect STRESS officers from further legal action. Cockrel, Ravitz, and the LDC promised they would appeal the Court's decision, but to no avail. The failed lawsuit led Cockrel and other members of the coalition began to turn to another strategy to confront police repression and the larger question concerning the inequities in the municipal and county criminal justice system—electoral politics.¹³¹

The Left's Electoral Turn: The 1972 Election of Justin Ravitz to Records Court Judge

Justin Ravitz's campaign for Recorder's Court judge in 1972 marked the first entry of the city's radical Anti-STRESS coalition into electoral politics. Justin Ravitz was raised in a modest Jewish family in Omaha, Nebraska and attended Babson College in Massachusetts. By 1965, Ravitz had earned a master's degree in international relations from the University of Pennsylvania and a law degree at the University of Michigan. He befriended Cockrel upon moving to Detroit. Ravitz and Cockrel built a relationship in the same way several of the League's leaders fostered theirs—through rap sessions about politics. Eventually, Cockrel,

¹³⁰ Labor Defense Coalition, "Case Complaint," Box 5, Folder 26. Cockrel Collection. WPRL.

¹³¹ Bill Black, "Drop STRESS Trial Judge—Why?," *Michigan Chronicle*, 13 May 1972; Brogan, "STRESS suit stayed."

Ravitz and others joined together to found a law firm, Philo, Maki, Ravitz, Pitts, Moore, Cockrel, & Robb.¹³²

Ravitz explained its rationale for running for public office in an internal draft of the campaign's training manual: "We are jointly about the business of developing a competent and solid political base comprised of people who share a vision of building a more humane and rational society."¹³³ Electoral politics for the Anti-STRESS coalition fulfilled other purposes. First, they thought controlling a bench could help address injustice in the city's justice system. By winning the seat, Ravitz could directly affect the lives of the hundreds of Detroiters who enter into his courtroom. The campaign estimated that Ravitz would be able to decide the fates of upwards 1,500 Detroiters a year. Ravitz also argued that he would make for an effective critic and advocate for a fairer justice system when he was outside the courtroom: "the justices never criticize their 'colleagues' and bring...important questions to the attention of the people. Justin will do this—thru the media and thru maintaining constant contact speaking to people throughout this city. This is EXTERNAL work." A judge Ravitz could be the first person from the Anti-STRESS left wing to demonstrate an inside-outside strategy of left municipal politics.¹³⁴

Second, members of the left-led electoral campaign saw their efforts as a means to taking over municipal institutions. Cockrel alluded to this aspiration as a member of the League on multiple occasions.¹³⁵ Ravitz's campaign recalls Sheila Murphy's interpretation of the Anti-STRESS campaign as an effort to take power back from Gribbs, Nichols, "and the people they work for."¹³⁶ From the Ground Up argued in their program that they "must organize politically to

¹³² Ken Kelley, "Maverick on the Bench," *Penthouse Magazine*, Cockrel Collection, Box 6, Folder 13, WPRL.

¹³³ The Ravitz Campaign, *Training Manual Draft*, (Detroit: The Ravitz Campaign, 1972), 2, Cockrel Collection, Box 5, Folder 10, WPRL.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹³⁵ Jacobs and Wellman, 21.

¹³⁶ Brian Flanigan, "Abolish STRESS Campaign Moves Ahead," *The Cell*. Vol. 1, No. 1, (May 1972).

take political and economic control.”¹³⁷ On the other hand, for the activists, the strategy of taking control of institutions represented a pragmatic decision. Cockrel, Murphy and others knew that the courts, city council, and city hall were the places where people with power made the crucial decisions.

For the Anti-STRESS coalition, taking power meant using electoral campaigns to build a social movement in the medium-term and an independent left-wing political machine in the long-term. Thus, electoral campaigns were, for Cockrel and his allies, extensions of their political education efforts. According to Georgakas and Surkin, “This group was convinced that the electoral process was a viable means of educating the public on issues, of propagandizing wider solutions, and of winning some limited power.”¹³⁸ They sought to lay the foundations for an inside-out strategy of political organization.

Much of Ravitz’s campaign staff were veterans of the city’s new left and Anti-STRESS coalitions—Margaret Borys, Lynda Chabot, Brian P. Flanigan, Jim Ingram, Frank Joyce and Sheila Murphy. Murphy served as Justin Ravitz’s campaign manager.¹³⁹ Yet, most of the campaign workers, according to Borys, “had little or no prior electoral experience...”¹⁴⁰ The Ravitz campaign published an organizing manual—“A Mini Manual of Criminal Justice”—outlining Ravitz’s and the coalition’s views on electoral politics, the criminal justice system, and heroin use. Despite the campaign’s lack of electoral experience and its lack of funds, Borys argued that the campaign was more organized than Ravitz’s opponents. The Ravitz campaign successfully recruited more than 400 unpaid volunteers to work the polls during the general

¹³⁷ From the Ground Up, “Preamble,” *Groundwork* (May-June 1973), 2-3.

¹³⁸ Georgakas and Surkin, 175.

¹³⁹ “The Ravitz Campaign, “Elect Ravitz Recorder’s Court Judge,” Box 6, Folder 10, Cockrel Collection, WPRL.

¹⁴⁰ Borys, *Towards Our Own Courts and Beyond Draft*, 3. Box 6, Folder 13, Cockrel Collection, WPRL.

election. Borys also reported after the campaign that the number of Ravitz’s contributors “greatly outnumbered that of any other candidate.”¹⁴¹

Ravitz grounded his campaign platform in the left wing critique of crime and a reformist agenda. The campaign claimed that the city’s criminal justice system “helps maintain and perpetuate crime.”¹⁴² Ravitz advanced a radical critique of the city’s justice system. He criticized the police, bail system, courts, prisons, and the heroin economy. Ravitz argued that prisons failed to prevent crime, they bred illicit activity. Instead of rehabilitating inmates, the campaign contended, prisons merely served to segregate them from the rest of society.¹⁴³ By calling the city’s justice system “an assembly line” Ravitz alluded to the way that it produced criminals and inmates via the repressive policing and the institution of what Ravitz referred to as the “Philadelphia Plan” where the state would elevate criminal charges with the intent of convicting suspects on lesser charges.¹⁴⁴ The assembly line metaphor pointed to how various institutions inside and outside of the Detroit’s justice system—city hall, police, prosecutors, judges, jails, prisons, and illicit markets—took the poor, or “hard core unemployed,” and warehoused them.

The Ravitz campaign advanced an economic critique of the city’s bail system. Ravitz called it “the ransom system of checkbook justice.” He insinuated that judges used bail to unreasonably detain suspects who tended to be poorer. “Poor people go to the Wayne County Jail while rich people (when charged) go free. A \$100 bond for an indigent is preventative detention!”¹⁴⁵ Ravitz argued that bail bondsmen’s sole purpose was to profit “off of human misery.” Their campaign also pointed to the bondsmen’s campaign contributions to judges and

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² The Ravitz Campaign, “Elect Ravitz for Recorder’s Court Judge.”

¹⁴³ Ravitz Campaign, *Training Manual Draft*, 8.

¹⁴⁴ Jerry M. Flint, “Detroit Lawyer Becomes First Radical Judge in U.S.,” *New York Times*, Nov. 12, 1972.

¹⁴⁵ The Ravitz Campaign, *Training Manual Draft*.

their lobby in Lansing as evidence of their political organization. Ravitz promised to reform the city's bail system...

The Ravitz Campaign also articulated a critique of the political economy of the heroin trade. Heroin use became a problem in the city during the early 1970s [check]. According to the campaign, there were about "30,000 or more" heroin addicts in Detroit. Ravitz argued that jailing addicts and initiatives such as STRESS hindered the city from confronting the problem at its source—the wholesaler. For Ravitz's campaign, justice lay in prosecuting corporations and the system for criminal activity rather than individual drug sellers in the underground economy with the intent of eradicating unlawful drug trafficking.

Left wing members of the coalition contended that the proliferation of the heroin trade and drug use resulted from U.S. imperialism, specifically the war in Indochina. In an article in *Groundwork*, May Weinbaum described the connection between U.S. imperialism, multinational capitalism and the heroin trade at home as the "heroin empire." She compared large dealers to global capitalists, "They may be dope pushers, but they are also pushers of Shell Oil, Ford Motor Company, etc....who are waiting in line for Indochina's markets..."¹⁴⁶ Weinbaum proceeded to argue that the U.S. took political advantage of the development of domestic drug markets. The anti-repression coalition believed that drugs pacified urban blacks. The drug trade also 'manufactured' more fodder for the local criminal justice system.

Ravitz, and members of the Left Coalition, did not really present any explicit evidence for their political and economic critiques of the heroin trade, relying instead on mainstream media sources, including the *New York Times* as well as leftist sources like *Ramparts* and *Monthly Review*. Frank Browning and Banning Garrett of *Ramparts* argued that Nixon's policy of extend the war into Laos, they argued, intensified the trade. "Nixon is widening the war in

¹⁴⁶ May Weinbaum, "The Heroin Empire," *Groundwork*, July-August 1973.

Laos, whose principal product is opium and which has now become the funnel for nearly half the world's supply of the narcotic, for which the U.S. is the chief consumer," they declared. The authors maintained that Cold War policy altered opium supply networks and, in some cases, helped facilitate its distribution by supplying the Laotian air force with helicopters and planes.

In the *Monthly Review*, Sol Yurick analyzed a "new" agent in local economies—the addict. He argued that the addict "is a social type generated in response to changes in the social economy in a time of world crisis."¹⁴⁷ Essentially, the creative destruction of particular urban economies via public and private policy engendered the emergence of illicit drug markets and consumers. Drug consumption represented a market and psychological response to deteriorating conditions. Once considered a target for public policy, the urban worker became the target of a drug market abetted by U.S. foreign policy and domestic neglect. For Yurick and the Anti-STRESS coalition, the criminalized addict became the human signifier of the coming of what Daniel Bell later called "the coming of post-industrial society"¹⁴⁸

Ravitz led the field of forty-two candidates in the August 1972 primary. His 130,514 votes were enough to finish second in the November 7 general election. Left wing members of the Anti-STRESS coalition considered Ravitz's election a clear victory. It demonstrated that a self-espoused radical could win political office in Detroit and laid the foundation for future electoral action.¹⁴⁹ In November 1972, Margaret Borys, published an article that detailed the Ravitz campaign strategy. She declared "The Ravitz Campaign understood that we can neither litigate nor elect our way to liberation, but selective and serious entries into each arena can advance the building of a socialist society." She then argued, "The political objectives of the

¹⁴⁷ Yurick, 23.

¹⁴⁸ Daniel Bell, *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society: A Venture in Social Forecasting* (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

¹⁴⁹ "Politics in Detroit," 77.

Ravitz Campaign are continuing ones: (1) to build class solidarity by organizing a self-conscious and anti-racist white movement; (2) to take leadership in the implementation of transitional reforms and demands; and (3) to achieve a mass multi-racial, independent, radical people's political movement—a movement conscious of the need and value of victories, unafraid and relentless in its pursuit of power.”¹⁵⁰ Borys's points epitomize what would become the Cockrel's and DARE's pragmatic view of the use of electoral politics as an avenue for radicals to gain political power. For Cockrel, DARE, and their allies, the road towards radical social change lay within the city's political institutions—the courts, mayor's office and city council.¹⁵¹

The Left Anti-STRESS Coalition and the Election of Coleman Young

With the turmoil accompanying STRESS, it was clear that police-community relations would emerge as one of the most significant issues in the 1973 mayoral election. Consequently, the local press contemplated whether or not two of the most prominent figures in the city—Police Commissioner John Nichols and black radical lawyer Kenneth Cockrel—would run in the primary. *Michigan Chronicle* asked in its January 12 edition: “Nichols vs. Cockrel for Mayor?” When asked by reporters about a potential run, Nichols was mum about such plans. “I'm a policeman, not a politician,” he said.¹⁵²

The concept of a Cockrel candidacy was not too fanciful. *Michigan Chronicle* named him one of the “Black Detroiters to watch” at the beginning of 1972.¹⁵³ Cockrel forces explored the possibility of a Cockrel mayoral run later that year. On June 8, a group of “young Blacks and whites” formed the “Draft Cockrel for Mayor Committee” and issued a press release calling for

¹⁵⁰ Quoted in Georgakas and Surkin, 176.

¹⁵¹ “Politics in Detroit,” 79; Georgakas and Surkin, 179

¹⁵² “Nichols vs. Cockrel for Mayor?,” *Michigan Chronicle*, January 12, 1973.

¹⁵³ Aretha Watkins, “These are the black Detroiters to watch in politics '72,” *Michigan Chronicle*, January 15, 1972.

Cockrel to run for mayor. Two hundred Cockrel supporters gathered three days later at the Detroit Metropolitan Airport to back the committee.¹⁵⁴ The committee argued that Cockrel was the best person to confront suburbanization and “the rapidly deteriorating economic base of the city.”¹⁵⁵ *Michigan Chronicle* journalist Bill Black also reported that the coalition used the rally to support universal health care and full employment. Cockrel attended and addressed the crowd, but he declined the draft at the time. He said his candidacy depended upon the degree of popular support he could earn.

Cockrel sought Julian Bond’s endorsement of a potential campaign that October.¹⁵⁶ Many black Detroiters, and some in the media, saw Cockrel as a legitimate candidate. According to the *Michigan Chronicle*, what distinguished Cockrel from other black activists were his tendencies to back up his flamboyant rhetoric with action. “The feeling among young Blacks...is that only Ken Cockrel ‘acts’ while the others ‘rap.’” Cockrel, ultimately, decided not to run. He only wanted to run if he had popular support and, like in Ravitz’s case, if he could win. “We know we could run this city,” Cockrel said in an interview.¹⁵⁷ Even though Cockrel stayed out of the race, Ravitz’s win and Cockrel’s flirtations with a mayoral run pointed to how Cockrel was leaning towards an explicit electoral focus.

Not everyone in the coalition supported Cockrel’s electoral efforts, however. The issue of electoral and coalition politics created friction among members of the city’s white left cadre organizations (MCLL and FTGU) in the wake of Ravitz’s victory. Members of MCLL thought the Ravitz’s campaign turned into an organizational surrogate for Cockrel’s political ambitions. White members of the MCLL such as Frank Joyce were skeptical of whether or not leftists could

¹⁵⁴ “Cockrel. Mayor. 1973,” *Changeover*, June/July 1972; “Bell to Run for Mayor, Cockrel ‘Available,’” *Michigan Chronicle*, June 17, 1972.

¹⁵⁵ Draft Cockrel for Mayor Committee, Press Release, June 8, 1972, Box 1, Folder 31, Cockrel Collection, WPRL.

¹⁵⁶ Kenneth Cockrel, Letter to Julian Bond, October 5, 1972, Box 1, Folder 31, Cockrel Collection, WPRL.

¹⁵⁷ “Bell to Run for Mayor, Cockrel ‘Available.’”

actually achieve radical change through electoral politics. Some believed the Ravitz campaign's professed support for a possible Cockrel mayoral campaign in 1973 compromised the organization's ideological integrity and political independence.¹⁵⁸ Surprisingly, Justin Ravitz also voiced his disapproval of Cockrel running for mayor in a memo addressed to Cockrel and Murphy. Ravitz opposed a Cockrel candidacy at that time because of pragmatic concerns, not ideological ones. Ravitz expressed concern about whether or not the campaign could mobilize the human resources necessary to build a mass multiracial organization capable of winning the election. Ravitz did not believe they could build that type of organization solely through an electoral campaign, especially if they should lose. However, Ravitz and others reversed their course when Cockrel decided to run for city council in 1977.¹⁵⁹

While Coleman Young cited Richard Austin as the early favorite among the city's black population,¹⁶⁰ Austin chose not to run. Cockrel's and Austin's decisions to stay out of the race meant that state senator Coleman Young would not have to face two of the city's most formidable black leaders in the primary. A former black radical with union roots, Young ran successfully for a state senate seat in 1964 and won. Young remained an ally of the city's Anti-STRESS forces as he fought against police repression from Lansing. He co-chaired a committee against political repression with John Conyers and fought unsuccessfully to establish a civilian review board to curb STRESS's excesses.¹⁶¹ Without having to compete with two of Detroit's more prominent black leaders, Young could capitalize on the city's sizable black population and the black population's discontent with excessive policing and crime, especially if he had to face an unpopular police commissioner in Nichols.

¹⁵⁸ Georgakas and Surkin, 178-79.

¹⁵⁹ Justin Ravitz Memo to Kenneth Cockrel and Sheila Murphy, Box 5, Folder 6, Cockrel Collection, WPRL.

¹⁶⁰ Young and Wheeler, *Hard Stuff: The Autobiography of Coleman Young* (New York: Viking, 1994).

¹⁶¹ Young and Wheeler, 192-193.

Coleman Young's rise appeared to signal the ascendancy of a working-class oriented black power in Detroit. He hailed from a working class, military, and organized labor background. Young served in the military as a second lieutenant for the Tuskegee Airmen and worked for the Ford Motor Company. In 1943, Young joined the UAW in the midst of the sit-down strikes in Flint. And like Cockrel and other black labor radicals in the late 1960s and early 1970s, Young often clashed with UAW leadership. Walter Reuther purged Young and other members of the union's left-wing in the midst of the Red Scare of the early 1950s. Young continued his labor organizing as a member of the National Negro Labor Council (NNLC). He gained national notoriety in 1952 for standing up to Georgia congressman John Wood while testifying before the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC).¹⁶²

While serving as a State Senator for nine years, Young rose quickly through the Democratic Party's ranks. His fellow Democrats elected him minority floor leader in 1966. Young supported legislation aimed at protecting the workers, the poor, and the state's African American population such as increasing Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) benefits, open housing, protecting residents from urban renewal displacement, and a bail bond law which allowed the accused to pay 10 percent of bail to the court.¹⁶³ Now, Young stood a great chance of becoming Detroit's first black mayor.

Young, Nichols, and white liberal city councilman Mel Ravitz were among the nineteen candidates who had entered the mayoral primary. Young also had to contend with another prominent black Detroiter, Judge Edward Bell who stepped down from his position as judge on Wayne County Circuit Court in the midst of the Left Anti-STRESS Coalition to focus on his

¹⁶² Darden, et. al, 99; Young and Wheeler, 119.

¹⁶³ Rich, 88-86.

mayoral campaign.¹⁶⁴ Young appeared to be a longer shot than expected. He finished fifth in an early poll. The UAW's Community Action Program endorsed Ravitz. The UAW's failure to endorse Young stung the candidate, his black supporters, and the rank and file. According to journalist Nadine Brown, the UAW's actions "angered many union members and sent them to his rescue."¹⁶⁵ The endorsement of Rev. Cleage's Black Slate helped solidify black support behind Young.¹⁶⁶ In the August primary, Young finished second to Nichols and thus advanced to the November runoff election.

Cockrel and the Left Anti-STRESS Coalition tacitly endorsed Young in the general election despite their weariness with the city's liberal establishment. In a *Groundwork* article analyzing the Young-Nichols contest, Brian Flanigan highlighted Young's Anti-STRESS views. Flanigan also quoted one of Young's campaign promises that the coalition, and many within the city's black population, cherished: Young's guarantee to fire Nichols promptly should he win.¹⁶⁷ B.P. Flanigan continued the left wing's attack on Nichols as well, calling him "racist" and reminding readers that Nichols was the one responsible for STRESS.¹⁶⁸

Cockrel's discussion of Young's candidacy in an interview that appeared in the July/August 1973 edition of *Groundwork* highlighted the coalition's ambivalence towards the city's liberal elite. Cockrel identified Young as the "closest to an individual with whom we could work." Yet, Cockrel maintained his, if not the coalition's, desires to build an independent left political force in the city. Cockrel wondered what kind of role the UAW would play in Young's coalition, considering its "illusory kind of image as being liberal and progressive..." It is evident

¹⁶⁴ Young and Wheeler, 196.

¹⁶⁵ Nadine Brown, "Battle lines clearly drawn," *Michigan Chronicle*, September 22, 1973.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁷ Although Gibbs eventually relieved Nichols of his Police Commissioner duties because Nichols refused to step down upon announcing his candidacy.

¹⁶⁸ B.P. Flanigan, "The Race," *Groundwork*, September 1973.

that Cockrel appreciated Young's criticisms of police repression and the potential that he would follow through. However, Cockrel's skepticism of a return of liberal-labor coalition and his clearer advocacy of building an independent politics signaled that he was drawing a line between Young's coalition and his. It also underscored a hope that their manifestation of a left independent politics could become a force that Young and his coalition would have to respect.¹⁶⁹

STRESS and crime emerged as the most significant issues in the 1973 mayoral election. Young often promised to abolish STRESS. During his first public debate with Nichols, Young reminded the audience that he would end STRESS. Young combined his critique of STRESS with strong law and order rhetoric. During his first public debate with Nichols, Young said he aimed to "run the muggers and drifters off the streets." He referred to criminals as "jackals" and "thugs."¹⁷⁰ Young argued that, even with STRESS, Nichols and the police department failed to curb the city's crime.¹⁷¹ Consequently, Young contended that he would combine abolishing STRESS with implementing more reforms aimed at improving the quality of policing. This included recruiting and hiring more black police officers. Young also argued that rebuilding the neighborhoods and revitalizing downtown would also aid in deterring criminal activity. Young's Anti-STRESS politics and reformism left Nichols on the defensive.¹⁷²

Ultimately, Young connected Nichols' mayoral bid with the others mounted by police chiefs across the country. He thought a Nichols win would contribute to the emergence of what he called a "coast-to-coast police state."¹⁷³ What is ironic is that Young was not just arguing for who should run the cities, but, who should oversee the draconian police regimes emerging to

¹⁶⁹ "An Interview with Kenneth Cockrel," *Groundwork*, July/August 1973.

¹⁷⁰ Nadine Brown, "Nichols, Young Square Off," *Michigan Chronicle*, October 13, 1973; Thompson, "Coleman Young of Detroit," in *African-American Mayors: Race, Politics, and the American City*, ed. David R. Colburn and Jeffrey S. Adler (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 236.

¹⁷¹ Thompson, "Coleman Young of Detroit," 236.-237.

¹⁷² Rich, 105; Jacoby, 308; Thompson, *Whose Detroit?*, 1987-198/

¹⁷³ Young and Wheeler, 198.

contain the growing criminal activity in the nation's declining cities. Young's insinuation that downtown revitalization could also curb crime illustrated the interconnectedness of increased policing and private sector-led development that the anti-repression left argued against in their Anti-STRESS pamphlet.

Coleman Young barely defeated Nichols in the general election, joining other newly-elected black mayors Thomas Bradley in Los Angeles and Maynard Jackson in Atlanta in 1973. Young won with almost 52% of the vote and by a margin of less than 4% of all votes cast. Young's victory was a direct result of the city's demographic change. Detroit lost 117,000 people in the three years before the election. By the time of the election, the city's blacks constituted more than half of the city's eligible voters.¹⁷⁴

These demographic changes signaled the defining irony of black urban power. Young, like other black mayors, entered into city halls as whites and middle class blacks were leaving for the suburbs. Also, Detroiters elected a mayor who had to contend with Nixon's restructuring of urban policy, the OPEC oil shock, and corporate disinvestment. As Grace Lee Boggs reflected, "What Young did not realize was how much the game had changed. By 1974, the year he was inaugurated, U.S. corporations were going multinational and deindustrializing Detroit." Young may have emphasized the salience of racial polarization after his victory. That did not mean that he was less aware of the global restructuring of corporations like General Motors as leftists who would establish progressive organizations such as the Ohio Public Interest Campaign and the Detroit Alliance for a Rational Economy. Yet, Young governed within the confines set by constraining national and state policy and the increasingly dire economic situation. Doing so included governing with the at least tacit support of local private developers and corporate

¹⁷⁴ Remer Tyson, "Coleman Young: Street wise and Canny," *The Nation*, December 24, 1973; Rich, 103.

elites.¹⁷⁵ Cockrel and DARE, in contrast, thought they could confront corporate flight by regulating their expansion or developing more democratically-controlled local economies.¹⁷⁶

While Young struggled to revitalize Detroit, he was able to fulfill one of his main campaign promises. On February 13, 1974, he eliminated the STRESS unit. Young also announced a broader reorganization of the city's police force, establishing fifty "mini-police" stations throughout the city. Young expressed respect for residents' civil liberties. Young ordered all officers "to halt all acts of disrespect toward any citizens." He also assured that "all officers shall be instructed that in strict enforcement of the laws any violation of a citizen's rights will result in discipline and possible prosecution."¹⁷⁷

Conclusion

Cockrel's and the city's left-wing's participation in the Anti-STRESS movement illustrated how using progressive politics—the combination of radical analysis, coalition-building, and reformist strategy—to address the focal point of policing could deliver a consequential victory for the Detroit's black residents during the early 1970s. Members of the Anti-STRESS coalition dramatized the DPD's police killings of black Detroiters through the courts and in marches and demonstrations. The Anti-STRESS coalition took advantage of political opportunities presented by the September 1971 killings of Buck and Mitchell as well as the Rochester Street Massacre to galvanize more opposition against deadly police tactics.

Previous instances of surveillance and violent repression during the late-1960s and early-1970s helped forge a left-liberal consensus around police reform. Radical lawyers such as

¹⁷⁵ Grace Lee Boggs, *Living for Change: An Autobiography* (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 178-179.

¹⁷⁶ Tyson, "Coleman Young."

¹⁷⁷ Office of Mayor Coleman Young, "Press Release," February 13, 1974. Cockrel Collections, Box 5, Folder 21, WPRL.

Kenneth Cockrel challenged Detroit law enforcement's racist tactics while defending black activists in court. Future mayor Coleman Young also spoke out against the harassment of black activists. Yet, it was the killings of black teenagers by the STRESS that forged a coalition of black power and new left activists and members of Detroit's liberal, civil rights, and labor organizations.

Left-wing members of the coalition such as Sheila Murphy devised and articulated a radical analysis of criminal activity and policing. They argued that STRESS served to contain the Detroit's black and poor populations, especially as the city's business leaders and real estate developers aimed to revitalize downtown. Murphy and others also challenged behavioral and cultural understandings of crime. They contended that crime was a product of capitalism as it employers' desires to maximize profit resulted in unemployment. Structural employment, left-wing activists reasoned, left displaced workers with little recourse but to resort to participate in illicit markets. Justin Ravitz stressed how the city's criminal justice system further perpetuated poverty as poorer suspects had to pay bail. Murphy, Ravitz, and the Coalition's left-wing stressed the need for law enforcement to prosecute white-collar crime. They also argued that U.S. military involvement in Indochina helped facilitate heroin distribution throughout the global drug market.

The Coalition's popular mobilizations and the left-wing's legal strategy raised awareness and placed pressure on the campaign's targets—Police Commissioner John Nichols, Mayor Roman Gribbs, and Wayne County Prosecutor William Cahalan. Activists successfully pushed Nichols to reform STRESS in March 1972. However, Coleman Young's mayoral election led to the abolishment of STRESS. However, the left-wing's electoral strategy highlighted tensions among radicals. Many leftists supported Ravitz's decision to run for Recorder's Court Judge in

1972. This aspect of their electoral strategy was consistent with black and white leftists' desires to transform criminal justice through established institutions. However, some white activists expressed skepticism about the prospects of electoral politics delivering radical transformation. Some activists grew disconcerted with what they saw as a development of personality politics around Kenneth Cockrel. They feared the Ravitz campaign was turning into a Cockrel electoral operation.

These tensions around electoral and social movement politics among the left-wing activists, however, were longstanding. The League of Revolutionary Black Workers also split around a social movement and electoral strategy during the late-1960s, with Cockrel, Hamlin, and Watson joining the Black Workers Congress. Another split among the BWC occurred, however, with Cockrel working exclusively with the Labor Defense Coalition to abolish STRESS. Pragmatism prevailed in the debate about Cockrel's political ambitions. Instead of running, Cockrel and the left-wing through their support behind Coleman Young's candidacy. Ravitz's election set the stage for Cockrel's campaign for city council in 1977.

Cockrel and the rest of the anti-repression left were still a long way from creating a left progressive organization devoted to addressing deindustrialization directly. Yet, they continued to argue for the development of a left independent political force in city politics after Young's election. On November 20, 1973, the coalition held a panel discussion to reflect on Detroit's mayoral election featuring Ravitz, Cockrel, and The Guardian's Executive Editor, Irwin Silber. Ravitz maintained that the coalition remained focused on "building an independent political machine" and "taking over the institutions that have oppressed us for years." Ravitz reiterated the coalition's Anti-STRESS politics, especially its connection to the decline of U.S. imperialism

and the nation's economy. Ravitz argued that the American system of imperialism and capitalism had entered into a decline as millions descended into poverty and criminal activity.

Cockrel built on Ravitz's argument for a left independent politics by critiquing the coalition's predecessors—the Motor City Labor League, League of Revolutionary Black Workers, and the Black Workers Congress. Cockrel argued that there was a disconnect between these organizations' exceptional ability to critique society and their unwillingness to engage in activities—electoral politics and municipal control—that he believed could lead to the type of political conflict these radical organizations desired.

This was not the first time Cockrel criticized the city's black radical organizations in a coalition-sponsored forum. In May 1973, Cockrel offered his history of black radicalism in Detroit since the 1967 rebellion. He argued that few of the organizations, including organizations he led and/or affiliated himself with including League of Revolutionary Black Workers that emerged from the 1967 riot ultimately failed to serve the black masses. "We've all failed," Cockrel declared.¹⁷⁸ What distinguished Cockrel's post-election discussion was his ability to differentiate the Anti-STRESS coalition's politics from the previous ones of the late 1960s and early 1970s more clearly. Cockrel called explicitly for a "progressive" multiracial and metropolitan electoral strategy.

The only way that we can get out of the box of racial division between the urban area and the suburban area is that we develop a people's movement inside of the city that is constituted not just of black people but that is constituted also of white people who have the capacity to begin to organize in the suburbs around the objective reality of the fact our destiny is inextricably intertwined with the destiny of people who in fact live in suburbia.¹⁷⁹

Cockrel's thoughts about metropolitan-wide political organization resemble some of Young's views on the issue: "I think we must recognize that there is a commonality of interest for the

¹⁷⁸ Kenneth Cockrel, "Remarks at the From Sun-Down to Sun-Up Forum," Box 5, Folder 41, Cockrel Collection, WPRL.

¹⁷⁹ From the Ground Up, "The Elections and the Future," Box 5, Folder 14, Cockrel Collection, WPRL.

white population and the black population in the cities and in the suburbs and deal with it from that point of view.”¹⁸⁰ The remaining questions for both forces moving forward is whether or not they could follow through on those aspirations successfully and what ideological shade would their politics look like—liberal or progressive?

¹⁸⁰ Quoted in Tyson, “Coleman Young: Street wise and Canny,” 681.

Chapter 3

Indochina, the Focal Point of U.S. Empire: The IPC and the Final Campaign to End the War

The last phase of the struggle to end the war in Vietnam began on a rainy September night in Columbus, Ohio in 1972. There, Jane Fonda, Tom Hayden, Holly Near, and former POW George Smith delivered a presentation to 300 people about the continuing conflict in Indochina. The exhibition featured entertainment, slideshows composed from photos documenting the war, and speeches. During the presentation, Fonda and Near explained the group's primary goal—to galvanize opposition against Nixon and to rally “middle America” against the war. The affair “ended with people taking literature and hugging goodbye.” Fonda, Hayden, Near, and Smith were “coming home,” Hayden wrote.¹

Hayden, Fonda, and the others repeated the same performance to a crowd at two more state fairs that night. The last presentation in Dayton attracted 1,200 people despite starting at midnight. The reception easily exceeded the activists' expectations. Hayden had expressed apprehension about launching an antiwar campaign aimed at “mainstream” Americans. However, he and his fellow activists also believed that organizing Americans in the coastal states would not be enough to defeat President Nixon's war policy. Hayden's associates agreed that

¹ Tom Hayden, *Reunion: A Memoir* (New York: Random House, 1988), 448-449; Hayden, *The Indochina Peace Campaign: A Working Paper* (Santa Monica: Indochina Peace Campaign, 1973), 29-30.

they could not end the war without garnering support from midwesterners.² Yet, the positive response they received from Ohioans instilled confidence in Hayden and the rest of the group. From then on, they referred to the tour's launch as "the miracle." Encouraged by the positive reception, Fonda and Hayden decided to establish a national organization, the Indochina Peace Campaign (IPC), with the intent of mobilizing public pressure to end the war.

This chapter analyzes the successful campaign to end the war in Indochina during between 1972 and 1975. Similar to the Anti-STRESS campaign, IPC's efforts represented a key example of progressive politics during the 1970s. The organization articulated a radical analysis of U.S. involvement in Indochina that connected the economy, corrupt executive power, and foreign policy. The group combined their radical analysis of war and imperialism with a pragmatic strategy. They linked popular mobilization and local action with a national congressional lobbying strategy to cut off spending on the war. Hayden and the IPC devised a method of analysis and organizing—focal point theory—that guided the campaign's strategy. In an effort to appeal to non-leftist Americans, Hayden and the organization avoided Marxist-Leninist terminology in its effort to popularize its view of the war.

This analysis of IPC challenges declension narratives of the U.S. left and the antiwar movement.³ Most scholars of the antiwar movement and the U.S. Left, with the exception of Charles DeBenedetti, have ignored the intellectual and political contributions of IPC to the 1970s, focusing instead on the decline of the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and the

² Austin McCoy, interview with Paul Ryder interview, August 20, 2013.

³ Most scholars of the New Left and peace movement point to the disintegration of SDS as one of the primary examples of the U.S. left's fragmentation. However, these interpretations by critics like Todd Gitlin rest upon a "good Sixties, bad Sixties" consensus narrative of the movement that romanticized the first half of the decade. Critics who lament the fracture of SDS and the decline of the 1960s movement lament the abandonment of a leftist, humanistic, universalism for "identity" and sectarian politics. Many scholars have since challenged these interpretations. One other reason why these interpretations are myopic in the context of the history of the postwar left is that they often failed to account for the examples of leftist activists and organization who did not abandon radical analyses of society and engaged in coalition politics. See Gitlin, *Twilight of Common Dreams*.

fracture of the New Left.⁴ However, this chapter shows that one cannot analyze the antiwar movement without accounting for IPC's contributions. It served as an example of the success of left progressive coalition politics during the 1970s. The IPC worked with liberal Democrats to mobilize opposition against the Nixon Administration's and the Pentagon's military aid packages. The IPC laid the groundwork for future left progressive organizations devoted to addressing plant closure and economic recession.

The IPC represented an organizational and strategic departure from the radical antiwar movement of the mid-to-late 1960s. What distinguished IPC from its predecessor organization, the Students for a Democratic Society, was its willingness to take a pragmatic path towards ending the war. Hayden's and IPC's strategic decision to eschew Marxist-Leninist rhetoric and analysis that remained salient among others in the radical New Left represented an example of the group's pragmatism. The IPC retained a radical analysis of the war, but Hayden, one of the group's leading spokespeople and intellectuals, sought to translate the organization's anti-imperialist views to Americans viewed leftist politics skeptically. IPC's pragmatic approach also reflected a geographic consciousness. Stopping Nixon and the war meant appealing to "middle America" and thus the group concentrated its initial efforts in organizing opposition to President Nixon in Midwestern states such as Ohio, Illinois, and Michigan. The organization envisioned itself as a single-issue organization rather than as one that sought to radically transform society like the SDS. Concerned that a majority of Americans were no longer paying attention to the war in Indochina because of Nixon's troop drawdowns and the 1973 Peace Agreement, Hayden,

⁴ Newer work on the SDS and the antiwar movement have begun to account for issues of identity within those movements. Penny Lewis, *Hardhats, Hippies, and Hawks: the Vietnam Antiwar Movement as Myth and Memory* (Ithaca: ILR Press, 2013).

Fonda, and others such as Ira Arlook mounted a campaign to build a progressive majority against continued U.S. involvement in the region.

Tom Hayden's and IPC's major intellectual and strategic contribution to left-wing progressivism during the 1970s and 1980s was the group's articulation of "focal point theory." Drawing from, North Vietnamese Communist leader, Trường Chinh, focal point theory" suggested that one could oppose U.S. empire by identifying a pressure point—Indochina—and stopping U.S. involvement there.⁵ Rather than the war in Indochina symbolizing a manifestation of the "highest stage of capitalism," or as a military blunder, the IPC saw Indochina as the place where multiple contradictions clashed—capitalism and communism and national liberation and imperialism.⁶ Moreover, combining the focal point theory with a campaign strategy focused solely on defunding the war left the ideological basis of U.S. foreign policy, and the economic interests of military-industrial complex, intact even as the country emerged from the conflict with its collective psyche battered.

The IPC combined a radical analysis with popular mobilization and an insider political strategy. The IPC self-consciously organized itself as a campaign.⁷ The campaign was a self-contained effort with one goal in mind—stopping U.S. intervention in Indochina. Similar to Detroit's left wing of the anti-STRESS movement, the IPC featured various tactics that included organizing demonstrations, petitioning citizens to raise awareness around the war, and using their Indochina Peace Pledge to lobby local elected officials and members of U.S. Congress. The IPC targeted antiwar Democrats and Republicans dismayed about Nixon's Watergate scandal in their

⁵ Tom Hayden, *Listen, Yankee!: Why Cuba Matters* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2015), 93.

⁶ "Indochina Peace Campaign," *Ann Arbor Indochina Peace Campaign*, January 1975; Paul Ryder, Interview, August 30, 2013.

⁷ Richard Flacks, "Knowledge for What?: Thoughts on the State of Social Movement Studies," in *Rethinking Social Movements: Structure, Meaning, and Emotion*, ed. Jeff Goodwin and James M. Jasper (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2004), 145.

congressional strategy. Congress such as California congressman Ronald Dellums and incorporated political lobbying of members of Congress and local elected officials with outreach to the Vietnamese, direct action, and political education. IPC's strategy worked as successfully pushed Congress to deny Nixon's, and Ford's, administrations resources to continue U.S. military involvement in Indochina.

The IPC sought to take advantage of what it called the "Watergate Opportunity." The organization believed that revelations around the break-in at the Watergate Hotel in June 1972 threw the war in Indochina, and thus U.S. imperialism, into crisis. The organization thus grounded its arguments against the war in distrust in the executive branch of government. The logic governing the Watergate scandal—the use of executive power to embark on illegal activities—, the IPC argued, also underlay the Nixon Administration's clandestine strategy in Indochina. The only way to address the crisis of executive power and in American Empire that the Watergate scandal exposed was to build a broad antiwar majority to acquire a greater say in U.S. foreign affairs. The IPC aimed to capitalize on Watergate in their campaign to convince the U.S. Congress to cut off financing for the war. The IPC ultimately saw Nixon and the executive branch of government as the weak spot, or "focal point," in American power.

In the aftermath of the fall of Saigon, the IPC's "focal point" method of analysis and campaign politics shaped the Ohio IPC's turn toward economic progressivism. By the mid-1970s, the focal point for Ohio IPC activists shifted from U.S. military power to the economic policies of multinational corporations. Ohio IPC activists chafed at the undemocratic nature of corporate capitalism and thought the next best step for IPC activists was to confront corporate power and address plant closings and economic inequality. Attributing deindustrialization and national economic turbulence to the growth of multinational corporations, Ohio activists drew on

the success of the antiwar campaign to propose similar methods to address plant closings and urban crisis—pressure lawmakers to pass regulations curbing overseas capital investment. Similarly to Detroit leftists, they wanted to infuse capitalism with more democracy. The campaign to end the war represented another example of how leftists reconstituted themselves around vital issues rather than sectarian politics.

While the IPC stopped the war, the group's efforts failed in its goal of halting U.S. imperialism at its pressure point. This was mostly due to tensions embedded within the organization's goals, campaign strategy, and ideology. The national IPC could not agree on a post-Indochina strategy, so the various chapters aimed to organize around different issues. Some IPC chapters sought to maintain the national organization with the goal of organizing a movement for a more democratic foreign policy. However, others in the organization, including its leading members, stuck to the organization's original charge of disbanding after achieving the goal of ending the war.

The Vietnam War, the New Left, and the Antiwar Movement during the 1960s

The Indochina Peace Campaign's strategy to end the war underscored the early Students for a Democratic Society's emphasis on political transformation rather than the radicalism of the post-1964 SDS and the New Communist organizations of the 1970s. At the beginning of the 1970s, SDS co-founder Tom Hayden argued that the SDS-led wing of the antiwar movement had grown too radical in its desire for the revolutionary transformation of U.S. society. Instead, the antiwar movement, according to Hayden, should have focused on stopping the war first before moving onto larger goals. Hayden represents a bridge between the first cohort of New Leftists in the Students for a Democratic Society who sought to radically interrogate dominant liberal

institutions such as organized labor, the Democratic Party, and “corporate liberals,” as well as federal domestic and foreign policy. The initial cohort that consisted of Hayden and peace activist Al Haber are distinct from a second, more radical cohort that ascended to SDS leadership in the late-1960s. Rather than discarding Marxism like the first cohort, SDS radicals such as Oglesby applied a radical analysis to U.S. imperialism. Ironically, Hayden’s and Oglesby’s analyses of U.S. foreign policy were commensurate despite the former’s disavowal of Marxist-inspired politics.

United States military involvement in Vietnam began in 1950 when it committed military and financial support to France’s effort to maintain colonial control over the country.⁸ The French left Vietnam following their defeat by the North Vietnamese communist forces in 1954, but it was not until the early-1960s that the U.S. increased its military presence to defend the anti-communist government of South Vietnam. President John F. Kennedy sent thousands of military “advisors” to South Vietnam between 1961 and 1963 in an effort to demonstrate his commitment to effectively combatting communism.⁹ In 1963, Kennedy approved the CIA’s decision to back a military coup against Ngo Dinh Minh, the elected president of South Vietnam.¹⁰ Following President Kennedy’s assassination, President Lyndon Johnson secured congressional authority to prosecute military intervention in Vietnam after North Vietnamese forces attacked two American surveillance ships in the Gulf of Tonkin in August 1964. The

⁸ Joshua Freeman, *American Empire: The Rise of a Global Power, the Democratic Revolution at Home, 1945-2000* (New York: Viking, 2012), 223; Lewis, 57.

⁹ Melvin Small, *At the Water’s Edge: American Politics and the Vietnam War* (Chicago: Ian R. Dee, 2005), 13; Quoted in James T. Patterson, *Grand Expectations: The United States, 1945-1974* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 595.

¹⁰ Glenda Gilmore and Thomas Sugrue, *These United States: A Nation in the Making, 1890 to the Present* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 2015), 417-419.

number of American soldiers in Vietnam grew from more than 16,000 at the end of the 1963 to 450,000 by the end of the 1966.¹¹

For leftists and antiwar activists, the war represented a manifestation of a racism and imperialism. The post-World War II antiwar movement in the United States unfolded in three phases: 1955-1964 constituted the early period, 1965-1969 is characterized by the presence of New Left organizations such as the Students for a Democratic Society, and liberals and progressives returned to the fore during the movement's final phase—1970-1975.¹² Historian Charles DeBenedetti locates the movement's origins in 1955 when peace activists sought to organize against nuclear testing. The movement then was dominated by two flanks—the radical pacifists and liberal internationalists.¹³ The pacifists included organizations such as the American Friends Service Committee, Fellowship of Reconciliation and the War Resisters League. Reverend A.J. Muste was prominent among the pacifists. The latter group comprised groups such as the International League for Peace and Freedom and the Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy (SANE).¹⁴

The threat of nuclear war shaped the early peace movement's politics, but there were differences among the two tendencies. Both flanks struggled against the proliferation of nuclear weapons, atomic bomb testing, and advocated for disarmament. However, liberal activists and organizations like SANE retained a belief in the rule of law and the power of government to enact reform in foreign policy. Many of the radicals, in contrast, questioned the U.S.

¹¹ Patterson, 595.

¹² Considering the history of IPC's involvement provoked this particular periodization. Historian Charles DeBenedetti located the origins of the antiwar movement in 1955. After consulting analyses of the antiwar movement, the New Left, and SDS, one realizes the narrow scope in terms of accounting for the movement's organizational, racial, ethnic, and class diversity. Many scholars have sought to both challenge the whiteness embedded in prior histories of the Vietnam anti-war movement by reinterpreting it through the lens of people of color and non-SDS activists. See...

¹³ De Benedetti, 12-13.

¹⁴ Simon Hall, *Rethinking the Anti-war Movement* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 2; Lewis, 58.

government's aspirations of world dominance. Even though liberals sponsored and participated in mass demonstrations during the 1960s, they were committed to working through established political channels. Radicals favored nonviolent direct action and civil disobedience.

Communism represented a crucial fault line between the groups. Liberals subscribed to Cold War anticommunism—they excluded communists from their organizations and refused to collaborate with them. Radical pacifists abhorred such exclusion.¹⁵ Liberal antipathy towards leftists persisted well into the 1960s when organizations such as SANE refused to support SDS antiwar mobilizations. While the IPC departed strategically from SDS, it maintained contact and continued to support the North Vietnamese regime. The IPC represented a mix of the two perspectives—their analysis of U.S. imperialism was farther to the left than the liberals, yet the organization endorsed working within established political institutions.

The emergence of the New Left, especially the Students for a Democratic Society, shaped the antiwar movement during the 1960s. SDS emerged as one of the leading organizations within the movement by the end of 1965. The group, which grew out of the student branch of the League for Industrial Democracy was founded by student activists Alan Haber, Tom Hayden and others was founded in 1960. Many of the activists within the IPC's leadership began their activism as members of SDS.

President Lyndon Johnson's decision to escalate the war in February 1965, and to rely on the draft to provide the soldiers for that escalation, led to the growth of the antiwar movement and the SDS. Dissenters protested at universities across the nation. They took to the streets, auditoriums, and the classrooms. In March 1965, professors at the University of Michigan organized the nation's first "teach-in" during which professors and students gathered to protest

¹⁵ DeBenedetti, 25-26; Milton S. Katz, *Ban the Bomb: A History of SANE, The Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy, 1957-1985* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1986), xii-xiii.

and learn about the U.S.'s military role in the Vietnam conflict in seminars and lectures.¹⁶ Then in April, SDS sponsored one of the largest peace rallies in the United States. Up to 25,000 protestors attended.¹⁷ At the march, SDS President Paul Potter delivered his famous “We Must Name the System” speech. The speech articulated SDS’s analysis of U.S. involvement in Vietnam. “What kind of system is it that justifies the United States... We must name that system, we must name it, describe it, analyze it, and change it. For it is only when that system is changed and brought under control that there can be any hope for stopping the forces that create a war in Vietnam today or a murder in the South tomorrow or all the incalculable, immeasurable more subtle atrocities that are worked on people all over.” The “system” that Potter referred to comprised a constellation of institutions and customs that Hayden and the SDS had described as too bureaucratic, authoritarian, and stultifying—universities, the executive and legislative branches of federal government, racism, and poverty. Potter advanced an analysis of U.S. foreign policy that anticipated Oglesby’s critique of liberalism in 1967 and Hayden’s and IPC’s analysis of Watergate during the early 1970s. Potter argued that U.S. foreign policy driven by President Johnson and the Pentagon was contradictory—it promised economic aid to a nation it was destroying. Finally, he maintained that U.S. military violence abroad and domestic political repression were two sides of the same coin.¹⁸

SDS’s growing prominence within the antiwar movement coincided with the entrance of a new cohort of activists into SDS.¹⁹ Featuring leaders such as Carl Davidson and Carl Oglesby, many hailed from working class roots. This cohort distanced itself from the earlier ideals of participatory democracy in favor of more radical forms of protest. They drew upon Marxist

¹⁶ DeBenedetti, 106; Lewis, 61; Hall, 12-13.

¹⁷ Hall, 14.

¹⁸ Paul Potter, “Antiwar Speech,” April 17, 1965, *Rebels With A Cause*, <http://www.sdsrebels.com/potter.htm>.

¹⁹ Kirkpatrick Sale, *SDS* (New York: Random House, 1973).

thought for their analyses of American domestic and foreign policy. Members of SDS during the mid-to-late-1960s advanced critiques of “corporate liberalism”—the braiding of liberal corporate and government interests powered by anti-communism and military force.²⁰

SDS’s antiwar leadership focused on liberals as the driving force behind “the system,” or what they increasingly called U.S imperialism, that was behind U.S. military intervention in Vietnam. Carl Oglesby elaborated on this analysis of U.S. imperialism in his 1967 book, *Containment and Change*. Oglesby’s analysis anticipated the IPC’s understanding of the war. He referred to Vietnam as the “nexus” where “west meets east,” similarly to how Hayden and IPC saw Indochina as the focal point of U.S. imperialism. He also called Vietnam “a paradigmatic example of U.S. imperialism,” locating the war in the history of U.S. expansion. Oglesby focused on the roles that multinational corporations played in U.S. imperialism. He drew from Leninist understandings of global capitalism—stressing the union between finance and industrial capital and its desire to coordinate capital accumulation on a global scale. Corporations could not invest its surplus everywhere, however, unless the U.S. military could clear paths for the establishment of “free” markets abroad. Oglesby’s discussions of foreign direct investment by U.S.-based corporations also anticipated conversations about MNCs among liberals and progressives during the mid-1970s.²¹

This shift within SDS reflected the growing prominence of Marxist-Leninist analysis and politics among New Left and black power activists and intellectuals. For example, Paul M. Baran and Paul Sweezy published *Monopoly Capital: an Essay on the American Economic and Social Order* in 1966. In the book, they asserted that the world economy had reached the

²⁰ Carl Oglesby, “Let Us Shape the Future” November 1965, Links to Resources from Students for a Democratic Society, http://www.sds-1960s.org/sds_wuo/sds_documents/oglesby_future.html; Rossinow, *Visions of Progress: The Left-Liberal Tradition in America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 246.

²¹ Carl Oglesby, *Containment and Change* (New York: Macmillan, 1967), 3; 57-58; 79.

monopolistic stage where large transnational corporations dominated particular industries. They identified the U.S. as the locus of monopoly capital. According to their theory, U.S.-based corporations largely dominated the world economy. Most importantly, the influence of U.S.-based transnational monopolies extended into every sphere of American life, from race relations to the military. Baran and Sweezy were not the only ones to build upon Vladimir Lenin's insights about the emergence of monopoly capitalism. Ghanaian President Kwame Nkrumah declared neo-colonialism the "last stage of imperialism" a year before *Monopoly Capital* appeared on bookshelves.²² Henry Magdoff published several articles outlining the process of U.S. imperialism. Marxist-Leninist analyses of imperialism and the world economy informed conversations about U.S. imperialism and MNCs within and outside of the IPC during the 1970s.

The war in Vietnam reached a boiling point in 1968. Viet Cong troops surprised Americans when they momentarily knocked the U.S. military and its South Vietnamese allies on their heels during the Tet Offensive that began on January 30. The offensive revealed to Americans at home Viet Cong's strength and signaled that U.S. forces were not nearly as close to victory as the Johnson administration had led on. The antiwar movement took advantage of the crisis. As criticism of Johnson's handling of Vietnam reached a fever pitch, peace activists and organizations such as SANE helped organize the "Dump Johnson" movement. Critics and activists convinced Senator Eugene McCarthy to challenge the President in the February New Hampshire primary. A month later, Lyndon Johnson shocked the nation when he announced that he would not seek the Democratic Party's nomination for President.²³

²² Kwame Nkrumah, *Neocolonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism* (New York: International Publishers, 1966).

²³ DeBenedetti, 213-214; Small, 108.

The nation's economy also suffered because of the war.²⁴ After escalating the war, President Johnson relied upon deficit spending to maintain military actions. Johnson sought to avoid tax hikes and cutting his domestic programs in order to offset defense costs. Instead, in his 1966-1967 budget, he asked Congress for \$10 billion, more than 55% of the real cost of the war.²⁵ Eventually, the President agreed to cut \$6 billion in Great Society spending in exchange for a tax surcharge to help subsidize the war. The deficit spending combined with the U.S.'s balance of payments deficit put inflationary pressures on the U.S. economy. Inflation rose from 4.4 percent in early 1968 to 6.1 percent in 1969. Great Society cuts hurt the urban poor and working class. Inflation damaged their purchasing power while the cost of living rose. The declining value of the dollar also fed into the decreased confidence in the currency on the international market, sparking gold runs in U.S. and European central banks. They also contributed to the development of monetary crises that President Nixon would have to confront during the early 1970s.²⁶

Turmoil in the Democratic Party intersected with the further radicalization of the antiwar movement. The pressures of Democrats to find a Johnson successor and SDS's revolutionary turn intersected at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago in August 1968. Hayden was among the key organizers of the planned protests at the convention. However, upon his arrival, he expressed dismay about the direction of SDS. "On the Chicago activist front, nothing was going very well either," Hayden recounts in his memoir. SDS had moved unrecognizably to the

²⁴ This economic context allowed members in IPC to advance modest economic arguments. They mostly deployed a tax politics that appealed to the morality of the American taxpayer. In flyers, the IPC often remarked about how their tax dollars were going towards paying for torture and Theiu's police state. IPC activists did not seek to theorize the economic transformation occurring in the midst of Vietnam until they were ready to look for new 'focal points.' However, there is evidence they were well aware of these arguments. They often assumed that what they believed to be as the war-generated economic crisis would support their arguments for cutting military aid.

²⁵ Small, 97.

²⁶ Joshua Freeman, *American Empire: The Rise of a Global Power, the Democratic Revolution at Home, 1945-2000* (New York: Viking, 2012), 243-244; Small, 97.

left: Bernardine Dohrn was elected to the national leadership at SDS's June 1968 convention declaring, 'I consider myself a revolutionary communist.'"²⁷ Thousands of activists traveled to participate in the action. Always determined to neutralized political opposition, Chicago Mayor Richard J. Daley dispatched 12,000 police to secure the site. The large police presence did not prevent what amounted to a "police riot" against the demonstrators.²⁸ Vice President-turned-nominee Hubert Humphrey left Chicago as he came—a damaged candidate tainted by Johnson's war in Vietnam.

The "Siege of Chicago" signaled a turning point for the 1960s social movements for Hayden. He viewed the revolutionary politics of the Panthers, SDS, and the Yippies with dismay.²⁹ However, Hayden thought the action still sent a message to the Democratic Party. He reflected, "I lay on the grass, pondering the alternatives. Reform seemed bankrupt, revolution far away. We had taught the pro-war Democrats the lesson that business as usual was a formula of political defeat and moral self-destruction. But was anybody listening? I felt drawn into a tunnel of our own, with no light at its end."³⁰ A proper political vehicle to end the war, and presumably influence the Democratic Party from the left, did not exist.

The SDS fractured in 1969. During SDS's national meeting in June 1969, the organization split into three factions: Progressive Labor, a Maoist sectarian organization that already tried to takeover SDS, the Weather Underground (or Weathermen), and the Revolutionary Youth Movement. The Weather Underground, led by Dohrn, Bill Ayers, and Mark Rudd, became the most infamous of the three as it sought to wage its "days of rage" by pursuing particular targets with explosives. While Progressive Labor and the Revolutionary

²⁷ Hayden, *Reunion*, 293.

²⁸ Hayden, *Reunion*, 321.

²⁹ Gilmore and Sugrue, 459.

³⁰ Hayden, *Reunion*, 321.

Youth Movement II faded into the sectarian left, the Weathermen suffered a self-inflicted wound in 1970 when a few activists accidentally detonated explosives at an apartment in Greenwich Village, leaving three Weather Underground members dead. The organization spent its remaining years underground.³¹

In November 1968, Nixon defeated Hubert Humphrey to win the presidency. Nixon signaled his intentions to continue U.S. military involvement in Indochina. On March 18, 1969, Nixon initiated a secret bombing campaign in neutral Cambodia in hopes of disrupting North Vietnamese supply lines. A year later, the U.S. invaded Cambodia, provoking significant protests throughout the U.S. Thousands of college students protested at Princeton, Rutgers, and the University of Cincinnati. In early May, hundreds of Kent State students joined in the nationwide student strike in protest of the war. The events on May 4, 1970 stoked antiwar sentiment and generated widespread condemnation. In the late morning of May 4, a confrontation between the National Guard and protesters of the right to freely assemble escalated to the Guard's call to disperse. The guardsmen fired 61 shots in 13 seconds, killing four—20-year-old Sandra Lee Scheuer, 19-year-old Allison Krause, 20-year-old Jeffrey Glenn Miller, and 19-year-old William Knox Schroeder.³² For the antiwar movement, Krause, Miller, Scheuer, and Schroeder became martyrs. The killings highlighted the intensity of state repression of radical movements.

Forming the Indochina Peace Campaign

³¹ Elbaum, 71-72

³² Hall, 44-45; Small, 133; 149-151

Tom Hayden, Jane Fonda, and the founders of the Indochina Peace Campaign envisioned the group as an effort to establish a progressive anti-imperialist voice in U.S. politics. Hayden explained the rationale for organizing the IPC in a December 1972 pamphlet, *The Indochina Peace Campaign*. According to Hayden, the IPC emerged in response to what he and other activists saw as a void in mass antiwar protest. The war in Indochina also represented a crucial flashpoint in the struggle between national liberation and U.S. military, economic, and political power. Indochina was the “focal point” of that particular global struggle. Hayden’s and Jane Fonda’s first educational tour in Ohio encouraged them and others to establish the IPC as an organization devoted to ending the war in Indochina. Yet, unlike the antiwar activists who pursued revolutionary politics outside of established institutions, Hayden and the IPC aspired to pursue their goal by combining political education and protests with more mainstream tactics and strategies such as lobbying.

During the early 1970s, Hayden settled in Southern California where he taught a class on the Vietnam War at Claremont College. While he was teaching, he, Jane Fonda, and others decided to establish the Indochina Information Project. Motivated by the belief that the war had fallen off the radar of most Americans as well as by Fonda’s infamous trip to Hanoi in July 1972, Hayden, Fonda, and others assembled Hayden’s teaching materials, films, and pamphlets to create an educational program aimed at raising awareness about continued U.S. involvement in the war in Indochina.³³

By the time they established IPC, Fonda achieved a level of respect from other activists as well as derision from the antiwar movement’s opponents. By her own account, Fonda entered into activism late. “I’m a latecomer to the peace movement,” she declared in an October 1, 1972

³³ DeBenedetti, 337. Tom Hayden, *The Indochina Peace Campaign*, i.

edition of the *Philadelphia Bulletin*.³⁴ Yet, Fonda started her activist work in March 1970.³⁵ Fonda participated in a 1,000 person march with Indians and allies at Fort Lawton near Seattle, Washington. Military police arrested Fonda and many of the marchers. Fonda involved herself in the movement to end the Vietnam War after the Fort Lawton action. Eventually, Fonda emerged as an important spokesperson and organizer in the movement. She frequently visited GIs, delivered speeches, published editorials, raised money, and connected activists.³⁶ Fonda eventually became a crucial figure in the IPC and Hayden's future political pursuits. She often donated her wealth to organization building for the IPC and Tom Hayden's California-based political organization, the Center for Economic Democracy.

Daniel Ellsberg's *The Pentagon Papers* served as a crucial resource for both Hayden's class and the educational project. Ellsberg had worked as a defense analyst for the RAND Corporation and for the Pentagon. In 1968, National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger asked Ellsberg to compose a paper for the Nixon administration on various strategies for prosecuting the Vietnam War. Ellsberg underwent a political conversion between when he encountered the classified 7,000 page study, *U.S. Decision-making in Vietnam, 1945-1968*, otherwise known as the *Pentagon Papers*. Ellsberg had expressed sympathies with antiwar protesters in 1967. Nixon's decision to continue U.S.'s involvement in Vietnam pushed him to leak the Pentagon Papers to the *New York Times* in 1971.³⁷ Ellsberg's leaks bolstered the antiwar movement's claim that the U.S. had involved itself in a corrupt war. Ellsberg also became a target of Nixon's "dirty tricks," as the President's Committee to Reelect the President (CREEP) broke into Ellsberg's psychiatrist's office, hoping to find information that would discredit the activist.

³⁴ Mary Hershberger, *Jane Fonda's Words of Politics and Passion* (New York: The New Press, 2006), 3.

³⁵ "Indians Seized in Attempt to take Coast Fort," *New York Times*, March 9, 1970.

³⁶ Mary Hershberger, "Peace Work, War Myths: Jane Fonda and the Antiwar Movement," *Peace and Change*, Vol. 29, No. 3 & 4 (July 2004), 551-552.

³⁷ Hall, 89-91; Patterson, 756-757.

Ellsberg and RAND Corporation employee and co-conspirator Anthony Russo were indicted in June 1971.³⁸ Members of Ellsberg legal team embedded itself within the network of antiwar activists. Future IPC and Ohio Public Interest Campaign activist, Paul Ryder, befriended Hayden while working as a researcher for Ellsberg's defense team.³⁹

Jane Fonda's, Tom Hayden's, Holly Near's, and George Smith's tour debut in Fall 1972 exceeded their expectations. Hayden expressed apprehension about launching an antiwar campaign aimed at "mainstream" Americans. However, founding members of IPC believed that organizing Americans in states on the east and west coast would not be enough to stymie President Nixon and end the war. Hayden's associates agreed that they could not end the war without garnering support from Midwesterners.⁴⁰ Yet, the positive response among Ohioans instilled confidence in Hayden and the rest of the group. From then on, they referred to the tour's launch as "the miracle."⁴¹ Encouraged by the positive reception, Fonda, Hayden, Near, and other activists decided to establish a national organization, the Indochina Peace Campaign, with the intent of organizing public pressure to end the war.

In January 1973, the U.S. signed a peace agreement with South and North Vietnam, agreeing to end U.S. involvement in the conflict. However, as IPC and other peace activists suspected, the Nixon administration continued U.S.'s involvement by delivering aid to the South Vietnamese regime. Following the peace agreement, the IPC focused their efforts on holding Nixon and the U.S. military to the terms of the deal.

IPC's organization reflected its electoral focus. Activists established local chapters in what Hayden called "key electoral states" in California, Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, Pennsylvania,

³⁸ Small, 176-177.

³⁹ Paul Ryder interview.

⁴⁰ Paul Ryder interview.

⁴¹ Hayden, *The Indochina Peace Campaign*.

New Jersey, and New York.⁴² The Santa Monica office served as the organization's national headquarters and "resource center." The Resource Center was responsible for organizing national conferences, conference calls, and other tours. It published the organization's national newsletter, *The Focal Point*, and distributed pamphlets, flyers, and other organizing and intellectual materials to the organization's locals as needed. Santa Monica's prominence in the national network did not signal that the IPC was a top-down cadre organization like the Black Panther Party. While local IPCs participated in the larger campaign to cut war aid by lobbying lawmakers in their cities and home states, they organized their own events.

Internally, the IPC was diverse. Each branch reflected the activists' personalities and the city's political culture. This coalitional arrangement reflected the activists' prior political experiences and growth. Ensuring each local's independence allowed for each organization to conduct their business as effectively as possible. Detroit's organization reflected the city's radical political community. Members often articulated themselves in a more Marxist-Leninist fashion compared to other branches. Cleveland's IPC branch, the Indochina Education Project, contained a mix of activists from various ideological and political backgrounds. Socialist activists like James Miller worked alongside progressives like Ira Arlook. Memories of the New Left's fracture were still fresh in the activists' minds. Thus, members of the individual locals, and each local organization, understood the importance of focusing on a single goal. This understanding, at least in Cleveland's case, mollified any potential internal schisms.

The Cleveland organization served as a Midwestern hub for the organization.⁴³ James Miller and other Cleveland activists established Cleveland's IPC branch in 1972 after Hayden's and Fonda's educational tour. Initially, Cleveland activists envisioned Cleveland's IPC as a local

⁴² Hayden, *The Indochina Peace Campaign*, i.

⁴³ I will refer to Cleveland's IEP as the Cleveland IPC to avoid confusion.

coalition comprised of anti-war activists, members of the clergy, and women's organizations. However, the Cleveland IPC emerged as a distinct organization. Miller [and others] named themselves the Cleveland Indochina Education project to denote the organization's focus on political education. While they organized rallies, they worried less about engaging in direct action tactics and focused more on raising the awareness of the U.S.'s role in the Indochina conflict.⁴⁴

The Cleveland antiwar movement and left was relatively small in a city of more than 750,000 people.⁴⁵ SDS had organized an ERAP project in the city during the early 1960s. The city boasted a visible Black Power movement. Organizations such as the Congress of Racial Equality adopted their version of black power and involved themselves in local black politics.⁴⁶ The antiwar movement was even smaller. Unlike with the civil rights and black power movements where Cleveland emerged as a hub, the city's antiwar activists appeared rather disconnected from larger movement activities. College students at Case Western and Cleveland State established their own peace organizations like Bread, Peace, and Land.

Activist James K. Miller worked for Bread, Peace, and Land before helping establish the Cleveland Indochina Education Project. Born in Tacoma, Washington, Miller traveled to Cleveland from California in May 1970. Miller grew up as a moderate republican, but grew skeptical of U.S. military power during the mid-1960s. He cited the U.S. military's invasion of the Dominican Republic in 1965 as a formative moment in his anti-imperialist politics. Miller refused to register for the draft. Risking imprisonment, Miller was convinced by his father to

⁴⁴ Cleveland IPC, "Nov. 4 March and Rally" Flyer, James K. Miller Papers, Box 12, Folder 271, WRHS; "Steady Work Yields Visible Results for Cleveland's IPC," *Focal Point*, February 1-15, 1974.

⁴⁵ U.S. Bureau of the Census, "Population of the 100 Largest Urban Places: 1970," Census.gov., <https://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0027/tab20.txt>

⁴⁶ Nishani Frazier, *Harambee Nation: Cleveland CORE, Community Organization, and the Rise of Black Power* (PhD., Columbia University, 2008).

apply for conscientious objector status in California in 1969. After he was accepted as a conscientious objector, Miller migrated to Cleveland, Ohio where he performed his alternative service at University Hospital. At the same time, he was active in the city's small leftist community, eventually involving himself with a group of activists who would form Cleveland's branch of the IPC.⁴⁷

IPC activist Ira Arlook was also a transplant to Cleveland. He went to work for Cleveland's IPC after a short stint with the Boston chapter. Arlook cut his teeth in the antiwar movement as a graduate student at Stanford University during the 1960s. Similar to antiwar activists at the Universities of Michigan and Wisconsin, Arlook and his colleagues aspired to draw attention to Stanford's role in the U.S. military-industrial complex.⁴⁸ During the late 1960s, Arlook left graduate school to pursue activism full-time.

Arlook moved to Cleveland to work with that IPC group in 1973. The addition of Arlook, and other IPC activists from Boston and New Jersey strengthened Cleveland's organization. Arlook provided the Cleveland IPC with a wealth of organizing experience. Describing him as "driven and organized," Miller said that Arlook "was instrumental in making things go."⁴⁹ Arlook emerged as one of the leaders of the national IPC, serving on its steering committee. Most importantly, he emerged as one of IPC's, and the progressive left's, foremost intellectuals during the 1970s, offering critical analyses of U.S. empire and global capitalism.

⁴⁷ James K. Miller interview, August 31, 2013.

⁴⁸ Ira Arlook interview, May 3, 2013; Richard W. Lyman, "Stanford in Turmoil," *Sandstone & Tile*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (Winter 2011), 6.

⁴⁹ Miller interview.

Focal Point Theory: Tom Hayden and IPC's Anti-imperialism

The formation of IPC signaled new political strategies and aims for many of the former New Left activists. Instead of seeking a radical reconstructing of American society or establishing a multi-issue organization as had the radical wing of the New Left, the IPC committed itself to accomplishing a single goal—ending the war in Indochina. Ending the war required combining community organizing, coalition politics, political education, and political lobbying Congress to stop war funding. Hayden and others anticipated skepticism from leftists. “Our decision, however, seemed like a ‘step backward’ to many radicals who were accustomed to multi-issue or anti-imperialist approaches,” Hayden acknowledged.⁵⁰ However, the IPC’s strategists believed that they could stymie U.S. imperialism permanently by pressuring Congress to cut off military funding for the war. The congressional focus was a clear departure from the emphasis on direct action and demonstrations of the 1960s antiwar movement. Hayden believed that the New Left had failed to mount a focused struggle against the war. Hayden and the rest of IPC’s founders envisioned the organization as a progressive single-issue organization and one that would utilize an array of strategies to end the war once and for all. Hayden declared in the pamphlet, *The Indochina Peace Campaign*,

The Indochina Peace Campaign is a single-issue movement, a united front based on opposition to U.S. involvement in Indochina and support for self-determination in Indochina. It has been a departure from both coalitions and radical organizations with a multi-issue focus...Few groups were exclusively doing Vietnam work. Our decision, however, seemed like a ‘step backward’ to many radicals who were accustomed to multi-issue or anti-imperialist approaches...Our 1972 single-issue focus, however, was not based on seeing Vietnam as an isolated case; on the contrary, it was because we viewed Vietnam as the focal point of a worldwide struggle against American imperialism.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Hayden, *Indochina Peace Campaign*, 2.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 2.

Hayden claimed that antiwar radicals, especially those who comprised the second generation of SDS, underestimated the significance of Vietnam. “Some radicals had long held that Vietnam is not the central focus of their work or their lives. This ambivalence towards the Vietnam question led many to say the war was only a ‘symptom’ of a larger problem, making Vietnam itself only important as a ‘tool for organizing’...Other radicals were saying that Americans could not be reached on the issue of the war alone but only on more immediate and material issues like jobs, taxes, and inflation.”⁵²

Hayden, however, overstated the point that the antiwar radicals did not attribute great significance to Vietnam. In fact, Hayden’s discussion of Indochina representing the focal point of the struggle against US imperialism was not too different from SDS’s Carl Oglesby’s analysis of Vietnam in his 1967 book, *Containment and Change*. Oglesby referred to Vietnam as the nexus of U.S. imperialism. He declared, “Vietnam seizes us in a new hold, fingers a new nerve, persuades us that this war is a most distinguished and fateful event.” Both theorists connected the conflict in Indochina to a range of domestic problems. What distinguished the two, however, was Hayden’s desire to devote all of IPC’s resources to stopping the war first, believing that turning back the US military in Indochina would allow the movement to address other aspects of the American system. Oglesby and the post-1965 SDS also grounded their anti-imperialism in a more explicit Marxist critique of monopoly capitalism.⁵³

The IPC reflected a new rhetorical tone for the activists. According to Hayden, the IPC represented “an effort to repair the painful gap between generations, between radicals and Middle Americans.”⁵⁴ While the IPC contained socialists, Marxist-Leninists, progressives and

⁵² Tom Hayden, *The Indochina Peace Campaign*, 1.

⁵³ Carl Oglesby, *Containment and Change*, 3; Hayden, *The Indochina Peace Campaign*.

Oglesby also calls Vietnam the ‘paradigmatic example of US imperialism.’ See *Containment and Change*, 112-13.

⁵⁴ Hayden, *Reunion*, 448.

other radicals, the organization sought to popularize its anti-imperial stance by eschewing Marxist-Leninist jargon. Fonda and other IPC members appropriated national symbols, such as the American flag, and often used less bellicose language to convey their discontent with American military power. While it appeared that the IPC decided to buck the rhetorical trend among radical circles, Hayden envisioned IPC's rhetorical move toward the middle as a continuation of the early New Left tradition. "The New Left originally was very American," Hayden admitted. Hayden's moderate public rhetoric contained in *The Indochina Peace Campaign* pamphlet recalled the early SDS's sentimentality embedded in the *Port Huron Statement*. The IPC's moderated voice reflected a strategic decision to try to establish the IPC as a legitimate political organization. To build a mass base, the IPC leadership thought, the organization had to speak in tones and language familiar to midwesterners. Losing the support of left radicals represented a worthwhile cost if they could stop U.S. imperialism in its tracks.

Rhetorical moderation did not reflect all of the local IPC groups' stances. When chapters discussed the future of progressive politics as the U.S. and South Vietnam President Nguyễn Văn Thiệu's regime lost momentum in Vietnam in 1974 and 1975, Hayden and other IPC activists often expressed more radical analyses of foreign policy and domestic politics. Particular chapters also took on a radical tone locally while allowing the national organizations to really speak for them on Capitol Hill.

Hayden elaborated on his views on empire in the spring in a 134-page book, *Love of Possession is a Disease With Them*. In the text, Hayden contextualized the Indochina War within the history of U.S. conquest, extending back to the colonization of the Americas. Hayden acknowledged that the ultimate goal of the Indochina war was the "Americanization of

Vietnamese economics, politics, and culture.”⁵⁵ This process came in the form of “a new system of domination”—“a growing Western-oriented consumer market economy.”⁵⁶ Hayden substantiated his claims with evidence drawn from blueprints for Vietnamese reconstruction by public and private sector organizations such as the RAND Corporation, the Johnson Administration, and statements by business leaders such as the Bank of America’s Rudolph Peterson. U.S.- and Japanese-based corporations sought to oversee the establishment of capitalism in Indochina. “The South Vietnamese economy,” Hayden wrote, “on which the US hopes to build is now a catastrophe. The roots of catastrophe lie in the fact that the economy is entirely artificial, a creation of American military, economic, and political institutions.” As evidence, Hayden pointed to the fact that:

American corporations like Standard Oil, Shell, and Ford have moved into South Vietnam, and dozens other contractors, builders, machine tool companies, and producers of agricultural equipment are involved. Alongside them are the expanding Japanese business interests; farm machinery factories, telephone and water works systems, a Sony assembly plant; and Toyota is rumored to be coming.⁵⁷

Hayden thought corporate planners were intrigued by the potential source of cheap labor and oil. Business leaders such as Rudolph Peterson hoped that securing South Vietnam, at the very least, would ensure the U.S. private sector’s role in developing parts of the Pacific Rim--“the western coasts of South America, Central America,” and nations in the Far East, as Peterson defined in 1968.⁵⁸

Hayden’s anti-imperialism stemmed from early-SDS radicalism was distinct from Marxist-Leninist-inspired interpretations. Marxist economists like Baran and Sweezy stressed the role that monopoly capital played in the creation of U.S Empire. Marxist theorist Harry Magdoff

⁵⁵ Hayden, *Love of Possession is a Disease with Them* (Chicago: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1972), 55.

⁵⁶ Hayden, *The Love of Possession*, 55.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 64.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 60.

elaborated on this analysis of U.S. foreign policy in his 1969 work, *The Age of Imperialism: The Economics of U.S. Foreign Policy*. He demonstrated how the U.S. had emerged as the “organizer and leader of the world imperialist system.” The U.S. military’s ability to open and secure allowed for multinational corporations to invest and circulate capital and resources abroad. The U.S. military, not to mention the Federal Reserve and other central banks, was an essential player in establishing the conditions for global economic restructuring during the 1970s.⁵⁹

These influential texts provided radicals with an updated analysis of the global economy and a language to describe corporate restructuring. Black Communist, Henry Winston stated that U.S. imperialism—powered by monopoly capitalism—threatened the worldwide black movement. “Monopoly aims to stop the advance of the Black liberation movement, to destroy organized labor and suppress every struggle of the oppressed and exploited,” Winston declared.⁶⁰ Black Panther Huey P. Newton also drew from these insights in his analyses of U.S. Empire during the early-to-mid-1970s.⁶¹ Despite IPC founders’ abandonment of Marxist-Leninism, radical analyses of imperialism provided an intellectual and rhetorical foundation for IPC progressives’ analyses of multinational corporations during the mid-1970s.⁶²

While Hayden and the Resource Center expressed a popular vision of anti-imperialism, individual activists and chapters continued to rely upon Marxist-Leninist rhetoric. Unlike Hayden, members of the Detroit chapter quoted Lenin at length in their analyses and articulated

⁵⁹ See Sam Gindin and Leo Panitch’s *The Making of Global Capitalism* for a discussion of the FED’s role in maintaining U.S. empire and facilitating the reconstruction of the global economy after World War II.

⁶⁰ Henry Winston, “From Anti-Slavery to the Anti-Monopoly Strategy,” 267.

⁶¹ Huey P. Newton, “Intercommunalism,” in *The Huey P. Newton Reader*, ed. David Hilliard and Donald Weise (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2002).

⁶² The organization also espoused the type of third worldist interpretation of Vietnam that its more radical predecessors/contemporaries like the Black Panthers did during this moment. They connect Vietnam’s fight against what IPC called “neocolonialism” with the struggles of black Americans, Chicanos and Latinos, and Native Americans. “A Strategy to End the War,” *Focal Point*, October 1-15, 1973.

their views of imperialism through a Marxist-Leninist lens.⁶³ The Detroit IPC's analysis of imperialism was prevalent among the Detroit white left. Members of the anti-STRESS coalition's leftwing, especially those from the organization, From the Ground Up, also subscribed to such interpretation of American power. The presence of Marxist-Leninism within IPC demonstrates the organization's capacity to incorporate radical elements into the network.

“The Watergate Opportunity”: IPC's Congressional Strategy and the Campaign to End the War

IPC's focal point theory also explained the organization's decision to pursue congressional lobbying as the primary strategy to end the war in Indochina. IPC's strategy entailed locating particular levers in local and federal government. For the organization, the focal point at the federal level was Congress whereas the local chapters sought to lobby city governments and congressional representatives in their home offices. IPC activists thought the antiwar movement could stop the war in Indochina by pressuring Congress to cut off the war's funding.

On June 17, 1972, five men from President Nixon's Committee to Re-elect the President broke into the Democratic National Headquarters at the Watergate Hotel. When they were caught, two of the men possessed address books that linked them with E. Howard Hunt, a former member of CREEP. While Nixon denied any foreknowledge of the break-in, he participated in the cover up. Nixon's cover up backfired as revelations about the depths of his administration's willingness to spy and intimidate the President's opponents became public. Washington Post reporters Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward published many of the developments concerning

⁶³ Motor City Labor League, *The Political Line of the Motor City Labor League* (Detroit: Motor City Labor League, 1974), 3, Detroit Revolutionary Movement Records, Box 8, Folder 1. Walter P. Reuther Library (WPRL), Wayne State University, Detroit, MI.

the scandal with information provided by a shadowy informant, “Deep Throat,” later revealed as Mark Felt, associate director of the FBI.⁶⁴ IPC, like many anti-war activists, observed the scandal intently as it learned how the Nixon administration also targeted the movement.

In the fall of 1973, the IPC launched its campaign to end the war. Its goal, according to the organization, was to “force a constitutional crisis” by exploiting the Watergate scandal and pushing Congress to stop a war that President Nixon wished to continue.⁶⁵ They often referred to this moment as “the Watergate Opportunity.” They utilized the method of campaigning, or organizing and mobilizing people and institutions around a single issue to achieve a specific goal. The IPC relied upon an anti-Indochina War pledge as its main lobbying and organizing instrument. The purpose of the pledge was to secure support for cutting military aid. It also functioned as a means to hold signers accountable. “The pledge and resolution are identically worded statements which commit the signer to support the spirit and letter of the key provisions of the 1973 peace agreement—provisions whose implementation would result in the end of U.S. intervention. The pledge is to be signed by members of Congress since they have a direct role in insuring implementation of the Agreements,” Cleveland IPC activist James Miller stated in an article for the socialist New American Movement.⁶⁶ Activists also used it to garner support from local elected officials, activists, and potential voters. This congressional strategy also distinguished the IPC from its radical predecessors. While antiwar radicals relied upon a plethora of disruptive tactics and strategies, the IPC combined their congressional effort with grassroots organizing. IPC activists also viewed liberal Democrats and skeptical Republicans as logical allies whereas the antiwar radicals of the 1960s criticized the Democratic Party. The most

⁶⁴ Gilmore and Sugrue, 491-492; Patterson, 772-774.

⁶⁵ Miller, “United Campaign: Cutting U.S. Aid to Thiệu & Lol Nol,” Miller Papers, Box 12, Folder 271, WRHS.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

disruptive of their actions were usually rallies. IPC activists thought this strategy was successful as they were able to garner the support from several members of Congress.

During a national IPC meeting in Cleveland in June 1973, the IPC decided that they could use the Watergate crisis to substantiate their argument that the war flowed from the corruption of the executive branch and that “the establishment” could not be trusted. IPC activists believed that the Watergate crisis and the war were inherently linked. IPC identified secrecy and dishonest political and military leadership as vital components of U.S. foreign policy during the mid-to-late 1960s and early 1970s. The IPC state in their report on the national meeting, “Though other factors were involved, the war, and the Nixon administration’s fears about the spread of anti-war sentiment to a majority of the population including GI’s and to the leaders of the Democratic Party led to the creation of a vast domestic espionage and sabotage apparatus and finally to Watergate.”⁶⁷ They contended that the Indochina wars reflected the undemocratic nature of U.S. foreign policy and the corruption of the executive branch. “To stave off defeat in Indochina, the Administration was willing to abandon traditional forms of democracy,” the editors of IPC’s *Focal Point* wrote.⁶⁸ President Nixon’s desire to discredit the antiwar movement, especially Daniel Ellsberg, and his Democratic opponents represented the sort of criminality that IPC thought characterized the war. IPC maintained that Watergate made it more difficult for the President to execute his strategy in Indochina.

The IPC officially adopted the congressional strategy at an antiwar unity conference in a city in Southwest Ohio, Germantown, in October 1973. There, the IPC organized a meeting of numerous antiwar organizations with the intent to create a broad-based alliance. The IPC’s willingness to work with liberal internationalist organizations underscored its willingness and

⁶⁷ IPC, “Report on Indochina Peace Campaign National Meeting,” June 20, 1973. Miller Papers, Box 12, Folder 264. WRHS.

⁶⁸ “Watergate: The Cause is War,” *Focal Point*, Sept./Oct. 1973.

desire to position itself closer to the mainstream of the movement and the nation's larger political culture. The goal of the conference, the IPC stated in their conference announcement was "to bring clarity and develop a coordinated strategy" to guide all of the participating organizations.⁶⁹ According to internal documents, representatives from fifteen groups attended including SANE, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Episcopal Peace Fellowship the Coalition to Stop Funding the War, American Friends Service Committee, and the Vietnam Veterans against the War.⁷⁰

Before the Germantown conference, the IPC Resource Center published and distributed the document, "A Strategy to End the War." As an introduction of the IPC and an outline of the next phase of the 1970s U.S. antiwar movement, the IPC elaborated on their philosophy—the Indochina as focal point, their congressional strategy, and the "Watergate opportunity." In the document, they identified three goals for the campaign: to raise Americans' consciousness about what they considered as the Thieu's brutal regime, "to organize a base of political power against further aid to Thieu and Lon Nol," and to work to cut off U.S. military and economic aid from Congress.⁷¹

"A Strategy to End the War" also featured a brief economic critique of the war. The organization reiterated how President Johnson's deficit spending affected the national and global economy. "The economic burden of the war has led to the erosion of the dollar on the international markets and inflation at home. The decline of the U.S. economy from world supremacy has begun," the paper declared.⁷² The document did not elaborate upon this point.

Although the IPC's references to Western neocolonialism does carry Africanist Marxist-Leninist

⁶⁹ "Indochina: A National Planning Conference," James K. Miller Papers, WRHS.

⁷⁰ Indochina Peace Campaign, "Indochina Conference Report, October 26-28, 1973," Box 12, Folder 263. Miller Papers, WRHS.

⁷¹ "A Strategy to End the War," *Focal Point*, October 1-15, 1973.

⁷² *Ibid.*

connotations, the organization did not detail any other connections between the war and the economy. In fact, the above quote was the only reference to the economy in the document. The omission of an extended economic critique reflected the organization's focus on highlighting the connections between Watergate and the war rather than concentrate on the economic aspect of what they considered an imperialist project.⁷³

The organizations agreed to work under the name, the United Campaign and they committed to using the pledge and the congressional strategy. The IPC agreed to produce campaign materials. The IPC also agreed to join the impeach Nixon drive. "IPC will use the analysis of the origins of Watergate in the Indochina War to prepare educational resources for both the public and participants in the impeachment drive," the organization declared in its November 16 edition of the *Focal Point*.⁷⁴ The name of the larger antiwar effort—the United Campaign—was conscious in that it reflected the movement's campaign strategy and their desires to organize around a single issue. Architects of the UC viewed their efforts grounded in sustained organizing and lobbying rather than large-scale mobilizations. The IPC Resource Center made this distinction in their conference report. The campaign strategy reflected Hayden's critique of the post-1964 New Left antiwar radicalism that he claimed relied exclusively on organizing large-scale mobilizations.⁷⁵

Over the next year, the IPC successfully gathered support for the peace pledge from elected officials in local, state, and the federal government. Several California political leaders signed the pledge. Although the organization did not comment on interracial organizing, the fact

⁷³ I asked Paul Ryder about deciding to focus on Watergate instead of economics. It appeared that the two were a false choice. The founders of IPC saw the 1972 election and then the 1973 peace agreement as initial foci for the organization. While Hayden and others expressed an economic critique, it was incidental to the '72 election, the peace agreement, and Watergate. Economic connections did not arise in the organization's report on the June 8-10 national meeting. Ryder maintained that focusing on Watergate was "the most logical way to address the war." Paul Ryder interview, 8-30-2013.

⁷⁴ "United Campaign to Pressure Congress," *Indochina Focal Point*, November 16-30.

⁷⁵ IPC Resource Center, "Indochina Conference Report," Miller Papers, Box 12, Folder 263, WRHS.

that a few prominent black elected officials signed or supported the pledge illustrated an element of interracial solidarity in IPC's antiwar effort. This list of signees included Los Angeles's first black mayor, Thomas Bradley.⁷⁶ Congressman Andrew Young of Georgia also signed the pledge.⁷⁷

IPC Cleveland and the rest of the Ohio branches also contributed to the congressional campaign. The organization urged activists to write letters to Congress. They also visited members in their home districts. In October 1974, members of Cleveland IPC met with Republican Senator William Saxbe about the war. During the meeting, the IPC activists explained how U.S. funding for South Vietnam's police and prison systems violated the 1973 peace treaty and urged the Senator to vote against all funding bills for South Vietnam. They also expressed concern for "the deplorable and subhuman conditions in which" political prisoners had to endure. While Saxbe, according to the activists, "shared our concern," he remained "noncommittal." Still, the senator was "generally cordial, desirous of hearing our position."⁷⁸ IPC's congressional lobbying strategy illustrated how the organization were moving from the liminality of New Left radicalism to more conventional political advocacy.

The Cleveland IPC successfully persuaded four members of Congress to sign the pledge—James Stanton, Charles Carney, Louis Stokes and Charles Vanik. On September 23, 1973, Vanik and Stokes appeared at a press conference at Trinity Cathedral in Cleveland with Bishop John H. Burt and Reverend Donald Jacobs to issue a statement condemning the US's continued support of the Thiệu regime.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ IPC, Focal Point, February 1-15, 1974.

⁷⁷ IPC, Focal Point, February 16-28, 1974.

⁷⁸ "Report on the IEP Visit with Senator William Saxbe," Miller Papers, Box 12, Folder 269, WRHS.

⁷⁹ IPC, Letter to Cleveland City Council, Miller Papers, Box 12, Folder 269, WRHS.

The IPC campaign received a boost when House Representative Ronald Dellums (CA-D) introduced the Indochina Peace Pledge to the Committee on Foreign Affairs. Ronald Dellums was the only prominent black radical—he identified as a socialist—to work on behalf of the IPC. On January 23, 1974, Dellums introduced H.R. 12156, which would end war funding and halt “the renewal of U.S. military involvement in Indochina... [and] prohibit the U.S. funding of police or prison systems in certain foreign countries.”⁸⁰

Tom Hayden and Jane Fonda embarked on a Washington, D.C. lobbying campaign four days later. They met with over forty Representatives and eight Senators. Hayden’s and Fonda’s trip demonstrated IPC’s ability to garner support from Congress. They secured promises to introduce legislation from Senators Cranston, Kennedy, McGovern and Abourezk and House Representatives Dellums, Abzug, Conte, Moorhead, and Rosenthal. Hayden and Fonda encouraged the United Coalition to take leadership in organizing the left wing of Congress. They concluded that the Democrats’ left wing “need direction” and “if Congress does not cut aid it will be our fault at least to a degree.”⁸¹

Disagreements over the congressional campaign and the Watergate focus emerged within the IPC. Some IPC activists were dissatisfied with the organization’s work and wanted to expand IPC’s focus beyond Indochina. During the IPC National Interim Committee Meeting in Cleveland in March 1974, Frank Joyce, representing Detroit’s IPC, reiterated his group’s concerns about the lack of clarity around the organization’s ideology. Apparently, he also had questions about the congressional strategy, although the report’s author failed to detail them. Regarding the Impeach Nixon drive, the Detroit group thought that struggling for impeachment

⁸⁰ *Congressional Record*, January 24, 1974; H.R. 12156 citation

⁸¹ Tom Hayden and Jane Fonda, “Report on One Month in Washington, Jan. 27-Mar. 1, 1974,” Miller Papers. WRHS.

was not enough. The report stated that Detroit activists saw impeachment as “the business of the ruling class,” and that IPC should demand Nixon’s resignation.⁸²

The IPC began seeing some results of their organizing that spring. Seventy-five congressional aides established a committee to continue Indochina lobbying work after attending a meeting on the subject organized by Hayden, Fonda, and Dellums.⁸³ By March 1973, eighteen members of Congress had signed the pledge, including Michigan’s John Conyers, New York’s Bella Abzug, and several members of California’s democratic delegation. Organizations such as the National Council of Churches, Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, Women Strike for Peace, and the United Methodist Church all pledged support for the campaign.

Cleveland IPC’s lobbying strategy also paid off locally. The local chapter petitioned Cleveland’s City Council to pass the IPC’s pledge as a resolution. Besides reiterating the organization’s argument that continued U.S. involvement in Indochina violated the 1973 peace agreement, the IPC argued that the war was depriving struggling cities of badly needed financial resource. “If the January Peace Agreement were truly being followed by the present Administration... \$1.7 billion could be diverted to our cities, including Cleveland, which so desperately need major expenditures...instead of being wasted in a bloody yet futile effort which jeopardizes the Peace Agreement and the peace.”⁸⁴

The Cleveland City Council passed the 1974 Indochina Peace Pledge in an emergency resolution on April 1, 1974.⁸⁵ Thirteen city councilmembers, including Dennis Kucinich, voted for the resolution which echoed IPC’s call for the U.S. to respect the terms of the 1973 peace agreement. The resolution also strongly condemned the federal government for financing Thiệu’s

⁸² “Indochina Peace Campaign National Interim Committee Meeting,” Miller Papers, Box 12, Folder 263. WRHS.

⁸³ “Capitol Hill Committee,” *Focal Point*, March 1-15, 1974.

⁸⁴ IPC, Letter to Councilmember (No date). Miller Papers, Box 12, Folder 269. WRHS.

⁸⁵ *Focal Point*, April 1-15; *IPC Ohio Newsletter*, date; IPC, “Indochina Peace Resolution,” Miller Papers. WRHS.

police and prison systems as well as for repressing antiwar activism. The city council also expressed its “strong objection to the continuing repressive policies and practices of the Theiu government” and echoed the IPC’s argument that the the military aid should be diverted to U.S. cities. “These tax dollars could be better spent on the cities of this country, including the City of Cleveland, which desperately needs additional funds to provide social services for its citizens.”⁸⁶ Other cities, including San Diego and Minneapolis, passed similar resolutions that year.⁸⁷

In January 1974, the *New York Times* reported that Nixon sought to approach Congress for more military aid for Thiệu.⁸⁸ Then, in March, the Pentagon asked Congress to approve a \$6.2 billion increase in aid for South Vietnam, to improve U.S. defenses in the Middle East, and to expand the nation’s presence in the Indian Ocean. House Armed Services Committee Chairman, Democrat F. Edward Herbert (LA), called the increase in the ceiling of South Vietnam aid from \$1.25 to \$1.6 billion “the most controversial” of the three.⁸⁹

The IPC moved to increase opposition to the Pentagon’s request in March. Aiming to influence the vote in Congress, the organization identified over 100 members as potential swing voters, including Ohio Senator Robert Taft, Jr. and Kentucky Senators Republican Marlow Cook and Democrat Walter Huddleston. The IPC Resource Center and Ohio chapters urged members to contact those officials. “We play a vital role,” the Ohio call declared, “SO NOW – write, telegram, or call. Tell Senators to vote against supplemental aid to South Vietnam.”⁹⁰

Herbert’s claim about the controversial nature of the Pentagon’s request to raise the ceiling of aid was prescient. The supplemental aid package to South Vietnam stimulated bipartisan opposition. Senators Edward Kennedy and Kansas Republican James B. Pearson

⁸⁶ Cleveland City Council, “Resolution No. 655-74,” James K. Miller Papers, Box [], Folder [].

⁸⁷ *Focal Point*, March 16-31.

⁸⁸ “More Military Aid Sought for Saigon,” *New York Times*, January 6, 1974.

⁸⁹ “Pentagon wants boost in aid to South Vietnam,” *Boston Globe*, March 19, 1974.

⁹⁰ “Supplemental Aid,” *Ohio Newsletter*, Vol. II, No. 3, March 1974

introduced an amendment to block military aid to Thiệu.⁹¹ Libertarian Republican Barry Goldwater testified against the increase in the Senate Armed Service subcommittee hearing on March 19. Nine Senators also testified against the spending increase during the subcommittee hearing. New York Representative Otis G. Pike led the charge against the bill in the House.⁹² Major newspapers such as the *New York Times* and *Los Angeles Times* published anti-Vietnam editorials.⁹³ The *Boston Globe* urged “no more arms for Saigon” in their March 23 edition.⁹⁴

Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and the Pentagon mounted defenses of the bill. On March 25, Kissinger wrote a letter responding to Senator Kennedy’s request that the Secretary explain U.S.’s policy towards Vietnam. In letter, Kissinger argued that the U.S. had committed itself to assisting South Vietnam when it signed the 1973 peace agreement.⁹⁵ Just days before the vote, however, Kennedy released a cable from Ambassador to South Vietnam Graham A. Martin requesting that Kissinger withhold “an honest and detailed answer” to Kennedy’s inquiries about U.S.’s policy in Indochina.⁹⁶ This revelation stirred up more outrage among Congressional opponents of the funding for South Vietnam. IPC scored its first national victory when the U.S. House of Representatives voted 177 to 154 against providing more aid to South Vietnam in April 1974.

The Nixon Administration’s failure to secure an increase in war funding generated an array of responses. A *New York Times* journalist called the outcome “unexpected.” According to the IPC’s Larry Levin, Dellums could “not believe” what happened.⁹⁷ Syndicated columnists Rowland Evans and Robert Novak called the administration’s effort “bungled” and predicted

⁹¹ “9 Senators Oppose New Aid to Saigon,” *Washington Post*, March 20, 1974.

⁹² “House Bars Rise in Vietnam Aid,” *New York Times*, April 5, 1974.

⁹³ Larry Levin, “Aid Defeat Examined,” *Focal Point*, April 16-May 15.

⁹⁴ “No more arms for Saigon,” *Boston Globe*, March 23, 1974.

⁹⁵ “Must Back Saigon, Kissinger Declares,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 1, 1974.

⁹⁶ Quoted in “Viet Cable Stirs Controversy,” *Washington Post*, April 3, 1974.

⁹⁷ “House Bars Rise in Vietnam Aid”; Levin, “Aid Defeat Examined.”

further instability due to Congress's failure to raise military spending. However, they also took aim at the IPC and the rest of the antiwar movement. They implied that the United Campaign had conspired with insurgent forces to foment revolution. They pointed to "the propaganda spread in Congress by 'radical' peace groups." They paired North Vietnam's military strategy with the establishment of the United Campaign. Evans and Novak speculated, "the Communists will continue sharp military attacks locally this year while preparing for a possible general offensive in the future. [...] The one factor that could advance the showdown is an economic breakdown, to which Communist headquarters have been alerting their cadre. A drastic, sudden reduction of US aid would surely trigger such a breakdown." The columnists continued, "This dovetails with the campaign laid out last October when veteran radical Tom Hayden invited 260 antiwar activists to Germantown, Ohio for a strategy session. The propaganda line set forth then have vigorously relayed on Capitol Hill; the Thiệu government, not Hanoi, is the aggressor and would collapse without provocation should the United States withdraw aid."⁹⁸ The writers' redbaiting withstanding, they appeared to take IPC's desires to support the Vietnamese liberation movement seriously. They also acknowledged the impact that the campaign to end the war had on public policy.

The IPC capitalized on the supplemental defeat by organizing its largest demonstration to date at Kent State University. Held on the four year anniversary of the shootings at Jackson State and Kent State, the goal of the protest was to continue the work of building a broad-based campaign against war funding as well as to protest the acquittal of the National Guardsmen who shot and killed Allison Krause, Jeffrey Miller, Sandra Scheuer, and William Knox Schroeder. The IPC envisioned the Kent State rally to be a mass rally. Cleveland IPC activists distributed

⁹⁸ Evans and Novak, "The New Crisis in Vietnam," *Boston Globe*, April 10, 1974.

hundreds of flyers and posters in the six months before the demonstration.⁹⁹ The organization also aspired to demonstrate its national reach. Thus, they secured speakers with national profiles such as Daniel Ellsberg, Representative Julian Bond, and Jane Fonda. Ron Kovic, a Vietnam veteran-turned-antiwar activist, IPC activist Holly Near, and a student wounded during the shootings, Dean Kahler also addressed the crowd.¹⁰⁰

Fonda, Ellsberg, and Kovic delivered speeches underscoring IPC's argument about how the corruption that spun out of the Watergate crisis could be felt in the Kent State and Jackson State shootings and their aftermath. Utilizing patriotic rhetoric, Fonda stated,

The reason this is not a memorial service, the reason we have called a rally together, is because the fundamental causes of the killings that took place at Kent State, Jackson State, Baton Rouge and Orangeburg are still unresolved, the war in Indochina rages on, fueled from American taxpayers, the Watergate Administration continues in office, continues to deceive and repress the American people, as long as these things remain unresolved we have an obligation as patriots, as responsible American people to protest together, to learn to organize together, to sing together...¹⁰¹

Daniel Ellsberg, with the recently released Nixon transcripts in tow, argued that executive corruption and the war threatened the idea of self-determination abroad and at home. "We must act to end American suppression and opposition to self-government abroad so we can retain self-government at home," he said.¹⁰² Kovic, wounded in Vietnam, used his and Dean Kahler's stories as an example to illustrate the connection between U.S. state violence abroad and at home: "Dean Kahler and myself were wounded 10,000 miles apart but our bodies will never forget it. Our bodies were destroyed by the same administration."¹⁰³

⁹⁹ Jim Miller interview, August 22, 2013; Cleveland IPC, "Proposed Budget for May 4th Event," Indochina Peace Campaign Records, Box 6, Folder 4, Wisconsin Historical Society (WHS), Madison, WI.

¹⁰⁰ IPC, Press Release, No date., Indochina Peace Campaign Records, Box 6, Folder 4, WHS.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² "Ellsberg: Hold Nixon accountable," *The Kent Stater*, May 7, 1974.

¹⁰³ "10,000 Rally at Kent," *Focal Point*, May 16-31.

In August 1974, the IPC experienced two major victories—President Nixon’s resignation and more aid cuts. On August 8, 1974, Nixon announced his resignation from the Presidency. That week, Congress also passed the Flynt-Giamo-Conte Amendment that reduced Vietnam aid to \$700 million. The IPC declared in its August 15-31 issue of *Focal Point*, “More efforts to reduce aid are immediately ahead, but the cut to \$700 million marked the culmination of aid what we have called ‘the Watergate opportunity’ for the peace movement.”¹⁰⁴

IPC Ohio’s Economic Turn: The Final Conferences, Spring-Summer 1975

IPC chapters engaged in their own discussions about economic and political transformation during the spring of 1975. The IPC locals gathered for an “Issues Conference” in Mantua, Ohio to explore the contours of a post-Indochina economic political strategy. Six chapters—Los Angeles, Detroit, Santa Monica, Cleveland, Massachusetts, and Ann Arbor—submitted reports to the group. All of the proposals, with the exception of Cleveland’s, identified an economic focal point. All of the participating chapters viewed the economic crisis as an opportunity for action, similar to Watergate.

The national IPC split because it could not agree on a post-Vietnam focal point. Members of the various IPC locals engaged in spirited debate about the fate of IPC and the issues that the next campaign should address. Individual activists such as IPC Cleveland’s Ira Arlook and local chapters drafted and circulated proposals for future work on issues such as the oil and energy crisis, the reemergence of multinational corporate power, and foreign policy. Ultimately, many of the IPC organizations pursued different political agendas after their final conference in Ann Arbor, Michigan, in 1975. Following the internal conversations and the Ann Arbor conference,

¹⁰⁴ *Focal Point*, August 15-31, 1974.

the Cleveland-IPC decided that growing corporate power in American cities and what Ira Arlook called “corporate globalization” represented Ohio IPC’s next focal point.¹⁰⁵

New York and Santa Monica IPC suggested that the rest of the locals should continue to rely upon searching for the precise opportunity to exploit. The nation’s economic crisis, both of these chapters reasoned, represented that opportunity. The New York chapter included a section, “The Economic Crisis as a New ‘Opportunity’? for war,” in their post-IPC proposal where they claimed that the U.S. would seek another military conflict in its effort of solving its economic crisis. “The imperialists,” according to the New York chapter, “have gotten into 2 world wars in the last 45 years to solve the economic crisis...As the contention develops, specifically between the U.S. and Russia, the threat of world war grows greater. Imperialist[s]...will be driven to war to insure their ability to make profits.”¹⁰⁶ The Santa Monica chapter forecasted the rise of a left progressive politics in their postwar proposal. The Santa Monica IPC stated, “In 1975-76 our opportunity will lie in the emergence of political and economic populism in the context of the American economic crisis.”¹⁰⁷

The Ann Arbor IPC identified the oil crisis as a new focal point. They thought oil and energy emerged as key contradictions in geopolitics and economics to exploit: “oil is the struggle for liberation of the key resource areas, and, even more pivotally, shipping lanes from imperialist, primarily US control. Domestically, as the contradiction between the working people and the monopoly capitalist ruling class, this is the entire range of struggles over energy, control of the terms of its production, pricing, marketing, economical and healthful uses.” They continued, “Domestically, this is the contradiction between energy and manufacturing capital,

¹⁰⁵ Ira Arlook, “Program Proposal for the New Foreign Policy Campaign, 1975-76.”

¹⁰⁶ New York IPC, “The Future of IPC,” Indochina Peace Campaign Records, Box 6, Folder 8. WHS.

¹⁰⁷ Santa Monica IPC, “Notes on the Future of the IPC,” Indochina Peace Campaign Records, Box 6, Folder 8. WHS.

evidenced in record high profits for the energy monopoly simultaneous with the partial collapse of the auto industry. Internationally, this is evidenced in the increasing struggle between US monopoly capital and European and Japanese interests, in which the price and availability of oil has become, with food, a chief lever forestalling a strategic US defeat.”¹⁰⁸

The conversation about what constituted the next focal point continued in July 1975 in Ann Arbor, which was the IPC’s final official gathering. The July conference not only signaled the end of the IPC, but many beginnings. After the meeting Tom Hayden and members of the Santa Monica IPC began to work on his senatorial campaign. Ira Arlook, Jay Westbrook, and other IPC activists decided to form the Ohio Public Interest Campaign in order to confront plant closings, capital flight, and corporate power in cities.

The Ohio IPC chapters set the tone for the July meeting. Arlook submitted a proposal on behalf of the state to the other chapters prior to the conference. Arlook’s proposal was broad in scope—sketching political campaigns to address foreign and domestic policy after the war. His thoughts regarding domestic policy became the seeds for the Ohio Public Interest Campaign. Arlook encouraged other IPC chapters to consider fighting for full employment and addressing what he called “corporate globalization.” Arlook echoed leftist critics of MNCs like Robert Scheer, “The U.S. economy is dominated by a few hundred corporations that operate throughout much of the world. Virtually every major U.S. corporation is a ‘multinational.’ Our national economy has, consequently, become so much a part of the world economy that we can no longer speak of wages and prices; inflation and unemployment; resource allocation and shortages as simply domestic problems.” Arlook continued in his section on “corporate globalization,”

¹⁰⁸ Ann Arbor IPC, “Draft paper on the future of IPC,” Indochina Peace Campaign Records, Box 6, Folder 8. WHS.

“Foreign direct investment has produced a loss in manufacturing jobs in the U.S. and exerted downward pressure on wages.”¹⁰⁹

Similar to Scheer’s call for a populist new majority that comprised a broader base than the 1960s student-dominated antiwar movement, Arlook called for the establishment of a “public interest campaign” composed of the remains of the antiwar movement, sympathetic religious organizations, students, liberals, public interest and populist groups, and “some union members” and “some” black and Third World people.”¹¹⁰ Arlook conceived of this campaign connecting itself to a revitalized left-liberal political coalition to be built on “city, state, and national levels.” This public interest campaign was populist in that it would use anti-corporate rhetoric to demand public control of multinationals.

Arlook’s initial vision of the post-Vietnam public interest campaign actually abandoned a single issue focus to pursue an agenda connecting domestic and foreign policy politics. Arlook wrote, “We will...have to demonstrate convincingly that U.S. foreign policy has much to do with the pressing economic problems most people face. We will have to address ourselves to what foreign policy looks like from the local level—as, for example, from the unemployment office.” “We must show,” he declared, “how unemployment is related as much to foreign policy as it is to domestic policy; that it is created in large part by military spending and overseas corporate expansion. Why, we should ask, are the Big Three auto manufacturers negotiating with the Chilean junta to begin production in Chile, while unemployment is so high in Detroit and Cleveland?”¹¹¹ The new public interest campaign would build upon IPCs strategy—political education, direct action, and grassroots pressure. The public interest campaign would also seek to

¹⁰⁹ Ira Arlook, “Program Proposal for the New Foreign Policy Campaign, 1975-76,” 5-6.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 10.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 10.

seize on the 1976 presidential election as an opportunity to organize support for its political and economic program.¹¹²

Arlook's domestic politics had two goals: to curb corporate globalization and to attain full employment. Arlook's call for full employment placed the Ohio IPC within the progressive tradition. Arlook believed the new organization could stop the corporate globalization through a number of measures that included closing tariff loopholes, prohibiting the export of capital and technology, taxing MNCs, and abolishing the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, which provided assistance to MNCs and insurance against nationalization and political instability. Arlook's final method of confronting MNCs foreshadowed OPIC's strategy to fight plant closings: the regulation of deindustrialization. This entailed crafting legislation requiring corporations to warn their workers of plant closings two years in advance and to provide lay-off insurance, severance pay, and pensions to workers affected by corporate flight.¹¹³ His call to restrict the power of MNCs also placed him among Scheer, the AFL-CIO, and Congressmen Burke and Hartke who also sought to curb the growth of MNCs.

Most of the chapters agreed generally that IPC should address foreign and domestic policy issues. Even though the Detroit chapter had reservations about fighting for full employment, they agreed that "fighting for jobs and peace" was "the proper political tactic."¹¹⁴ Chicago saw the military budget as the focal point where "the contradictions between public need and corporate greed are most sharply focused." They pointed out how this contradiction manifested itself in social service cuts, fiscal crises in cities and states, and unemployment.¹¹⁵ The Los Angeles chapter agreed that multinational corporations represented the crucial issue.

¹¹² Arlook.

¹¹³ Arlook, 11.

¹¹⁴ Detroit Chapter IPC, "The Future of IPC," Box 12, Folder 268. Miller Papers. WRHS.

¹¹⁵ "Notes of the Future Direction for IPC/United Campaign," Box 12, Folder 268. Miller Papers. WRHS.

They identified breaking up multinationals as the main goal of the next public interest campaign. The LA IPC's policy proposals resembled Arlook's in that they called for the closing of tax loopholes for MNCs. They also added several other goals that many progressives/leftists would fight for later including democratic economic planning on national and regional scales, opening of corporate finances to the public, restricting MNCs intervention into domestic affairs of foreign nations, and greater self-determination of host nations.¹¹⁶

Strategically, many of the IPC chapters wanted to build upon the organization's successes. Thus, many did not want to abandon their "campaign" strategy that combined political education, grassroots pressure, lobbying, and using pledges to organize other Americans and hold legislators accountable. Chicago agreed that the new organization should build broad based coalitions with groups they considered to be "to their political right," such as labor, environmental groups, and citizens' organizations. The Chicago IPC also endorsed utilizing pledges and resolutions. The Ann Arbor United Campaign also supported electoral tactics as well. While they made sure to point out that electoral politics did not represent an end, the LA IPC also agreed with capitalizing on the 1976 elections. "The upcoming elections provide us with an ideal platform from which to project our position to the American people....As political activists in the United States, we must understand how to operate in the established party politics for the achievement of our goals..."¹¹⁷ The LA IPC proceeded to propose working in Tom Hayden's 1976 senatorial campaign and to seek to send delegates to the 1976 Democratic Party convention.

Not all IPC chapters agreed on the economic analysis, or the future direction of the organization. Although Chicago did not elaborate, they stated that there were "shortcomings" in

¹¹⁶ Los Angeles Indochina Work Group, "Proposal: New IPC Focus: The Multinational Corporations," 2. Box 12, Folder 268. Miller Papers, WRHS.

¹¹⁷ Los Angeles Indochina Work Group, 4.

Arlook's paper.¹¹⁸ The Detroit chapter took on Arlook's economic analysis. The Detroit IPC examined political economy through a Marxist-Leninist lens. They remind the other chapters that capitalism was a "crisis-ridden" system. They included lengthy discussions of Lenin's theory of imperialism to support their contention that MNCs were only "the contemporary form in which monopolies operate" and that "they represent no qualitative change from the phenomenon Lenin observed 60 years ago."¹¹⁹ Regarding the turn towards domestic economic policy, the Detroiters contended that fighting for full employment within the capitalist system was futile since the system "requires a reserve army of labor."

Opinions regarding the engagement in electoral politics and the view that the 1976 presidential campaign represented a useful political opportunity ranged from ambivalent to highly skeptical. The Chicago branch argued that the new organization "must also look beyond the '76 elections, and not base its work solely on the opportunities presented in an election year." They also acknowledged that IPC could not undertake a uniform political strategy, either. "Many of Ira's proposals may be viable in California, Ohio, or elsewhere, but are somewhat out of touch with our reality in Chicago."¹²⁰

The Detroit IPC expressed the strongest disagreement with the electoral approach. They acknowledged the short-term usefulness of the congressional strategy, but they reasoned that any alliance or work with the Democratic Party was futile. They disagreed with Tom Hayden's entrance into Democratic Party politics. They used Tom Hayden's entrance into Democratic Party politics in California to express its suspicion toward the two party system and the Democrats. They frowned upon Hayden's suggestion that the California Democratic Party

¹¹⁸ Chicago IPC, "Notes of the Future Direction for IPC/United Campaign, 1. Box 12, Folder 268. Miller Papers, WRHS.

¹¹⁹ Detroit, "The Future of the IPC," 3. Box 12, Folder 268, Miller Papers, WRHS.

¹²⁰ Chicago IPC, "Notes of the Future Direction for IPC/United Campaign," 2.

represented workers' interests. The Democratic Party, according to the Detroit IPC, represented a bourgeois political party that enjoyed a captured constituency. "The fact is that the Democratic Party is a bourgeois political party ranging from George Wallace to Tom Hayden, which is significantly to the right of even the British Labor Party. The fact that it has a mass membership of people who have nowhere else to go says nothing about its real class character..." They were a mass party by default due to the two-party system. They also contended that neither Hayden nor his allies sought to bring his potential campaign up for a discussion within the IPC.¹²¹ Ultimately, the Detroit branch predicted Hayden's defeat. The question that remained after examining Detroit's IPC analysis of electoral politics was whether or not leftists should participate in local politics. The Detroit left would confront this question when Kenneth Cockrel ran for city council a year later.

Other chapters, like Ann Arbor, wanted to focus solely on foreign policy. Ann Arbor proposed that IPC create a post-Vietnam organization that resembled the IPC. Even though they billed this new organization as a "multi-issue" institution, it would still engage in a struggle against U.S. imperialism. This organization would expand its geographic focus to address Korea, Chile, Zimbabwe, and Iran. It would utilize political education to build a grassroots base and a congressional strategy to confront what they considered two major arms of U.S. imperialism: the Pentagon and the CIA. Echoing Arlook's foreign policy proposals, this new organization would seek to organize Americans around cutting the Pentagon budget and the U.S. intelligence agencies.¹²²

The IPC dissolved after the July 1975 conference. IPC's fate challenges narratives about the antiwar movement that emphasizes its decline during the early 1970s. IPC also reveals the

¹²¹ Detroit, "The Future of the IPC," 11-13.

¹²² Ann Arbor IPC, "Draft paper on the future of IPC"

pragmatic nature of antiwar organizing. Many IPC activists advanced rather radical analyses of U.S. empire, but they pursued political and rhetorical strategies that appealed to non-activist Americans and elected officials. Gone was “the movement,” if that meant trying to push the U.S. to total revolution. The IPC hitched its politics onto a single issue and to mainstream political institutions. Ultimately, IPC activists gave their organization an expiration date. While there were many IPC activists who wanted to continue their work, many others such as Tom Hayden and Ira Arlook envisioned the organization as a temporary institution that would dissolve once the war ended.

Conclusion

IPC’s campaign to end the war in Indochina represented an example of successful progressive organizing during the early 1970s. The war in Indochina turned out to be a consensus issue among progressive antiwar activists and Democrats, disaffected Republican elected officials, and sympathetic Americans. The organization combined a popularized radical analysis of U.S. empire with a single-issue campaign strategy that not only included mobilizations, but congressional lobbying. The IPC used its Peace Pledge as a grassroots organizing tool and a method to secure support for its cause from elected officials. The group developed and articulated its “focal point theory” as a means to explain both the centrality of the war in Indochina in the maintenance of U.S. empire and its method of applying pressure on Congress. As *Washington Post* columnists Rowland Evans and Robert Novak explained, one could not explain the congressional vote to cut military aid to the Thiệu regime without considering IPC’s organizing.

The organization's antiwar politics and strategy was rather sophisticated. Hayden disagreed with new left radicals' strategies to address U.S. empire. He argued that the new left radicals who helped engineer SDS's split in 1969 and those who participated in the New Communist Movement during the 1970s failed to directly address Vietnam. Rather than continue to build an antiwar movement among radicals in the coastal states, Tom Hayden and IPC popularized radical analyses of U.S. imperialism in their efforts to appeal to Americans living in Midwestern states. IPC also discovered a third way strategy when it came to expressing its support of North Vietnamese self-determination in an anti-communist political culture. The organization maintained contact with North Vietnamese activists and sought to relay the damage that the U.S.-backed Thiệu regime had done to them.

"Focal point theory" represented IPC's most significant intellectual and strategic contribution to 1970s left-wing progressivism. This concept represented a method of analyzing power and identifying institutional pressure points. Drawing from North Vietnamese Communist activists, Hayden identified Indochina as the focal point for the struggle against U.S. imperialism. Ironically, it functioned as the left's version of the U.S.'s domino theory. While the U.S. government thought if Vietnam went communist, then the rest of the region would follow suit, Hayden and the IPC thought that imperialism could be stopped, and thus paving the way for Vietnamese self-determination, if the organization pressured Congress into stop funding the war. Thus, Congress emerged as the lever while the Indochina, and corrupt executive power embodied by President Nixon, became the targets. Focal point theory guided subsequent actions of IPC activists after Saigon fell in 1975. The concept also revealed tensions within the large organization.

While the group proved right Hayden's theory that the problem with the antiwar left was its inability to concentrate solely on ending the war, the end of the campaign revealed tensions within IPC's strategy and organization. The IPC executed its campaign strategy in an extremely disciplined manner. They successfully used the Watergate crisis to appeal to local and national elected officials. They scored legislative wins in Congress. But IPC organizers such as Ira Arlook and Tom Hayden maintained that the organization had an expiration date—the day the U.S. stopped its involvement in Indochina. After the war's conclusion, the separate IPC chapters would decide the next focal point. However, it is no surprise that such a large organization that contain locals who were empowered to devise and articulate their own versions of anti-imperialism and to pursue their own strategies on the ground would produce internal tensions. Consequently, once the national IPC reached its goal, the separate branches could not agree on a post-Vietnam strategy. Some in the organization wanted to continue the group's foreign policy focus, members of the Ann Arbor IPC saw the oil crisis as the next focal point while Arlook and members Ohio's IPC branches viewed deindustrialization and globalization as the most pressing issue. In a sense, social movement victory created organizational tension.

The shift from anti-imperialism to anti-globalization was one that reflected strategic thinking more than anything else. Analyses of imperialism stressing the role that corporations and free market ideology swirled around the IPC's campaign and internal discussions. But the IPC saw the Watergate crisis as the most fruitful means of ending the war. Thus, they deployed a political analysis that stressed government corruption. IPC activists turned towards talking about corporate power after Nixon resigned and the war in Indochina began to wind down. And while Marxist-Leninist organizations did not have much political impact, M-L analyses of anti-imperialism and MNCs informed progressive politics during the early-to-mid 1970s. IPC

activists advanced a radical analysis of imperialism that stressed the U.S.'s long history of conquest. They also grounded their analysis of Indochina in a populist skepticism of executive power.

The Cleveland IPC and Tom Hayden and the Santa Monica IPC organization decided to focus on domestic economic politics. In 1976, the year after the Indochina Peace Campaign disbanded, Tom Hayden entered into the California Senate primary against John V. Tunney. Part of Hayden's reasoning behind his decision lay in his observation that the Democratic Party needed reforming and it represented a viable political battleground for leftists. "I believe the Democratic Party is a logical arena for the new populist forces," his campaign program stated. Hayden's campaign also argued that Democratic Party did not listen to their "rank and file" supporters. Instead, the campaign declared, "The hierarchy tends to be a more exclusive club, dominated by corporate lawyers, and others who have little in common with the rank and file."¹²³

Hayden's campaign published its manifesto in 1976, *Make the Future Ours*, where it outlined Hayden's political and economic program. He called for full employment legislation and the adoption of an economic bill of rights. The program attacked the power of government and multinational corporations. Hayden ran on a platform of "economic democracy."¹²⁴ Hayden, and one of his political advisors, Derek Shearer, first popularized the term during the campaign. This entailed providing space for workers and publicly-elected representatives to serve on

¹²³ Tom Hayden for U.S. Senate Campaign, *Make the Future Ours* (California: Tom Hayden for U.S. Senate, 1976), 19.

¹²⁴ James Rowen, "The Office Holding Activists," *The Nation*, 5 July 1975; Alexander Cockburn and James Ridgeway, "The New Progressives," *Village Voice*, 23 June 1975; Tom Hayden for U.S. Senate Campaign, *Make the Future Ours*.

corporate boards and for establishing more democratic economic institutions such as cooperatives.¹²⁵

Hayden's call for economic democracy included a progressive analysis of the crisis that viewed technocracy and the lack of political power in economic decision making as the problem. "They [analysts and policymakers] cannot acknowledge that the basic problem of our economy is not technical but political: the uncontrolled market power of the banks and corporations. To overcome our own powerlessness in the modern market place, *we need to move toward democratic control of our economy.*"¹²⁶ Hayden lost his campaign to Tunney. But he garnered over a million votes and his campaign served as the foundation for the California-based Center for Economic Democracy (CED). The CED was a statewide organization, like OPIC, that struggled for economic democracy.

Cleveland IPC's and Tom Hayden's and the Santa Monica IPC's decisions to focus on domestic politics reflected the development of a network of progressive organizations devoted to organizing around economics. Feminist activist, community organizer, and political strategist, Heather Booth and William Winpisinger established the Citizen/Labor Energy Coalition to struggle for greater democratic control over utilities and energy sources in 1978.¹²⁷ A month before IPC's final gathering, a large group of progressive activists and politicians assembled in Madison, Wisconsin, for the first annual Conference for Alternative State and Local Policies. Activists and politicians like Tom Hayden, Lee Webb, and Detroit's Justin Ravitz gathered to devise strategies for progressive governance. IPC activists such as Ira Arlook became frequent attendees. Members of the Detroit Alliance for a Rational Economy also considered themselves members of this growing left progressive network.

¹²⁵ Tom Goff, "Hayden Outlines New Democracy Plan," *Los Angeles Times*, January 20, 1976.

¹²⁶ Tom Hayden for U.S. Senate Campaign, 22.

¹²⁷ Battista, *The Revival of Labor Liberalism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008).

Many scholars of the left in the U.S. also focus on the fragmentation of the left. While the end of IPC pushes back against notions of movement failure, the movement did fracture. But it did not fracture over internal disputes or repression. IPC struggled through their disagreements about ideology and strategy. Most importantly, the organization splintered into multiple groups due to success. Ultimately, the splintering was evidence of transformation. This point is often missed due to personal disappointment about maintaining a fabled left universalist movement, movement periodization, and historiography. It is true that movements are finite and rather self-contained phenomena—they have a beginning, a life, and an end. Historians who work on the antiwar movement are only obligated to charting that particular movement's life—hence the concluding analyses during the end of the 1960s or 1970s. But, what happens when one takes a step back and analyze the larger political trajectory?

The campaign against Indochina and Nixon also stimulated more political activity. Activists wanted to continue political work by tackling issues other than U.S. foreign policy. IPC Boston Karen Nussbaum involved herself in the women's rights/workplace movement. Santa Monica IPC activist Paul Ryder decided to join Ira, Westbrook, and others in Cleveland to work on the issue of plant closings. Detroit IPC activist Frank Joyce worked as an organizer for the Detroit Alliance for a Rational Economy. These "new progressives" were confident of their politics and secure with their decision to engage in electoral politics and push the Democratic Party from the left when needed. "The radicalism of the 1960s has become the common sense of the 1970s," Hayden declared at an activist conference.¹²⁸

¹²⁸ David Olsen, "Sixties Radicals Seek Seventies Mainstream."

Chapter 4

Industrial Exodus: The Ohio Public Interest Campaign's Movement against Plant Closure

On September 25, 1979, over a 1,000 people filled the rotunda in the Ohio Statehouse. They gathered to attend hearings before the Senate Commerce and Labor Committee on S.B. 188, a bill that would protect industrial workers from the harmful effects of plant closings. The crowd comprised a broad coalition of trade unionists, elected officials, civil rights and religious leaders, other grassroots leaders, as well as members of the progressive organization, the Ohio Public Interest Campaign (OPIC). The Director of Ohio's UAW-CAP declared, "We have come to Columbus today to let our representatives know that we can't wait any longer... Since I first testified on this bill, 18 months ago, over a dozen major plants and many smaller ones have closed in Ohio. Over 18,000 workers have lost their jobs. Our message today is clear: PASS 188 THIS YEAR."¹ As the crowd chanted and sang union songs "Solidarity Forever" and "This Land is Your Land," supporters testified in support of the bill introduced by State Senators Michael Schwarzwald and Thomas Carney. Since the room where the hearing was held could accommodate less two hundred people, crowds of supporters circled in and out periodically so everyone had a chance to witness the proceedings.²

The September 1979 rally represented the last highlight of OPIC's campaign against plant closings in the state of Ohio. Since its founding in the fall of 1975, the organization had

¹ "1,000 rally for plant closing bill," *Public Interest Report*, Vol. 4, No. 5, September/October 1979.

² Evan Davis, "Bill to curb plant closings," *Columbus Free Press*, October 10 – November 5, 1979.

sought to build a coalition of trade unionists, workers, civil rights and grassroots community organizations, and elected officials around plant closings as a focal point. The movement centered on supporting workers' protests against plant closure, grassroots policymaking, and public meetings in order to raise awareness about deindustrialization in Ohio and throughout the U.S. However, despite the support for such legislation, the movement failed as the bill died in the legislature.

Despite OPIC's inability to leverage its efforts into law, the campaign for the plant closure bill reflected the organization's and the broader progressive movement's ability to shape conversations about deindustrialization during the 1970s and 1980s. Between 1976 and 1978, OPIC crafted the Community Readjustment Act (CRA). The bill called for early notice of closure, severance pay, health benefits for six months after a closing, and it demanded firms deposit money into a readjustment fund for economic development. The organization's legislation grew out of the organization's analysis of, and narrative about, deindustrialization. OPIC's signature study of deindustrialization, *Industrial Exodus: Public Strategies for Control of Corporate Relocation*, influenced future studies of plant closure, progressive organizations in Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, and Illinois viewed OPIC's CRA as a model for their efforts to curb factory shutdowns.

OPIC's campaign against plant closings in Ohio exemplified attempts by progressives to build state-based Rustinian coalition of activists, labor organizers, and civil rights and religious groups during the mid-to-late 1970s to address economic concerns. The Ohio Public Interest Campaign served as the guiding group that organized all of the aforementioned constituencies, developed an analysis of deindustrialization, and constructed policy. Rather than trying to organize workers inside plants, OPIC focused on mobilizing communities. Such a politics and

strategy presumed that the citizen, worker, and community were the main agents rather than just the industrial working class. While the plant closing campaign never reached the level of a mass movement, the group garnered support for their public actions from leaders in organized labor such as Bill Casstevens and UAW President Doug Fraser.

OPIC relied on various tactics in their campaign against plant closure. While the group did not organize direct actions, it did support protesting workers. It also held public meetings to raise awareness around plant closure in the state and organized large rallies in Columbus, Ohio, the state capital, to support the CRA hearings. Finally, OPIC engaged in policy analysis and development. The group's efforts led it to the rhetorical frame of "industrial exodus" when the group published *Industrial Exodus: Public Strategies for Control of Corporate Relocation* in 1977. The frame "industrial exodus" influenced other progressive groups such as the Illinois Public Action Campaign and scholars of deindustrialization including sociologist Gregory Squires and economists Bennett Harrison and Barry Bluestone.

OPIC activists aspired to build a "public interest campaign" to stop plant closings. Like the IPC, the "campaign" in the organization's name referred to the activists' preference to build upon what they saw as a winning political strategy. The emphasis on the "public interest" not just underscored the organization's populism, but it represented the organization's desire to build a new broad-based and multiracial coalition around economic interests. For OPIC, the labor question remained important during the 1970s. Yet, this aim illustrated OPIC's desire to take plant closings out of the collective bargaining process since organizers presumed that organized labor was not strong enough to challenge the private property rights of corporations. OPIC sought to address the labor question by arguing for economic democracy that placed questions of investment and labor into the realm of politics and into the hands of citizens and workers instead

of an early-20th century conception of industrial democracy that advocated for greater worker control of a particular plant or industry.³ OPIC was responding to what it saw as the decline of New Deal labor liberalism and the labor movement's acceptance of managerial prerogatives in the areas of capital investment and disinvestment. It was necessary, according to the organization, to take plant closings out of the collective bargaining structure due to the "isolation" of organized labor and business's reassertion of political power.⁴ OPIC's initial policy proposals aimed at checking corporate power and addressing plant closings. They ranged from labor law reform and full employment on a federal level to supporting worker-owned enterprises and cooperatives.

To discourage plant closings, OPIC devised a state anti-plant closure law, the Community Readjustment Act (CRA). OPIC's bill was an expression of economic democracy grounded in what Lynd called community rights to industrial property. OPIC sought to hold corporations accountable for decisions that hurt local communities and workers. In the coalition's advocacy for the CRA, they framed their arguments in the rhetoric of shared responsibility and ownership and gestured towards a mythic social contract between workers, communities and corporations. At least at the level of rhetoric, OPIC's political appeals were more moralistic than the Detroit Alliance for a Rational Economy's calls for economic democracy. DARE argued for workers' and municipal control over abandoned industrial property. DARE's vision entailed the construct of a public-enterprise sector where workers would develop firms where they would control investment and production.

³ OPIC's decision to try to mount a public campaign against plant closure, partly in response to what they saw was a failure in collective bargaining prefigured the labor movement's shift into public sector organizing. See Joseph A. McCartin, "A Wagner Act for Public Employees: Labor's Deferred Dream and the Rise of Conservatism, 1970-1976," *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 95, No. 1 (June 2008).

⁴ Edward Kelly, "Plant Closings Legislation: The Ohio Experience," in *Plant Closings: Issues, Politics, and Legislation Briefing Book*, ed. William Schweke (Washington, D.C.: Conference on Alternative State and Local Policies, 1980), 9.

As drafter, the CRA would have demanded a two year warning, severance pay, and corporate contributions to a community development fund when plants closed. However, one of the contradictions between OPIC's appeals to community rights to industrial property and the organization's Community Readjustment Act was that the law was reactive and thus would not have served as the deterrent that the organization's rhetoric called for. No preventive provisions existed in the bill. OPIC's CRA challenged the private property rights of corporations through its provisions aimed at hindering closure. Yet, it was less radical than the Detroit Alliance for a Rational Economy's "rational reindustrialization" plan that called for workers to share rights to industrial property with municipal governments. In fact, as I shall demonstrate, OPIC's political visions appeared to narrow as they supported national labor and full employment legislation.

Building upon the Indochina Peace Campaign's success, OPIC also pursued a legislative strategy in their campaign against factory shutdowns. OPIC was successful insofar as they were able to build a coalition and organize a few state congressional hearings. However, the group's federal legislation never advanced outside of committee in either the Senate or House. While legislative strategies and more direct action approaches, such as plant occupations, may not be mutually exclusive, the community-based legislative approach took OPIC away from trying to organize workers in plants in a sustained manner. OPIC organizers acknowledged in the midst of the campaign to get the CRA passed that they made attempt to stop plant closings that were already in process. Workers in Youngstown's steel plants and even the UAW at Van Nuys, California's General Motors plant demonstrated relatively successful models of plant-based resistance that incorporated local communities.

While OPIC did not seek the direct elimination of managerial prerogatives in investment, its campaign for plant closing legislation amounted to a challenge of managerial private property

rights, especially manufacturer's control over capital investment and location. While employers have long sought to maintain these rights, the 1950 Treaty of Detroit agreement between General Motors and the United Auto Workers had embedded them in the post-World War II industrial economy. The Treaty of Detroit took the struggle over capital investment, location, and divestment off the table for the organized trade union movement. However, as postwar deindustrialization and the ensuing political struggles around plant closings illustrate, the Treaty of Detroit did not totally solve the labor question for activists in unions, civil rights and black power organizations, nor for progressives during the 1970s and 1980s. This circumstance, along with the varied crises in the national and global economies, cities, energy, and auto and steel industry, forced organizers like labor activist-intellectual Staughton Lynd, OPIC, and the Detroit Alliance for a Rational Economy to develop alternative understandings of the role of property in the political economy.⁵

OPIC's campaign for plant closing bill demonstrates how progressives struggled to enact economic reform during the 1970s. IPC's organizing underscored how progressives could organize around non-economic issues successfully. IPC's success came on an issue on which antiwar advocates had already won the policy debate in public discourse. Plant closure, however, was a completely different issue, particularly given the level of union-blaming during periods of economic crisis.

Also, state politics stymied OPIC's efforts. OPIC's actions pushed business interests to mobilize against the bill. The Ohio Manufacturers Association and Greater Cleveland Growth Association criticized OPIC and sought to lobby against the bill. OPIC's campaign also revealed the alignment of interests of key state Democrats and Republicans. Governor James Rhodes

⁵ Nelson Lichtenstein, *State of the Union: A Century of American Labor* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002)

avored a state redevelopment plan utilizing bonds and tax breaks and the Democrat chair of the State Senate's Commerce and Labor Committee failed to push it.

OPIC's decision to focus on passing plant closure legislation and the campaign's failure highlights the transformation of U.S. political culture during the 1970s. As stated, the group viewed the New Deal as dead and trade unions as ineffectual. OPIC activists, as well as other progressives, were keenly aware of the growing political strength of business as well. They concentrated on a state-based strategy because they believed political opportunities on the national level to be limited. Governor Rhodes adhered to prevailing assumptions about capital investment that stressed improving the state's "business climate." Such prescriptions for economic development grew in relevance as policymakers and key decision-makers in the private sector stressed tax-cutting, dismantling the welfare state, eradicating other social wages, and delivering public subsidies to business as keys to private investment, especially for rustbelt cities and states seeking to compete with growing Sunbelt areas.

Context for the Rise of OPIC: The Business Offensive, the Restructuring of the Democratic Party, and the Growing Relevance of Multinational Corporations

Unlike the 1960s social movements that were inspired by beliefs in uninhibited economic growth and the redistribution of surplus, crisis, scarcity, and the transformations in political culture shaped 1970s progressivism. Also business began taking a greater role in public affairs while organized labor struggled to maintain relevance. Watergate discredited the Nixon and Ford regimes during the mid-1970s. However, progressives such as Tom Hayden did not see the Democratic Party—as it was constituted—as a viable force for economic democracy. Democrats during the 1970s rebranded itself into a political party that was on the vanguard of a neoliberal

form of governance that focused on finance rather than manufacturing, deregulation, and supporting free trade policies that facilitated greater capital mobility.

The Business Offensive and “Good” Climate for Investment

The defeat of the Ohio Public Interest Campaign’s movement for plant closing legislation cannot be understood without recognizing corporations’ willingness to shape political culture and to influence economic development policy. OPIC not only carried over their IPC-analyses of the threat that multinational corporations had on workers and communities, they were aware of the growing power of business in U.S. political culture. Even though business had waged a war against the New Deal and organized labor since the 1940s, left-wing activists did not perceive business as political threat distinct from the two major parties until the 1970s. While hundreds of workers rebelled against working conditions, and their unions, during the late-1960s and early-1970s, many business and political leaders saw the fracturing of the Democratic Party and economic restructuring as an opportunity to further discipline workers and organized labor. OPIC quoted a 1974 *Business Week* editorial that underscored the private sector’s willingness to defend their interests, “It is inevitable that the U.S. economy will grow more slowly than it has...Yet it will be a hard pill for many Americans to swallow—the idea of doing with less so that big business can have more.”⁶ Consequently, the private sector asserted itself in the political arena—deploying teams of lobbyists to Washington, D.C., organizing their own educational institutions, and, in the case of Cleveland in 1979, throwing cities on the precipice of financial collapse by withholding capital.

⁶ Quoted in Ohio Public Interest Campaign (OPIC) and Conference on Alternative State and Local Policies, *Reclaiming the Future: A Citizens’ Conference on the Crisis of the Industrial States* (Washington, D.C., Conference on Alternative State and Local Policies, 1979), 5.

The argument for corporations' willingness to mobilize against progressive politics could not have been clearer than in Lewis Powell's August 23, 1971 memo to Eugene Snyder, Jr., President of the U.S Chamber of Commerce. In the memo titled, "Attack on the American Free Enterprise System," Powell charged that business had been under attack by "Communists, New Leftists, and other revolutionaries who would destroy the whole system, both economic and political."⁷ Powell also saw the most "reasonable elements of society," such as college students, intellectuals, members of the clergy and the media participating in the attack. He also identified a racial element, "In most of these groups the movement against the system is participated in only by minorities."⁸ Powell called for business to influence college curricula, the media, and to deploy legal strategies to combat the threat.⁹

The frame of "good" business climate represented a strategy for influencing development in the public sector. Business consultants such as the Fantus Corporation began using the concept as a gauge for private investment during the late 1970s.¹⁰ The concept was an ideological and political construction that served business interests. When trying to determine a state's business climate, Fantus considered many factors to determine a state's "pro-business" stance including taxes, labor laws, unemployment benefits and worker's compensation costs, size and cost of government, welfare costs, and indebtedness. In other words, how "free" was a state's market? For Fantus, the lower the social costs businesses had to pay, the higher a state's ranking. In one 1975 Fantus study commissioned by the Illinois Manufacturers Association, seven of the top ten states came from the south, where labor laws were weak or nonexistent and taxes were low.

⁷ Lewis Powell, "Memo to Eugene B. Snyder, Jr.," September 21, 1971, <http://law2.wlu.edu/deptimages/Powell%20Archives/PowellMemorandumTypescript.pdf>, accessed June 1, 2016. I will refer to the document as the Powell Memo.

⁸ Powell Memo, 2-3.

⁹ Kim Phillips-Fein, *Invisible Hands: The Businessmen's Crusade Against the New Deal* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2010), 156-160.

¹⁰ Greg LeRoy, *The Great American Jobs Scam: Corporate Tax Dodging and the Myth of Job Creation* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., 2005), 79.

Business leaders and lobbyists tried used Fantus' rankings to justify plant closure and promote tax relief for investment. The Illinois Manufacturers surveyed their membership about the causes of plant closure in the state and many listed four reasons: high wages and taxes, the perception that the state is pro-union and anti-business, and the state's regulatory burden.¹¹

Elected officials and activists expressed mixed reactions. For elected officials working in states with so-called "weak" business climates such as California Governor Jerry Brown, and even some business leaders, such studies were dubious. California's chief economist Pauline Sweezy told the Los Angeles Times that the report contained "many inconsistencies."¹² The Ohio Public Interest Campaign, however, tried to use the Illinois Manufacturers Association report for its own advantage. Ohio shared the #26 ranking with Louisiana. The organization sought to use the ranking to make the case for plant closing legislation. In a flyer, OPIC stressed that the state's climate was "second only to Indiana of all the major northern industrial states." Thus, the CRA, according to the Ohio Public Interest Campaign, would "not significantly change" Ohio's business climate.¹³

The Crisis of the New Deal and the Restructuring of the Democratic Party

The crisis of New Deal liberalism and the fracturing of its coalition of organized labor, Democratic Party, and big city mayors also formed the backdrop of for the development of OPIC and their construction of the Community Readjustment Act. Progressives in OPIC and DARE often acknowledged that a national movement was needed to institutionalize economic

¹¹ "A Special Report—Fantus Study Confirms Illinois' Sick Business Climate," IMA Executive Memo, November 4, 1975, Ohio Citizen Action Records, Box 18, Folder – Fantus Corp – Illinois Manufacturers Association, Western Reserve Historical Society (WRHS); LeRoy, 80.

¹² Roger Smith, "Is Fantus Study Fact or Faulty?," *Los Angeles Times*, April 23, 1978.

¹³ OPIC, "Business Closing Legislation Won't Place Ohio at a Disadvantage," James Miller Papers, Box 5, Folder 111, WRHS.

democracy. However, they often argued that the national political environment was not hospitable to their policy agenda.

New Deal liberalism was in crisis by the 1970s as a result of global economic turbulence and sustained political attacks from business, the right, and the left. Democrats had long grounded the social-democratic aspects of the New Deal in notions of a perpetually expanding manufacturing economy, thus leaving elected officials and policymakers unprepared for the economic crises of the 1970s including stagflation, deindustrialization, and the oil shock. Democrats and organized trade unions failed to pass trade, employment, and labor legislation while business leaders continued their decades-long attack on organized labor. Progressives believed these failures signaled the need for a construction of a new social democratic politics—in the form of economic democracy—that could serve as an alternative to a dying New Deal liberalism and challenge an ascending political and economic philosophy that relied heavily on finance, unimpeded capital mobility, the globalization of production, and an emphasis on market-based solutions to all social and economic problems.

As Japan and West Germany gained in the production of steel and automobiles, the U.S. entered into a crisis of trade policy. Labor unions such as the AFL-CIO pointed to the excesses of free trade contributing to deindustrialization and job loss in the Northeast and Midwest. Post-WWII free trade policies created the conditions for the 1971 trade deficit. The U.S. had opened up its market to Europe and Japan after the war “to cement cold-war alliances” even as Japan and European nations maintained protectionist trade policies based on tariffs and quotas. In 1970, the U.S. had reported a \$2.7 billion trade surplus. A year later, however, the country recorded a trade deficit, its first since 1893. Federal officials saw Japan as the principle contributor to the

deficit as Japan's exports to the U.S. increased by 96 percent during the late 1960s. The trade deficit with Japan alone increased from \$3 billion to \$8.5 billion between 1970 and 1971.

The Democrats' relationship to declining New Deal liberalism and the restructuring global economy became more complicated. The rise of "New Democrats" embodied by Senator George McGovern signaled a shift in the national electoral coalition from a urban-labor-liberal base towards one that drew on liberal suburbanites and the 1960s social movements. Political scientist Bruce Miroff refers to the new Democratic orientation as "moral politics, infused with a spirit of social justice."¹⁴ This moral politics translated into rooting out corruption in politics. Reformers sought to displace party insiders from urban machines and big labor. Instead of trying to develop an economic policy suited to the turbulence of the decade, national Democrats concentrated on foreign policy, race, gender, political process, and the environment.¹⁵ Party reforms underscored Democrats' desires to attract suburbanites, women, youth, African Americans and other social movement constituencies. Some liberals in the Democratic Party sought to check the growth of multinational corporations with the Burke-Hartke Bill in 1972, pass full employment legislation, labor law reform at the end of the decade, yet they failed to get such legislation passed.¹⁶

President Jimmy Carter represented a departure from the New Deal-Great Society mold. Carter articulated a moral politics that disavowed special interests and sought to reduce the size of the federal government. Carter concentrated his efforts on curbing inflation. Carter initiated rounds of deregulation in finance that Reagan and Clinton continued in the 1980s and 1990s. He

¹⁴ Bruce Miroff, *Liberals' Moment: The McGovern Insurgency and the Identity Crisis of the Democratic Party* (Lawrence: University of Kansas, 2009), 23.

¹⁵ Judith Stein, "Politics and Policies in the 1970s and Early Twenty-First Century: The Linked Recessions," in *Workers in Hard Times: A Long View of Economic Crises*, ed. Leon Fink, Joan Sangster, and Joseph McCartin (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2014), 147; *Pivotal Decade: How the United States Traded Factories for Finance in the Seventies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010).

¹⁶ Stein, "Politics and Policies in the 1970s," 146.

appointed Paul Volcker chairman of the Federal Reserve in 1979 who raised interest rates and famously shocked inflation out of the economy.

Liberalism's emphasis on free-market economics at home and abroad also contained the seeds of destruction of the industrial economy. Public policy scholar Oren M. Levin-Waldman argues in *Plant Closure, Regulation, and Liberalism: The Limits to Liberal Public Philosophy*, that post-WWII liberalism was unsuited to deal with the challenge of plant closure. "The rights revolution between the New Deal and the 1980s responsible for the generation of these entitlements," Levin-Waldman writes, "has essentially stopped short of plant closure."¹⁷ This is true, but postwar liberalism's inability to extend rights consciousness into the realm of corporate governance and labor has more to do with the decoupling of labor and civil rights in the courts during the 1930s and 1940s and corporations' ability to maintain control over investment decisions. Additionally, the economic aspects of U.S. Cold War policy such as the Marshall Plan and seeking to remove trade barriers for allies have also contributed to liberalism's inability to protect workers from plant closure.¹⁸

Economic Crisis and the Rise of Progressivism

The 1973 OPEC oil embargo served as another key event in the transformation of the U.S. political economy and the emergence of progressive politics in the 1970s. In 1973, the mostly Arab members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Companies (OPEC) imposed an oil embargo in response to U.S. military support of Israel against Egypt in the Yom Kippur

¹⁷ Oren M. Levin-Waldman, *Plant Closure, Regulation, and Liberalism: The Limits to Liberal Public Philosophy* (Maryland: University Press of America, 1992), 4.

¹⁸ Risa Goluboff, *The Lost Promise of Civil Rights* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007); Anthony Chen, *The Fifth Freedom: Jobs, Politics, and Civil Rights in the United States, 1941-1972* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).

War. The embargo quadrupled oil prices.¹⁹ The shock drove up energy prices by 70% in the United States.²⁰ This price hike in oil sent the manufacturing sector in the U.S. economy reeling. Auto, appliance, textile, furniture, and television manufacturers struggled. The shock contributed to growing inflation and provoked a national recession in 1974 and 1975.²¹

The 1974-1975 economic recession signaled the end of the postwar economic boom.²² The 1970s recession was the worst since the 1930s. According to Stein, the U.S. economy experienced a dramatic decline between October 1974 and March 1975. “Productivity plunged 2.7 percent. The decline in business profits was the worst in seventeen years. Wages fell 2.1 percent. Unemployment reached 7.2 in December,” Stein reports.²³ Black unemployment, typically higher than white unemployment, grew to 14.8% in 1975.²⁴ The recession hindered and halted labor militancy in the private and public sectors.²⁵

Industrial cities such as Detroit and Cleveland felt the brunt of the oil shock and recessions during the 1970s. These crises hit Detroit the hardest as its economy depended primarily on the mass production and consumption of cars depended upon low energy costs. During the 1974-1975 recession, Detroit’s unemployment rate was double that of the national

¹⁹ Stein, *Pivotal Decade*, 74.

²⁰ Daniel J. Sargent, “The United States and Globalization in the 1970s” in *The Shock of the Global: The 1970s in Perspective*, 49.

²¹ Judith Stein, *Pivotal Decade: How the United States Traded Factories for Finance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 74 & 114; Charles S. Maier, “‘Malaise’: The Crisis of Capitalism in the 1970s,” in *The Shock of the Global: The 1970s in Perspective*, eds. Niall Ferguson, Charles S. Maier, Erez Manela, and Daniel J. Sargent (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 31.

²² Stein, “Politics and Policies,” 142

²³ Stein, *Pivotal Decade*, 115.

²⁴ Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Unemployment rates by race and ethnicity, 2010,” *TED: The Economics Daily*, accessed February 13, 2016, http://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2011/ted_20111005_data.htm

²⁵ Cowie, *Stayin’ Alive: 1970s and the Last Days of the Working Class* (New York: New Press, 2010), 217; Joseph A. McCartin, *Collision Course: Ronald Reagan, the Air Traffic Controllers and the Strike that Changed America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); McCartin, “Solvents of Solidarity: Political Economy, Collective Action, and the Crisis of Organized Labor, 1968-2005,” in *Rethinking U.S. Labor History: Essays on the Working-Class Experience*, ed. Donna T. Haverty-Stacke and Daniel J. Walkowitz (New York: Continuum, 2010).

rate—it increased from 12.5 to 17.4% while the country’s rate rose from 5.6 to 8.5%.²⁶

Cleveland’s unemployment rate tacked closer to the national average. By December 1974, unemployment in the Cleveland metropolitan area had reached 6.1%. Manager of state employment services, Emden C. Schulze, estimated that the city’s unemployment rate may have been 10% while the rate for African Americans, Hispanics, and Latinos “was probably about 16 per cent” combined.²⁷

Economic recession, urban fiscal crises, deindustrialization, disarray within the Democratic Party, and a largely ineffectual national organized labor movement set the stage for the reappearance of progressivism and economic democracy. A network of progressive activists, elected officials, organizations, and publications coalesced during the 1970s. Progressives occupied the Democratic Party’s left wing. As political scientist James Jennings explains, progressives “did not accept the accumulation or protection of capital as a greater priority than the needs of poor and working class citizens.”²⁸ And as leftist journalists Alexander Cockburn and James Ridgeway once remarked about one of their conferences, “There were faces from the 60s,” but, there was “no radical hangover.”²⁹ This group of progressives articulated a populist critique of corporate power and advanced a program of “economic democracy,” which entailed, but was not limited to, greater regulation of corporations, establishment of worker-owned enterprises, the public control over energy, utilities, and banking.

A leftist counterpublic sphere took shape during the 1960s and 1970s. Think tanks and publications such as the Washington, D.C.-based Institute for Policy Studies (IPS), Exploratory Project for Economic Alternatives, the Institute of the Black World, *In These Times*, *Working*

²⁶ Thomas J. Anton, *Federal Aid to Detroit* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1983), 6-7.

²⁷ Douglas E. Kneeland, “On the Jobless Line in Cleveland,” *New York Times*, January 28, 1975.

²⁸ James Jennings, “Boston: Blacks and Progressive Politics,” in *The New Black Vote: Politics and Power in Four American Cities*, ed. by Rod Bush (San Francisco: Synthesis Publications, 1984), 215.

²⁹ Alexander Cockburn and James Ridgeway, “The ‘New Progressives,’” *The Village Voice*, 23 June 1975.

Papers for a New Society, and *Mother Jones* developed and disseminated progressive ideas. In June 1975, more than 150 activists and public officials gathered in Madison, Wisconsin for the first annual Conference for Alternative State and Local Public Policies. In addition to serving as a crucial meeting space for progressives from across the country to gather and share ideas and organizing and governing advice, the organization published several key documents aiding OPIC and other groups fighting plant closure.

National labor- and citizen-based coalitions also arose during the 1970s. The Citizen-Labor Energy Coalition and the Progressive Alliance emerged in response to crises in energy and in organized labor. William Winipisnger and Heather Booth formed the Citizen-Labor Energy Committee (CLEC) in an effort to develop a grassroots energy policy in response to the late-1970s oil shock.³⁰ UAW President Doug Fraser organized the Progressive Alliance in [year]. While the organization failed to create a long-lasting progressive coalition aimed at tackling corporate power, it contributed greatly to the movement against plant closings. The Progressive Alliance enlisted Barry Bluestone's and Bennett Harrison's expertise to publish studies of deindustrialization. They published their first analysis—*Capital and Communities: The Causes and Consequences of Private Disinvestment*—in 1980.³¹ Their studies culminated with the publication of *The Deindustrialization of America: Plant closings, Community abandonment, and the Dismantling of Basic Industry* in 1982, which built upon OPIC's works documenting plant closings.

Although many political scientists argue that black politics also drifted rightward in the 1970s, black politics often represented a vestige of New Deal, or left, liberalism. African American mayors and many of their constituents, and black political groups such as the

³⁰ Andrew Battista, "Labor and Liberalism: The Citizen Labor Energy Coalition," *Labor History*, Vol. 40, No. 3 (1999), 301.

³¹ Andrew Battista, *The Revival of Labor-Liberalism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008), 91.

Congressional Black Caucus operated on the left wing of the Democratic Party. Even though the 1972 “Gary Declaration” arose out of a meeting between black radicals such as Amiri Baraka and black politicians such as Gary’s mayor, Richard Hatcher, it contained many economic and foreign policy ideas that were to the left of the Democratic Party. The left-liberal “Gary Declaration” called for more substantial economic development, a guaranteed family income, a raised minimum wage, and redistributive measures through tax reforms and hikes in estate and gift taxes. The document was anti-imperialist and critical of mass government expenditures in defense as well, two stances that Washington would highlight in his primary campaign.³²

The Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) operated on the Democratic Party’s progressive wing during the 1970s and 1980s. The CBC and its white allies also suffered a major setback in terms of producing and pushing through legislation that targeted the issue of unemployment. During the late 1970s, the CBC led the charge with the attempt to pass full employment legislation. In 1978, Congress passed the Humphrey-Hawkins Bill, which was a piece of legislation that black supporters believed would secure full employment, and be in the spirit of Martin Luther King’s Poor People’s Movement. The legislation failed to impact the national labor market, however, because neither the President, Congress, nor the Federal Reserve sought to implement it.³³

³² According to Robert C. Smith, the convention at Gary fomented a black politics that focused on agenda setting and mobilizing around “deracialized” issues. Smith counts six different policy setting messages or platforms that black politicians created between 1972 and 1981. Like the Gary Declaration, many of these proposals focused on economics and international concerns. Typical plans included calls for full employment, welfare reform, universal health insurance, and foreign policy issues such as criticisms of US stances towards Apartheid South Africa. Robert C. Smith, “Politics is not Enough,” *From Exclusion to Inclusion: The Long Struggle for African American Political Power*, eds. Ralph C. Gomes and Linda Faye Williams (New York: Greenwood Press, 1992), 111-112. For a larger explanation of the Gary Convention see Cedric Johnson, *Revolutionaries to Race Leaders: Black Power and the Making of African American Politics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 109-111.

³³ Robert C. Smith, *We Have No Leaders: African-Americans in the Post-Civil Rights Era* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996), 187-210.

Progressives Move toward a New Focal Point After Vietnam: Multinational Corporations

The Ohio Public Interest Campaign was born out of the Indochina Peace Campaign's attempt to locate the next focal point for action. Ira Arlook and members of Ohio's IPC chapters viewed the growth around U.S.-based multinational corporations as a possible focal point. Ohio's IPC members entered into unfolding conversations among liberals and radicals about the rise of multinational corporations (MNCs) and capital mobility. Organized labor began mobilizing against the power of MNCs during the early 1970s. Radical theorists, many of them relying on a Marxist-Leninist analysis, began trumpeting MNC's as a manifestation of the latest phase of capitalist development. Liberal analysts, such as economist Richard Barnet, critiqued the growing power that MNCs began to exert on nation-states and workers. And the IPC began laying the foundation for the Ohio Public Interest Campaign's analysis of how the force of MNCs manifested themselves on a local level—via disinvestment and plant closings.

Views on MNCs can be divided roughly into four categories—a business view that saw MNCs as preferred development, a liberal-labor view, a radical view, and a left-liberal view. The labor view, exemplified by the AFL-CIO, was grounded in mostly protectionist approaches to dealing with MNCs. Like left-liberals and radicals, they saw MNCs as a threat to workers' rights, but, like left-liberals they proposed protectionist legislation. Left-liberals tended to eschew the nationalist rhetoric of organized labor unions such as the AFL-CIO and tended to disagree with the Marxist-Leninist analysis of MNCs. But, like organize labor, left-liberals call for greater regulations of corporate capital. Radical theorists and critics of MNCs advanced Marxist-Leninist understandings of corporate and economic restructuring. Often drawing from either Sweezy and Baran's concept of monopoly capital, or Lenin's theories of imperialism, radicals articulated stagist theories of economic development—MNCs representing a higher form of

capitalism, another step towards creating the conditions for the emergence of a global proletariat. Radicals often emphasized MNCs' role in uneven economic development between regions and within and among nations. Organized labor, left-liberals, and radicals all agreed, however, that unchecked MNCs were the source of plant closings and unemployment. The AFL-CIO spearheaded an effort to curb the power of MNCs during the late-1960s and early 1970s. The AFL-CIO proposed legislation to curb foreign direct investment by U.S.-based companies. The Foreign Trade and Investment Act of 1972 called for eliminating tax breaks for investing in foreign countries. It forbade corporations from sheltering profits and investments overseas. The bill also limited imports. Senator Vance Hartke of Indiana and Representative James Burke of Massachusetts agreed to sponsor AFL-CIO's legislation and introduced it in late 1971.³⁴ Business leaders and members of the Nixon Administration roundly opposed the legislation. While speaking at the Detroit Economic Club in May 1972, David Rockefeller charged that MNCs were "'being hauled before the court of public opinion and indicted.'"³⁵ Other businessmen, such as the Cleveland, Ohio-based Westinghouse Electric Company also defended MNCs and attacked the bill.³⁶ After much opposition, the bill never made it to the floor for a vote.

The union published a report in 1973 analyzing the bill's failure. The AFL-CIO's report, *U.S. Multinationals: The Dimming of America*, advanced a nationalist critique of the growth of MNCs. They worried that the MNCs growing power threatened the nation-state's ability to govern them. They also asserted that corporations did not act as proper citizens of the U.S. They argued that MNCs only demonstrated allegiance to themselves. They deemed MNCs, and those

³⁴ John Judis, *The Paradox of American Democracy: Elites, Special Interests and the Betrayal of Public Trust* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2000), 114; "Labor, Business Square Off in Trade Fight, Even Though Key Bill has no Chance in '72," *Wall Street Journal*, May 15, 1972.

³⁵ Quoted in Judis, 115.

³⁶ "Westinghouse Assails Burke-Hartke Measure; Curb on Growth Feared," *Wall Street Journal*, April 6, 1972.

who ran them, as the “non-American ‘Cosmocorps.’” This group represented the emerging global corporate managerial class who turned their back on America and its workers. “American-based multinationals,” the report states, “by moving to another part of the world, shun the laws of this country, just as they shun the flag of this nation.”³⁷

Despite the AFL-CIO’s nationalism and protectionism, their report anticipated many of the IPC critiques of MNCs and many of the leftist critiques of deindustrialization during the late 1970s and early 1980s. They placed blame for the nation’s economic woes squarely on large corporations. They alluded to the local effects of corporate restructuring when they expressed concern about the U.S. becoming “a land of idle workers and empty factories.”³⁸ Like many leftists, they pointed to the increasing power of multinational banks in restructuring the global political economy. They claimed that the transfer of capital represented the graver threat to the nation than the movement of production.³⁹ Banks, in effect, could disturb economic public policy (such as monetary policy) and they help facilitated the sheltering of profits from U.S. taxation.⁴⁰

While the AFL-CIO lost the political battle, their fight opened up a public conversation about MNCs among left-liberals and radicals. Radicals tended to view MNCs as the latest manifestation of monopoly capitalism. They saw global corporations as the primary culprit of economic instability, and thus, the primary target of action as the U.S. military floundered in Indochina. Radical theorists such as scholar Stephen Hymer, activist Robert Scheer, and economist Steve Babson, maintained that MNCs were the source of uneven development, deindustrialization, and waste. Black radicals also weighed in on the debate. Black Panther Huey Newton acknowledged the growing power of MNCs, but also asserted that they created the

³⁷ AFL-CIO Maritime Trade Department, *U.S. Multinationals: The Dimming of America*, (AFL-CIO, 1973), 15.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 86.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 35.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 35-43.

conditions for a revolutionary intercommunalism whereas Black Communist Carl Bloice argued that MNCs represented the greatest threat to black workers.⁴¹ Similar to conversations about imperialism, leftist analyses of MNCs rested on the Marxist-Leninist view that monopoly capitalism represented the latest stage of capitalism. The following analysts drew from Lenin's pamphlet on the subject, but, like Baran and Sweezy, placed U.S. corporate capitalism at the center.

Black Communist Carl Bloice viewed automation, the growth of MNCs, and the global concentration of finance as serious threats to black labor power. According to Bloice, proletarianization was under attack by these forces: "the forces of production and finance under capitalism are being pitted against the black worker and thereby all black people. Being that 94% of all black people in the U.S. are workers, what we are confronted with might be called the steady lumpenization of a people."⁴² Since black Americans comprised much of the nation's urban industrial working class, the globalization of production threatened to hurt them the most. Yet, similar to the Detroit's League of Black Revolutionary Workers' outlook, black workers in cities represented the vanguard of the black liberation movement during this period. Based upon his analysis, Bloice recognized the significance of the state of Michigan, and presumably the city of Detroit, in the fight between black American workers and MNCs.⁴³

Steve Babson, a scholar from the Union for Radical Political Economics, agreed with the AFL-CIO that MNCs were the source for deindustrialization and unemployment. Confronting pro-MNC arguments that the globalization of production stimulated domestic job growth, Babson thought such suggestions were often exaggerated. He cited a Tariff Commission study that found that foreign direct investment created one job in the U.S. for every 3.3 jobs it created

⁴¹ Carl Bloice, "The Black Worker's Future in American Capitalism," *The Black Scholar*, Vol. 3, Issue 9 (1972), 18.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 15.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

elsewhere.⁴⁴ Babson concurred with critics who contended that the globalization of production provided capital with a formidable weapon in its struggle against labor—the threat of leaving. Acknowledging the long history of “runaway plants,” or deindustrialization, in the New England region, Babson illustrated how corporations such as General Electric and Frigidaire used layoffs and threats of plant closures to discipline workers.

Leftist journalist Robert Scheer wrote that MNCs had taken control over U.S. politics and the economy in his 1974 book, *America After Nixon: The Age of Multinationals*. “The age of multinationals represent a time when effective control over what is important has passed to the new breed of transnational corporations. The ascension of Nelson Rockefeller to the Vice-Presidency merely symbolizes a process that had already been well underway,” Scheer wrote.⁴⁵ Scheer maintained that one could not talk about the symptoms of the nation’s economic crisis— inflation and unemployment—without considering the central role of MNCs. Due to their large size and scope, political influence, control over scale, and obsession with growth, MNCs undermined worker and citizen power and regulation. Echoing the AFL-CIO’s observation that MNCs sought to destabilize the nation-state (but not the AFL-CIO’s nationalism), Scheer explained, “This abandonment of the nation-state involves giving up a unit of government in which people have some chance of exercising control over these corporations.”⁴⁶ Scheer’s point about MNC’s growth of power in relation to government and labor percolated in progressives’ critiques of corporate power during the mid-to-late 1970s.

Scheer argued that liberalism played a role in the development of MNCs through the Marshall Plan and the liberalization of foreign economies. Scheer viewed liberalism as ill-equipped to confront powerful MNCs. Instead of continuing to hold onto liberalism, Scheer

⁴⁴ Babson, “The Multinational Corporation and Labor,” *Review of Radical Political Economics* (1973), 24.

⁴⁵ Robert Scheer, *America After Nixon: The Age of Multinationals* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974), 1.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 125.

called for “an active, organized left political force” that could oppose MNCs and “restore citizen control over political life.” Scheer also called for a “new leftist coalition” that would leave behind “the style” of the 1960s. Students could no longer serve as the primary agent of social change. Instead, these “new” new leftists would have to try to capitalize on what Scheer saw as a burgeoning populism and build a larger progressive majority.

Detroit leftists analyzed the impact of MNCs on the city. The Detroit Area Research Group (DARG) published *The Average Citizen’s Guide to the Multinational Corporation*. Written by an “ex-heroin addict, a technical white-collar worker for the city of Detroit, a suburban college student, a Chrysler assembly line worker, and a university professor and mother,” DARG was an anonymous leftist group that was clearly connected to the city’s left.⁴⁷ They specifically focused on the role of the “Big 3” automakers in urban development. The DARG argued the “Big 3” possessed a disproportionate power in decisions regarding development. The “Big 3” sought to control the creation of a proposed high speed transit system in the city. They also pointed to Henry Ford II’s and the Detroit Renaissance, Inc.’s—an urban development organization devoted to the economic revitalization of the city—reliance on gentrification to develop the city through luxury apartments and office buildings instead of rehabilitating housing in the city’s neighborhoods. “One has to ask, though, who will be using these gleaming castles?,” DARG asked. “No housing is going to be made available to the poor and the working people who manage to just make the mortgage payment,” they continued. DARG’s pro-neighborhood, and anti-corporate, arguments anticipated those advanced by the

⁴⁷ Detroit Area Research Group, *The Average Citizen’s Guide to the Multinational Corporation* (Detroit: The Group, 1973).

Ohio Public Interest Campaign and Kenneth Cockrel and the Detroit Alliance for a Rational Economy during the late 1970s.⁴⁸

Leftists advanced several potential strategies for confronting MNCs and capital flight. Scholar Robert Hymer suggested the vague idea of “regional planning as a positive negation of the multinational corporation.”⁴⁹ Babson suggested that activists rework portions of the Burke-Hartke Bill.⁵⁰ Babson asserted, “The Burke-Hartke Bill, minus the section on import quotas and with extensive re-writing of the remaining sections, could be made into a feasible set of initial demands.”⁵¹ DARG advanced vague individualized suggestions such as joining local leftist organizations like the Control, Conflict, and Change bookclub, a group with whom Sheila Murphy was affiliated.⁵²

Many leftists agreed that a leftist populist movement was needed to confront MNCs. Hymer, like Huey Newton, was confident that opponents of MNCs and the globalization of production could use its technological advances to confront globalized corporate power. “Fortunately businessmen in attacking the problem of applying technology on a world level have developed many of the tools and conditions needed for a socialist solution, if we can but stand them on their head, he wrote.⁵³ Hymer also recognized the need for a left populist politics. Hymer suggested, “What is needed is a complete change in direction. The starting point must be the needs of the bottom two-thirds, and not the demands of the top third. The primary goal of such strategy would be to provide minimum standards of health, education, food, and clothing to the entire population...”⁵⁴

⁴⁸ DARG, 5-6.

⁴⁹ Stephen Hymer, “The Multinational Corporation and the Law of Uneven Development,” 135.

⁵⁰ Babson, 32.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 32.

⁵² Robert H. Mast, *Detroit Lives* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994), 87.

⁵³ Hymer, 135.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 134.

Richard Barnet's and Ronald Müller's 1974 book, *Global Reach: The Power of Multinational Corporations* inspired OPIC's analyses of MNCs. Representing a liberal view, Ronald Müller was a trained economist and Richard Barnet co-founded the liberal think tank, the Institute of Policy Studies, with Marcus Raskin in 1963. Müller specialized in economic development while Barnet wrote extensively about U.S. foreign policy before publishing *Global Reach*. Barnet's and Müller's text was to the right of Leninism, yet to the left of the AFL-CIO's critique of MNCs. However, they did echo the AFL-CIO's contention that MNCs transcended the imperatives of the nation-state. They believed that the multinational corporation had not only become a powerful agent in shaping the national and emerging global economy, but they were the purveyors of economic and political inequality. However, they did not see global corporations as fundamental adversaries of economic and political democracy like Marxists and other left-liberals such as Arlook. They thought MNCs could be reformed and regulated.

The power of their text rested upon their thick description of the emergence of the globalization of production. After declaring that "the men who run the global corporations are the first in history with the organization, technology, money, and ideology to make a credible try at managing the world as an integrated unit," they went into painstaking detail to describe the conditions of corporate restructuring, managerial strategies, and MNCs' effects on the United States and third world.⁵⁵ They described how MNCs such as IBM, Mobil, and General Motors used advances in communications, computer technology, transportation, and management to direct the production, distribution, marketing, and selling of goods on a globalized scale.⁵⁶ The

⁵⁵ Richard Barnet and Ronald Müller, *Global Reach: The Power of Multinational Corporations* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1974), 13.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 35-37.

shift towards global corporate management, according to the authors, also stimulated the centralization of industries in fewer large corporations.⁵⁷

Müller and Barnet were especially interested in how MNCs sought to transform politics with the intent of creating more favorable conditions of expanding their companies and advancing the gospel of a borderless and unregulated global market that allowed money, capital, technology, and products to flow freely. “The U.S. global manager, despite his traditional suspicion of government and his extravagant faith in the ability of business men to serve the public interest better than politicians, is now asking Washington to step up official support of U.S. business abroad to counter the advantages that national governments afford his foreign competitors,” the authors reported.⁵⁸

Barnet’s and Müller’s primary criticism of MNCs was of their propensity to produce inequality among the “third world” and the West as well as among the wealthy and workers and poor within the U.S. They described the process of growing economic inequality in the U.S. as the “Latin Americanization of the United States.” According to the authors, MNCs created the conditions that made the U.S. resemble “underdeveloped nations.” Barnet and Müller asserted, “it is now possible to discern certain structural changes in the United States which are causing the world’s richest nation to take on some of the aspects of an underdeveloped country. Some of these changes are directly related to the rise of the global corporation.”⁵⁹

This process, according to the authors, entailed the emergence of “the globalization of oligopoly capitalism” where the various technological, managerial, and political transformations during the late 1960s and early 1970s resulted in the expansion of U.S.-based global corporations. Consequently, the greatest corporate power was consolidated in those firms. These

⁵⁷ Ibid., 37-42.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 39-40.

⁵⁹ Barnet and Müller, 213.

corporations concerned themselves primarily with maximizing profit. They also cited the restructuring of the international division of labor. They pointed to the development of Latin American, Asian, and African nations as new production hubs in the post-colonial era.⁶⁰

Echoing the AFL-CIO, the authors acknowledged how the growth of production abroad meant the slimming down of manufacturing in the U.S. They confirmed that the obsolescence of U.S. production created more “unemployable” persons, or what 1969s policy makers called the “hard-core unemployed.” “The effect is to eliminate traditional jobs on the assembly line and thereby to reduce the blue collar work force and to replace these jobs with others (probably a smaller number) requiring quite different skills.” Instead of a manufacturing-based economy, the U.S. would produce “plans, programs, and ideas for others to execute.” The U.S. would become an information and service hub employing less Americans.⁶¹

Barnet and Müller critiqued labor and Marxist approaches to MNCs. They say labor unions as too nationalistic. They recognized the power of finance capital, but they did not see the essential union between finance capital and the state as Marxist-Leninists did.⁶² In fact, they often maintained that the MNCs threw the legitimacy of the nation-state into question. Müller and Barnet also disagreed with radicals over their analyses of imperialism and the role of banks in the national and global economy. The authors reasoned that there were times when bankers’ and industrialists’ shared an identical goal—to ensure profit and promote growth. When banks operated in “regulated industries” such as the railroads, utilities, and communications, they tended to wield greater power over particular companies. Despite these differences, Barnet and Müller advanced some proposals that future critics of MNCs and plant closings would appreciate—tax code reforms, ensure greater worker power, redistribution of income in order to

⁶⁰ Barnet and Müller, 214.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 216.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 194; 239-243.

shrink the gap between the rich and the poor, the break-up of the most concentrated industries, making corporations more beholden to the community.

OPIC activists believed that Müller's and Baret's prescriptions needed to be turned "on their head," as Arlook recalled—start from the bottom-up and plan locally rather than national planning.⁶³ The conversations about MNCs that occurred within the Ohio chapter of the IPC allowed future OPIC members such as Ira Arlook to make valuable intellectual and political contributions to conversations about globalization and deindustrialization of cities. They successfully connected the dynamics of the national and global concentration of corporate power to local plant closings. Baret and Müller only hinted at the connection. Labor unions did make this connection with their discussions of the relationship between MNCs and "runaway plants," but future OPIC activists complicated the connection between MNCs and "runaways" by deepening understandings of the process of corporate disinvestment and deindustrialization.

Establishing the Ohio Public Interest Campaign

Ohio Indochina Peace Campaign activists formed the Ohio Public Interest Campaign (OPIC) in 1975. They charged themselves with confronting corporate power and plant closings in Cleveland, Ohio. OPIC functioned similarly to IPC, but on a state level. The organization's base was Cleveland, but they had members in several cities including Cincinnati, Akron, and Dayton. OPIC also assisted activists in other cities struggling against plant closings during the late 1970s and early 1980s like Youngstown. Even though they engaged in local and state politics, OPIC's leadership saw the organization as part of a growing movement against plant closings. Other progressive organizations such as Massachusetts Fair Share modeled much of their political proposals around the issue after OPIC.

⁶³ Austin McCoy, Interview with Ira Arlook, April 19, 2013.

Kelly and OPIC thought maintaining the state's industrial base was in the interests of not just factory workers, but everyone. Arlook remarked, "We felt that unless the issue was seen as more than a labor question it wouldn't be enough. It was really a public interest question that meant senior citizens should be concerned, traditional community organizations should be concerned, religious congregations, even many small businesspeople."⁶⁴ Kelly argued that it was necessary to move the issue of plant closings outside of traditional labor-management relations, or collective bargaining. It was a mistake, the organization thought, to organize around industrial workers alone because organized labor "was unfortunately isolated."⁶⁵ Instead OPIC sought to build a broad based grassroots campaign akin to IPC's Indochina campaign. OPIC envisioned the campaign pulling together a wide range of constituencies including organized labor, the peace movement, "Nader-inspired research and advocacy groups," and liberal Democrats.⁶⁶

OPIC sought "to work on economic issues affecting the state of Ohio."⁶⁷ Also, for activists like Arlook, addressing plant closings represented one strategy to connect the local with the global and confront "corporate globalization."⁶⁸ The restructuring of global production transformed the Midwestern economy. The region served as a national manufacturing hub for automobiles, rubber and tires, steel, and durable goods. And while deindustrialization began long before the 1970s, the process intensified as scores of factories closed and Midwestern and Northeastern cities hemorrhaged jobs, capital, and people during this period. The spate of plant closure during the 1970s and 1980s resulted in the loss of thousands of manufacturing jobs.

⁶⁴ Quoted in Boyte, *Citizen Action and the New American Populism* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986), 59-60.

⁶⁵ Kelly, "Plant Closing Legislation: The Ohio Experience," 37.

⁶⁶ Arlook, "Program Proposal," 10.

⁶⁷ Edward Kelly, "Plant Closings Legislation: The Ohio Experience," 1.

⁶⁸ McCoy, interview with Arlook; Arlook, "Program Proposal," 6.

Youngstown lost nearly 10,000 jobs due to steel mill closings between 1977 and 1979. Cleveland lost 68,442 manufacturing jobs between 1979 and 1983.⁶⁹

According to a Department of Labor report on displaced workers, 11.5 million workers 20 years age and over lost jobs due to deindustrialization nationally between 1979 and 1983. Almost half of those workers—5.1 million—were employed for at least three years. African Americans comprised 12 percent of those workers. The East North Central Region, which included Michigan, Illinois, Ohio, Indiana, and Wisconsin, lost over 550,000 jobs. Of those jobs, 225,000 auto workers were displaced. “Of these,” the report stated, “44 percent reported they had lost their jobs because their plants had closed.”⁷⁰

OPIC “believed that plant closings affected the most Ohioans.” Statistics help explain why OPIC activists saw the state of Ohio as a crucial site for organizing against the “economic structure of empire,” as Paul Ryder called it.⁷¹ Between 1958 and 1983, firms fled to the suburbs and out of the state. During this period, the city of Cleveland lost 21.5 percent of its manufacturing firms. Cleveland lost 27.5 percent of its industrial workers while the number of manufacturing laborers increased in the suburbs by almost 50 percent between 1958 and 1972.⁷² Also, the northeast Ohio region experienced several plant closings in the years following the establishment of OPIC. In 1975, Akron’s Goodyear Plant closed. The SCM Corporation closes Cleveland’s Glidden Plant in 1976. Diamond Shamrock moves south in the same year. US Steel

⁶⁹ Edward Hill, “The Cleveland Economy”; Lynd, *The Fight Against Shutdowns*.

⁷⁰ U.S. Department of Labor, *Displaced Workers, 1979-1983* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau Statistics, 1985), 1-11.

⁷¹ McCoy, Interview with Paul Ryder.

⁷² Ohio Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, *Affirmative Action or Inaction?: The Pursuit of Equal Opportunity in Cleveland* (1977); Edward W. Hill, “The Cleveland Economy: A Case Study of Economic Restructuring,” in *Cleveland: A Metropolitan Reader*, ed. W. Dennis Keating, Norman Krumholz, and David C. Perry (Kent: Kent State University Press, 1995), 54-55.

closed its plant in 1978 and Westinghouse Lamp Plant closed the following year. General Electric closed six factories.⁷³ In Youngstown, Lykes Sheet and Tube closed in 1977.⁷⁴

Yet, OPIC had to organize in a state where the Republican Governor argued for a development model emphasizing tax breaks and building a “better” business climate. Governor James Rhodes served as Ohio’s governor for eight years (1963-1971) before returning for two more terms in 1975.⁷⁵ Rhodes governed as a moderate in both stints in the statehouse. Yet, unlike Michigan Republican Governor George Romney, Rhodes did not boast a national profile. Rhodes attracted the ire of the New Left, however, for the deployment of the National Guard at Kent State that led to the deaths of Allison Krause, Jeffrey Miller, William Knox Schroeder, and Sandra Lee Scheuer on May 4, 1970.

Times changed in the four years that Rhodes was not in office. Rhodes reentered the governor’s mansion in the midst of economic recession. He also had to face Democratic majorities in the General Assembly. Thus, among Rhodes’s political goals was to make the state “Depression proof.”⁷⁶ This meant attracting industry and revitalizing the state’s biggest cities. “We’re going to get jobs for all the people of Ohio regardless of race, color, creed or sex,” he declared at his inaugural address.⁷⁷

Rhodes sought to finance the state’s economic revitalization with a cocktail of bonds, a slight tax increase on gasoline, and tax incentives for businesses. Rhodes sought to use tax abatements—a reduction or an exemption from property taxes over a specified period of time—for urban redevelopment. While Rhodes was willing to commit the state to public spending in

⁷³ Edward Hill, “The Cleveland Economy,” 60-63.

⁷⁴ Lynd, *The Fight Against Shutdowns*.

⁷⁵ Governors are only allowed to serve two consecutive terms in the Ohio Constitution. Leonard, 156.

⁷⁶ Quoted in Lee Leonard, “Rhodes’s Second Eight Years, 1975-1983,” in *Ohio Politics*, eds. Alexander P. Landis and Brian Usher (Kent: Kent State University Press, 2007), 129.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 130.

housing, transportation, and public improvements, Rhodes thought the state's manufacturing sector suffered from high taxes. He told the General Assembly in March 1975, "We might as well hang signs at the state borders that say 'Industry Not Welcome Here.'"⁷⁸

OPIC built upon the state-based networks that IPC activists had established. The central office was located in Cleveland, but the organization eventually also opened offices in, Columbus, Akron, Dayton, and Youngstown. Not only were many of these cities the largest in the state, they also boasted larger African American populations.

OPIC's focus on economic crisis and plant closings also stemmed from IPC's anti-imperialist politics. Members of OPIC like Arlook maintained that U.S. corporate and military power were two sides of the same coin. In IPC's June 30, 1975 program proposal for future action, Arlook stated, "We can begin to demonstrate the structural roots of U.S. foreign policy—the need to provide military protection for overseas economic expansion. Public opinion is highly dubious about the role of the big corporations."⁷⁹ Having won the fight over the end of the Vietnam War, OPIC's leadership now believed it could take on corporate power.

So what explained OPIC's decision to focus on state-level politics instead of remaining local, like the Detroit Alliance for a Rational Economy, or participating in national politics like IPC?" OPIC activists thought Congress was unlikely to deliver on their proposed economic reforms. Arlook explained their organization's reasoning to a UAW/Independent Parts Suppliers (IPS) local in October 1975: "We don't have the votes in Congress yet that we need to pass such [plant closing] legislation."⁸⁰ The organization believed they could successfully mobilize citizens across the state around the issue of plant closings, and their efforts would lay a foundation for

⁷⁸ Quoted in Leonard, 130.

⁷⁹ Arlook, "Proposal," 2.

⁸⁰ Ira Arlook, "Transcript of Speech to Region 2 of the United Automobile Workers/Independent Parts Suppliers," OCA Papers, Box 7, Folder: SB 337, WRHS.

federal legislation. “The efforts to pass state plant closing legislation,” Kelly reflected several years after OPIC’s founding, “while important in their own right, would also help build a base for national legislation. OPIC believed that most progressive legislation which had been passed by Congress was preceded by state legislation.”⁸¹ Arlook and OPIC also hoped their efforts would serve as model for future organizing in other states. “We believe that an important way to build a broad base of support for national legislation is to begin at the state level—in a key state such as Ohio—and try to build an organization and a coalition that can serve as a model for people and organizations in other states...”⁸²

The Campaign to Fight Plant Closure

OPIC’s progressivism and plant closure campaign reflected the organization’s recognition that the crisis in New Deal liberalism foreclosed the political opportunities for implementing plant closure legislation and fighting corporate power on a national level. While the Democratic Party and organized labor leadership and civil rights organizations did not focus on collective rights, instead pursuing a range of single-issues, progressives believed that it was essential to collectivize, municipalize, etc. industry and other economic decisions. Opposing plant closings and seeking to hold corporations accountable represented a push for economic democracy, albeit a reformist one compared to DARE and other movements to stop plant shutdowns. The organization thought similarly as labor activist-intellectual Staughton Lynd’s when it came to organizing in crisis: in times of economic hardship and crisis, workers and citizens would consider different ideas.⁸³

⁸¹ Kelly, “Plant Closings Legislation,” 37.

⁸² Arlook, “Transcript of Speech to Region 2 of the United Automobile Workers/Independent Parts Suppliers,” 3.

⁸³ Staughton Lynd, *Living Inside Our Hope: A Steadfast Radical’s Thoughts on Rebuilding the Movement* (Ithaca: ILR Press, 1997), 162.

In OPIC's initial phase, the organization sought to garner support from local labor unions in northeast Ohio. OPIC lent support to workers facing plant closings. Arlook also delivered speeches outlining the organization's analysis and plans. Arlook and OPIC saw UAW locals as presumptive allies because of the history of UAW locals challenging individual plant closures. Arlook outlined OPIC's burgeoning progressive politics to members of Region 2 UAW and Independent Parts Suppliers in Mentor, Ohio in late October 1975. He began by illustrating how plant closings represented a community-labor issue rather than just one that unions could solve through collective bargaining. "I was invited here to talk about an organization that I work with...that has gotten started because of the problems created for everyone—not just working men and women, but all taxpayers; senior citizens; families with children of school age; everyone—problems created by plant closures due to runaway industry," he declared.⁸⁴

Arlook's echoed his prior analyses of deindustrialization to union members. He located the problem in two factors: the concentration of corporate ownership and the spread of MNCs. Arlook argued that the growth of corporate power through mergers and the expansion of MNCs had led to great transfers of capital from not just the North to the South and West, but also from the U.S. to nations with cheaper labor markets.⁸⁵ Arlook's argument regarding the extension of MNCs to low wage regions and nations underscored the organization's efforts to connect the globalization of particular industries to local plant closings.

Arlook listed the consequences of the globalization of production and the restructuring of corporate firms, including structural unemployment, decreased wages, tax increases for workers, and the decline in workers' standard of living. Structural unemployment represented the most immediate consequence. In his discussion of job displacement, Arlook also acknowledged the

⁸⁴ Arlook, "Transcript of Speech to Region 2 of the United Automobile Workers/Independent Parts Suppliers."

⁸⁵ Ibid.

growth of the service sector. Yet, Arlook argued against the argument that overall job growth was keeping pace with the decline in manufacturing. “And when, and if, these [manufacturing] jobs are replaced, it’s with a smaller number of service jobs which are paid at a lower rate.”⁸⁶

The expansion of MNCs and plant closings also contributed to economic inequality. Arlook claimed that corporations took advantage of laws that encouraged foreign investment. Such policies allowed corporations to evade paying taxes, thus leaving workers with a greater tax burden. Arlook also pointed to a U.S. Department of Labor study claiming that income inequality had increased over the last 20 years with much “of the national income going to the top 20% of the population coming at the expense of blue and white collar wage-earners.”⁸⁷

Arlook then discussed OPIC’s plan to address economic restructuring, crisis, and plant closings. He expressed his support for the UAW’s program to address corporate power through ending corporate tax breaks, forcing firms to provide severance pay to laid off workers, limit capital exports, and federal legislation like the Ford-Mondale Bill that addresses plant closure. “But,” Arlook contended, “there are some obstacles in our path: we don’t have the votes in Congress yet that we need to pass such legislation.”⁸⁸ Arlook argued instead for a state-based movement—a community-labor coalition that could serve as an organizing and political model for other states—to pass anti-plant closure legislation on the state level. “A public interest campaign” of organized labor, white collar workers, religious organizations, city councils, and civil rights groups,” he insisted, could serve as a base for a progressive electoral majority.

Arlook concluded by outlining OPIC’s legislation. The bill would require corporations to pay full wages to displaced workers for two years and a tax to fund finance and community assistance. While Arlook did not provide any details as to how the third component would work,

⁸⁶ Arlook, “Transcript of Speech to Region 2 of the United Automobile Workers/Independent Parts Suppliers.”

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

the bill also would require firms to give laid off workers the opportunity to transfer to new and existing plants. Arlook acknowledged that the Ford-Mondale bill influenced OPIC's legislation. Yet, he also admitted that state legislation would not be enough to stop deindustrialization. Consequently, Arlook contended that the process for coalition and campaign building to create community-labor power was vital to stopping plant closure.

After OPIC opened its Cleveland office in January 1976, the organization sought to build labor support by supporting workers in their struggles against plant closings. Members of OPIC worked with members of [union] to organize a protest against the closing of Cleveland's Glidden paint plant in February 1976. The Glidden Company established roots in Cleveland in the late nineteenth century. The corporation opened the plant in question in 1906. Glidden eventually merged with the SCM Corporation during the 1967.⁸⁹ Less than a decade later, SCM announced that it would start phasing out the Cleveland plant the following month. The SCM told the *Wall Street Journal* that the facility had "become very costly to operate." The layoffs affected 120 of the 350 workers employed at the plant.⁹⁰

OPIC and the locals from the AFL-CIO and Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers International Union organized a public meeting in response to the Glidden closing. Scheduled for February 14, the meeting represented an expression of OPIC's aims to build a community-labor coalition comprising of labor, citizen, and religious organizations. Arlook, the President of the Local Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers International Union of the AFL-CIO, Nicholas Kostandaras, members of the OCAW local, religious leaders, and Cleveland City Councilman John Lynch and Ohio State Senator Tony Celebrezze were scheduled to speak at the meeting. According to OPIC, over 150 people attended. Kostandaras argued that workers helped the

⁸⁹ "SCM, Glidden Co. Agree on Merger," *Boston Globe*, May 17, 1967.

⁹⁰ "SCM to Phase Out Plant in Cleveland, Lay Off 120 Workers," *Wall Street Journal*, February 23, 1976.

company rebuild after a plant explosion in 1974. “The work was done by regular employees,” Kostandaras stated, “for which the company offered its undying gratitude. Who was to suspect just how soon the gratitude would die?”⁹¹

At the meeting Arlook aspired to articulate a message that highlighted the communal cost of plant closings. Arlook contextualized Glidden’s closing within what he saw as a growing trend of deindustrialization hitting the state. Arlook claimed that the state had lost over 180,000 manufacturing jobs since 1970. Similar to his October 1975 speech in front of the Region 2 UAW, Arlook outlined the consequences of decisions like SCM’s. He argued that communities would “take on a triple tax burden.” Cities would lose tax revenues that were essential for basic services both from the displaced workers and the companies while the federal government and taxpayers would have to pick up the tab for unemployment and welfare payments.⁹²

Arlook laid the responsibility of the Glidden closing at the feet of SCM and argued that SCM was not closing because of the plant’s costliness. Arlook pointed out Glidden’s profitability: “The Glidden Company is the fourth largest paint company in the country. Last year, its sales were \$332.8 million, with profits of close to \$11 million... If Glidden is moving, it is not because the company is having financial difficulties; it is not because the plant is losing money...it is because it can make an even greater profit by absorbing the production of this plant into four others, outside of Ohio.”⁹³ While Arlook did not issue any demands for greater worker decision-making power in investment, he called for greater corporate accountability. He did so by arguing for a law mandating corporations to help compensate workers and communities if

⁹¹ OPIC, “Community Opposes Glidden Decision,” *OPIC Monthly Report*, Vol. 1, No. 1, April 1976.

⁹² Ira Arlook, “Speech to a Public Meeting to Oppose the Closing of the Glidden Paint Plant in Cleveland,” February 14, 1976, OCA Papers, Box 9, Folder “Paint Closings Glidden,” 1, WRHS.

⁹³ Arlook, “Speech to a Public Meeting,” 2.

they decided to leave in order “simply to increase profits.”⁹⁴ Arlook’s remarks anticipated OPIC’s anti-plant closure law. “If major companies are required, by law, to shoulder their share of the problems they create when they move out,” Arlook declared, “they will think twice before leaving; and, in the event that they do leave, the workers they leave behind will receive payments that maintain their full wages at corporate—and not taxpayer’s expense—for a decent length of time; and our communities will receive payments into a fund so that the economy can be redeveloped.” But the only hope to get such a law passed, according to Arlook, was to organize a movement of “a coalition of forces all over Ohio” for the public interest.⁹⁵

Three days later, Edward Kelly published an editorial in the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* imploring SCM to reconsider its decision. After outlining the harmful effects of SCM’s decision on the city’s workers, Kelly punctuated his letter by appealing to community rights to industrial property: “Glidden has been operating in Cleveland since 1883. Thousands of Clevelanders have given their working lives to make it grow and succeed: Surely Glidden owes something to Cleveland in return...It [the plant] should remain in Cleveland in the public interest.”⁹⁶ For OPIC, SCM’s decision to close Glidden substantiated their argument about the relationship between the centralization of corporate power and deindustrialization.

SCM officially closed the Glidden Plant in 1976. In the six months after the factory’s closing, OPIC conducted a survey to document its effects. Of the 119 employees who lost jobs, 69 responded. Their survey found that older workers had a more difficult time finding work after the closing. Workers also suffered lost wages and benefits over time as a result. According to OPIC, nearly 35% of the workers surveyed earned lower wages. Almost half of the laborers who had worked for Glidden for more than twenty years had not found a job at the time of the survey

⁹⁴ Arlook, “Speech to a Public Meeting,” 2.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 2-3.

⁹⁶ Edward Kelly, “Plea to Glidden: ‘Stay!’,” *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, February 17, 1976.

while 82.4% of workers between the ages of 28-39 had found work. OPIC's survey highlighted the contradictions of deindustrialization and a manufacturing-based economy. Economic restructuring created a set of unemployable people, either due to age, mismatched skills, geography, race, gender, or other attributes. The Glidden shut down illustrated the relevance of conversations about structural unemployment. The Glidden closing produced another set of what James Boggs called "outsiders." In this case, the outsiders were older workers who possessed more seniority.⁹⁷

On July 31, 1976, OPIC formally launched its state-wide campaign to pass plant closing legislation at a public meeting in Cleveland. The meeting was called in response to several closings that hit Cleveland and Northeast Ohio. Like the Glidden Plant protest, this occasion featured speakers from a cross-section organized labor and religious organizations. Ohio State Senator Oliver Ocasek and U.S. Senator Howard Metzenbaum also attended and addressed those who attended. Arlook stated the reasons for organizing a campaign, "Manufacturing job loss is a rapidly increasing problem here in Ohio...As industry moves South and overseas in search of cheap labor, Ohioans are left without jobs and our communities lose the tax base which is essential to providing services." State Senator Ocasek criticized Ohio Governor, Republican Jim Rhodes's support for tax breaks to attract corporate investment in the state. Union leaders such as District 7 OCAW President Nick Kostandaras and President of Local 179 United Rubber Workers Lydia Hosler argued for relief for displaced workers.⁹⁸

OPIC's embarked on several tactics in its campaign strategy. They continued to support workers protesting individual closings, they drafted plant closing legislation, held public meetings, and used their publication to communicate to their followers and advance their

⁹⁷ OPIC, "Survey of the Effects of the Glidden Closing," June 1977, OCA Papers, Box 8, Folder "Research Findings," WRHS.

⁹⁸ OPIC, "News Release," July 31, 1976, OCA Papers, Box 8, Folder "Research Findings," WRHS.

analysis of deindustrialization in Ohio. The campaign culminated in a conference and a public rally in Columbus in support of the anti-plant closure legislation. While OPIC was able to attract the support of rank-and-file workers, local union leaders, civil rights and religious organizations, the state's business community and its Republican Party stymied the passage of the bill. The bill died in committee twice, eventually forcing OPIC to concentrate on other economic issues. But, this was not without the organization creating model legislation for other likeminded organizations in the region and producing its influential analysis of plant closings, *Industrial Exodus: Public Strategies for Control of Corporate Relocation*. While the Community Readjustment Act represented a more limited and reactive response to deindustrialization, *Industrial Exodus* presented a more comprehensive plan for establishing economic democracy.

OPIC's research director, Ed Kelly, began drafting the plant closing legislation for the organization. The legislation would apply to firms employing more than 100 people and operating for more than five years. The proposed bill would require businesses to give two years prior notice if the firm planned to shutdown the plant, move a part of its operation to another location, or shutdown a portion of the plant, "resulting in a fifty per cent loss of employment over two years."⁹⁹ The bill also mandated corporations to pay laid off workers and affected communities. These provisions of the legislation were vague. They did not identify how, or by what mechanism, severance would be determined. While proposing to have corporations pay workers was important to address the individual effects of plant closure, mandating firms to compensate communities illustrated the organization's commitment to the concept of collective rights in industrial property.

OPIC's Community Readjustment Act resembled the 1974 National Employment Priorities Act (also known as the Ford-Mondale Bill). Michigan Representative William Ford

⁹⁹ OPIC, "Plant Closing Legislation," OCA Papers, Box 7, Folder: SB 337, WRHS.

and Senator Walter Mondale sponsored a rather ambitious bill that sought to provide relief to displaced manufacturer workers. The Ford-Mondale Bill is similar to the CRA in its general mandates—early notification of closing and provide assistance to workers and communities. With the Ford-Mondale Bill being federal legislation, it prohibited federal support for “unjustified dislocation.” It called for the establishment of a National Employment Relocation Administration in the Department of Labor. This agency would investigate proposed closing, provide assistance to workers and communities, and conduct general research about the problems accompanying deindustrialization. Financial assistance would include maintenance of workers’ incomes, pensions, and health benefits, relocation allowances, early retirement benefits, emergency mortgage and rent payments, and welfare benefits.¹⁰⁰ The bill garnered support from the UAW.¹⁰¹ Arlook and Kelly also cited the bill as model legislation.¹⁰² The 1974 bill died in committee. Democrats would reintroduce the bill to no avail for the next ten years.¹⁰³

State Senator Michael Schwarzwaldner introduced State Bill 337—OPIC’s Community Readjustment Act at an International Union of Electrical Workers (IUE) and OPIC-sponsored SB 337 tacked close to OPIC’s proposal. Along with a cross-section of the type of coalition that OPIC sought to build: members from Ohio’s AFL-CIO, religious leaders, the President of Ohio State Council of Senior Citizens, and members of OPIC. The bill called for two years advance notice, severance pay for workers, and payment into a community fund for redevelopment. Schwarzwaldner stated, “The costs imposed by this legislation are very small compared to

¹⁰⁰ “Summaries for the National Employment Priorities Act,” Govtrack.us. accessed, 1-31-2016, <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/93/hr14238/summary>.

¹⁰¹ Citizen Action, “Making Sense of Plant Closings,” Midwest Academy Papers, Box 148, Folder – Issues – Unemployment – Plant Closings Pamphlet [nd], Chicago History Museum (CHM).

¹⁰² Arlook, “Speech to Region 2”; Edward Kelly, *Industrial Exodus: Public Strategies for Control of Corporate Relocation* (Washington, D.C.: Conference for Alternative State and Local Policies, 1977), 11.

¹⁰³ Marie Howland, “Plant Closings: The Problem and Current Policy,” in *Plant Closings and Worker Displacement: The Regional Issues* (Kalamazoo, MI: W.E. Upton Institute for Employment Research), 7.

corporate profits—but the advance notice and severance payments will make a great deal of difference to their former employees which they leave behind.”¹⁰⁴

OPIC followed Schwarzwalders’ announcement with public meetings in Canton, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Dayton, and Toledo to discuss the CRA. These gatherings featured speakers from numerous members of OPIC’s coalition of religious, labor, senior citizen, and community organizations. Many participants appeared to accept what they considered as the fact of plant closure. Some from the civil rights community also injected a racial analysis into the conversation, which was a view that OPIC organizers hardly elaborated on themselves. Consequently, coalition members pointed out the potential benefits of the passage of SB337 at the meetings. At the Cincinnati meeting, Reverend U.Z. McKinnon of the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance stated, “While this bill will not keep those industries here which are intent upon going, it will allow us to plan for the future. We need to train our young people for job opportunities which are going to exist—not for jobs that are going to disappear.” President of Cincinnati NAACP, Reverend John Compton, discussed the racial impact that the bill would have, “The black community has come to depend on the jobs and tax base provided by the manufacturing sector. While SB 337 will not stem the flow out of these jobs out of this area, it will provide some very real assistance to the people and communities left behind.”¹⁰⁵

Workers and union organizers tended to appeal to labor and community rights in industrial property. The coalition sought to share private property rights with corporations. UAW Region 2 Director Bill Casstevens said at the Cleveland meeting, “The people of this state need the security brought about by SB 337 and they have the right to expect it in return for the long years of hard work and loyalty they have given.” In Toledo, Legislative Director for the local

¹⁰⁴ “Schwarzwalders Introduces Community Readjustment Act,” *Public Interest Report*, October 1977.

¹⁰⁵ Quoted in “Four Hearings Support Community Readjustment Act,” *Public Interest Report*, January/February 1978.

AFL-CIO Council stated, “SB 337 establishes clearly the principle that large corporations have a legal responsibility to help individuals and communities which suffer when plants close.”¹⁰⁶

Industrial Exodus—OPIC’s Analysis of Plant Closings.

OPIC provided a frame for understanding deindustrialization to progressive activists and organizations during the 1970s. The organization’s analysis of the “industrial exodus” connected the growth of multinational corporations and the globalization of production to local plant closings. While Democrats and Republicans tried to address economic crises that beset the U.S. by tackling inflation, progressive organizations such as DARE and OPIC sought to reign in corporate power and advance citizen-based industrial policies. OPIC’s analysis of the industrial exodus formed the basis for the organization’s state-based plant closing legislation. It also provided their allies with a language to describe deindustrialization and influenced future studies of the subject.

OPIC’s research director Ed Kelly deepened Arlook’s analysis in the organization’s statement on plant closings, *Industrial Exodus: Public Strategies for Control of Corporate Relocation*, published in October 1977. In *Industrial Exodus*, Kelly argued against free market understandings of plant closings. He contended, “It is easy to view the loss of industry as an inevitable trend as the result of uncontrollable objective forces operating in the economy.” “In truth, the trend is not inevitable; it is the direct result of conscious decisions by large corporations to pursue their own private gains without regard to the overall public cost,” he continued.¹⁰⁷ Kelly maintained that firms moved south and overseas in search of cheap and non-unionized labor. *Industrial Exodus* also addressed several key themes such as the pattern of

¹⁰⁶ “Four Hearings Support Community Readjustment Act”

¹⁰⁷ Ed Kelly, *Industrial Exodus: Public Strategies for Control of Corporate Relocation* (Washington, D.C.: Conference for Alternative State and Local Public Policies, 1977). 2.

capital mobility, the impact of deindustrialization on the nation, region, and cities, and its implication on burgeoning non-manufacturing-based economies such as the service sector. Kelly also outlined a comprehensive program for tackling plant closings that ranged from supporting federal full employment legislation and labor law reform to employee and community ownership.

Industrial Exodus explained the process and pattern of capital mobility. Like Müller, Barnet, Arlook, and other left observers of economic change, Kelly attributed the “corporate exodus from the industrial states” to greater foreign investment by U.S. companies.¹⁰⁸ The process of deindustrialization took many forms—total plant shutdowns, “partial” plant closings, “out-of-state investments,” and the “export of capital.”¹⁰⁹ Total plant shutdowns describe the process by which a business closed a plant in the process of moving operations to another location. Partial plant closings reflect the longer term process of moving production to another location. Essentially, a firm would gradually draw down production in the old plant while operating the new one. Out-of-state investments reflects a business’s decision to invest revenues in plants outside of their “traditional locations” rather than reinvesting in capital within them. The export of capital points to the relationship between finance capital and deindustrialization that historians such as Judith Stein have analyzed. Kelly argued that banks and other financial institutions invested in production in the south and outside of the U.S.

Kelly argued that capital mobility and plant closings had deleterious effects on cities, municipal governments, communities, and workers. Kelly identified deindustrialization as a key culprit of what came to be known as the “fiscal crisis of the state.”¹¹⁰ He argued that plant closings drove up unemployment. Plant closings and growing unemployment depleted tax bases

¹⁰⁸ Kelly, *Industrial Exodus*. 2.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰ James O’Connor, *Fiscal Crisis of the State* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1973).

and contributed to the fiscal crises of state and local governments. With falling revenues, policymakers are left to raise taxes and cut services.¹¹¹

Industrial Exodus failed to deeply examine the relationship between race and deindustrialization. The only instance where plant closings and discrimination appeared was in Kelly's contention that citizens could pursue a legal strategy to halt closings. Kelly claimed that workers should file anti-discrimination suits under Title 7 of the Civil Rights Act because the suburbanization of industry is more likely to disproportionately affect African Americans. Kelly cited lawsuits filed by the New York City-based Suburban Action Institute: "The suits charge that corporate movement to the suburbs discriminates against blacks and other minorities who cannot afford to follow and who do not now live there in significant numbers."¹¹² Kelly's argument, and the Suburban Action Institute's actions anticipate scholar Gregory Squires's argument in his report for the Illinois Advisory Committee to the United States Civil Rights Commission, *Shutdown: Economic Dislocation and Equal Opportunity*. Squires contended that plant closings were "a civil rights issue." Kelly, the Suburban Action Institute, and later Squires's analyses of race and deindustrialization raises questions about scholars' understandings of the separation of labor and civil rights. Labor historian Nelson Lichtenstein is correct to argue that the New Deal state institutionalized labor and civil rights, but Kelly, OPIC, and Squires illustrated how activists and workers considered strategies to bring the two together, even if they pursued labor and civil rights in the legal arena.¹¹³

Kelly's document illustrated left-wing progressives' attempts to influence policymaking. *Industrial Exodus* featured a comprehensive plan to address the industrial exodus. Kelly called for greater corporate regulation on Federal, state, and local levels, especially of plant relocations.

¹¹¹ Kelly, *Industrial Exodus*, 6.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 17.

¹¹³ Lichtenstein, xiii.

He also advocated for measures that policymakers in cities such as Chicago and in the federal government adopted: advance warning of plant closings, financial assistance to workers and communities, and withholding of Federal benefits.¹¹⁴ Some of the measures reflected labor-liberalism's efforts to reinvigorate New Deal policies such as full employment and labor law reform. Policies underscoring progressives' desires to democratize the economy were also included in OPIC's platform.

On the federal level, *Industrial Exodus* called for greater regulation of corporations through the tax code and trade policy. Kelly called for the adoption of a federal plant closing law that required two year advance notice of relocation, assistance to workers, and withholding tax benefits for firms that decide to move "unjustifiably." Kelly's document builds upon the AFL-CIO's call for eliminating tax breaks that stimulated the growth of multinational corporations and capital mobility. "There should be changes in Federal tax laws which now encourage corporations to move production overseas," Kelly declared.¹¹⁵ Kelly also vaguely called for reforming tariffs "encouraging overseas production."

Industrial Exodus advocated for key components of organized labor and Democrat's economic policy—full employment and labor law reform. Kelly called for the federal government to mandate full employment and repealing section 14B—ensuring "right to work" legislation—of the Taft-Hartley Act. Kelly argued that passage of the Humphrey-Hawkins full employment bill "would be a major step in alleviating problems caused by corporate relocation" because earlier drafts of it mandated special attention toward the unemployed.¹¹⁶ For Kelly and OPIC, eliminating right to work laws would hinder firms' desires to relocate where non-unionized labor reigned. It would also reopen the south to unionization.

¹¹⁴ Kelly, *Industrial Exodus*, 11.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 12.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 11.

Industrial Exodus represented OPIC's expression of economic democracy. Kelly and OPIC argued that the issue of plant closings needed to be taken out of the labor-management bargaining process. Instead, the "public" should possess greater say in plant location and relocation. The public had to challenge corporate power and lead economic redevelopment efforts. "Greater public involvement in the economy is necessary," the report declared. "This public involvement should take a variety of forms—governmental, non-profit, private and renewed small business," Kelly continued. *Industrial Exodus* called for the creation of public financial institutions like state and local public banks, state insurance companies, and state development corporations. These institutions would provide capital to support already-existing small businesses, cooperatives, and workers and communities that sought to takeover abandoned industrial plants. However, *Industrial Exodus* failed to explain how workers would govern their own plants. Kelly also argues that progressives should consider advocating for investing pension funds for social needs. Calls for the establishment of public financial institutions and worker and community ownership placed OPIC among other radical progressive economic organizations who called for public ownership like the Detroit Alliance for a Rational Economy. Yet, OPIC's vision of a public economy did not call for nationalizing industries, worker syndicalism, advocating for the end of capital mobility, or overturning capitalism.¹¹⁷

The document supplied the burgeoning movement against plant closings and capital flight with language and a model of analysis. Organizations such as the Illinois Public Action Council began talking about the "industrial exodus" in their states.¹¹⁸ Kelly's analysis also laid the foundation for future analyses of plant closings. Assistant to UAW President, Doug Fraser,

¹¹⁷ Kelly, *Industrial Exodus*, 20.

¹¹⁸ IPAC, "Employees and Communities – Victims of the Industrial Exodus," *Public Action News* (April 1980), 4-7. Midwest Academy Papers, Box 183, Folder: IPAC – Public Action News 1977-81, Chicago History Museum, Chicago, IL.

Don Stillman published one of the more widely-read and cited studies of deindustrialization in 1978 in that year's edition of the *Working Papers for a New Society*, "The Devastating Impact of Plant Closings." Squires relied upon Kelly's analysis in *Shutdown*.¹¹⁹

Don Stillman's 1978 *Working Papers for a New Society* essay, "The Devastating Impact of Plant Closings," is one of the more influential texts on the topic. What distinguished Stillman's essay from Kelly's was Stillman's discussion of the effects of plant closings on individuals. Stillman ultimately argued that the issue of plant closing is a matter of life or death for workers. He used the tragic story of Jim Farley, a laborer at the Federal Mogul Corporation's Detroit roller bearing plant who committed suicide, to illustrate how plant closings disrupted lives. Stillman pointed to research conducted by public health scholars to highlight the connection between plant closings and various health problems such as higher rates of hypertension and heart disease. He also pointed to the relationship between job loss and depression, anxiety, and suicide.¹²⁰ Health problems were exacerbated when workers and their families lose health insurance. This aspect of the conversation about job loss is nothing new. The effects of job loss on individual mental and physical health governed conversations about the structural, or "hard-core," unemployed during the 1960s. But the conversations conducted by Stillman, Bluestone and Harrison, are grounded intimately in a structural analysis that does not pathologize workers.

OPIC's hearings in the state legislature highlighted the organization's efforts to build a Rustinian coalition of civil rights and religious organizations, and labor and progressive activists. The hearings in the Commerce and Labor Committee in 1978 featured testimonies deploying the rhetoric of shared responsibility and industrial ownership. Some activists also utilized the

¹¹⁹ Squires cites Kelly several times. See Squires, *Shutdown*, 7, 12, 17, 19, 60

¹²⁰ Don Stillman, "The Devastating Effect of Plant Closings," *Working Papers for a New Society* (1978)

rhetoric of fairness, claiming that workers “played by the rules,” whereas corporations did not. Thus, workers and communities were really victims and more deserving of benefits than corporations because capitalists drained communities of resources—labor, land, raw materials—reaped the profits, and then fled to the next best location. Witnesses also sought to confront the idea of the “business climate” as an inhibiting factor in economic development.

The Valentine’s Day hearings in 1978 featured members of the coalition for plant closing legislation. Twenty witnesses testified in front of the Senate Commerce and Labor Committee, including members of OPIC, the Dayton Black Political Assembly, the Cincinnati NAACP, and the UAW. More than one hundred people representing the OPIC-led coalition of organized labor, civil rights, religious, and senior citizen groups packed the hearing. “No one was giving SB 337 much of a chance before the hearing, ‘commented Warren Smith, Secretary-Treasurer of the Ohio AFL-CIO, ‘but the hearing put the bill in a new light.’”¹²¹

Bill Casstevens testified about the effects that plant closings had had on workers during the 1970s. He argued that corporations had a shared responsibility to the workers and communities that built the infrastructure needed for business to prosper. “It seems insignificant that an employee has performed well for many years or that a community has built schools, water and sewage systems, made road improvements and other public works on the belief that the company was a responsible member of the community.”¹²² Communities and workers, Casstevens concluded, had fulfilled their end of the social contract, but not business.

Casstevens also argued against the idea that the CRA would inhibit the state’s climate for investment, arguing that manufacturers had closed down plants because of corporate mergers “and shifts of production,” not because of the state’s “business climate.” Casstevens also sought

¹²¹ IPAC, “Ohioans Unite to Fight Job Loss,” *Public Action News* (March 1979), 3.

¹²² Bill Casstevens, “Testimony Before Public Hearing on “Community Readjustment Act,” February 14, 1978, CRA Papers, Box 6, Folder – CRA Senate Hearing, WRHS.

to advance an alternative conception of what makes a “good business climate,” one that was based on the needs of workers and communities rather than just managerial prerogatives. “We need to provide a climate where the families of workers, small business, dependent industries, municipal and county governments, schools *and* the needs of our major corporations can exist hand-in-hand.”¹²³

In his testimony, William P. Sheehan, executive secretary of the Cincinnati AFL-CIO Labor Council sought to contextualize the CRA within the New Deal liberal tradition, “There is a proud tradition in this country dating back more than forty years of taking care of the unemployed, poor and dependent members of our community. [...] The bill you are considering this evening is in this proud tradition.”¹²⁴ After recounting the harmful effects of deindustrialization in Cincinnati, due to capital fleeing to the South and outside of the country, Sheehan admitted that the CRA would only aid in worker transition rather than threatening managerial investment decisions. Yet, Sheehan argued, the government had a role to play in providing protections to workers affected by capital flight. “Something state government can do is buffer, for the people and the communities, the trauma of a plant closing.”¹²⁵

Sheehan also appealed to community rights to protection through their labor. Using the example of a closing of a Clopay, a door manufacturer, Sheehan maintained that the corporation violated their workers’ rights by closing with three months’ notice. “A job belongs not just to the company which provides that job. It also belongs to the person who holds that job and to the

¹²³ Ibid., 5. Emphasis in original.

¹²⁴ William P. Sheehan, “Statement Before Senate Commerce and Labor Committee,” February 14, 1978, CRA Papers, Box, 6, Folder – CRA Senate Hearing, WRHS.

¹²⁵ Sheehan, “Statement,” 3.

community in which that job exists. These people and communities must receive consideration when corporations decide on that job's final disposition."¹²⁶

Pastor of Lorain, Ohio's St. Matthews AME Church Thomas L. McCray also emphasized community rights and the importance of the social contract between workers and business. He used the metaphor of marriage to describe the compact between business and the community. "When a company invests in a community a kind of wedding (if you will) takes place." McCray declared. "The company invests with the expectation that it will have a capable, steady and cooperative workforce. And there is an expectation of cooperation from the community."¹²⁷

Black coalition members based their testimonies in a racial analysis. For Reverend Charles E. Winburn, Jr. of Cincinnati's NAACP, the issue of plants closures was also matter of civil rights. "It is as much a civil right as any other that Ohio cities who want to work should have a job."¹²⁸ Winburn contended that plant closings particularly hurt the city's and state's African American population. "Industrial flight has led to the decline of the tax base and jobs in the central cities where the percentage of Blacks concentrated in central cities increase," Winburn declared. Yet, he also connected African American joblessness to that of whites living in Appalachia.¹²⁹ In a similar fashion, McCray concluded his testimony by quoting Coretta Scott King. "I agree with Mrs. Coretta Scott King who stated recently, 'joblessness is a cancer eating away at the black community, destroying our hopes, our aspirations and even our most valuable asset, our youth.' But, I realize that there is little hope extended to our youth when growing

¹²⁶ Sheehan, 5.

¹²⁷ Thomas L. McCray, "Statement," February 14, 1978, CRA Papers, Box 6, Folder CRA – Senate Hearings, WRHS.

¹²⁸ Charles E. Winburn, Jr., "Testimony," February 14, 1978.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

numbers of people are faced with unemployment due to plant closings and shifts out of our community.”¹³⁰

OPIC and its coalition ran into an institutional roadblock in the State Senate’s Commerce and Labor Committee. The committee’s Chairman, Cincinnati Democrat William Bowen did not hold any more hearings on the bill. Chairman Bowen told the Associated Press in April, “I have priorities in terms of scheduling, and at this time that is not among them.”¹³¹ Bowen disagreed with the bill claiming “it could push an industry over the brink.” Joseph Krabach from the Ohio Manufacturers Association lobbied for the committee to bury the bill. “We want to see the bill killed at the earliest possible date,” Krabach told the Associated Press. The OMA and the Ohio Chamber of Commerce saw the bill as “anti-business.” The Associated Press reported that business lobbying succeeded. While Bowen promised another hearing, the committee failed to act when the Senate session ended in December. Instead he joined with Republican Governor James Rhodes to sponsor a bill that would extend tax abatements to businesses for urban investments..¹³²

Ohio’s business leaders came out against the CRA as early as 1977. OMA lobbyist William Costello blasted the CRA in the *Akron Beacon Journal*, “I’ve been here 18 years and seen some ridiculous legislation. This has got to be in the top five.” The Akron Regional Development Board, an organization that sought to attract industry to the state, contended the terms of the CRA were too harsh.¹³³ The Ohio Manufacturers Association stepped up its opposition to OPIC and the plant closing bill. The OMA served as frequent critics of OPIC’s

¹³⁰ McCray, “Statement.”

¹³¹ “Lobbyists Stall Industrial Bill,” *Logan Daily News*, April 4, 1978.

¹³² Edward Kelly, “Plant Closings Legislation: The Ohio Experience”; Bill Casstevens, “Testimony by Bill Casstevens,” September 25, 1979, OCA Papers, Box 6, Folder – CRA Hearings; “Lobbyists Stall Industrial Bill,” *Logan Daily News*.

¹³³ “Industry assails job protection bill,” *Akron Beacon Journal*, July 12, 1977.

work in the state. OMA called it an ‘industrial ransom bill.’ OMA reasoned that the plant closing bill encroached on manufacturers’ private property rights. It even went as far as to argue that the CRA “constitutes a severe threat to the very concept of ‘free’ enterprise in the state of Ohio.”¹³⁴ They argued that the bill threatened economic growth and would prevent the state from creating a “better business climate” for investing. Kelly quotes the organization, “The bill’s obvious impact would be to drive all new jobs out of the state and discourage any industry from expanding or relocating in Ohio.”¹³⁵

The Greater Cleveland Growth Association also rallied its membership. In a letter to members of the Association urging them to write the Senate’s Commerce and Labor Committee, President, John Lathe, Jr. and Vice Chairman Lawrence C. Jones referred to OPIC as a group that “takes decidedly anti-business stances.” They warned their members that “It is very important that SB 337 not reach the floor of the Senate because the Ohio Chamber of Commerce reports that the legislation is gaining support among the Senators.”¹³⁶ Like the OMA, the Greater Cleveland Growth Association also thought the bill would negatively impact the state’s business climate. The OMA and the GCGA received their wish—the CRA died in committee—again.

Schwarzwalder reintroduced the CRA on April 27, 1979. Shortly thereafter, OPIC organized a conference in Columbus to support the new incarnation of the CRA. The “Reclaiming Our Future” conference, however, did not just represent an OPIC effort to mobilize support for the CRA. OPIC, along with the gathering’s co-sponsors, the Ohio AFL-CIO, the Ohio UAW Community Action Program, the Progressive Alliance, the Citizen-Labor Energy

¹³⁴ Quoted in IPAC, “Ohioans Fight Back.”

¹³⁵ Kelly, “Plant Closings: The Ohio Experience,” 6; Ohio Manufacturers Association, “OMA Newsletter,” No. 17 (June 2, 1979), 5. Ohio Citizen Action Records, Box 5, Folder – OMA Newsletters, WRHS.

¹³⁶ John H. Lathe, Jr. and Lawrence C. Jones, “Letter to Growth Association,” March 15, 1978, Ohio Citizen Action Records, Box 6, Folder – CRA Senate Hearings.

Coalition, and the Conference on Alternative State and Local Policies, also sought to use the conference to build a national progressive political coalition around urban and economic issues. “The ‘Reclaiming Our Future’ Conference is based on the idea that a new coalition is emerging to play a decisive role in American politics in the 1980s.” This coalition not only presented itself as an alternative both to Reaganism and to New Deal liberalism. “Faced with this challenge, we can no longer rely on the strength of the liberal New Deal coalition, which dominated American politics for four decades,” OPIC stated in its conference program, “It has expired, and cannot be revived.”¹³⁷

For OPIC, the purpose of the conference was to develop responses to a number of national political and economic developments: economic crisis, what they called “the corporate offensive,” and the collapse of New Deal liberalism. [...] The organization downplayed a right-turn in U.S. politics in their analysis of the context. While they acknowledged the “birth of a new alignment” in U.S. politics, the organization argued that political categories were breaking down. “America is going through a transition. But instead a ‘shift to the right,’ all the old categories – left and right, Democratic and Republican, liberal and conservative – are dissolving.” This claim seemed to echo socialist Michael Harrington’s observations that U.S. politics was moving “‘vigorously left, right, and center at the same time.’”¹³⁸ What distinguished OPIC from Harrington, however, was that the organization named the potential new alignment—public interest politics. “The politics of the 1980’s will judge issues by whether they serve corporate interests or the public interest.”¹³⁹ While OPIC had majoritarian aims, their politics remained progressive.

¹³⁷ OPIC and Conference on Alternative State and Local Policies, 5; OPIC, “Background: ‘Reclaiming Our Future’ Conference,” OCA Papers, Box 26, Folder 4, WRHS.

¹³⁸ Quoted in Cowie, *Stayin’ Alive*, 5.

¹³⁹ OPIC, “Background,” 2-3.

The speakers at the conference reflected the progressive Rustinian coalition that OPIC and others hoped to build on a national level. They included President of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers and one of the leaders of the Citizen-Labor Energy Coalition, William Winpisinger, former civil rights activists and executive director of the Coalition of American Employees, James Farmer, and UAW leaders Marc Stepp and Douglas Fraser delivered speeches to the conference. Cleveland Mayor Dennis Kucinich and State Senator Schwarzwaldler were the only two elected officials invited to talk.

James Farmer placed the effort to build a progressive movement within a longer historical context. Former CORE leader and Executive Director of the Coalition of American Public Employees, James Farmer drew a line from the labor struggles during the Great Depression through the 1960s and 1970s social movements: “The real struggles of our nation, the struggle of labor to bring about industrial democracy in the ‘30s and ‘40’s, to translate political democracy into economic democracy; the struggle of minorities in the ‘50’s and the ‘60s to include themselves in the promise of democracy; the struggle of women for equal rights in the ‘70’s; all of these battles are now coming together. We are coming together in what has been called a giant coalition of people from around the nation.”¹⁴⁰ The 1970s signaled a new time in the history of a class-based progressive politics for Farmer. With Jim Crow segregation in the past, corporate power represented the biggest threat to democracy. “We know who the enemies are. It’s no longer a George Wallace who is standing in the schoolhouse door. Now, it’s corporate power that, like the Sheriff of Nottingham, is stealing from the poor to give to the rich.”¹⁴¹

¹⁴⁰ OPIC and Conference for Alternative State and Local Policies, 33.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 33.

UAW President Doug Fraser pointed to fundamental issue of fighting plant closure and corporate power. He informed the audience, “When we talked with Ford or GM or Chrysler or any other big corporations of America, they said, ‘If you try to even tamper or restrict our fundamental managerial prerogative to make these economic decisions as to where we should move, you’re restricting and destroying the free enterprise system.’” Fraser maintained, though, that a defense of corporations’ private property rights amounted to the abandonment of communities and workers. He even declared, “And if that’s what free enterprise is all about, then we shouldn’t be concerned about destroying it—the hell with it.”¹⁴²

Fraser criticized the failure to implement progressive measures such as national health insurance as well as President Carter’s handling of inflation, rising interest rates, and growing unemployment. For Fraser, the solution the aforementioned problems lay in convincing more Americans to involve themselves in electoral politics. Acknowledging many Americans’ discontent with the political process, Fraser called for a return “to the days of the politics of principle rather than the politics of personality.”¹⁴³

The conference received favorable media coverage. Douglas McCormick from the *Cincinnati Post* declared, “the new progressive movement is alive and well in Columbus.” McCormick saw the conference as a gathering of a progressive faction of the Democratic Party that would support Kennedy in his challenge to President Carter. “While it was not a political rally and it did not endorse Sen. Edward Kennedy for president, it was evident many believe he is the best available alternative to an administration that has disappointed them,” he stated.¹⁴⁴ The *Cleveland Plain Dealer’s* Michael McManus published an Op-Ed endorsing anti-plant

¹⁴² OPIC and Conference for Alternative State and Local Policies, 49-50.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 50-52.

¹⁴⁴ Douglas McCormick, “Hundreds gather in Columbus to ‘reclaim the future,’” *Cincinnati Post*, April 30, 1979.

closure legislation.¹⁴⁵ *New York Times* reporter Reginald Stuart, placed OPIC's CRA in the context of already-existing plant closure legislation in foreign countries. Stuart's article also stressed the community-labor politics at hand during the conference and Doug Fraser's appeal to community rights to industrial property.¹⁴⁶

OPIC organized a march and a rally of more than 1,000 people in Columbus to support the CRA in September 1979. The September 25 hearing also demonstrated the coalition of organizations around the bill. "Also testifying were representatives from many of Ohio's major unions including the United Steelworkers, the United Rubber Workers (whose president Peter Bommatrip testified), and the United Auto Workers. Many other unions strongly participated in the rally including: ACTWU, ILGWU, IAM, IUE, CWA, and many more." The state-based coalition was once again on display. Economist Barry Bluestone, OPIC, UAW, United Rubber, Cork, Linoleum, and Plastic Workers of America, the Ohio State Council of Senior Citizens, the East Market Street United Church of Christ in Akron, the Ohio Black Political Assembly, and the Former Mayor of Cincinnati, Theodore Berry testified.¹⁴⁷

OPIC's Legislative Director, Marylynne Cappelletti argued against the idea that the CRA was prohibitive to business. She argued that the CRA was not designed to stop flight. "But this legislation does not try to stop corporations from leaving," Cappelletti informed the committee. She continued, "For a state to try to stop corporate movement would probably be unconstitutional and would discourage new investment." Like many proponents of the bill, Cappelletti also appealed to the concept of a social contract between business and communities. Corporations had a responsibility toward communities in which they settle. Cappelletti stated, "The employees and the community are expected to act responsibly toward the corporation

¹⁴⁵ Michael J. McManus, "Northern perspective," *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, May 6, 1979.

¹⁴⁶ Reginald Stuart, "Northeast and Midwest Joining to Save Industries," *New York Times*, April 30, 1979.

¹⁴⁷ Kelly, "Plant Closings: The Ohio Experience," 4.

which in turn should act responsibly toward them. This relationship is a long term one—based on past performance, current trust, and future expectations.”¹⁴⁸

UAW Region 2 Director Bill Casstevens recounted the history of the coalition’s campaign to stop plant closings. He concluded his remarks by pointing to the limits of collective bargaining approach in addressing capital flight, “It is incumbent upon this Committee and the Ohio State Legislature to handle the problems of plant closings and relocations for the working people in Ohio who do not possess the collective bargaining clout to handle it for themselves.”¹⁴⁹

Economist Barry Bluestone provided a technical explanation for deindustrialization. He pointed to technological innovations in communication and transportation as factors for increased capital flight. He also cited mergers and corporations who bought plants with the intent to liquidate their capital stock and invest resources in other ventures. He also testified that the bill would not impede business investment. “But the Bill will not keep viable firms from expanding in Ohio or stop new business from coming into the state,” Bluestone stated.¹⁵⁰

OPIC’s members sensed that passage of the CRA was unlikely in the near future. “While recognizing the degree of success we have had in pushing the idea of plant closing legislation, we also must recognize that we are far from passage of a plant closing bill either in Ohio or at the Federal level,” stated a November 6, 1980 internal memo to the organizing staff.¹⁵¹ The organization outlined the shortcomings of the campaign. They recognized the intense business opposition to the bill. The organization admitted that they did not build a broad enough coalition. They also pointed out the problems of organizing in the midst of crisis. The organization

¹⁴⁸ Marylynne Cappelletti, “Statement,” September 25, 1979, Box 6, Folder – SB 337, OCA Papers, WRHS.

¹⁴⁹ Casstevens, “Testimony of Bill Casstevens,” September 25, 1979.

¹⁵⁰ Barry Bluestone, “Testimony on S.B. 188 Business Closing,” September 25, 1979, OCA Papers, Box 7, Folder – SB 337 [1978], WRHS.

¹⁵¹ OPIC, “Memo to Organizing Staff,” November 6, 1980, Midwest Academy Papers, Box 187, Folder – Ohio Public Interest Campaign 1980, CHM.

reasoned in the memo that the prospect of a plant closing does not really push workers to involve themselves in such a campaign. Yet, organizing around crisis places workers and organizations in an uneasy space because once a plant closes, they “lose their unifying institutions – employer and union.” Consequently, there’s no institution for displaced workers to go, and, more than likely, no jobs to organize for.¹⁵²

The organization also considered next steps for potentially continuing the plant closing campaign. Participating in electoral politics remained a potential strategy as the memo suggested getting involved in the 1982 gubernatorial campaign. Also, recognizing the national conversations around “reindustrialization,” the memo contemplated organizing for a federal plant closing bill. “The opportunity probably exists for squeezing some concessions from the ‘reindustrialization’ effort. One of these might be some kind of plant closing regulations at the Federal level. Another might be greater availability of capital and technical assistance for reopening closed plants,” the memo states.¹⁵³ The Detroit Alliance for a Rational Economy used national conversations about reindustrialization as a point of entry for their plans to redevelop the city.

While the Ohio General Assembly failed to vote on the Community Reinvestment Act, OPIC’s campaign was consequential. They built a state-based coalition that caught the attention of the state’s business community. Their bill and their coalition also served as a model for legislation for progressive groups in other states such as Massachusetts, New Jersey, Connecticut, Illinois, and Pennsylvania.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵² OPIC, “Memo to Organizing Staff.”

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ IPAC, “Ohioans Fight Back.”

Conclusion

OPIC's campaign against plant closure illustrates how left-wing progressives sought to organize a state-based coalition of labor activists, civil rights and religious organizations, and grassroots communities against plant closure during the mid-to-late-1970s. While OPIC successfully organized this coalition, the campaign also underscores the difficulties that left-wing progressives had with trying to win on economic issues. OPIC, unlike the Indochina Peace Campaign, was not able to win the debate around deindustrialization in public discourse. The emerging argument for why industrial plants left was that the costs of running factories in the Midwest and Northeast were too high—manufacturers were paying too many taxes, organized labor forced them to pay their workers elevated wages, and welfare services dragged down the economy. Consequently, Republican Governor James Rhodes, as well as key members of the state's legislature concurred with corporate and business interest groups such as the Ohio Manufacturers Association and the Greater Cleveland Growth Association that creating a "better business climate" was the best course of action to take for attracting and maintaining the state's industrial base.

Even though OPIC could not win the argument around deindustrialization, it contributed to the left's thinking about plant closure. The organization's conception of the "industrial exodus" influenced progressive organizations such as the Illinois Public Action Council and intellectuals such as Robert Squires and Bennett Harrison and Barry Bluestone. The Alliance hired scholars Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison to compose reports about corporate flight in their efforts to combat plant closures.¹⁵⁵ Bennett Harrison's and Barry Bluestone's work for the Alliance led to the publication of *The Deindustrialization of America: Plant Closings, Community Abandonment, and the Dismantling of Basic Industry*, which documented the social

¹⁵⁵ Battista, "Labor and Coalition Politics," 411.

and economic costs of industrial flight. Their work help spark a conversation about deindustrialization and it established a left presence in the discussion.

Squires' argument was not necessarily new. Ed Kelly alluded to it in *Industrial Exodus*. Black members of OPIC's coalition testified about the detrimental effects that deindustrialization had on African Americans. Coleman Young mounted a defense for saving Chrysler that he grounded in a racial analysis. What was probably the most significant about the race-based argument from Squires and Young was the relative silence around black masculinity that dominated discussions about job displacement and the urban crisis during the 1960s. The persistence of behavioral explanations for poverty, attacks on welfare, as well as a concern about crime and the constraints that urban fiscal crises placed on cities may explain why it seemed that issues of race and gender did not appear as relevant in conversations about deindustrialization among mainstream and progressive intellectual-activists.

OPIC's legislative strategy also had its limits. The state-based progressive coalition encountered a legislature unwilling to act on the bill, business lobbyists, and a state politics that favored tax breaks in seeking to address deindustrialization, not to mention a national political context growing more hostile to labor and the new deal. And while the coalition sought to moderate its arguments for the CRA in front of the Commerce and Labor Committee, business responded to the bill as an inherent threat towards their private property rights. This raises the question—was it possible for OPIC, or even DARE, to work within established political institutions and legal and policy structures for economic democracy if even business and political leaders perceived any reforms on industrial decision making as a threat to the whole “free enterprise” system?

Chapter 5

“DARE to Struggle, DARE to Win”: The Detroit Alliance for a Rational Economy’s Electoral Politics & Response to Deindustrialization

On September 28, 1979, 500 Detroiters gathered at Sacred Heart Seminary to discuss the direction of the city’s economic development at the Detroit Alliance for a Rational Economy-sponsored conference, “City Life in the 80’s.” Since his election in 1973, Detroit’s Mayor, Coleman Young, and his supporters in Detroit’s business community had engaged in redeveloping Detroit’s economy through the construction of various downtown and riverfront projects. Observers and the city’s officials had named this urban coalition’s revitalization efforts the “renaissance,” after Henry Ford II’s signature luxury high rise office complex located along the city’s riverfront. By 1979, the Detroit Alliance for a Rational Economy’s (DARE) was the leading opposition group to what they perceived as Young’s narrow focus on private downtown development, hence their sponsorship of the “City Life in the ‘80s” conference.¹ DARE was especially critical of Young’s strategy of adopting the “public-private partnership” model of economic growth to revitalize Detroit, using city, state, and federal resources to subsidize private development.² In contrast, DARE, and its most prominent spokesperson, City Councilman

¹ *Taking on Detroit*, DVD. Directed by Stephen Lighthill (New York: Icarus Films, 1981); “Fighting City Hall is Serious Business for Activist Group,” *Detroit Free Press*, Oct. 14, 1979.

² For an extensive discussion of the “public-private partnership,” see Chapter 3 of Jason Hackworth, *The Neoliberal City: Governance, Ideology, and Development in American Urbanism* (Ithica: Cornell University Press, 2007).

Kenneth V. Cockrel, argued for what it called a more “rational” approach to economic development.³

What follows is an examination of the Detroit Alliance for a Rational Economy’s progressive politics and its responses to three focal points—Coleman Young’s urban development policies, the 1979-1980 Chrysler loan guarantee, and reindustrialization. DARE’s progressivism was consistent with the Anti-STRESS Coalition’s, Indochina Peace Campaign’s, and the Ohio Public Interest Campaign’s in that the organization couple radial analyses of their focal points with pragmatic and reformist strategies. While individual members of DARE, such as Kenneth Cockrel, called themselves revolutionary socialists, the organization self-consciously moved away from revolutionary politics. DARE’s Constitution called for a “socialist transformation of society.”⁴

But, like the Indochina Peace Campaign and OPIC, DARE pursued reformist strategies to enact economic change. DARE grew out of Kenneth Cockrel’s city council election in 1977. While DARE’s leadership eschewed arguments about the efficacy of electoral politics, they did not romanticize electoralism. The group’s leaders only sought political office if and when they believed they could win and serve effectively. They sought to utilize an insider-outside approach to politics combining the mobilization of outside political pressure with the election of political allies to public office. DARE’s leadership envisioned the construction of a multiracial left movement that supported workers and the poor and hoped to ally themselves with other potential allies in the nation’s cities in order to build a nationwide multiracial left movement.

³ Sheila Murphy was featured prominently in *Taking on Detroit*, yet much of her voice on rational reindustrialization was absent in DARE’s papers. Further expansion of this project and studies of DARE should focus on the administrative, organizational, and intellectual role that she played.

⁴ DARE, “Constitution.” Kenneth V. and Sheila M. Cockrel Collection, 1978, Box 8, Folder 3, Walter P. Reuther Library.

In a similar fashion to the Ohio Public Interest Campaign (OPIC), DARE articulated a vision of economic democracy that sought to respond to Young's downtown development, deindustrialization, and economic crisis. However, DARE's conception of economic democracy was more radical than OPIC's. "Rational reindustrialization" entailed the construction of a diversified public enterprise sector based upon a mix of market socialist principles, which entailed worker- and/or community control over industrial property, production of goods, and social control over investment.⁵ Building a public enterprise sector in Detroit involved collective economic planning, converting abandoned plants, greater community and worker control of said plants, and production for social needs in a renewed national market for industrial goods. DARE imagined local government as the primary instrument to implement such a policy. But to implement such a policy, DARE knew, would required both the cultivation of political support to challenge Young's dominance of city politics and the organization of a regional and national movement capable of influencing national urban and industrial policy.

DARE called for a rational economic approach to development based on true grassroots democracy in which the city's population possessed property rights in the corporation. While they accepted the presence of a market in economic relations, they disagreed with the idea of free markets and capitalist economic development as naturally rational.⁶ For DARE, capitalist markets and economic development produced job loss and structural unemployment and were thus woefully inadequate for Detroit's citizens. Markets and the private sector did not know what was best for the economy, workers and governments did. They sought worker and community

⁵ Philosopher David Schweickart attributes the characteristics, "worker self-management of enterprises, social control of investment, and a market for goods and services," to his vision of market socialism—economic democracy. The architects of DARE's rational reindustrialization mention each of these aspects in the documents that I am analyzing in this paper. David Schweickart, James Lawler, Hillel Ticktin, and Bertell Ollman, *Market Socialism: The Debate Among Socialists* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 18.

⁶ For a brief discussion of rationality and markets see, Justin Fox, *The Myth of the Rational Market: A History of Risk, Reward, and Delusion on Wall Street* (New York: Harper Business, 2011), xii-xv.

control of corporations and the creation of a public-sector economy based upon capital investment from various sources including private investors and the city, state, and federal governments. According to DARE's rational economic approach, municipal governments and workers would determine investments by adhering to a set of criteria that accounted for workers' needs. DARE's call for the social production for social needs challenged capitalists' desire for endless accumulation of profits and unlimited economic growth as the means of spreading wealth.

DARE's rational reindustrialization plan represented a left response to the industrial policy proposals of *Business Week's*, the Carter Administration, and investment banker Felix Rohatyn. DARE favored more government and citizen planning and control over the economy. The group also believed that the economy should benefit Detroit residents rather than specific corporations and individual capitalists. *Business Week*, Carter's Commission, and Rohatyn also proposed national solutions while DARE's conception of rational reindustrialization represented a local solution that other cities could adopt.

Luria's and Russell's *Rational Reindustrialization* sparked debate among leftist activists and intellectuals in publications such as *Socialist Monthly Changes* and *The Progressive*. Many of the leftist intellectuals and activists who evaluated Luria's and Russell's plan were often quite critical. The debate underscored two crucial questions that concerned leftists during the late 1970s and early 1980s: How does one build sustainable political power in an era of decline of organized labor; and how does one acquire the capital needed to construct an economy with democratic principles?

DARE's concept of rational reindustrialization exemplified a post-new left and post-black power politics of scarcity. The economic boom of the 1960s had enabled left and black

political activists of the period to organize around a concern for achieving equal rights and further integration into the U.S. economy through the redistribution of economic surplus. new leftist and black power organizations based their political programs on the presumption that the U.S. economy could sustain infinite economic growth.⁷ With the redistribution of economic growth off of the table, organizations such as DARE and the Ohio Public Interest Campaign argued for the retention of capital in the face of growing plant closures, rising energy costs due to the OPEC oil shock, and economic recession. Yet, in response to these conditions, DARE rearticulated new leftist notions of participatory democracy in the economy.

The debate over rational reindustrialization challenges interpretations of scholars like Van Gosse who insist that the left “had no coherent alternative to the extraordinarily sophisticated, rationalized, world of global corporate capitalism.”⁸ While DARE articulated a coherent plan within the constraints of national urban policy, the problem with Detroit’s progressive left was less a lack of ideas than a lack of mass organization and political power. The incorporation of African Americans into Detroit’s governing structure served as the key political roadblock in DARE’s organizing. The organization failed to make inroads with enough Detroiters, especially the city’s black workers, to be able to effectively oppose Mayor Coleman Young, who led a coalition of business, civil rights, and labor union leaders.⁹ Policy and political structures converged to limit the organization’s opposition to Coleman Young and his growth coalition. Federalism, the restructuring of national urban policy and state tax abatement laws also worked against progressives because they structured and helped facilitate Young’s development strategies. While the mayor was not able to acquire the resources necessary to implement his

⁷ Van Gosse, *Rethinking the New Left: An Interpretive History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 188.

⁸ Gosse, 210.

⁹ For a discussion of incorporation theory, see Baodong Liu and James M. Vanderleeuw, *Race Rules: Electoral Politics in New Orleans, 1965-2006* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2007), 25-26.

massive *Moving Detroit Forward* plan, he successfully received federal resources from the federal government. Ultimately, Young's domination of Detroit politics and the strength of his coalition left Cockrel and DARE politically isolated.

This analysis builds upon the scholarship on politics, planning, and economic development in post-World War II Detroit. While the story of the city's deindustrialization, the suburbanization of its metropolitan region, and the political conflicts that ensued after the 1968 uprising are well-known, much of the scholarship lack a sustained analysis of the city's progressive politics during the 1970s and progressives' responses to the aforementioned transformations and events. Historian Heather Ann Thompson presents a history of Detroit as one characterized by political conflict—a struggle between liberals, conservatives and radicals for power in Detroit. Thompson's study of Detroit politics during the "crisis-filled period in the North between 1967 and 1973" is significant because it stresses contingency in Detroit politics rather than declension. However, this study of DARE extends Thompson's periodization beyond 1973 and places it within a national and global context.¹⁰ DARE represents an example of activists who resisted industrial divestment and sought to mitigate the local effects of the restructuring of the national and global economies. This chapter illustrates the need for a greater focus on the ways activists sought to address the shift from "fordist" to "post-fordist," or what David Harvey has called "flexible," economies in the decades after World War II.¹¹

Political and Economic Context of DARE's Development

DARE's emergence and its articulation of economic democracy were responses to the interplay of local, national, and global political developments and economic transformations,

¹⁰ Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis*; Heather Ann Thompson, *Whose Detroit?: Politics, Labor, and Race in a Modern American City*. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), 8.

¹¹ Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity*.

such as Detroit's "urban crisis," turbulence in the U.S. and global political economy, downturns in the automobile sector, and local urban development issues.¹² Uneven metropolitan development after World War II—capital and white flight from the central city to the suburbs—had stunted the city's economic development and the city government's ability to extend services to its most vulnerable residents. Detroit famously birthed the modern urban fordist economy—an economy based upon mass production and consumption and a regulated relationship between multinational corporations, governments, and the nation's major labor unions.¹³ For many Detroiters, including Coleman Young, the city's identity rested on its reputation as "the motor city." General Motors, Ford Motor Company, and the Chrysler Corporation, the U.S.'s three largest automobile manufacturers, based their production and management operations in the metropolitan area.

Detroit's industrial economy employed tens of thousands from the 1920s through the 1970s. The number of unemployed workers were as low as 4,000 during the 1940s.¹⁴ However, various factors, including the decentralization of the auto industry, deindustrialization of the city's economy, and suburbanization and white flight, revealed Detroit's vulnerability in the

¹² DARE's rational reindustrialization challenged the fundamental function of a city in the U.S. capitalist political economy. According to a 1980 Presidential Commission Report, *A National Agenda for the Eighties*, "cities are economic entities; first and foremost they are the settings where great wealth is produced and distributed." Sociologist Richard Child Hill elaborated on the notion of "capitalist cities" in his work. According to Hill, they serve as exclusive sites for capital accumulation and "a locale for the reproduction of the labor force, a market for the circulation of commodities and the realization of profit, and a center where these complex relationships are coordinated and controlled."¹²

President's Commission for a National Agenda for the Eighties, *Report of the President's Commission: A National Agenda for the Eighties* (New York: The New American Library, Inc., 1981), 74; Richard Child Hill, "Fiscal Crisis, Austerity Politics, and Alternative Urban Policies," *Marxism and the Metropolis: New Perspectives in Urban Political Economy*, 2nd Edition, ed. By William K. Tabb and Larry Sawers (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 299. Hill drew his analysis of the capitalist city from the Marxist geographer, David Harvey's *Social Justice and the City*. Edward W. Soja, a radical geographer, is a contemporary scholar who also analyzes the city and its role in the global capitalist economy. See Edward W. Soja, *Seeking Spatial Justice*.

¹³ David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Inquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 1990), 125-140.

¹⁴ Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 19.

changing postwar U.S. and global economy. Between 1952 and 1980, the city lost 65% of its population while its surrounding suburbs gained over a million residents.¹⁵ Detroit also lost 33% of its jobs between 1968 and 1977. The resulting decline of tax revenue produced problems for city government as Young often confronted budget shortfalls. It was only the mayor's ability to secure substantial grant funds from the federal and state governments that enabled him to balance the city's budget.

Population loss, declining property values, deindustrialization, and recession threw the city into episodic fiscal crises during the 1970s. In 1970, Deputy Controller Alfred Pelham estimated that the city faced budget deficits of \$21 million and \$39.5 million in 1969-70 and 1970-71 fiscal years.¹⁶ To respond to these crises, Pelham suggested a mix of tax increases and austerity. The controller urged Mayor Gribbs to raise income taxes, eliminate a deadline for the city to collect municipal income taxes, judiciously "control the use of overtime compensation" and "temporarily" eliminate "all except absolutely essential public services."¹⁷ Gribbs implemented some of these measures, laying off 237 city workers and cutting city services. He laid off another 314 city workers in 1972.¹⁸ The cuts, however, were not sufficient. In May 1973, Auditor General Victor McCormick warned of another \$50 million budget shortfall.¹⁹

In 1972, Gribbs and the city also confronted the reality, or threat of, more industrial plant closures. GM announced that it would close its Fisher Body Plant, leaving over 1,000 workers

¹⁵ Joe T. Darden, Richard Child Hill, June Thomas, and Richard Thomas, *Detroit: Race and Uneven Development*. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987), 19.

¹⁶ Alfred M. Pelham, "Report to Mayor Roman S. Gribbs from Alfred M. Pelham, Deputy Controller, Re: Current Fiscal Status of the City of Detroit" (January 9, 1970), 1a-5a. Roman S. Gribbs Papers, Box 70, Folder 1. Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library. I will refer to Pelham's report as "The Pelham Report."

¹⁷ Alfred M. Pelham, "Report to Mayor Roman S. Gribbs from Alfred M. Pelham, Deputy Controller, Re: Means of Meeting the 1970-71 Budget Deficiency Confronting the City of Detroit," (January 9, 1970), 1-4. Roman S. Gribbs Papers, Box 70 Folder 1. Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library.

¹⁸ Clark Hallas, "Detroit Official Says Fund Cuts Will Cripple City," *The Detroit News*, February 7, 1973.

¹⁹ Don Lenhausen, "\$50 Million Budget Deficit Possible, City Auditor Says," *Detroit Free Press*, May 2, 1973.

idle. Other local manufacturers such as Gar Wood, Wolverine Tube, and Eaton Corporation announced plant closings in March, 1972. The closings of Federal Mogul, Excello Corporation, North American Rockwell, and the Burroughs Corporation plants in Detroit and the western Wayne County suburbs pushed its Wayne County Commission to issue a resolution on February 17 calling for the establishment of a “Jobs for Greater Detroit Committee.” The goal of the committee, which would be comprised of local political, industry, labor, and community leaders, would be to devise strategies to stop plant closings.²⁰ Gribbs also called for a cooperative approach to address deindustrialization in the aftermath of GM’s Fisher Body announcement.²¹

Changes in federal urban policy also contributed to Detroit’s fiscal turbulence during the 1970s. Unlike the big city mayors of the 1960s, big city mayors governed under a different federal urban policy regime. Federal aid to cities declined overall during the 1970s.²² President Richard M. Nixon abandoned the Great Society/Model Cities-style of urban policy that allowed cities to tap into various agencies for money. Nixon’s new federalism emphasized “revenue sharing” among cities.²³ Under Nixon’s new federalism, the federal government consolidated funding available for urban development in several block grants including the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). Nixon’s grants distributed federal funds more widely than the previous urban policy regime, which tended to extend most of its resources to northeastern

²⁰ Ralph Orr and John Oppendahl, “GM Reaffirms Plant Closing,” *Detroit Free Press*, February 10, 1972; James G. Tittsworth, “Employees Assail Tube Plant Closing,” *Detroit News*, March 21, 1972; James Dewey, “Eaton Corp. Plans to Move Plant Out of Detroit,” *Detroit Free Press*, March 2, 1972; Nugent, “500 to Lose Plant Jobs at Gar Wood,” *Detroit Free Press*, March 27, 1972; Bernard E. Hanus, “Letter to Roman S. Gribbs,” (March 1, 1972), Roman S. Gribbs Papers, Box 329, Folder 5. BHL.

²¹ Roman S. Gribbs, “Statement of Mayor Roman S. Gribbs on February 2, 1972,” Gribbs Papers, Box 329, Folder 5, BHL.

²² Jon C. Teaford, *The Rough Road to Renaissance: Urban Revitalization in America, 1940-1985* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), 269.

²³ David B. Walker, *The Rebirth of Federalism: Slouching Toward Washington* (New Jersey: Chatham House Publishers, Inc., 1995), 135; Timothy J. Conlan, “The Politics of Block Grants: From Nixon to Reagan,” *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 99, No. 2 (Summer 1984), 252-253.

cities.²⁴ The federal government instituted the Urban Development Action Grant Program (UDAG), which awarded troubled cities grants for economic development.²⁵ In this era of 1970s new federalism, Detroit obtained almost \$400 million in federal aid in 1978.²⁶ The city also earned \$114 million in Urban Development Action Grants between 1978 and 1984.²⁷ Young used these funds to offset budget deficits and for riverfront, downtown, industrial, and neighborhood development.²⁸

Nixon's approach to urban policy exacerbated Detroit's budgetary problems. The *Detroit Free Press* called Nixon's impending 1974 budget, "A \$400 Million Blow for Detroit."²⁹ Roman Gribbs declared in his testimony in a February 1973 Congressional subcommittee hearing that Nixon's 1974 budget would "decimate many of the programs designed to contain and combat the social evils that plague our cities... These cuts will give impetus to a new cycle of decay in American cities."³⁰ Gribbs projected cuts in summer job programs, housing, parks, child care, health care, and in the construction of a six-county water and sewage treatment center.³¹ Other mayors of Midwestern and Rustbelt cities also expressed concern with the impact of Nixon's budget. Gary, Indiana mayor Richard Hatcher testified that the city would suffer a \$21 million cut due to Nixon's revenue sharing program.³² Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter would maintain the same block grant structure in their urban policies, forcing Coleman Young to confront the same budgetary crisis that had bedeviled, his predecessor.

²⁴ Thomas J. Anton, *Federal Aid to Detroit* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1983), xii.

²⁵ Teaford, 268-69;

²⁶ Anton, xvi.

²⁷ Thomas, 157.

²⁸ Anton, xvii.

²⁹ David Cooper, "A \$400 Million Blow for Detroit," *Detroit Free Press*, March 28, 1973.

³⁰ Roman Gribbs, "Testimony, Subcommittee, "A New Federalism," February 21, 1973, 53

³¹ David Cooper, "A \$400 Million Blow for Detroit," *Detroit Free Press*, March 28, 1973; "Nation's Cities Brace for Major Financial Problems from Nixon Budget," *New York Times*, April 30, 1973.

³² Gary Hatcher, "Testimony, Subcommittee, "A New Federalism," 34.

While the urban crisis helped lay the foundation for the rise of DARE, the organization also arose in response to transformations in the national and global economies. Historians cite the oil shock of 1973 as the end of the postwar economic boom and the onset of the “stagflation” crisis of the 1970s.³³ Responding to tacit U.S. support of Israel against Egypt in the Yom Kippur War, the mostly Arab members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Companies (OPEC) imposed an oil embargo that drove up energy prices by 70% in the United States.³⁴ This price hike in oil sent the manufacturing sector in the U.S. economy reeling and provoked a national recession in 1974 and 1975. Detroit especially felt the brunt of the oil shock because mass automobile production and consumption depended upon low energy costs. Detroit’s unemployment rate increased from 12.5 to 17.4% while the country’s rate rose from 5.6 to 8.5% during the 1974-75 recession.³⁵

Turbulence within the U.S. auto economy during the 1970s contributed to the city’s downturn and spurred DARE’s marxist analysis of the Chrysler crisis and its effort to construct an economic plan that would respond to both the local and national crises. The 1973-74 oil embargo and the oil shock at the end of the decade, economic recession, government regulations, and increased competition from Japan and West Germany generated a crisis in the auto industry. Consequently, Ford, General Motors, American Motors, and especially Chrysler, experienced wild fluctuations of loss and profit during the decade. In the midst of the oil shock and economic

³³ Judith Stein, *Pivotal Decade: How the United States Traded Factories for Finance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 74; Charles S. Maier, “‘Malaise’: The Crisis of Capitalism in the 1970s,” in *The Shock of the Global: The 1970s in Perspective*, eds. Niall Ferguson, Charles S. Maier, Erez Manela, and Daniel J. Sargent (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 31.

³⁴ Daniel J. Sargent, “The United States and Globalization in the 1970s” in *The Shock of the Global: The 1970s in Perspective*, 49.

³⁵ Anton, 6-7.

1974-1975 recession, auto sector profitability fell from 5 percent to 1 percent between 1973 and 1975.³⁶

The surge of Japanese imports, abetted by the federal government's trade policies, also exacerbated the crisis within the auto industry. Japanese auto makers intensified their penetration into the U.S. auto market during the 1970s. By 1973 Japanese imports totaled over 3 million or 15 percent of the U.S. auto market. According to historian Judith Stein, Japanese auto companies exported 1.2 cars for every car bought in Japan. As the decade progressed, Japanese automakers were also able to take advantage of the rising demand for fuel efficient vehicles and of the oil shortage stimulated by the revolution in Iran in 1979.³⁷ By the end of the decade, Japanese automakers' market share had increased to 26.7 percent.³⁸

Auto companies attributed blame on the turbulence within the industry on federal regulations. Chrysler's business leaders, as well as pro-business publications such as *Business Week*, pointed to these federal regulations as the culprit for the corporation's deterioration during the late 1970s. "The regulatory load falls unevenly on us and affects us like a regressive tax," Chrysler chairman John J. Riccardo told the *New York Times* in August 1979.³⁹ In fact, the fuel standards in the Clean Air Act of 1970, combined with the oil shock, and international competition to push the Big 4 automakers to produce smaller, more fuel efficient vehicles such

³⁶ U.S. Government, *The Automobile Industry and Its Impact on the Nation's Economy* (Washington, D.C.: Gov't Printing Office, 1975), 20.

³⁷ Heather Ann Thompson, *Whose Detroit?: Politics, Labor, and Race in a Modern American City*. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), 215.

³⁸ The success of Japan's intervention into the U.S. auto market can be explained by the Japanese government's work to develop and protect their nation's auto companies during the early 1950s. Japan's Ministry of International Trade and Industry set up protective tariffs on foreign imports and prohibited foreign companies from building plants. Japanese auto companies had not built a single plant in the U.S. or Europe during the 1970s. The Japanese government also provided more incentives for auto companies to export their cars abroad. Judith Stein, *Pivotal Decade: How the United States Traded Factories in for Finance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 254-255.

³⁹ Edwin McDowell, "Behind Chrysler's Decline: It's Management and Competition," *New York Times*, 17 August 1979.

as American Motors's Gremlin and Hornet and Ford's Pinto.⁴⁰ This shift in consumer demand towards more fuel efficient cars, models that Chrysler developed too slowly, was one of the factors that pushed Chrysler Corporation to declare bankruptcy in 1979.⁴¹

The Cockrel Campaign, Establishment of DARE and the Tension between Radicalism and Electoral Politics

DARE emerged out of Kenneth Cockrel's election to the Detroit city council in 1977. Cockrel's victory was the zenith of his personal success in politics. Soon Cockrel and his comrades in DARE experienced isolation as the principled opposition to Mayor Young and his growth coalition inside city government. Young's coalition featured the UAW and business leaders such as Ford Motor Company's Henry Ford, II and the developer Alfred Taubman. DARE, however, thought it could use Cockrel's election to build momentum to confront Young and his coalition and to eventually organize a movement around what they considered a more "rational" economic approach in response to deindustrialization and the city's fiscal crisis.

Kenneth Cockrel had first explored running for mayor while working in the anti-STRESS campaign during the early 1970s. While Coleman Young's ascendancy in 1972-1973 thwarted Cockrel's mayoral ambitions, he seized on the opportunity to run for city council in February 1977. He saw his decision to run for public office as an extension of the long term political strategy of building a sustainable multiracial left political movement that had first emerged from activist-lawyer Justin Ravitz's election to Recorder's Court Judge in 1972.⁴²

Cockrel's 1977 campaign organization boasted over 1,000 volunteers—second only to Coleman Young's mayoral campaign—and a war chest of \$70,000, much of it from \$5 and \$10

⁴⁰ Glenda Gilmore and Thomas J. Sugrue, *These United States: A Nation in the Making, 1890 to the Present* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2015), 514.

⁴¹ *The Chrysler Corporation Financial Situation*, 24.

⁴² "Cockrel Tells Why He's in Common Council Race," *Michigan Chronicle*, 19 February 1977.

donations. Cockrel's campaign distributed 50,000 buttons, 25,000 bumper stickers, and four thousand flyers.⁴³ Having earned experience running Ravitz's successful campaign, Sheila Murphy stepped in to serve as Cockrel's campaign's manager. Notable activists—Herb Boyd, Melba Boyd, Jim Jacobs, and Jack Russell served as campaign coordinators.⁴⁴

Cockrel's campaign also solicited help from other leftist organizations in the city. Murphy convinced Cockrel to allow members of Detroit's chapter of the New American Movement (NAM) to work as researchers and canvassers in his campaign.⁴⁵ She recognized NAM's intellectual and political capabilities.⁴⁶ Ron Aronson, Judy Kunnes, Tony Rothschild, and Steve Shank comprised the "Detroit NAM Cockrel Committee." Aronson led the organization's "think tank," or research team while Kunnes, Rothschild, and Shank worked as district coordinators. The members of the NAM Cockrel Committee approached the campaign as members of a political coalition; they saw electing Cockrel as an important goal because they assumed Cockrel would "raise issues, expose practices, and deal from an independent base uncontrolled by traditional political and capital interest in the city." Yet, they also believed they had much to gain as an organization by working in the Cockrel campaign. "We saw it as an arena for recruitment to our chapter," the NAM Cockrel Committee acknowledged. Ultimately, NAM saw the Cockrel campaign as an opportunity to forge "a coalition of progressive and socialist forces" in the city.⁴⁷

Cockrel and his campaign organization encountered a crucial question: How much should Cockrel emphasize his socialist credentials? The Cockrel's campaign's desires to win

⁴³ "Going the Distance in Detroit," *Moving On* (November 1977), 8.

⁴⁴ Cockrel Campaign, "Campaign Coordinators," Cockrel Collection, Box 11, Folder 15, WPRL.

⁴⁵ Ron Aronson, Judy Kunnes, Tony Rothschild, and Steve Shank, "Ken Cockrel's Campaign for Detroit City Council and NAM's Participation," Box 11, Folder 22, Cockrel Collection. I will refer to this group as the NAM Cockrel Committee.

⁴⁶ NAM Cockrel Committee, "Ken Cockrel's Campaign for Detroit City Council and NAM's Participation/"

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

votes from a broad swath of the city, especially its African American population, produced a tension between Cockrel's self-identification as a socialist and the campaign's unwillingness to explicitly run on a radical platform. Mainstream and leftist press coverage often highlighted Cockrel's leftist credentials.⁴⁸ Yet, Cockrel's politics remained vague in the campaign's literature. Campaign flyers expressed a leftist populism. The campaign framed him as a "fighter" for workers and "the people."⁴⁹ A campaign profile of Cockrel contained traces of his leftist politics. It stressed his successes as a lawyer and activist and remarked that capitalism exploited all people, "At the height of racial polarization, in Detroit and nationally, he [Cockrel] was a clear and consistent voice saying 'the conditions which create our situation are colorless. People...are not served by a corrupt capitalist system.'"⁵⁰ Some observers and the members of the NAM Cockrel Committee acknowledged how the campaign downplayed its candidate's socialist politics. NAM declared that Cockrel's campaign "was not a socialist campaign, and its main appeal was to the Black community." In its postmortem of DARE, leftist journalists Mark Levitan and David Finkle acknowledged how Cockrel "ran as a socialist" even though "the campaign was vague about what this meant for the issues facing Detroit."⁵¹ Campaign organizer Jim Jacobs captured this tension in his analysis of the campaign. "The Cockrel campaign was not overtly socialist in its ideology or program. However, in interviews to the media, Cockrel always identified himself as a socialist."⁵²

⁴⁸ "Jim Crutchfield, "Marxist Councilman Urges Move to the Left," *Detroit Free Press*, November 10, 1977; Richard Williams, "Radical attorney's campaign for Council is full of contrast," *The Detroit News*, October 18, 1977.

⁴⁹ Cockrel Campaign, "Flyer—Ken Cockrel is a Fighter!"; "Ken Cockrel Speaks for the People," Cockrel Collection, Box 11, Folder 27, WPRL.

⁵⁰ Cockrel Campaign, "Profile: Kenneth V. Cockrel," Cockrel Papers Box 11, Folder 27, Cockrel Collection, WPRL.

⁵¹ Mark Levitan and David Finkle, "DARE: What did it accomplish? Why did it fail?" *Socialist Monthly Changes* Vol 3, No. 8 (September 1981): 11.

⁵² Jim Jacobs, "DARE to Struggle."

The campaign's economic views also highlighted the tension between Cockrel's political identity and his platform's content. Cockrel devoted his attention to the economic issues tax reform, an issue that DARE would also focus on following the election. One of his campaign pamphlets addressed questions of how to address deindustrialization and alluded to DARE's vision of rational reindustrialization. The pamphlet asked: "Should we enact a tax on businesses that move out of Detroit as an incentive for them to stay? Should we think about and implement another way to allocate our labor time to produce socially useful goods and services? When industries desert Detroit, should the City purchase and preserve plants in ways that expand employment and advance workers' control?"⁵³ Regarding Cockrel's economic platform, one observer wrote, "Cockrel is stressing such themes as: government takeover of services that the private sector is failing to adequately deliver" and "the development of labor-intensive employment..."⁵⁴ His concern for economic issues was indicative of the economic turbulence of the 1970s. "We've entered an era in the country generally, and Detroit particularly, where the questions of economic survival are paramount," he told the *Michigan Chronicle*.⁵⁵

Similar to Ravitz's campaign, Cockrel's campaign embodied left progressive arguments for the use of electoral politics, interaction with established political institutions, and the development of independent political organization as mechanisms for addressing the problems facing Detroit. As Jack Russell stated in "No Gas and Water Socialism in Detroit," "we made the decision to run because we wanted to test the possibilities of creating out of the campaign a multi-racial organization..."⁵⁶ For Cockrel, and eventually DARE, taking political office only

⁵³ Cockrel Campaign, "Facing the Future: A Critical Look at the Issues Confronting Detroit," (Detroit: The Committee to Elect Cockrel, 1977), 1. Cockrel Collection, Box 11, Folder 27, WPRL.

⁵⁴ "Going the Distance in Detroit," 9.

⁵⁵ Rod Bush, "Victory of a Black Radical: Interview with Ken Cockrel," in Rod Bush, ed. *The New Black Vote: Politics and Power in Four American Cities* (San Francisco: Synthesis Publications, 1984), 186-187.

⁵⁶ Russell, "No Gas & Water Socialism in Detroit," 25.

comprised one component of their model of an independent black left politics. One also needed a viable political organization that had the capacity to pressure the city's institutions. Cockrel emphasized this symbiotic relationship between independent political organization and sympathetic politicians when he addressed a question regarding what voters should expect from his performance on the council, "What I am able to do in the council is going to be dependent upon what we're able to do in the community..."⁵⁷

Cockrel saw the need for developing a nationwide network of likeminded city-based organizations because he recognized the limitations of local politics when trying to address globalized problems. He explained the reasons for the establishment of DARE as follows:

We needed an organization because we recognized the limitations in holding elective office, at this or any other level of government. For example, after the 1974 embargo, the quadrupling of prices and the concern about fuel efficiency, you reach a point where quite obviously there's not a thing that I can do in the Wayne County building or that Young can do in the Wayne County building about the problems which have a global geo-political genesis. We know we need the organized capacity to relate to other embryonic entities that do exist around the country...⁵⁸

Ultimately, Cockrel's and his allies' theory of social movements and politics rested upon an inside-outside approach. Social movements and political organizations could organize, mobilize, and elect their candidates into office. However, in the case of Cockrel, and what became DARE, those elected officials and outside political organizations would work in tandem to build more support for more radical policies among the city's citizenry. Then, the political organization and the elected official would encourage those external to the city government to pressure the established institutions to adopt particular policies.

Cockrel faced considerable odds despite enjoying mass support. He had to contend with a field of 73 in the city's September 13 nonpartisan primary election. Neither Young, the UAW,

⁵⁷ "Black Marxist Wins in Detroit," *In These Times*, 8.

⁵⁸ "Politics in Detroit: An Interview with Ken Cockrel," *Socialist Review*, No. 49 (January/February 1980), 80.

the local black political organization, the Black Slate, led by Reverend Albert B. Cleage, not the *Detroit Free Press*, endorsed Cockrel's candidacy.⁵⁹ However, he did earn endorsements from Congressman John Conyers and the local conservative paper, the *Detroit News*. Cockrel finished first in the primary election, garnering over 100,000 votes. He received over 160,000 votes in the general election that November, placing seventh out of eighteen candidates and first among non-incumbents.⁶⁰

Cockrel entered office as Young's urban regime coalesced. Young won a second term, defeating Ernest Brown by 77,000 votes in the mayoral runoff.⁶¹ At the same time, the city's voters elected the first black majority on City Council. Erma Henderson, the city council president, represented the body's most progressive member next to Cockrel.⁶² While Cockrel sought to build a progressive machine, in the form of DARE, that appealed to black Detroiters, then whites, the solidification of Young's governing coalition threatened to isolate his effort.

After Cockrel's election, the activists in Cockrel's political organization established an organization that they hoped could fill the need to an external pressure group. On September 10, 1978, Cockrel, Murphy, Ravitz, and their supporters gathered at Cobo Hall and constituted themselves as the Detroit Alliance for a Rational Economy. DARE charged itself with supporting Cockrel in his opposition against Young's redevelopment efforts. The organization did so by organizing conferences around economic development, facilitating an alternative city bus tour, establishing a newsletter, their *Dispatch*, and founded a policy think-tank, the Detroit Institute for Urban Policy Research.⁶³ It was through their work with the Institute that Jack Russell and

⁵⁹ "Radical Attorney's Campaign for Council is Full of Contrast," *The Detroit News*, 18 October 1977.

⁶⁰ Conference on Alternative State and Local Policies, "Cockrel Places in Detroit," *Newsletter*, September 1977. Kenneth V. and Sheila M. Cockrel Collection, 1978, Box 11, Folder 28, Walter P. Reuther Library.

⁶¹ Rich, 111.

⁶² NAM Cockrel Committee.

⁶³ Hill, "Crisis in the Motor City," 112-113.

economist, UAW researcher, and DARE activist Dan Luria produced *Rational Reindustrialization*. DARE's members also drafted a constitution that featured its organizational vision and its organizational structure. The organization required members to pay \$20 dues annually. At its height, DARE boasted over 200 dues-paying members.⁶⁴

DARE featured an elaborate hierarchical and rather democratic structure. The General Assembly comprised all members. The General Assembly was responsible for establishing and reviewing the year's organizational objectives. The Assembly met once a year to elect the Executive Board. The Executive Board had seventeen members who were vested with administrative and decision making powers. The Executive Board and the General Assembly reconstitutes itself as the Executive Council, which assumes the powers of the Executive Board. From there, DARE implemented its strategy and program through its quadrant organizers. Two quadrant organizers were in charge of the four quadrants—north, south, east, and west. They supervised district coordinators and neighborhood captains.⁶⁵

DARE's constitution captured the various conceptual strands of left politics that many of the founders had practiced in the prior decade. The first statement of the preamble of DARE's constitution read: "We are progressives who defend liberty and oppose economic exploitation, racism, sexism, and all forms of oppression." Calls for "the socialist transformation of society," to "work to reform the present social order" were reminiscent of Borys's rhetoric in her essay supporting Ravitz's campaign. The organization stated that its goal was to "develop a united, independent political force..."⁶⁶ The Preamble's inclusion of a statement of support for engaging in electoral politics also reflected the organization's activists' prior experience in Ravitz's and

⁶⁴ John Judis, "Cockrel's DARE Challenges Detroit Renaissance," *In These Times*, 10 October 1979.

⁶⁵ DARE, "City Life in the 80s Conference Program," Kenneth V. and Sheila M. Cockrel Collection, September 1979, Box 7, Folder 25, Walter P. Reuther Library.

⁶⁶ DARE, "Constitution." Kenneth V. and Sheila M. Cockrel Collection, 1978, Box 8, Folder 3, WPRL.

Cockrel's campaign. DARE sought to make it clear that it was prepared support likeminded candidates and to demonstrate that an independent electoral strategy was a viable for leftists in the late 1970s.⁶⁷

DARE's leadership saw the organization as having the potential to be a prototypical left urban organization that could lead in constructing a nationwide independent left social and electoral movement devoted to confronting the problems of uneven metropolitan economic development and capital and government disinvestment from the nation's cities. Cockrel explained the organization's broader political aspirations in an article that appeared in the left publication, *In These Times*, in the fall of 1979 entitled, "Left City Politics Must Focus on Working and Poor People's Interests." "This involvement in electoral activity provides a range of opportunities in the 1980s to build the kind of local organization that is essential if a reinvigorated national left is to emerge in the next decade." Then, after underscoring DARE as "a city-wide, multi-racial, community-based organization with socialist leadership," Cockrel described the organization's "urban populism," and presumably its rational economic policy, as "the essential urban core of a popular left movement in the 1980s."⁶⁸

Cockrel's election to city council and the creation of DARE represented the culmination of a decade-long process of the development of a multiracial, left, and independent politics in the city of Detroit. Black and white radicals led by Cockrel and Murphy moved away from organizations concerned with ideological purity and a skepticism towards electoral politics towards a political formation coalescing around attracting a mass political base and taking power through the city's established political institutions. Now that Cockrel had entered into Detroit's corridors of power, DARE's next challenge was to develop a left critique of the liberal economic

⁶⁷ DARE, "Constitution."

⁶⁸ "Left City Politics Must Focus on Working and Poor People's Interests."

development of Young and the Democrats and to construct a left-wing economic and urban policy that could serve as an alternative.

“Detroit Renaissance”: Mayor Coleman Young, the Public-Private Partnership, and DARE’s Critique of Liberal Urban Development

Cockrel’s and DARE’s opposition to Mayor Coleman Young’s use of tax abatements for riverfront and downtown development was an example of their opposition to growth liberalism. It also represents an example of progressives’ encounter with powerful policy and political structures. The city’s power structure featured a strong and popular black mayor. Local black political organizations such as the Black Slate either aligned themselves with Young or stayed out of his administration’s way. A network of development institutions such as the Economic Development Corporation and Detroit Renaissance, Inc. comprised of local business leaders and real estate developers often utilized municipal ties and public money in their efforts to stimulate the city’s “renaissance.”

As Young’s coalition emerged as a crucial political roadblock for Cockrel and DARE, it is important to remember that Young also governed within particular institutional, policy, and structural constraints. Young entered into office in the midst of crucial shifts in policy and political economy. Detroit’s auto-based economy slowed in the midst of economic crisis and the 1973 oil shock. President Nixon’s and Ford’s “new federalism” closed a source of revenues for the struggling city. While members of DARE concentrated on Young’s alliance with corporate leaders and developers, the mayor sought a comprehensive redevelopment strategy that included revitalizing downtown, riverfront, neighborhoods, and the industrial sector. As mayor, Young used the legal and policy resources available for urban development. These measures included tax abatements for downtown and industrial development, as well as Urban Development Action

Grants (UDAGs), and eminent domain for building a General Motors plant in the Poletown neighborhood.

In his inaugural speech in 1974, Young famously told would-be criminals to “hit the road.” Young linked his plans to fight crime with a call for racial reconciliation and a promise to revitalize the city’s downtown and the riverfront. Young declared that he would “attack the economic deterioration of our city” and “move forward the first significant step that has been made since the Renaissance Center, to deal with the problem of rebuilding our city economically.”⁶⁹ His discussion of economic redevelopment, especially his reference to the city’s Renaissance Center, did not stray from his campaign message where he once declared, “Revitalize the riverfront...and I guarantee you’ll revitalize the whole city.”⁷⁰

Despite this proclamation, Young continued to invest in industrial development. Young’s coalition of public and private interests’ projects reflected an effort to build a post-industrial Detroit that could serve as headquarters for white collar professional work and other elements of a service economy. Coleman Young and his corporate allies drew from an older strategy of urban development that was part of a national trend. Planners and local officials in cities like New York City, Chicago, and Pittsburgh relied upon urban renewal to clear the way for building highways and redevelopment projects. New York City planner Robert Moses’s and Metropolitan Life President Frederick Ecker’s collaboration on Met Life’s Stuyvesant Town during the 1950s exemplified the type of public-private strategy for urban development that Young, local developers, and corporate leaders sought to undertake.⁷¹ Young’s coalition’s strategy in Detroit relied on building large high end projects that included luxury apartments, office buildings, and

⁶⁹ Coleman Young, “Inaugural Address,” Coleman A. Young Papers. Box 107, Folder 5, Walter P. Reuther Library.

⁷⁰ Quoted in Thomas, 157.

⁷¹ Samuel Zipp, *Manhattan Projects: The Rise and Fall of Urban Renewal in Cold War New York* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 19; Teaford, 108.

the construction of a sports arena. The policy, economic, and regional context distinguished Young's redevelopment efforts from his predecessors and his peers.

Young injected himself into the post-rebellion public-private infrastructure developed by New Detroit, Inc. and Detroit Renaissance, Inc. upon his election in 1973. As discussed in Chapter 1, then-Mayor Jerome Cavanagh, businessman J.L. Hudson, and an assemblage of the city's business leaders formed the "nation's first 'urban coalition,'"—New Detroit, Inc.,—involving representatives from business, government, labor, and the city's neighborhoods in July 1967.⁷² They charged themselves with addressing what they perceived as the economic causes of the rebellion. Consequently, they looked to spearhead economic development by establishing another public-private entity—the Economic Development Corporation of Greater Detroit (EDC).⁷³ However, Henry Ford, II.'s Detroit Renaissance, Inc. superseded this organization. Ford's establishment of the organization also coincided with his vision for a prominent riverfront development project comprising a complex of five high towers, office buildings, hotels, and restaurants—the Renaissance Center.⁷⁴ Ford successfully attracted the financial support from all of the executives from the city's major corporations affiliated with the automobile industry.

Young established additional public-private institutions "dominated by business leaders to 'coordinate public and private development efforts.'" These organizations included the Economic Growth Corporation (EGC), the Economic Development Corporation (EDC), and the

⁷² Richard Child Hill, "Crisis in the Motor City," 96.

⁷³ Hill argues that the establishment of the EDC was "an effort to put white capitalism to work to promote black capitalism." The organization, according to Hill, would "demonstrate that 'the private business and financial communities are best equipped to lead the way in opening the benefits of the free enterprise system to minorities' and that 'minority business development is one of the key solutions to our nation's problems.'" Hill's argument suggests that scholars of the black power era, especially those who focus on black power's economic aspects, should build on the critique of black capitalism and what some may consider African Americans' acceptance and advocacy of the public-private partnership purported by black left activists such as Robert L. Allen in *Black Awakening in Capitalist America*. Hill also notes that black capitalism failed to ameliorate black poverty in Detroit. For Hill's discussion of black capitalism see Hill, "Crisis in the Motor City," 97.

⁷⁴ Sugrue cites the construction of the Renaissance Center as product of "public private partnership." Yet, he argues that its construction did "little to enlarge city's employment base and have drained city coffers of more tax money." Sugrue, 271.

Downtown Development Authority (DDA). These institutions adopted Detroit Renaissance, Inc.'s organizational model and took on an incestuous character as they often shared the same members.⁷⁵ These organizations often facilitated the use of public funds, either tax revenues or federal grants, in the execution of urban development projects.

Despite the economic turbulence and urban policy reforms, Young and his administration developed a more comprehensive development plan—*Moving Detroit Forward: A Plan for Urban Economic Revitalization* in April 1975. The plan demanded \$2.5 billion from the Federal Government. It called for federal and state money for an array of job programs and development projects. It called for riverfront development, the creation of industrial parks, the construction of a shopping center, courthouse, county jail, hospital, and an expansion of the city airport. It served as an example of how the federal government could work with cities to ensure post-industrial and post-oil shock urban reconstruction.

Coleman Young's plan reflected prior calls for urban reconstruction. Civil rights leaders such as Whitney Young and Martin Luther King, Jr. had called for a "Marshall Plan" to rehabilitate American cities. In a time of urban fiscal crisis, federal devolution, and the rightward drift in U.S. politics, *Moving Detroit Forward* represented a New Deal-style employment program. The Young administration estimated that such a plan would create over 60,000 jobs. The plan called for retraining 30,000 "structurally unemployed" Detroiters. Young believed the state should continue to protect workers and citizens from market failures and structural economic transformations such as the suburbanization and globalization of manufacturing.

Young sought to make a point with the ambitious plan: the federal government was implicated in the urban crisis and it was responsible for maintaining the health of the nation's cities. "It is now incumbent upon the Federal government to act decisively on the challenge

⁷⁵ Shaw, 81.

posed and sustain its greatest asset – the nation’s cities,” the report declared. Young also held the federal government responsible for neglecting its housing stock. HUD owned 20,000 properties in the city, many of which were abandoned homes and vacant lots.⁷⁶ HUD’s neglect, according to the plan, “all but destroyed home ownership” in Detroit.⁷⁷

President Gerald Ford and his administration dismissed the plan. This is not surprising considering the trajectory of urban policy during the first half of the 1970s. The Nixon and Ford administrations designed urban policies to facilitate more economic growth in the South and West. The Ford administration initially balked at saving New York City during its fiscal crisis in 1975, thus signaling to mayors of struggling cities like that they were virtually on their own as they navigating economic downturns and budget crises. On the other hand, Coleman Young aimed to use his close relationship with President Jimmy Carter to secure federal funding for development projects during the 1970s. Young’s early support of then-Georgia Governor Carter in his presidential campaign in 1976 placed him and the city in favorable position to receive preferential treatment in the allocation of federal grants and loans.

“Tax Al and his pal Max”: DARE’s Opposition to Tax Abatement

Coleman Young relied on a corporate-centered strategy of development where city government collaborates with business to ensure private investment, the construction of private development projects, and the construction of a “healthy” business climate.⁷⁸ Mayor Young’s

⁷⁶ Biles, 213.

⁷⁷ *Moving Detroit Forward*, 3.

⁷⁸ Critics of the approach argue that the private entities usually emerge as the dominant partner in this relationship. This “unequal partnership” often results in the municipal government’s exclusive focus on downtown development and the neglect of neighborhood development. The privileged position of business also can also place economic development decisions out of the reach of the citizens because the city government could also vest public-private institutions with the powers of municipal government such as land clearance. Opponents ultimately maintain that the public-private partnership model has had little impact on mass unemployment and declining city revenues. Hackworth, 61; Gregory D. Squires, “Public-Private Partnerships: Who Gets What and Why,” in *Unequal*

strategy for stimulating development was similar to Ohio's Republican Governor James Rhodes. Young executed this strategy by awarding tax abatements and other forms of financial relief to corporations and real estate developers for settling in Detroit.⁷⁹

Riverfront and central business district development embodied the core of Young's revitalization program. The construction of Joe Louis Arena and Max Fisher's and Al Taubman's Riverfront West luxury apartments characterized the major development projects along the riverfront and downtown. The Renaissance Center remained a "centerpiece for allied development" for Young.⁸⁰ When the city's hockey team, the Detroit Red Wings, threatened to move, Mayor Young took out a \$38 million dollar loan against future CDBG funds from the Carter Administration to finance the arena.⁸¹ When developers Max Fisher and Al Taubman expressed interest in building luxury apartment complexes, Young supported the use of tax abatements—a reduction or an exemption from taxes over a specified period of time—to help fund the project. Young's use of federal grants like the CDBG and city resources attracted the ire from DARE and Cockrel. The organization often maintained that Young's use of those resources served the interests of private capital, not of the city's workers and residents.⁸²

DARE strongly opposed city government's use of tax abatements to subsidize private development on the grounds that it contributed to the city's budget crises, therefore provoking

Partnerships: The Political Economy of Urban Redevelopment in Postwar America, ed. Gregory D. Squires (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1989), 2-3. For more on the critique of public-private partnerships see Miriam Greenberg, *Branding New York: How a City in Crisis was Sold to the World* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 27-28. Greenberg discusses the role of the private-public partnership in imposing austerity and developing a neoliberal strategy of economic development during New York City's 1975 fiscal crisis.

⁷⁹ Tax abatement—policies that provided relief to business, corporations, and developers for a period up to twelve years in the state of Michigan. Michigan State government created abatements for industrial (in 1974), commercial residential (1977) and commercial (1978) development.

⁸⁰ Hackworth, 155.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 157.

⁸² "Cockrel fights tax breaks," *Detroit News*, 6 October 1979; "Ol' pals Cockrel, Fisher 'clash,'" *Detroit News*, 5 June 1981. It is important to note, however, that Young's public-private partnership model did not totally preclude neighborhood development. According to Thomas, the city allocated \$100,000 a year to the neighborhoods' citizens' district councils. She also noted that the city also refurbished "over 6,000 housing units between 1982 and 1991." See Thomas, 167.

Young's austerity politics. The national recession of 1974-75 negatively impacted the city, causing Young to lay off 4,000 city workers in the face of "a projected revenue shortfall between \$25 million and \$35 million."⁸³ Sociologist Richard Child Hill claims that Young's austerity measures contributed to the stagnation and/or decline of revenues allocated for social services.⁸⁴ He attributes the budget crises and the resulting austerity to inflation, higher taxes, "a more regressive tax structure" and "the decreasing weight of industrial and commercial property in the Detroit tax base due to corporate disinvestment, which shifted the burden from firms to residents" Yet, DARE also saw Young's uses of tax abatements and public resources as contributing factors. In "Tax Breaks and Burdens Workshop," a document composed for the 1979 City Life in the '80's Conference, the organization outlined its reasoning: "The costs of tax abatements and other incentives by city government are borne by all the citizens of Detroit and are clearly measurable. Tax incentives reduce city revenues at a time when city services are being cut to the bare bones. The allocation of federal and state funds to downtown development reduces allocation of those funds to the development of residential areas and neighborhood commercial strips."⁸⁵ Activist Jack Russell also argued that Detroit's residents also carried an unequal burden in supporting the city financially. He wrote, "We are dealing in the city of Detroit with a \$70 million budget deficit, the sources of which are complex, but the occasion of

⁸³ Shaw, 78. Young also responded to the 1981 budget crisis with further austerity measures—freezing city workers' wages, selling \$125 million in emergency bonds, and asking for a tax increase. See Darden, et al., 217.

⁸⁴ Hill, "Crisis in the Motor City," 109-110.

⁸⁵ Detroit Alliance for a Rational Economy, "Tax Breaks and Burdens Workshop," Kenneth V. and Sheila M. Cockrel Collection, September 29, 1979, Box 7, Folder 24, Walter P. Reuther Library. Thomas concurred with this argument in *Race and Redevelopment*. She writes, "Year after year, the city council fought with Mayor Young about whether the city should spend its resources on big ticket items in the central business district, riverfront, or industrial sector, or spread funding around to benefit smaller neighborhood projects. The tradeoff was real, because Young frequently used funds designated for neighborhoods to pay for projects such as the Detroit People Mover and Poletown." Thomas, 166.

which allows us to raise in the public mind the question of at whose expense the necessary fiscal austerity must come."⁸⁶

Cockrel emerged as the principal opponent of Young's uses of tax abatements. He often submitted the lone "no" vote when council passed tax abatement measures. In July 1979, Cockrel presented a resolution to City Council that would subject the issuance of tax abatements to greater scrutiny. Considering whether or not "a requested abatement was consistent with the purposes of the law and the needs of the community" would represent the crucial factor in offering such relief. The resolution also limited the number of abatements developers and businesses could receive and required developers to submit affirmative action hiring plans. The city council voted down Cockrel's proposal.

Cockrel and DARE organized against tax abatements for developers Max Fischer's and Al Taubman's riverfront luxury apartments. When Taubman and Fisher threatened not to proceed with constructing the Riverfront West apartments without tax abatement, Cockrel stated that the city already supported them with a \$9.4 million Urban Mass Transit Grant for the people mover, \$14 million in UDAG and federal resources for the project's mortgage.⁸⁷ The organization also contended in a flyer that money from the abatement would be better used by rehiring laid off city workers.⁸⁸ In September 1979, DARE organized a petition drive to put pressure on the council to oppose any tax measures for Taubman's and Fisher's developments in response to Taubman's and Fisher's requests and threats. DARE succeeded in reaching their goal of 15,000 signatures, but they were unable to stop the Council from granting the developers their

⁸⁶ Russell, "No Gas & Water Socialism in Detroit."

⁸⁷ "Cockrel Fights Tax Breaks," *The Detroit News*, 6 October 1979; "Downtown Projects Linked to Tax Break," *Detroit News*, 6 March 1980.

⁸⁸ DARE, "No Tax Break for Riverfront West," Cockrel Collection, Box 11, Folder 3, WPRL.

tax abatement. Cockrel lost the council vote, 8-1.⁸⁹ Mayor Young called Cockrel and DARE, “crazy,” and said he would “ignore them” in an October 6, 1979 *Detroit News* article. This outcome highlights a central problem with 1970s urban left politics—winning elections and serving as principled opposition was not enough to defeat Young’s governing coalition or to develop political power. Yet, members of DARE such as Jack Russell maintained that the organization’s ability to provoke debate and garner public support demonstrated the organization’s potential to challenge a popular black mayor. DARE’s efforts also illustrated how it was necessary for them to construct a city-based populist movement to attain political power and implement any alternative visions of economic development in the future.⁹⁰

DARE’s First Intervention: Critiquing the 1979 Chrysler Corporation Bailout

The 1980 Chrysler loan guarantee offered a political opportunity for DARE to challenge Young and the federal government’s response to crisis and advance its own policy of rational economic development. The organization opposed the bailout on the grounds that it would call for more worker concessions. DARE also criticized the bailout on more ideological terms—articulating an anti-corporate critique of the loan package. They charged that the conditions should promote an economic democracy that demanded more corporate accountability to Detroit’s citizens. Thus, they organized a conference in March 1980 to educate Detroiters on the impact of the bailout and the policy’s shortcomings. The organization also published a series of essays and a position paper, “DARE Speaks Out: Chrysler, The People, and the City.” What was most significant about the document was that DARE began to advance their conception of a rational economic development policy.

⁸⁹ “Downtown Project Linked to Tax Break,” *Detroit News*, March 6, 1980.

⁹⁰ Russell, “No Gas & Water Socialism.”

Chrysler began its steep descent into crisis in 1979. Geopolitics haunted the organization again in January as the Iranian revolution destabilized global oil market and subsequently drove up gas prices. Rising gas prices discouraged consumers from buying full-size Chrysler models. Hundreds of thousands of unsold automobiles remained in Chrysler's inventory.⁹¹ On May 30, Chrysler announced the closing of Dodge Main, its largest metropolitan Detroit plant. Located on the city's eastside, the plant served as one of Chrysler's flagship plants. At its height, Dodge Main could produce upwards of 12,000 cars every six-day workweek. The plant was also a major Detroit employer. The factory had employed 20,000 people at one point in 1959.⁹² The Corporation had laid off closed to 6,000 workers from the plant in the year prior to the 1978 announcement. Consequently, Dodge Main's remaining 2,600 jobs would be lost.⁹³

Fearing bankruptcy, Chrysler, with the support of Mayor Young and Republican Governor William Milliken, approached the federal government for federal aid on July 31. Chrysler requested a \$1 billion tax credit from the Treasury Department. Secretary G. William Miller declined the request, but offered the corporation loan guarantees "in the range of" \$500 and \$750 million dollars instead.⁹⁴ To qualify for the loan guarantee, Chrysler would have to construct a financial plan and raise capital from willing investors. On August 1, Chrysler experienced its worst quarterly loss in history—\$207 million.⁹⁵

⁹¹ Stuart, 109-111.

⁹² Warren Brown, "A Plant and Its City Fall Victim to Chrysler's Decline," *The Washington Post*, November 14, 1979.

⁹³ The Dodge Main closing was ironic considering its history. The context of crisis transformed industrial plants, as spaces of worker exploitation and labor militancy into sites that multiracial progressives sought to save. During the late 1960s, black activists such as Kenneth Cockrel and black plant workers such as General Baker helped established DRUM in Dodge plants. Now, in 1979, Chrysler emerged as a different site of crisis and contestation. Chrysler became a site where the fight for an industrial policy to address economic crisis and deindustrialization emerged. While Detroit's left progressives and Young's coalition sought to save jobs, Cockrel and DARE advanced a more radical vision to save the plant that included turning Dodge Main over to the city's citizens and workers.

⁹⁴ *The Chrysler Corporation Financial Situation*, 1.

⁹⁵ Thompson, 215.

The Chrysler debate stimulated a national conversation about industrial policy in the United States during the late 1970s and early 1980s. *Washington Post* journalist Joseph Kraft explained in a November 8, 1979 editorial, “The plight of the Chrysler Corporation defines a gaping hole in the American system. Washington has no direct means for promoting that high national priority, the reindustrialization of America.”⁹⁶ Secretary of Transportation Brock Adams concurred in an Op-Ed, “First Chrysler—and Then?” Adams connected the immediate issue regarding Chrysler to the larger problem of how the federal government should address the transformation of U.S.’s industrial economy. “What we are ultimately addressing is the reindustrialization of America, and a new industrial revolution won’t happen by itself. I believe we can refurbish our factories and once again make the kind of quality product that will dominate world markets,” he surmised. Democratic presidential hopefuls Edward Kennedy and Jerry Brown spoke favorably about reindustrialization.⁹⁷ *The New York Times* and *Business Week* featured articles about “reviving industry” and the “reindustrialization of America.”⁹⁸

Kraft’s and Adam’s assumption that the U.S. lacked an industrial policy if one defined it broadly to include such historical interventions such as subsidizing railroads during the nineteenth century, contracting out military production to various producers like Chrysler during World War II, facilitating the decentralization of the nation’s defense industry after World War II, or even extending loan guarantees to Lockheed and Chrysler.⁹⁹ Yet, considering their contentions from the leftist point of view provokes one to ask two questions: What shape should industrial policy take? Who should control the process of reindustrialization? Leftists such as

⁹⁶ Joseph Kraft, “The Chrysler Portent,” *The Washington Post*, 8 November 1979.

⁹⁷ “Reindustrialization. What?,” *New York Times*, 2 June 1980.

⁹⁸ “The Reindustrialization of America,” *Business Week*, June 1980

⁹⁹ Otis Graham argues that the U.S. did have an industrial policy. It consisted of the assemblage of various sectoral government interventions into the economy that policymakers in the Carter and Reagan administrations. See Otis L. Graham, Jr., *Losing Time: The Industrial Policy Debate* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992); Judith Stein, *Running Steel, Running America: Race, Economic Policy, and the Decline of Liberalism* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998).

DARE argued that federal, state, and local governments should incentivize the municipalization and democratization of industrial plants. The Chrysler debate opened a political space for DARE to not just advance critiques of the federal approach to the Chrysler bailout, but to push for more democratic reindustrialization strategies.

The threat of massive job loss due to a Chrysler failure dovetailed with already-existing organizing and discussions about plant closings among left-progressives during the 1970s documented in the previous chapter. Ohio activists led the way in the fight against industrial plant closings during the mid-to-late 1970s. Activists from the Ohio Public Interest Campaign (OPIC) began organizing around the issue of plant closings in 1976. They drafted a plant closing bill in 1977 that Ohio State Senator Michael Schwarzwald later sponsored. The Community Readjustment Act of 1977 contained several key provisions including two years advance notice of plant closings, severance pay to affected employees, and corporate payment into community assistance fund to aid cities.¹⁰⁰ OPIC and DARE shared the same principle of corporate responsibility to workers and municipalities. Yet, DARE advocated for what they considered as more fundamental solutions such as municipal ownership and workers' ability to take over abandoned plants.¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ Ohio Public Interest Campaign, "Schwarzwald Introduces Community Readjustment Act," *Public Interest Report*, October 1977

¹⁰¹ DARE's lean towards public ownership has more in common with activists' responses to the steel mill shutdowns in Youngstown in between 1977 and 1980. Many scholars and activists have discussed the city's struggles to retain its steel industry. Youngstown started to feel the ravages of plant closings in 1977 with the closure of Campbell Works of Youngstown Sheet and Tube. Two years later, the U.S. Steel Corporation shut down its mill in Youngstown, eliminating 3,500 jobs. Much of the literature has focused mostly on the decline of the city's industry and the social and economic impact, while paying little attention to activist responses to it. Supporting the city's Ecumenical Coalition, Gar Alperovitz and Staughton Lynd, the steel plant's workers and United Steelworker Locals sought to buy Campbell Works in 1977 and 1978 and operate it as an employee-owned enterprise. See Sherry Lee Linkon's and John Russo's *Steeltown, U.S.A.* as well as Staughton Lynd's *Fight Against Shutdowns: Youngstown's Steel Mill Closings* (1982); Michael Stewart Foley, *Front Porch Politics: The Forgotten Heyday of American Activism in the 1970s and 1980s* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2013), 190-191.

Mayor Coleman Young, members of Congress, and scholars predicted Detroit's doom should Chrysler fail. The city housed 15 of Chrysler's plants. Senator Carl Levin argued during the Chrysler hearings during the fall of 1979 that 80,000 metropolitan Detroiters would lose jobs. Almost half of the unemployed would be minority workers. The unemployment rate in the area, Levin stated, would rise from 8.7 percent to between 16 and 19 percent.¹⁰² According to a Department of Transportation study on the economic effects of a Chrysler failure, the city would suffer "an immediate economic shock" if the firm folded. The shock would resemble the one that beset the city in the midst of the initial OPEC oil shock and economic recession during 1974-1975 when the unemployment rate rose to 14%.¹⁰³ Mayor Young argued during the Chrysler proceedings that it was necessary for the federal government to bailout the ailing Chrysler because the city would lose \$30 million annually from the corporation if it failed.¹⁰⁴

Coleman Young and other members of Detroit's delegation advanced racial appeals in their testimonies as well. Chrysler was a major employer of black workers nationally and in Detroit. A Chrysler failure left black Americans uniquely vulnerable. Mayor Young testified, "Black unemployment in the city would increase dramatically. Approximately 25,000 of the 37,000 Detroit Chrysler workers are black."¹⁰⁵ Michigan Democratic Senator Donald Riegle stated, "A shutdown would create depression conditions in Detroit and it would cause tremendous economic losses for the minority populations there since Chrysler is a major employer of black and Hispanic workers" Riegle continued, "It is estimated, for example, that 1 percent of total black income in the United States is derived from Chrysler."¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² *The Chrysler Corporation Financial Situation*, 4.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 62.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 343.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 343.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 3 & 10.

After congressional hearings and negotiations among Chrysler, the UAW, and prospective creditors, President Jimmy Carter signed the Chrysler Corporation Loan Guarantee Act on January 7, 1980. It established the Chrysler Loan Guarantee Board and the Office of Chrysler Finance to oversee the execution of the loan guarantee. The loan plan required Chrysler to continue to sell assets. In addition to requiring concessions from dealers, suppliers, and banks, it enacted an austerity program on workers and state and local governments. The federal loan guarantee not only encouraged the corporation to slim down, but it also imposed an austerity logic upon its workers, states, and cities that DARE and labor activists criticized. The United Auto Workers were expected to give up \$1.2 billion in wages and benefits while state and local governments had to supply the corporation with \$250 million.¹⁰⁷

UAW President Douglas Fraser's appointment to Chrysler's Board of Directors appeared as potential silver-lining for workers, and possibly for advocates of greater worker control. However, Fraser's appointment stimulated much debate among union leaders and leftists. AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland argued that structure of Chrysler's Board would not allow Fraser and the UAW any greater decision-making power. Kirkland told the *New York Times* in November 1981, "I think most companies are management-controlled...The woods are full of professional board-of-directors sitters, usually people who retire and then pad out their income by serving on this board...for a stipend and infrequent work." Kirkland also warned in the same interview that such desires for union representation in the boardroom could inadvertently allow employers to deemphasize collective bargaining. "I have apprehensions that some employers...see it as a way around the collective bargaining table. And I think one has to be constantly on guard against that."¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ Stuart, 150; Glasberg, 69.

¹⁰⁸ William Serrin, "Labor Chief Seeks Investment Power," *New York Times*, 16 November 1981; Glasberg, 85-86.

UAW Local 400 Representative Roger Robinson argued that Fraser's presence on Chrysler's Board signified "an honest attempt at redistribution of power in favor of the workers." UAW Local 869 Representative Dave McCullough, however, argued that UAW's seat on the Board would not extend more power to the corporation's workers. Fraser would not acquire any information about Chrysler's operations that he could share publicly, nor would Fraser exercise any influence since he represented the sole voice for labor in the boardroom. Instead, McCullough asserted, Fraser would have to share responsibility for capital accumulation and profit-making.¹⁰⁹ Left progressive activists Martin Carnoy and Derek Shearer advance a similar critique of worker representation in their book, *Economic Democracy: The Challenge of the 1980s*. Drawing from studies about worker representation on boards of directors in Western European nations during the 1970s, the authors concluded that the corporate board of directors was structurally flawed because of the power of corporate managers and the board's culture of secrecy and informality.¹¹⁰

DARE responded to the Chrysler crisis by applying pressure within city council through Cockrel, organizing a conference, publishing articles in the organization's newsletter, and producing a position paper. They questioned the logic of bailouts that depended upon enacting austerity on Detroit autoworkers and residents. They also began articulating other progressive demands and principles of what they considered a "rational economy." DARE's rational economics represented their expression of economic democracy. This model included greater corporate accountability by giving Detroiters a seat on Chrysler's Board of Directors, converting industrial plants to produce for social needs, and generally protecting workers. DARE's Chrysler efforts also contained mistakes and contradictions that eventually proved fatal to the

¹⁰⁹ "Debate: Should Fraser Be on Chrysler's Board?," *Labor Notes*, November 20, 1979.

¹¹⁰ Martin Carnoy and Derek Shearer, *Economic Democracy: The Challenge of the 1980s* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 1980), 252.

organization. They failed to garner mass support for their efforts from African Americans and union workers. They also missed the opportunity to throw at least qualified support behind the UAW. DARE also failed to incorporate a racial analysis.

While DARE agreed with Mayor Young's immediate concern of saving jobs, the organization asserted that the bailout represented a short-term fix carrying high social costs. Arguing that the Chrysler crisis was the product of corporate capitalist development. DARE stated that it was less concerned with saving the corporation and reiterated their desire to save jobs and use the debate as a political education tool. Russell affirmed the organization's immediate concern of the crisis was to "protect further erosion of the high-wage industrial jobs that our own labor has made possible in this city."¹¹¹ The organization declared in its pamphlet, "We in DARE do not care whether or not the formal corporate entity called Chrysler survives. Our concern, rather, is with saving jobs and, in the process, with developing public understanding of the inevitability of crises such as Chrysler's in capitalist economies, and of the haves- vs. have-nots struggle that determines who pays for 'solutions.'"¹¹²

DARE critiqued the austerity logic contained within the loan guarantee. They argued that the bailout could also exacerbate the city's financial crisis and the austerity that the city's workers and poor had to endure. They reasoned, "The cities and states that will have given Chrysler loans, tax abatements, and other breaks will similarly find themselves smothered by debt or, worse yet, forced to permanently forgo vital services that might otherwise have been affordable. Pressure for service cuts will be joined by demands for reduced worker compensation benefits, unemployment assistance and the like."¹¹³ The organization also stated, "we shudder at

¹¹¹ Jack Russell, "Moving Chrysler Forward: Negotiation or Give Away," *Dispatch*. Kenneth V. and Sheila M. Cockrel Collection, February/March, 1980, Box 9, Folder 28, Walter P. Reuther Library.

¹¹² DARE, "Chrysler, the People, and the City," 7.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 2.

the impact of this package on another impoverished Corporation, the City of Detroit, which has also been forced to lay off workers, and which is also in danger of ceasing to be a ‘full line’ producer of a product we need more than Newports: the city services which hold life together in our town.”¹¹⁴

Moreover, DARE advanced an anti-corporate critique and posed fundamental questions about class relations. They maintained that Chrysler not only stole labor from workers, but the corporation exploited taxpayers and cities. The organization declared:

The federal “rescue” plan devised for Chrysler by Congress and the President with the assistance of the Corporation and its bankers is a lesson in the power of private capital. Billions of taxpayers’ dollars are held ready to save—for the time-being, at least—a mismanaged and tottering corporate entity and secure its financiers, while the workers who have produced the wealth of the Corporation are permanently stripped of \$462,500,000 in resources. And while the workers were being gouged, few suggested that the security of their jobs or their voice in determining Chrysler’s future was worthy of debate.¹¹⁵

According to DARE, corporations like Chrysler enjoyed a disproportionate amount of power in the U.S. political economy. For DARE, and other progressives like the UAW’s Fraser, Chrysler’s attempt to recoup capital from Detroit’s taxpayers and workers illustrated how corporations abandoned the social contract. Citizens, workers, and cities became responsible for paying for poor corporate planning and structural failure. The city’s residents and workers are to earn a return on their investment in the form of jobs, either. They are expected to pay to secure macroeconomic security. So, if DARE suggested that the bailout symbolized a misuse of funds, how did the organization seek to address this problem? DARE called for greater accountability and worker- and community control of the organization.

Members of the organization saw the crisis as a chance to use the controversy to push for greater corporate accountability and commitment to the city and its workers. Cockrel stated in an

¹¹⁴ DARE, “Chrysler, the People, and the City,” 15.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 4.

editorial, "...the crisis affords us an opportunity to build-in some safeguards against unchecked corporate decisions to close plants and shift production inside as well as outside of this state and country."¹¹⁶ They claimed that the city should force Chrysler to commit to the city by ensuring job security to its workers. And, if Chrysler refuses to ensure that it will keep industrial jobs in the city, then the city should withhold funds. Russell writes, "Before voting to approve the UDAG application, Ken indicated that, in his view, no funds from the grant should be released to build the paint shop unless and until Chrysler makes some firm, written commitments to the city..." The commitments that Cockrel and DARE proposed were further corporate investment in the city, financial transparency—"open the corporate books"—and popular representation on the Chrysler Board of Directors.¹¹⁷ Accountability and commitment were important for DARE because they argued that the workers built the city of Detroit, the corporation and its wealth. Consequently, the corporation should serve its workers and remain accountable to the city in which it resides.¹¹⁸

Like the UAW, DARE demanded popular representation on the Chrysler Board of Directors. DARE activists envisioned their demand as a step toward worker ownership and control of industrial plants. Cockrel asserted, "Public representation on Chrysler's board is a critical step in our overall battle to achieve greater worker and community control over the investment decisions that determine the quality of life for Detroiters, and all Americans."

Activist Jim Jacobs also quoted Cockrel, "The issue of public representation at Chrysler is very

¹¹⁶ Kenneth Cockrel, "Detroiters Fight Back—Editorial," *Dispatch* Kenneth V. and Sheila M. Cockrel Collection, February/March, 1980, Box 9, Folder 28, Walter P. Reuther Library.

¹¹⁷ Russell, "Moving Chrysler Forward," 4.

¹¹⁸ DARE, "Chrysler, the People, and the City," 3-4.

simple...If public monies are used to aid the corporation, it is rational to expect that the people should exercise some control over the use of those funds.”¹¹⁹

Jacobs admitted that public representation would not fundamentally address the problems plaguing the corporation or the U.S. economy. “While we have no illusions that public representation on the Chrysler board will solve the problems of the ailing automaker, this demand is a beginning step in attempts to control the irrationality of the present economic decisions,” he affirmed. Essentially, DARE claimed that the utility of capital and the relationship between the city and corporations should be defined by social impact rather than unmitigated economic growth. For the organization, the measure of extending “socialism” to Chrysler, as Cockrel called the measure in his “City Life in the 80s” speech, should function to sustain and grow jobs and not abet the insecurity of both local economy and the city’s workers.¹²⁰

DARE also advocated for long-term planning, plant conversion, and production for social needs. “Finally, the City of Detroit should take steps to secure funding for a truly comprehensive and bold planning effort focused on developing the capacity to convert plants such as Dodge Main to production of useful, under-supplied goods and services needed by the people of Detroit,” declared the organization. They further suggested several potential products that converted plants could manufacture including electric heat pumps, cogeneration equipment, and mass transit vehicles and parts. However, the organization did not elaborate on any decision making process or plan by which the city or workers would convert, run, and control plants. This required the organization to engage in more extensive analysis. DARE’s proposals of collective planning, worker and community control of plants, and conversion in their writings about

¹¹⁹ Jim Jacobs, “A Step Forward: DARE Chrysler Aid Forum,” *Dispatch* Kenneth V. and Sheila M. Cockrel Collection, April/May, 1980, Box 9, Folder 28, Walter P. Reuther Library.

¹²⁰ Kenneth Cockrel, “Transcript—City Life in the ‘80s,” (DARE: 1979), 8. Kenneth V. and Sheila M. Cockrel Collection, September 29, 1979, Box 7, Folder 24, Walter P. Reuther Library.

Chrysler illustrate the organizations desires to construct a “rational economy” governed by the principles of “conservation, accountability, conversion, and cooperation” pointed to a larger vision of economic democracy and the revitalization of Detroit.”¹²¹

Whereas DARE’s position paper is significant because it began articulating a left progressive alternative to the Chrysler loan guarantee and urban industrial economies, it also contained glaring silences that may to help explain the organization’s inability to garner mass support for its critique of the bailout. The Chrysler crisis appeared to present a great opportunity for DARE to appeal to the UAW’s rank and file. However, neither Cockrel, Jacobs, nor Russell threw their support behind UAW workers outside of critiquing the austerity logic contained within the loan guarantee. In fact, no one from DARE even discussed the union publicly. It is possible that DARE’s silence around the UAW stemmed from the city’s arrangement of political coalitions. Historically, Cockrel and the UAW were antagonists since the days of the revolutionary black union movements. The UAW leadership was part of Mayor Young’s governing coalition.

“The Future Detroit is Possible”: DARE’s Rational Economic Development and the National Conversation around Reindustrialization

Published in March 1981, DARE’s *Rational Reindustrialization: An Economic Development Agenda for Detroit* represented the organization’s answer to economic crisis and liberal urban redevelopment. The product of DARE’s Institute for Urban Policy Research, *Rational Reindustrialization* exemplified the organization’s most comprehensive vision of local economic democracy. Russell’s and Luria’s document offered a critique of Coleman Young’s and Detroit Renaissance, Inc.’s “Renaissance.” Russell and Luria also critiqued fundamental understandings of the market in the U.S. political economy. Arguing against notions that markets

¹²¹ DARE, “Chrysler, the People, the City,” 13.

are self-regulating and thus the government's only role is to remove barriers to free trade, they advocated for government intervention on the behalf of workers. Additionally, and most importantly, they envisioned several aspects of DARE's rational economic development supporting "radically increased" government activity in the economy—democratically collective planning of the local economy, social control of investment, and mass production for social needs.¹²² Plant conversion represented Russell's and Luria's primary strategy to achieve the goal of rehabilitating the city's job market and creating a public enterprise sector. The authors imagined 'rational reindustrialization' as a route to remaking Detroit into a post-automobile manufacturing city during the 1980s. They also envisioned rational reindustrialization as a potential model for the redevelopment of Rustbelt cities.

DARE members Dan Luria and Jack Russell wrote *Rational Reindustrialization*. Russell, like Murphy, Ravitz, and Cockrel, involved himself in the city's radical left after the 1967 uprising. Russell worked with the predominately-white left organization, From the Ground Up in the midst of the local movement against police brutality during the early 1970s.¹²³ During the mid-1970s, Russell emerged as Cockrel's closest political and economic advisor. He, along with Murphy, helped develop Cockrel's campaign strategy. Luria also cut his teeth politically in the 1960s new left. He worked with the local chapter of the Students for a Democratic Society. He joined those new leftists who went into the factories to revitalize the labor movement. As a trained economist, Luria worked as a researcher in the UAW, making him one of the few labor union members who worked closely with DARE.

Rational Reindustrialization represented DARE's contribution to the national policy conversation around reindustrialization. Various observers, scholars, and policymakers advanced

¹²² Jack Russell and Dan Luria, *Rational Reindustrialization: An Economic Development Agenda for Detroit* (Detroit: Widgetripper Press, 1981), 6.

¹²³ Georgakas and Surkin, 126-127.

liberal and conservative solutions to deindustrialization. In June 1980, *Business Week* released its special issue on reindustrialization, *The Reindustrialization of America*. The editors argued for a new “social contract between business, labor, government, and minorities” that would rekindle the U.S.’s economy. The editors favored economic development uninhibited by regulation and argued against “specific,” or targeted, government planning of the economy.¹²⁴

President Jimmy Carter’s Commission for a National Agenda for the Eighties published its report the same year as DARE released *Rational Reindustrialization*. Regarding the political economy of cities, the Commission maintained that cities were “economic entities; first and foremost they are the settings where great wealth is produced and distributed.” Sociologist Richard Child Hill elaborated on the notion of “capitalist cities” in his work. According to Hill, they serve as exclusive sites for capital accumulation and “a locale for the reproduction of the labor force, a market for the circulation of commodities and the realization of profit, and a center where these complex relationships are coordinated and controlled.” The Commission also argued for a “rational” approach to managing the economy. However, the commission focused on reducing deficits and inflation as means to rehabilitating the economy.¹²⁵ DARE’s rational reindustrialization fundamentally challenged the report’s argument that cities facilitated growth in the U.S. capitalist political economy.

Felix Rohatyn, an investment banker and chairman of the Municipal Association Corporation (MAC) of New York also emerged as a prominent voice in the “reindustrialization” debate. He criticized Carter’s Commission’s lack of a racial analysis in urban affairs in a testimony to the House subcommittee on economic stabilization, revitalization, and the economy. Rohatyn asked the committee: “is it realistic for a Commission reporting on our so-called urban

¹²⁴ “Creating a New Sense of Teamwork,” *Business Week Special Issue: The Reindustrialization of America* 30 June 1980, 86.

¹²⁵ *President’s Commission for a National Agenda for the Eighties*, 7,

problems not to face up directly to the fact that urban problems cannot be discussed separately from race problems, and that the notion of 'taking the people to the jobs' completely overlooks the basic fact that that is not a viable possibility for many of those people in large parts of this country?"¹²⁶

Rohatyn articulated a liberal answer to deindustrialization. Rohatyn published "Reconstructing America," in the *New York Review of Books* the same month DARE published *Rational Reindustrialization*. In "Reconstructing America," Rohatyn argued for the resurrection of a New Deal institution—the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC). According to Rohatyn, the RFC would provide equity capital to failing corporations as opposed to the loan guarantee that Congress awarded the Chrysler Corporation the year before. The federal government would also charge the RFC to rebuild the nation's infrastructure as well. Rohatyn even accepted the use of private-public partnerships, "geared mostly to business enterprise."¹²⁷

Coleman Young enlisted Rohatyn's and his firm's assistance in dealing with the city's fiscal crisis in 1981. The city was on the precipice of financial disaster. Young faced a \$35 million budget when he took office.¹²⁸ As a result, Young became one of the most austere mayors in the city's history. He laid off hundreds of city employees and renegotiated labor contracts. In 1975, Young enlisted members of his liberal-corporate-labor coalition, including Pelham and then UAW Vice President Doug Fraser, to serve on a financial task force that would analyze the city's budget and identify savings.¹²⁹ Fraser and Pelham suggested tax increases on

¹²⁶ House Subcommittee, 112.

¹²⁷ Felix Rohatyn, "Reconstructing America," *The New York Times Review of Books*. 5 March 1981.

¹²⁸ Rich, 234.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 242.

income, cigarettes, and alcoholic beverages.¹³⁰ The recession, auto crisis, and another round of energy shocks also exacerbated the city's financial troubles.

In 1981, the city faced a mounting deficit that would reach \$135 million by June.¹³¹ Creditors lowered the city's rating from Baa to Ba.¹³² Young appointed another group—the Budget Planning and Stabilization committee—comprising various leaders in business, organized labor, and finance including the UAW, Ford Motor Company, Detroit Edison, and the National Bank of Detroit.¹³³ The Committee released its report on March 11, 1981. They outlined a strategy that mixed of tax increases and austerity. It called for the city to raise the income tax by 1%. It called for implementing a 2 to 3 percent tax cut for city residents and a one-half to 1 ½ percent commuter tax.¹³⁴ The UAW joined with auto companies and banks to provide more than \$400,000 to a public campaign supporting Young's effort while AFSCME and the AFL-CIO started an oppositional effort.¹³⁵

In a June speech to the Detroit Economic Club, Rohatyn admitted that Detroit's and New York City's cases were not similar. He stated that Detroit did not suffer from indebtedness stemming from “poor financial management, weak mayoral leadership, failure to face problems, and lack of co-operation among business, labor and government.”¹³⁶ He argued that Detroit suffered from more structural problems. After praising Young's program to deal with the deficit, he turned to national politics. He criticized the Chrysler bailout, calling it an “example of how not to do it,” since such an effort required more equity capital that only a renewed

¹³⁰ “Report,” Young Papers, Box 166, Folder 13.

¹³¹ Letter from Jack Wood to Fred Secrest, March 11, 1981, Young Papers, Box 166, Folder 14.

¹³² Rich, 246; Budget Planning and Stabilization Committee, “Report,” (April 1, 1981), Chart B, Box 166, Folder 16.

¹³³ Rich, 247.

¹³⁴ Mayor's Budget Planning and Stabilization Committee Subcommittee on Changes in Existing Revenue Sources, “Report to the Committee,” March 11, 1981, Young Papers, Box 166, Folder 14.

¹³⁵ Herbert H. Denton, “Detroit Mayor Campaigns for Tax Boost, Pay Cuts,” *The Washington Post*, June 22, 1981.

¹³⁶ Felix Rohatyn, “Back from bankruptcy: New York's Lessons for Detroit,” *Detroit Free Press*, June 4, 1981.

Reconstruction Finance Corporation could provide. Rohatyn called for a “second industrial revolution,” which entailed federal policy that would help restructure the nation’s industrial base, especially in cities experiencing capital flight and obsolescence.¹³⁷

DARE’s plan for reindustrialization represented a leftist response to deindustrialization and the city’s decade of fiscal turbulence. The organization favored more government and citizen planning and control over the economy. They also believed that the economy should benefit the city’s residents more than particular corporations and individual capitalists. *Business Week*, Carter’s Commission, and Rohatyn also proposed national solutions while DARE’s conception of rational reindustrialization represented a local solution that other cities could adopt.

DARE released their rational reindustrialization plan several months after Ronald Reagan took office. His entrance into the White House represented a key victory for the nation’s conservative movement. Reagan aimed to make good on his campaign promises to reorient the federal government’s relationship to states and cities, cut taxes, and drastically slash the federal budget. Reagan’s tax cuts formed the centerpiece of his economic policy grounded in the theory of supply-side economics, also known as “Reaganomics.” The logic behind Reaganomics was that it was necessary to relieve the country’s top earners of their tax burden to restore and generate economic growth. Consequently, those Americans on the lower rungs of the economic ladder would benefit indirectly from the top earner’s investment in the economy.¹³⁸ Reagan’s federalism entailed encouraging states and cities to become more entrepreneurial and financially self-sufficient. Reagan’s pursuit of new federalism and smaller government negatively affected urban and social policy. Theoretically, Reagan’s policies revolved around free market principles

¹³⁷ Rohatyn, “Back from Bankruptcy.”

¹³⁸ James D. Carroll, A. Lee Fritschler, and Bruce L.R. Smith, “Supply-side Management in the Reagan Administration,” *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 45, No. 6 (Nov-Dec. 1985), 805.

of privatization, competition, and self-reliance. In reality, they amounted to an assault on the welfare state and caused an increased financial stress on states, cities, and poorer Americans.

Reagan also supported Republican Jack Kemp's and Democrat Robert Garcia's concept of free enterprise zones as a basis for urban policy. Passed in 1981, the Urban Jobs and Enterprise Zone Act in 198 encouraged cities to designate dilapidated areas in cities to be redeveloped. Local leaders would reduce property taxes for private sector development in those designated areas for a period of time. These zones emphasized competing with other cities to achieve and maintain economic growth and creating free enterprise zones whereby local governments would entice business investment by offering them tax breaks.¹³⁹ While Luria and Russell criticized Reaganomics, they sought to appropriate the concept of free enterprise zones for progressive purposes as a matter of pragmatism.

To set up their argument for rational reindustrialization in Detroit, the authors challenged the concept of laissez faire capitalism that had gained popularity with Reagan's election. Russell and Luria disputed any notion that U.S. market capitalism was self-correcting and that government regulation was "the problem."¹⁴⁰ The authors wrote, "There is, moreover, no self-correcting process by which urban disinvestment creates the conditions necessary for expanded reinvestment of the kind and on the scale required."¹⁴¹ Another belief regarding the notion that U.S. capitalism regulated itself was the implication that once capital left, other private firms would absorb the unemployed labor in a manner that utilized their skills. In contrast, Russell and Luria argued that "no workable programs from inducing privately-financed economic

¹³⁹ George E. Peterson and Carol W. Lewis, *Reagan and the Cities* (Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute Press, 1986), 3-10.

¹⁴⁰ Ronald Reagan, "Inaugural Address," *Inaugural Addresses of the Presidents of the United States*. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. G.P.O.: for sale by the Supt. of Docs., U.S. G.P.O., 1989; Bartleby.com, 2001).www.bartleby.com/124/. Date Accessed: 13 May 2011.

¹⁴¹ Russell and Luria, 10-11.

development” existed. If the private sector could not replace lost industrial jobs, then could local city governments fulfill this role? For Russell and Luria, the answer to this question was no—at least not as long as city governments continued to serve as protectorates of private capital within the U.S. political economy.

Russell and Luria also contested the prevailing method of urban development which preserved the idea that the city’ government’s role in the U.S. political economy is to aid business and create a positive climate for private investment: “...we dispute the value of using government as a tool to ‘improve the business climate’ in pursuit of chancy rewards...” This criticism extended to the business-dominated public-private partnership known as the city’s renaissance. The authors argued that the real purpose of urban development was not to benefit the city’s workers, but “protect the value of existing investments and future profit opportunities in the downtown hub.”¹⁴² Russell and Luria viewed the model of downtown development and its emphasis on attracting professional employment as essentially flawed due to the city’s geography as well:

The grand designs for the future development of downtown Detroit are based upon the questionable belief that many thousands of salaried professionals and managers can be induced to settle there with their families. Some will surely be attracted to the amenities of the river and the hub, but with Detroit’s extraordinary upper-middle-class home bargains and the comfortable, secure suburbs just minutes away by freeway, we believe the downtown Renaissance may well abort. Given the high risk, the developers’ current terms, the narrow strata of the population served, and the limited impact on the local economy, we do not believe that the downtown strategy should have priority claims on the City’s precious economic development resources.¹⁴³

This model of development, the declared, “would not meet the needs of working class Detroit.”

The authors stated that the Riverfront West apartments, the Trolley Plaza building, and other “contemplated residential developments” would not account for the thousands of jobs lost in the

¹⁴² Russell and Luria, 7.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 7-8.

city due to plant closings. They also estimated that the “proposed Detroit Hilton might contribute 1,000” jobs while the Cadillac Center, “if ever built, and would add at most 2,000 new jobs to the Detroit economy.” They understood that the high end development that Young and his coalition pursued could not offer a panacea for the city’s job loss and chronic unemployment. Luria and Russell contended “it is a fantasy to hope that hotels, a shopping center, some office buildings, and the service needs of wealthy condominium owners will be able to employ the workers, and the children of workers, who have been discharged from our closed factories.”¹⁴⁴ Luria’s and Russell’s criticism of downtown commercial development highlights this form of development’s preference for, and reliance on, upper-middle-class gentrification of areas that the city and the business leaders targeted for development. It also implies that the private-public partnership, or the use of government funds to subsidize private development, relied upon “trickle down” logic. Presumably, the wealth generated by downtown development and the employment and settlement of white collar professionals in the city would extend to the city’s workers and neighborhoods.

Luria’s and Russell’s *Rational Reindustrialization* is best understood as an elaboration of DARE’s advocacy of plant conversion and conservation in their pamphlet criticizing the 1980 Chrysler bailout. Plant conversion served as the conceptual centerpiece for the author’s agenda for building of Detroit’s post-automobile economy. They asserted, “a rational economic development agenda must be centered on replacing the declining private activities of the city—auto assembly, parts, and machining—with new activities that take maximum advantage of the existing industrial linkages.”¹⁴⁵ Although the authors offered a list of potential products in “Chrysler, the People, and the City,” they placed greater emphasis on a potential set of criteria

¹⁴⁴ Russell and Luria, 8.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 12.

for the city's workers to use when deciding which products to produce. Elements of their criterion included the "scale of job creation," "conservation of capital," "local economic impact," "characteristics of markets," the city's "comparative advantage," "market countercyclicality," labor cost, transport costs, "advantage of publicness," and "profitability for entry."¹⁴⁶ But the overriding question guiding this process, according to Russell and Luria, should be which projects could absorb the most surplus-labor in a manner that best retained their "accustomed" wages and corresponded to, or presumably built upon, their existing job skills and training? The second important question concerning their advocacy for the reuse of abandoned plants and the city's other resources—what projects could take advantage of the "area's concentration of metalworking capital stock...and of the city's deep waterway location" to produce "products for a growing, undersupplied, long-lived national and international market for which the business cycle is either absent or opposite to the auto/auto parts demand cycle."¹⁴⁷ They recognized four potential product lines that met the first eight criteria and satisfied the two aforementioned questions, "deep natural gas and heavy oil production, residential and industrial steam/electric cogeneration units, large coal- and diesel fuel-fired industrial process engines, and mine-mouth coal gasifiers." They also identified key areas of production that addressed national concerns about energy and speculated about the development of a regional economy based upon the production of mass transit goods. Again, Russell and Luria imagined this production sector as one that supported their idea of Detroit as the post-"Motor City."¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ Russell and Luria, 13-14.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 14.

¹⁴⁸ In their discussion on deep gas and heavy oil equipment, Russell and Luria outlined a potential Midwestern economy based upon the mass production of mass transit vehicles. They argued that one would be able to adopt their analysis to a study of "which cities could expect to capture significant shares of the bus, rail car, and rail electrification markets, should they evolve in the future." They speculated that Detroit could specialize in the production of rail electrification hardware. Other rustbelt cities such as Cleveland, Cincinnati, Dayton, and Philadelphia could participate in rail car production while Youngstown, Pittsburgh, Seattle, and Memphis seemed "suited to strong entries in the bus manufacturing business." See Russell and Luria, 16.

In addition to providing recommendations for what products the city's workers should produce, Russell and Luria submitted guidelines for how the city and its residents should decide the fate of the city's corporations. This is an important aspect of their agenda since the two authors opposed "unplanned, socially wasteful, and privately controlled movement" of capital.¹⁴⁹ The authors advocated "picking the winners," a concept that *Business Week*, Carter's Commission, and Rohatyn all opposed. They called for a socially conscious cost-benefit analysis when considering the closing and opening of plants. They further claimed owners of firms based their decisions to close plants solely upon their profitability. Instead, planners in Russell's and Luria's vision of the economy would consider the "social costs" such as unemployment benefits, increase of the tax burden on the residents, and policing.¹⁵⁰ According to the authors, it was possible to ascertain whether or not a plant was socially beneficial by comparing the firm's profit rate to the estimated financial impact closure would have on the city. This approach also considered the position of the particular firm in the local economy. Was the firm non-profitable yet intertwined with other firms inside and outside the city limits? While Russell and Luria assumed that private firms would flee the city in the event they recognized their inability to expand and accumulate wealth, they suggested that firms may be encouraged to keep their doors open for work if the city subsidizes their losses. If the city successfully brokered this type of arrangement with a private firm, it could stem the tide of disinvestment and capital flight. However, the authors failed to consider whether or not this approach would lead to the growth of the private firm, which would probably remain a crucial factor in any firm's decision to close and/or move. This stance reinforced DARE's stance that private firms should be beholden to the city and the workers who help to generate wealth. However, this sort of arrangement between

¹⁴⁹ Russell and Luria, 6.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 31.

private capital, workers, and the city government would require the agents of capital to buy into a more mixed, or even less capitalist, economic system, one that replaces the desire for profit and economic growth with greater sustainability of labor, city government, and the firms themselves.

The desire to convert abandoned plants and enter into presumably burgeoning markets did not represent the main objective of rational reindustrialization. Luria and Russell envisioned reconstituted plants as components of a public enterprise sector in Detroit. Again, the authors advocated for greater city government involvement and worker power in determining the direction of economic development: “We have looked to local government to take the lead in initiating a continually bargained economic development plan in which workers and government join private enterprise as co-planners in the realm of production.”¹⁵¹ They argued that worker participation was crucial if they hoped to implement the plan: “However, since many of the valuable industrial linkages we seek to protect from disinvestment exist in a metropolitan web of agglomerated interdependence, a higher level of working class cooperation on a metropolitan scale will be necessary. The workers of Warren and Detroit will have to join forces to protect their futures if their respective local governments are to help coordinate what should ultimately be a regional development plan.”¹⁵² In essence, the authors saw the process of urban development, especially one where workers and the government would play crucial roles, as inherently political. While making the case to stem plant closings and create worker-owned and –planned firms, workers and political allies would have to build political support in the city. If workers and their political allies were successful, the construction of this sector and the implementation of rational reindustrialization, would unfold in four phases—the pilot project phase, the mixed enterprise zone phase, and the mature plan phase.

¹⁵¹ Russell and Luria, 35.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 38.

For the authors, the first phase—the pilot project—represented the initial effort to reopen a closing plant. Russell and Luria envisioned workers possessing a crucial role in establishing decision-making power. “The objective in this phase is to reopen the facility as an enterprise in which the workers and community hold equity and thus can participate in bargained planning of the new company’s development. The product line of the new venture would be based on the criteria, and probably selected from among the examples, we have described” they explained.¹⁵³ To build a case for worker-ownership and working-class political capacity, advocates of rational reindustrialization would have to conduct what the authors called a “feasibility study,” which would outline a business plan documenting “the product line’s current and future market,” “current production technology, costs, and anticipated improvements,” “financing options,” “the forms of corporate governance and management structure suited to the purpose of the participants,” and “how to best accommodate existing or pending state law and regulations.”¹⁵⁴ Russell and Luria proposed that union workers would also handle the “production, marketing, planning and the other traditional aspects of enterprise as a for-profit business.” The realization of worker ownership would manifest itself through an employee stock ownership plan (ESOP).¹⁵⁵

The city government played a greater role in Russell’s and Luria’s outline of the mixed enterprise zone phase. While the authors criticized the free market principles embedded in Reagan’s new federalism and urban policy, the concept of rational reindustrialization appropriated the free enterprise zone concept for their own purposes. Nodding to the concept, the

¹⁵³ Russell and Luria, 39.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 39.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 40. The authors also saw community corporations, individual investors, and the Detroit Economic Development Corporation as also playing roles in the governance of capital.

author's envisioned a mixed economy comprising of both private and public enterprises.¹⁵⁶ They contended that "Rational Reindustrialization can be attempted in a single large industrial tract of Detroit" once the problems of downtown development became apparent. Consequently, they state, "Local government would nurture the potential linkages among a substantial number of both traditional private and pilot project firms in the tract."¹⁵⁷ Similar to the national bill, the authors would accept that the local government provides incentives for firms within zones including tax cuts, "the provision of better services, and reduced governmental red tape." In exchange for these benefits, local governments would request that private firms "provide jobs, training, and technical assistance to workers and residents in the zone."¹⁵⁸ Offering jobs and training would be a requirement for private firms to enjoy the benefits of a mixed enterprise zone.¹⁵⁹

Unlike their discussions of the first two phases of rational reindustrialization, the authors did not offer an exact vision of what the mature phase would look like. They did provide an estimation of the cost to produce 100,000 jobs—\$4 billion.¹⁶⁰ The authors speculated that capital investment would come from various sources. They looked to corporate owners to transfer unused capital to community corporations. Luria and Russell contended that the federal government's UDAG program would play a role in the investment in the sectors' operating companies. They envisioned the federal government, such as the U.S. Department of

¹⁵⁶ The Kemp-Garcia Urban Jobs and Enterprise Zone Act awarded tax breaks to any firm deciding to invest in designated impoverished urban neighborhoods. Harvey D. Shapiro, "Now, Hong Kong on the Hudson?: Saving the Slums with Enterprise Zones." *New York Magazine* (April 26, 1982), 36.

¹⁵⁷ Russell and Luria, 44.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 46.

¹⁵⁹ Russell and Luria also cite tax increment financing, the use of pension fund capital and eminent domain as other institutional/financial/legal tools that the city government could utilize in constructing and cultivating a mixed enterprise zone. In another suggestion of how to rehabilitate closing and abandoned plants, the authors propose the construction of "industrial condominiums" where firms would share multi-story facilities. For their discussion of all of the aforementioned tools, see Russell and Luria, 45-49, for their proposal of "industrial condominiums," refer to page 49.

¹⁶⁰ Russell and Luria, 51.

Commerce's Economic Development Administration, providing funds for Employee Stock Ownership Plans (ESOP). Luria and Russell also envisioned a combination of private investors and institutions like churches to also contribute resources. The authors' plan for securing capital investment presumed a new social contract between governments, private entrepreneurs, workers, and citizens. However, unlike Business Week's "new social contract," DARE's allowed for more direct citizen and government planning.¹⁶¹ The question Russell and Luria left open, however, was what incentive would private investors have to participate in such an economy?

The authors also discussed the prospects of instituting rational reindustrialization during the emerging era of Reaganism. One could speculate that a mature phase of rational reindustrialization would encapsulate Detroit's entire economy. The city's new economy would be much more diversified and the firms would be greatly connected to each other, the city government, and the neighborhoods. Workers, union members, and the city's citizenry would enjoy greater decision-making power in the economy; they would decide which products to produce and they would ultimately decide the fates of the city's firms. Workers, political officials, and other investors would make these decisions based upon a socially conscious cost-benefit analysis that would privilege the city's residents' interests. The workers would have a greater influence in defining the public interest rather than corporate capital and political allies, or politicians and their corporate allies.

The authors identified various structural barriers to the implementation of rational reindustrialization in Detroit. First, they acknowledged that Michigan law prohibited government from owning shares in private companies or establishing state-owned and ran banks. State law also prohibited the use of public and private employee pension funds to put towards reindustrialization efforts. Russell and Luria also cited investment and political culture as

¹⁶¹ Russell and Luria, 41-43.

possible obstacles as well. They recognized it would be tough to acquire federal resources during Reagan's presidency. The authors also recognized that private investors might well shy away from investing in public corporations especially if they have "unusual ownership and management structures" and "when they neither have a track record nor the investment tax advantages of established, profitable corporations." The authors also cited the potential land clearance issues due to the age of many of the city's abandoned plants.¹⁶² Russell's and Luria's discussion of the structural impediments to instituting rational reindustrialization points to the problem of how to implement such a radical policy.

Russell and Luria maintained that rational economic policy represented a plan for reindustrialization that would only be implemented if DARE, and other likeminded activists and organizations, were able to organize and gain political power. They knew that workers would have to challenge to challenge the current political and economic arrangements that governed Detroit and the United States. They argued that "Reagan and the free market troglodytes who shape his public policies must go" for Rational Reindustrialization to have a chance to work. Ultimately, Russell and Luria declared that "left and progressive forces in America" would have to construct a "national social-democratic movement with clear objectives."¹⁶³

Luria's and Russell's *Rational Reindustrialization* provoked critical leftist responses. Labor activist and writer David McCullough reviewed Rational Reindustrialization in the April 1981 issue of *Socialist Monthly Changes*. He identified several positive aspects of rational reindustrialization. First, he saw rational reindustrialization as a possible leftist alternative to what he called "Rohatynism." While McCullough argued that Rohatyn was winning the debate, McCullough argued that rational reindustrialization was "an initiative that a broad section of

¹⁶² Russell and Luria, 36-37.

¹⁶³ Ibid., 51.

people could be rallied to.”¹⁶⁴ Luria and Russell called for a progressive version of “rational” planning that placed the creation of jobs over that of increasing and maintaining profits.

McCullough states, “Planning is for a purpose.” “The main purpose of the plan detailed in RR [*Rational Reindustrialization*] is to provide jobs for Detroiters. However, the purpose of ordinary capitalist planning is to produce and maximize profits,” McCullough continued.¹⁶⁵ McCullough’s second and third reasons are related. Rational reindustrialization calls for the city government, residents, and workers to utilize available unused capital and reorient production towards a “*socially attractive product line*.”¹⁶⁶

While McCullough identified rational reindustrialization as a possible alternative to the Rohatyn plan, he also identified key shortcomings in Luria’s and Russell’s concept that reflected a problem in 1970s progressive economic thought. First, Luria’s and Russell’s plan, according to McCullough, failed to discard with the profit motive. Also, McCullough argued that the author’s criteria for product selection would not push for a progressive reorienting of the economy. In other words, rational reindustrialization may not advocate for conversion towards a peace, rather than defense-based, economy. McCullough’s critique also posed an important question: Who actually possesses power in such an economic arrangement, especially if the private sector were to hand over a portion of startup capital? Would workers and the city really hold power? Luria and Russell took issue with McCullough’s characterization of rational reindustrialization as an expression of a “classless”—lack of class consciousness and conflict—view of progressive economics. McCullough interpreted rational reindustrialization as a new arrangement between the city, industry, and private industry, which tapered over “conflicting interests.” Rational

¹⁶⁴ David McCullough, “Planning a Future for Detroit: A Case of Rationality Versus Power,” *Socialist Monthly Changes* (April 1982), 20.

¹⁶⁵ McCullough, 19.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 20. Italics by author.

reindustrialization, McCullough stated, also represented a technocratic and pragmatic plan that abandoned organized labor's "unconditional defense of jobs and wages."¹⁶⁷

In addition to arguing that rational reindustrialization represented a move toward the right because the plan did not really challenge private sector power, nor capitalism, McCullough advanced a point that other critics of rational reindustrialization articulated: Luria's and Russell's economic plan would be unnecessary if robust and powerful labor unions existed to challenge corporations:

Joint labor/capital enterprises are gains for labor only where labor has real bargaining power to force the content of labor in its own favor. But unless one sees economic conditions as acts of God which one can respond to but not control, it has been exactly labor's weakness in the U.S., its inability to defend both jobs and wages, which has led to the impasse that RR was written to lead us out of. This point is crucial, so I will state it again in another way. If the U.S. labor movement was as combative and politically well-organized as the Italian labor movement in the "Red Triangle" where Bologna is located, we simply would not need ideas like RR's scaled-down state capitalism.¹⁶⁸

Of course, McCullough did not blame Luria and Russell for the political context in which the authors developed rational reindustrialization. He points out how, as with OPIC's call to shift plant location decisions from the collective bargaining process to the electoral arena, rational reindustrialization was a response to the diminishing power of organized labor. To McCullough, DARE activists such as Luria and Russell, should work on rebuilding the labor movement and then reorienting towards a pursuit of controlling capital in addition to defending jobs and wages.

The Progressive published a forum on Luria's and Russell's rational reindustrialization in its July 1982 issue. Scholars from various disciplines including political scientists and economists as well as activists weighed in on rational reindustrialization. A majority of the analysts criticized the concept for its infeasibility. Reviewers Jeanie Wylie and Lawrence Walsh

¹⁶⁷ McCullough, 20.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 23.

contextualized the debate and the document in an analysis of Detroit's political economy, national conversations about reindustrialization, and interviews from Luria and Russell.

Wylie and Walsh, as well as labor attorney Deborah Groban Olson and economist James Crotty supported Luria's and Russell's efforts. Even if the feasibility of rational reindustrialization remained up for debate, the three thought Luria and Russell offered what they considered much-needed leftist alternatives in national debates about reindustrialization during the early 1980s. "While Rational Reindustrialization neither accomplishes the revolution nor necessarily increases worker control of the workplace," Wylie and Walsh state, "its programs warrant review."¹⁶⁹ Olson thought rational reindustrialization would support the concept of employee ownership.¹⁷⁰ Crotty issued the strongest support for rational reindustrialization in *The Progressive* forum. He called the plan "a technically solid model" and it illustrated that the left could devise and articulate a detailed alternative to "both Reaganomics and Felix Rohatyn's Big Brother corporatist state."¹⁷¹

Criticisms of rational reindustrialization from the left centered on questions regarding its feasibility, source of start-up capital, and the lack of political power needed to create the conditions to implement such a plan. Labor journalist Jane Slaughter saw rational reindustrialization as a bad deal for workers and wondered skeptically if business would invest in the plan. "They can get a much more beneficial, Reagan-type free enterprise zone, and continue to wipe their feet on the likes of the United Auto Workers," Slaughter wrote.¹⁷² Political Scientist Alfred J. Watkins focused on the question of source of start-up capital. "The crux of the problem is financing," Watkins declared. Watkins, like Slaughter, argued that the incentive for business to

¹⁶⁹ Wylie and Walsh, 33.

¹⁷⁰ Deborah Groban Olson, "A Boost for Employee Owners," *The Progressive* (June 1982), 29.

¹⁷¹ James Crotty, "A Believeable Alternative," *The Progressive* (June 1982), 27.

¹⁷² Jane Slaughter, "Labor Can Do Better," *The Progressive* (June 1982), 28.

invest in rational reindustrialization did not exist, especially since firms could move to the South to participate in the energy hardware business.¹⁷³ Calling rational reindustrialization “a blueprint for make believe,” UAW Local 160 member Pete Kelly saw Russell and Luria’s plan as fundamentally flawed because “it is purely utopian to advance quasi-socialist notions of industrial development within the framework of free enterprise.” Similarly to Slaughter’s stance on rational reindustrialization, Kelly argued that DARE’s plan would not help workers since it was “structured from the top down.”¹⁷⁴

Crotty, Watkins, and Slaughter all agreed that the problem with rational reindustrialization extended beyond planning and the source of capital. The problem lays in the lack of leftist political power and the declining labor movement. Crotty maintained, “The major obstacle to the creation of democratic, local reindustrialization projects, therefore, is not their economic infeasibility but the lack of sufficient political power to get the job done.”¹⁷⁵ Watkins appropriates the “better business climate” rhetoric to argue that the left could not implement such a plan unless the labor movement could organize in right-to-work regions like the South. “In short, Detroit will probably never have progressive, rational reindustrialization until the ‘working-class climate’ in Texas and other low-wage havens improves.” Slaughter argued the strongest for focusing on organizing a more robust labor movement. She saw little value in trying to establish any sort of labor-management accord. Slaughter declared, “I would argue that the only chance for the creation of decent jobs in the 1980s and 1990s is a labor-led movement which is politically independent of the employers, not in coalition with them.” Such a movement would advocate for one of DARE’s key principles such as control over investment as well as “nationalization” and “direct government planning.” “And,” Slaughter declares, “that requires a

¹⁷³ Alfred J. Watkins, “Socialism in One City?,” *The Progressive* (June 1982), 31.

¹⁷⁴ Pete Kelly, “A Blueprint for Makebelieve,” *The Progressive* (June 1982), 33.

¹⁷⁵ Crotty, 27.

labor movement which is not, in *The Progressive's* words, 'content to be the limp tail on the Democratic Party donkey.'"¹⁷⁶

Young and city government and the UAW did not respond to rational reindustrialization. Luria's and Russell's program did pique some of the city's economic and political leaders' interests. Luria and Russell presented their plan to the city council in March 1982. They even earned a presentation to the members of one of the city's economic development organizations, the Business Attraction and Expansion Council, which ironic outcome DARE and Cockrel spent considerable effort criticizing the city's private-public development institutions.¹⁷⁷

Poletown: Another Missed Organizing Opportunity?

Coleman Young's maneuvers to convince General Motors to construct its Central Industrial Park and the Detroit-Hamtramck Assembly Center in the Poletown neighborhood served as another aspect of the administration's industrial policy and was one of the most controversial projects. It also served as another missed organizing opportunity for DARE. Young estimated that the construction of the GM plant would create 6,000 jobs. However, this was generous as the plant only ran one shift, at a little half of the projected number of positions. The proposed cite spanned 465 acres and it would require the city (corporation) to clear more than 1,100 buildings and to relocate more than 3,400 residents. As planning scholar June Manning Thomas remarks, "This was no ordinary site. People, houses, businesses, churches, manufacturing firms, and a hospital occupied much of it."¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁶ Slaughter, 28.

¹⁷⁷ Howard Face, "Memo to Members of the BAEC," May 14, 1982; James H. Bradley, "Memo to Detroit City Council," March 22, 1982. Both in author's possession.

¹⁷⁸ June Manning Thomas, *Redevelopment and Race*, 162-163.

DARE commented on the plan in their newsletter. Jack Russell advanced a neutral analysis. “The city is between a rock and a hard place. Six thousand high-wage industrial jobs, thousands of jobs at smaller shops which would provide supplies to the big plant and \$12 to \$18 million that would be generated in annual property tax revenues, all are desperately needed by Detroit,” Russell wrote. However, he also recognized the “staggering” human costs of the development.¹⁷⁹ This was one of the few times the organization sort of found itself on the same side as Young when it came to development. DARE appeared ambivalent because of the potential stimulus that it could provide the city.

The Poletown case appeared to present a dilemma for the organization. DARE seemed to support the idea of the project creating more industrial jobs. However, they recognized the human costs of Young’s and GM’s destruction strategy. DARE had no clear socialist answer for eminent domain. Russell appeared to pose a question about how such a construction proposal play out in a city grounded in a “rational” socialist politics. He posed a question, “What responsibilities are created for progressives?” His answers were consistent with the organization’s views of development underscoring corporate responsibility and community input—“Insist that GM produce a written, unconditional guarantee that they will locate the plant in Detroit if the site is prepared for them. Minimize city financing of the project. Fight to insure that tax benefits of the plant to Detroit not be delayed through abatement or tax increment financing. Demand municipal equity in the plant, and municipal representation in GM decisions which will effect Detroit in the future.” However, Russell neglected to say anything about all of the residents, workers, and institutions that would be affected by the facilities’ construction. While one could speculate that somehow Poletown residents would incur some sort of benefits

¹⁷⁹ Jack Russell, “GM Considers Detroit Site for New Plant,” DARE Dispatch, Vol. 2, No. 7 (August-September 1980), 1 & 4.

from owning a stake in the plant, DARE did not say how.¹⁸⁰ The organization did not join with the Poletown Neighborhood Council to mount any response. Members of the Poletown Neighborhood Council wrote a letter to all of the city council members asking for their support.¹⁸¹ Cockrel voted the lone “no” on the project.¹⁸²

Conclusion

As Kenneth Cockrel struggled to mount a substantive opposition to Coleman Young and his redevelopment agenda, DARE’s membership sank. Black membership declined by 40% between the end of the Chrysler forum and the organization’s dissolution in June 1981. In many ways, DARE’s Chrysler conference spelled the downfall for the organization. Only 130 people attended the conference, many of them committed leftists.¹⁸³ But it was Cockrel’s decision not to run for reelection in 1981 that prompted DARE to disband, even as group members continued to promote the organization’s rational reindustrialization policy. Cockrel’s decision and the resulting disintegration of DARE suggest that the problem for the left in Detroit was not one of an inability to generate policy alternatives as historians like Van Gosse have suggested. The problem lay in the failure to develop a sustainable coalition that could incorporate leftists, black workers, and segments of organized labor around the city’s economic crisis. DARE struggled to build political power in a city where the liberal growth coalition enjoyed support from a broad coalition of black voters, organized labor, and corporate leaders.

The formation of DARE in 1978 represented the culmination of left-wing progressive politics that stretched back to the left-wing Anti-STRESS coalition. DARE’s leadership drew

¹⁸⁰ Russell, “GM Considers Detroit Site for New Plant.”

¹⁸¹ Erma Henderson, Memo to City Council,” July 22, 1980. Cockrel Collection, Box 12, Folder 19, WPRL.

¹⁸² Russell, “GM Considers Detroit Site for New Plant.”

¹⁸³ Levitan and Finkel, 13.

from their past experiences to construct a political strategy based on a mix of social movement and electoral approaches. They envisioned DARE as a local multiracial left organization that could help to forge a nationwide movement to reconstruct a more sustainable economy on more democratic principles. The organization responded to the economic turbulence, the restructuring of Detroit's, U.S.'s, and the world's political economies by developing critiques of liberal economic development and constructing an alternative vision of urban political economy. It criticized Mayor Young for relying on the public-private partnership model and growth liberalism for urban development. Instead of Young's brand of the public-private partnership and corporate bailouts, DARE argued for rational reindustrialization, or as the name of the organization connoted, a "rational economy." DARE advocated a mix of market and municipal socialism that included worker and community control of economic and urban planning and industrial plants.¹⁸⁴

DARE's critique of Young's model of economic development illustrated how black mayors governed in the service of private capital. Young's absorption into the New Detroit, Inc. and Detroit Renaissance, Inc. structure illustrates the political incorporation of African Americans into urban politics after 1965. However, Young also sought to hold the federal government accountable for its culpability in the decline of Rustbelt cities during this period. It remains difficult to assert that Young's example of urban liberalism, in fact, stood in the way of structural reform at the end of the 1970s considering the constraints that Young and other big city mayors faced.

DARE aimed to transform Detroit's economy by building political support to forge a local public sector economy comprising of a mixture of publicly- and privately-owned firms that

¹⁸⁴ DARE's policy recommendations were similar to how David Schweickart defined his idea of economic democracy—"worker self-management of enterprises, social control of investment, and a market for goods and services." See Schweickart, 18.

would be more accountable to the city's workers and voters. DARE leadership, however, recognized the necessity of building a political movement that could usher in that transformation by organizing on a local level to elect more likeminded city council-people and eventually a mayor, organizing on a state level to amend Michigan's constitution to allow state and city government to explore more ways of generating revenue, and by organizing on a national level to elect allies to Congress and even a sympathetic President committed to implementing aspects of rational reindustrialization on a national scale.

And yet DARE's implementation of its politics exhibited several shortcomings. Most importantly, the organization failed to capitalize on potential political opportunities and failed to advance a racial analysis of the Chrysler crisis. Moreover, DARE's response to Coleman Young's and GM's Poletown plan suggests that the organization may have been too committed to industrial development. By forging a relationship with the Poletown Neighborhood Council and siding with Poletown's residents, DARE may have been able to significantly strengthen its anti-capitalist reindustrialization coalition. Since DARE struggled to make inroads with the city's black workers, making inroads in Poletown could have revitalized the organization. Such an effort would have at least sharpened the group's economic outlook. But instead, DARE failed to mount any significant opposition to Young and GM's plan to demolish a whole neighborhood for the sake of industrial development.

Still, DARE's criticisms of Chrysler operating as a weapon against the city's workers would prove prescient. While the Chrysler Corporation endured, the city of Detroit and many of the corporation's workers did not survive the bailout. Chrysler employed 102,389 workers throughout the U.S. in 1979. In 1981, Chrysler's employment dropped by 30.3%. Austerity and layoffs hit black workers hard. African Americans held 33.6% of the corporation's jobs in 1975

and only 27.8% in 1981. In 1980, Chrysler operated thirty-eight U.S. plants, twenty-two of them located in the Detroit area. Chrysler subsequently closed fifteen U.S. plants, twelve of them in Detroit and the number of Chrysler employees in the Detroit area fell by 26.6% between 1980 and 1982. Despite Young's effort, the Chrysler crisis provoked the corporation to slim down its domestic production, leaving the city of Detroit with more abandoned plants, higher unemployment, and decreasing tax revenues.

DARE's response to the Chrysler bailout also suggests larger questions about leftist and labor politics during the 1970s. How does one organize against the emerging logic of austerity contained in federal-sponsored loan guarantees? Whether one points to the New York City fiscal crisis, or Chrysler's 1979 failure, lawmakers, and eventually taxpayers, expected workers to "pay their share" for its institution's financial failures. Bailout packages required workers to take pay freezes, pension cuts, and lose jobs and benefits.

Analyzing DARE's emergence and fall raises important questions about left-wing progressive politics during the 1970s. One could argue that DARE would have still been able to organize conferences, produce analyses of Detroit's political economy and forge networks among leftist politicians and organizations outside of the city without an electoral strategy. Yet, via Cockrel's seat on the city council seat gave DARE access to municipal power, provided the organization with a direct line to the Young administration, and enabled it to provoke debates about urban development that may not have occurred otherwise. DARE defended electoral politics as a strategy. However, members remained ambivalent about whether or not electoralism could actually challenge capitalists. Cockrel asked in an interview: "I say no tax breaks for the millionaires—what do I do when capital goes on strike? What do I do when investors say hey

man fuck you, as they told Dennis Kucinich?”¹⁸⁵ Jack Russell echoed Cockrel’s questions a month later:

If we do, what are the real limits that would be faced by socialists in power in the local situation, by having to exist in a capitalist economy, where investment is still largely privately controlled, where one operates within a federal political system presumably still dominated by bourgeois politics, where the state of the national Left’s development is an imponderable (with perhaps no reason for great optimism). What would our relationship be to the local business community? Would capital go on further strike against the city of Detroit?¹⁸⁶

Cockrel’s questions about the efficacy of socialist, or even black, control of political institutions points to an ambivalence that comes out of a context where a self-proclaimed urban populist—Dennis Kucinich—lost his job as mayor in 1978 over refusing to privatize Cleveland’s publicly-owned light plant, MUNY Light, in exchange for the credit that Cleveland needed to avert its financial crisis.¹⁸⁷ Cockrel and Russell’s comments also arose from their own experience struggling against a mayor whom considered himself liberal and also sought to solve social problems of poverty, unemployment, and crime, but accepted the reality that private capital would play a large role in revitalizing Detroit. The organization’s inability to develop substantial political opposition to the liberal coalition’s growth-based redevelopment plans is testament to Young’s political strength. Conversely, Coleman Young’s dependence on private developers and business leaders on their terms reflected the economic and political realities of the late 1970s and early 1980s. It leads one to ask, what was it about the political realities of the late-1970s and early-1980s that explains why Young saw limited opportunities for economic development more independent of private capital? Could leftists really rely upon pursuing reform through established political institutions if they wanted to achieve structural economic change? Such a

¹⁸⁵ “Politics in Detroit,” 87.

¹⁸⁶ Russell, “No Gas and Water Socialism in Detroit.”

¹⁸⁷ Clavel, 87; Hackworth, 1.

proposition seemed unlikely without a mass social movement and a greater opportunity for Detroit leftists to take more institutional power.

Cockrel's question about a socialist mayor dealing with business also forces one to confront the dilemma that left progressives faced—how does one control capital? DARE argued that progressive cities could serve as the bulwark against corporate capital. Corporations would be beholden to community rather than its own economic interests. DARE's progressive Detroit would have enabled workers to take a lead in economic planning. If a corporation decided to leave, it would have to compensate the city's workers. Also, the city's municipal government should be able to empower workers to rehabilitate and convert abandoned plants. And workers and city residents should have been able to determine the types of products they wanted to produce in the city. Essentially, Detroit workers should have been able to govern based upon "rational"—read: democratic—economic principles. DARE constructed and promoted this economic vision, a vision which garnered much electoral support in form of Cockrel's campaign for city council.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁸ Jack Russell and Dan Luria, *Rational Reindustrialization: An Economic Development Agenda for Detroit* (Detroit: Widgetripper Press, 1981), 51.

CONCLUSION

Reflections on Left-Wing Progressive Politics during the 1970s and 1980s: From Black Power and the New Left to Jesse Jackson's Rainbow Coalition

DARE's activists continued to work for political change after Kenneth Cockrel declined to seek reelection in 1981 and DARE disbanded. Dan Luria and Jack Russell continued their work on economic development in the policy world. Cockrel returned to practicing law. Still, Cockrel's name hovered over conversations about who would succeed Coleman Young. Young's political standing in the city had declined by the end of the 1980s. Sadly, Cockrel would not live long enough to run for mayor. Detroit left-wing politics suffered a fatal blow on Tuesday night, April 25, 1989. Shortly before 11pm, he collapsed in his kitchen. Detroit EMS pronounced him dead from a massive heart attack upon his arrival at Grace Hospital.¹ Two months before his death, Cockrel had hinted at a possible run. He told a *Los Angeles Times* journalist, "There is a feeling abroad that new blood would give the city a shot in the arm."² As Detroit Free Press writer Bill McGraw observed, "With Cockrel's death, some political activists are questioning not only who will take Young's place, but who will replace Cockrel."³

The Ohio Public Interest Campaign (OPIC) also experienced its own transition during the 1980s. After failing to pressure the Ohio General Assembly to pass a plant closure law, OPIC continued its efforts to confront corporate power. In a change of strategy, OPIC won a federal lawsuit against several Ohio grocery businesses in 1983. The organization also increasingly

¹ Bill McGraw, "Activist Cockrel left deep imprint," *Detroit Free Press*, April 27, 1989.

² James Risen, "Challengers think Mayor Young may be losing his grip on the electorate," *The Ann Arbor News*, February 19, 1989.

³ McGraw, "Activist Cockrel left deep imprint."

engaged in environmental activism. Concentrating on local politics, it successfully worked to pass “right to know” laws passed in Cleveland and throughout the state. In 1989, OPIC turned itself into a formal membership organization in 1989, abandoning its coalitional structure. Members renamed itself Ohio Citizen Action, reflecting OPIC’s grassroots focus.⁴

Ironically, Ohio Citizen Action activists would watch the federal government pass a national plant closing law in 1988. In July of that year, Congress passed the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN). It called for businesses employing 100 or more workers to give 60 days’ advance notice.⁵ Michigan Representative William Ford introduced H.R. 2847 in 1983, which called for six months-to-a-year advance notice, severance pay and transfer rights to affected workers, and it made employers’ liable for a community’s tax losses.⁶ Ohio Democratic Senator, and supporter of OPIC’s Community Readjustment Act, Howard Metzenbaum introduced a significantly weaker version of Ford’s bill in 1987. The Jobs Training Partnership Act did not specify a time-table for advance notice nor would it hold firms liable for moving.⁷ The Senate voted to attach an amendment to the Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act of 1987 that required firms employing at least 100 people to give 60 days’ advance notice. The House bill required 90 days’ warning for businesses employing 50 or more workers and 180 days if a closing affected 500 or more laborers.⁸

Plant closing legislation emerged as a prominent issue in the 1988 Democratic presidential primary and in national politics. President Ronald Reagan threatened to veto the bill. Reagan declared he would veto the legislation “before I let a bad trade bill veto our economic

⁴ Paul Ryder, Citizen Action also represented an attempt to build a network of state-based citizen organizations during the 1980s.

⁵ Ronald G. Ehrenberg and George H. Jakubson, *Advance Notice Provisions in Plant Closing Legislation* (Kalamazoo: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, 1988), 5.

⁶ Christopher P. Yost, “The Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act of 1988: Advance Notice Required?,” *Catholic University Law Review*, Vol. 38, No.3 (March 1989), 689.

⁷ 690.

⁸ Ehrenberg and Jakubson, 4-5.

expansion.”⁹ Similar to OPIC’s campaign for the CRA during the late-1970s and early-1980s, business groups such as the National Association of Manufacturers lobbied against the measure.¹⁰ Many of the frontrunners in the Democratic primary supported WARN. Tennessee Senator Al Gore voted for the bill. Jackson called on Congress to pass the bill. He also requiring firms to repay government subsidies should they close and move.¹¹ Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis said at a rally in Toledo, Ohio, “Not only is it right and fair thing to give workers notice before you throw them out in the street, but governors want notices...Why? Because we can’t possibly save those jobs unless we know long enough in advance so we can do something about it.”¹²

The passage of the WARN Act in 1988 confirmed OPIC’s hypothesis that it was important to push for national plant closing legislation in a favorable political climate. Even though Reagan threatened to veto the bill and national business leaders lobbied against it, the WARN Act did not suffer the same fate as OPIC’s CRA. Democrats controlled both houses of Congress in 1987. A consensus around supporting WARN emerged in the party as progressives such as Jesse Jackson and centrists such as Al Gore advocated for the bill. The passage of WARN begs the question of whether or not progressives could have organized and executed a campaign around plant closure during the late 1980s. It is quite possible that OPIC and other progressives who advocated for plant closing legislation several years too soon.

⁹ Quoted in Frank Swoboda, “White House, Congress Spar Over Trade Bill; Jackson, Gore Endorse Plant-Closing Provision,” *The Washington Post*, April 12, 1988.

¹⁰ Randall Samborn, “A Fizzling Time Bomb,” *The National Law Journal*, January 22, 1991.

¹¹ Hobart Rowen, “Workers’ bill of rights helps Jesse,” *The Vancouver Sun*, April 5, 1988.

¹² Quoted in Adell Crowe, “Plant-closings bill fuels political debate,” *USA Today*, April 25, 1988.

Assessing Left-Wing Progressive Politics during the 1970s and 1980s

“No Radical Hangover” illustrated how a consequential left-wing progressivism arose in the Midwest during the 1970s and 1980s. Developing in response to the excesses and fracturing of the New Left and Black Power movements, left-wing progressive activists in Ohio and Detroit combined radical analyses of several focal points—urban rebellions, policing, the war in Southeast Asia, urban development, and deindustrialization—with pragmatic and reformist political strategies. Left-wing progressives successfully organized against police brutality and the war while activists failed to achieve economic reforms.

The purpose of the following discussion will be to assess left-wing progressive politics and strategy during the 1970s and 1980s. Also, I will conclude by considering the meaning of left-wing progressive politics as it relates to the question of whether or not left-wing social movements can include a successful electoral wing. In addition to considering the Detroit Alliance for a Rational Economy as the local example that appeared in this study, I will draw some insights from the lessons of Reverend Jesse Jackson’s presidential runs, and establishment of the Rainbow Coalition, during the 1980s.

“No Radical Hangover” challenged several arguments related to the fate of the left after the 1960s. In this study, I argued that a consequential left-wing in the Midwest existed during the 1970s and 1980s. Progressive campaigns in Detroit and Ohio shared important characteristics such taking radical analyses of focal points and pursuing reformist strategies for social change. Left-wing progressive activists did not succumb to sectarianism. Neither did left-wing progressives focus on a narrow “identity politics.” While it is true that leftist organizations such as Detroit’s League of Revolutionary Black Workers, the Students for the Democratic Society, or even the Indochina Peace Campaign split or declined, scholarship on the left often neglected how

organizers moved to address different focal points in new political formations in local and state politics. Activists often developed and articulated complex analyses around focal points that fused the politics of race, class, and to a lesser extent, gender with interrelated critiques of policing, war and empire, and economic development.

Progressive Successes during the 1970s: the Anti-STRESS Movement and the Indochina Peace Campaign

Detroit's Anti-STRESS Movement and the Indochina Peace Campaign's efforts to stop the war represented two successful efforts of left-wing progressive politics during the 1970s. Both formations relied upon coalition politics. The left-wing progressives' efforts to build a broad based coalition of black nationalists, civil rights groups, trade and police labor unions, and liberals around police killings challenged the presumption that black power and new left activists pursued sectarian politics during the early 1970s. The Indochina Peace Campaign was an organization that comprised of several branches scattered throughout the country. Mostly located in the Midwest, each chapter developed their own political style. For example, the Detroit IPC articulated a more radical analysis of U.S. involvement in Southeast Asia than Hayden or the Cleveland IPC.

Framing and winning the debates around the focal points of police killings and the war in Southeast Asia enabled Anti-STRESS and IPC activists to achieve their goals. Progressives in the Anti-STRESS movement helped raise awareness around lethal policing through their participation in demonstrations and their legal strategy. Radical lawyers Kenneth Cockrel and Justin Ravitz helped the campaign highlight the DPD's abuses. Also, Ravitz's campaign for Recorder's Court Judge served as a referendum on STRESS and the city's criminal justice system. Ravitz and the coalition's left-wing connected their arguments against STRESS with a

radical critique of the court system that extracted revenues from poor black Detroiters and an analysis of the heroin trade that implicated U.S. military involvement in Indochina.

Tom Hayden, the IPC, and the larger antiwar movement also won the public debate around U.S. military involvement in Southeast Asia. Rather than relying on Marxist-Leninist rhetoric, Hayden popularized IPC's anti-imperialist politics. This tactic seemed to work from the onset of the campaign as Hayden, activist-actress Jane Fonda, Holly Near, and George Smith attracted sizeable crowds at their initial rallies in the Midwest. The IPC also capitalized on Nixon's Watergate scandal by using their Indochina Peace Pledge to organize the grassroots and lobby U.S. Congress. The IPC's success with influencing public discourse was also evident in the organization's ability to successfully convince Congress to discontinue U.S. military aid. Journalists Bill Novak and Rowland Evans detailed this influence in the *Boston Globe* in 1974, "The propaganda lines set forth then have been vigorously relayed on Capitol Hill: the Thieu government, not Hanoi, is the aggressor and would collapse without provocation should the United States withdraw aid."¹³

The combination of stopping military aid and Nixon's resignation hastened the demise of the Thieu regime. Saigon eventually fell in 1975, thus ending U.S. military involvement. The IPC framed Indochina as the focal point for U.S. imperialism, thus asserting that the campaign may be able to turn back empire if it halted U.S. military aid. On the surface, it appeared that the IPC did not achieve such a lofty goal. However, it is reasonable to suggest that the organization's role in ending the war helped changed the perception of that the U.S. military was unbeatable. Also, the defeat in Indochina led to Americans' reduced appetite for long ground wars in the future, at least up until the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq during the 2000s.

¹³ Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, "The New Crisis in Vietnam," *Boston Globe*, April 10, 1974.

Neither the Anti-STRESS nor the IPC's campaign operated on the same scale. The Anti-STRESS movement was a city-based campaign. Its targets were the Detroit Police Department, the Wayne County Prosecutor, and the city's mayor, Roman S. Gribbs. The campaign sought to mobilize as many different organizations within the city against STRESS. Detroit's streets, its city council, and its courts became crucial sites for action. The IPC, on the other hand, operated on multiple scales simultaneously. The IPC pressured raised awareness locally, pressured local governments, and U.S. Congress. Even though the organization comprised of local chapters which engaged in grassroots organizing, Tom Hayden and Jane Fonda led the congressional strategy on Capitol Hill.

The campaign strategies of the Anti-STRESS movement and the IPC not only highlighted how left-wing progressives worked in coalitions to pursue achievable goals, they also illustrated how activists continued to pursue focal points after attaining victories. The IPC split in 1974 because it could not agree upon a post-Vietnam strategy. Success generated more debate about what focal points activists should concentrate on—foreign policy, the oil crisis, or multinational corporations. Such debates are not surprising considering the reality of working with a politically and intellectually diverse network of IPC chapters. Detroit's IPC chapter argued for continuing an anti-imperialist course grounded in a Marxist-Leninist critique. Other IPC chapters, like Ohio's, looked to more local concerns as they chose to organize a state-based campaign against plant closure.

Progressive Defeats Between 1967 and 1981: Albert Cleage's Federation for Self-Determination, the Ohio Public Interest Campaign, and the Detroit Alliance for a Rational Economy

The 1967 urban rebellions in Detroit and Newark created focal points for black power activists and liberals. Black Power activists such as Reverend Albert Cleage saw the black

community, Twelfth Street, and the city as the focal points for action. Conversely, liberals in Detroit, as well as in the federal government, saw hiring, and policing, the “hard core unemployed” as the solution to the civil disturbances. Black power activists’ outlooks on the rebellions suggested a nationalist approach grounded in the principle of self-determination. The liberal view was grounded in longstanding understandings about racism creating a “tangle of pathology” and culture of poverty among black families. Revolution was neither needed nor desired for black Americans. Instead, black men needed to be rehabilitated and integrated into the workforce. Liberals viewed their focal point in an individualistic manner whereas Cleage and other Black Power activists saw theirs as a collective.

The liberal and black power approaches also spurred different strategies for addressing their focal points. However, both relied upon coalition politics. Business and political leaders in Detroit formed the “first” urban coalition, the New Detroit Committee. Members of the NDC such as Ford Motor Company’s Henry Ford, II and the Hudson Company’s J.L. Hudson offered jobs to the hard core unemployed. The NDC also aimed to support black organizing around revitalizing black communities. They offered the Detroit Council of Organizations and Cleage’s Federation for Self-Determination grants, as long as they did not use the money to engage in politics.

Meanwhile, Cleage and others sought to build an intra-racial organization, the Federation for Self-Determination. This group represented an attempt for black Detroiters to close ranks around Cleage’s “transfer of power” strategy. Cleage’s “transfer of power” underscored black power activists’ desires to hold predominately-white institutions in the public and private sector accountable for the structural racism driving the urban rebellions. The scale of Cleage’s black power politics was somewhat smaller than his progressive predecessors. While he believed that

black Americans should take over predominately-black cities, he also thought they could start at the neighborhood level. In the “transfer of power” strategy, white institutions would hand over financial resources and power over public institutions to black Americans living in predominately-black neighborhoods. Cleage envisioned the construction of a capitalist, black-ran cooperative-based economy.

Unlike his progressive predecessors, Cleage denied to pursue what looked to be a pragmatic course of action; he turned down NDC’s funds. Even though black radicals and black nationalists such as Cockrel and the Congress of Racial Equality’s Floyd McKissick supported Cleage’s decision to stick to principles and decline the New Detroit Committee’s funds, it also spelled the end of Cleage’s attempt to rebuild Twelfth Street. The FSD coalition strategy depended upon the receipt of resources from predominately-white institutions. The resources would have allowed the FSD to fulfill its intended purpose—to redevelop black Detroit around a race- and space-based cooperative economy. The FSD sought to position itself as the administrator for black Detroit. Consequently, without the transfer of power, there was little need for the intra-racial coalition.

During the late-1970s and early 1980s, left-wing progressive activists in the Detroit Alliance for a Rational Economy and the Ohio Public Interest Campaign saw urban development and deindustrialization as focal points for action. They also pursued different approaches to economic democracy. DARE sought to build a left-wing political organization that would run their own candidates and oppose Coleman Young’s black-liberal-labor-corporate coalition. DARE drew on prior organizing and political victories to get black radical Kenneth Cockrel elected to city council in 1977. The organization successfully raised awareness around tax abatements for riverfront and downtown development. It also developed an alternative economic

plan called rational reindustrialization that called for a mix of municipal and market socialism. The organization outlined the construction of a public enterprise sector that would produce transportation and energy goods. Dan Luria and Jack Russell envisioned rational reindustrialization within established urban policy frameworks such as the Reagan administration's free enterprise zones. In such an economy, workers, citizens, and the city government would hold private property rights in enterprises and have a say in investment decisions.

DARE, however, failed to intervene with consequence around the 1979-1980 Chrysler bailout and local conversations about reindustrialization. DARE advanced an analysis of the corporation's failure that neglected a racial analysis. Also, by the time the organization released its critique and hosted its forum on the bailout, President Jimmy Carter had signed the Chrysler Corporation Loan Guarantee Act into law.¹⁴ The organization also missed an opportunity to build relationships with members of the Poletown community as Young's administration collaborated with General Motors to demolish their neighborhood in order to build a plant.

Ultimately, the incorporation of Coleman Young into the city's power structure may have represented DARE's biggest obstacle. Cockrel and the organization suffered from political isolation as Young mostly ignored their efforts. Young led a broad-based growth coalition consisting of organized labor leaders such as UAW President Doug Fraser, development organizations such as Detroit Renaissance, Inc., real estate developers, and business leaders such as Henry Ford, II. This coalition even extended to Republicans as Governor Milliken joined Young and the state's delegation to Washington, D.C. to argue for the Chrysler bailout in 1979. All of these factions not only supported Young in elections, but helped him govern. Most

¹⁴ Jimmy Carter, "Remarks on Signing into Law H.R. 5860, the Chrysler Corporation Loan Guarantee Act of 1979," January 7, 1980, *The American Presidency Project*, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=32978axzz1iVHeHBN1>, accessed, June 6, 2016.

significantly, Young successfully maintained a strong black political base, even as he had to resort to austere policies to keep the city afloat. The Detroit Alliance for a Rational Economy failed to cut into Young's black support and raised questions about the efficacy of an independent left-wing electoral politics.

OPIC pursued an economic vision that adapted elements of 1930s and 1940s-style industrial democracy to the 1970s economy characterized by growing multinational corporations, increased capital mobility, destruction of organized labor and the social wage, and the erosion of Ohio's manufacturing base. The organization saw a political opportunity in the decline of organized labor, the New Deal, and deindustrialization. OPIC embraced a Rustinian coalition model that aimed to bring together activists, labor organizers and workers, and civil rights and religious groups to fight for a plant closure law on the state-level. The Community Readjustment Act (CRA) called for early warning, severance pay, health benefits, and for fleeing businesses to donate to a community development fund. The group relied upon appeals toward constructing a new social contract where corporations would, at the very least, help maintain communities. OPIC built upon the Indochina Peace Campaign's strategy that combined grassroots organizing, mobilizing, policymaking, and congressional lobbying. OPIC successfully organized a state-based coalition to support the CRA. Their campaign even attracted national leaders such as UAW President Doug Fraser.

OPIC's campaign for plant closure legislation ran into opposition from the state's political and business leaders. The Ohio Manufacturers Association and the Greater Cleveland Growth Corporation lobbied against the bill in the Ohio General Assembly. While Ohio Governor James A. Rhodes was willing to devote state spending to development, he saw constructing a "good" business climate as the best strategy to attract new industrial development.

The chairman of the Ohio Senate's Commerce and Labor subcommittee, Cincinnati Democrat William Bowen, also thought the bill would hurt the state's business climate. Consequently, he failed to move on the CRA.

Both OPIC and DARE sought to take radical analyses of war and imperialism, police violence, and the economy and put them on a reform path in an effort to broaden the appeal of left-wing politics during the 1970s and 1980s. The two groups' efforts raise questions of which organization and strategy was most effective, what was lost in each, and what other paths might have been taken. In terms of organizational strategy, OPIC was more successful in organizing a coalition to confront plant closings. The coalition regularly attracted scores of workers and citizens at their community meetings in various Ohio cities wracked by plant closure. Their state hearing testimonies were symphonic—each group built advanced a necessary distinct analysis of deindustrialization, whether they focused on race, macroeconomics, health, or the community impact around one theme, corporations failed to uphold their end of the bargain while workers and communities sacrificed. However, the OPIC coalition could not get a vote on the bill.

Business mobilized against the coalition's bill, calling it a threat to free enterprise and managerial prerogatives. Governor Rhodes and State Senator Bowen adhered to development orthodoxy—make the economic climate hospitable for business on business's terms. The type of regulation that OPIC proposed was anathema to their pro-business outlook.

Yet, OPIC's efforts to target state government were prescient. OPIC located state government as a "focal point" because they thought the political possibilities for economic democracy did not exist on a national level. State government was, and continues to be, a crucial institution for progressives and left-wing activists to pursue policy change. The "new" federalism policies of the 1970's and 1980's have given governors and state legislators more control over

the implementation of federal policy. Also, state legislatures and governors can put more resources behind the urban policy legislation they pass than either the federal government or municipal governments.

Obviously, progressives and left-wing activists and organizations cannot only focus on state-level politics. DARE's concentration on city politics and confronting Coleman Young was not misguided considering the organization's economic plans. Cockrel's and DARE's inside-outside strategy in which a political organization would seek to serve as the organizing go-between city residents and elected officials was novel. However, they were not able to build a large enough base to either to continue elect left-wing candidates nor to actually pressure Young and his coalition to reconsider their strategy of revitalization. And, even though DARE saw rational reindustrialization as a model that other organizations could adapt for regional development, their political focus was in fact too local. The group never established working relationships with groups outside of Detroit and never developed a mechanism to confront development policies arising out of the statehouse.

One thing OPIC and DARE had in common in strategic and tactical terms was a failure to develop plant-based organizing and with it the threat of direct action against industrial employers. Both organizations' new leftist and black labor radical skepticism of big labor manifested itself in their politics and strategies. OPIC reasoned that it was necessary to take plant location and investment decisions out of their contemporary labor-management arrangement because the collective bargaining system had atrophied. The organization attracted the support of labor leaders, even UAW's Fraser. But, OPIC did not acquire much from trade unions in terms of resources. Cockrel and DARE remained on cool terms with the United Auto Workers even though its leadership supported OPIC's campaign. OPIC joined workers who protested closings,

but neither they, nor DARE, ever advocated for worker-led direct action. Ironically, both group's failure to focus on plant-level organization reinforced the void left by a shrinking trade union movement.

Thoughts about defensive organizing also provoke the question of how left progressives could pursue an offensive strategy to fight for economic democracy. This would require building an institutional structure that organizes on multiple registers—local, state, and regional. Such a structure would draw from IPC's, Anti-STRESS's, and DARE's penchant for political education around progressive economic democracy. Yet, even if organizers successfully built an infrastructure on this type of a scale, they would still struggle around familiar structural and cultural constraints such as federalism and an adherence to free market capitalism. Surely, opportunities to intervene in national conversations generated by economic crises would present themselves. Activists took advantage of this situation when they occupied Zuccoti Park in 2011 response to the financial crisis. Bernie Sanders's presidential campaign also represents such an opportunity.

Ultimately, two questions linked OPIC's, DARE's, as well as Detroit's Reverend Albert Cleage's, the Student for a Democratic Society's and social democrat Bayard Rustin's politics: Is it possible for left-wing and progressive activists to pursue reformist means to control corporate capital and to pursue economic democracy? How does one build the political power and acquire the capital investment needed to implement such a politics on a local and state level? All of these activists had to confront these questions and dilemmas as they constructed their alternatives to liberal urban development during the late-1960s, the erosion of organized labor and the decline of the New Deal, or the intensification of market-based economic policies during the 1970s and 1980s.

Can Progressive Social Movements Have Electoral Wings, or Can an Inside-Outside Strategy Work for the Left?

Kenneth Cockrel's and DARE's experiences trying to challenge Mayor Coleman Young's growth coalition actually strikes at the heart of what seems to be the left's irresolvable dilemma: Can left-wing progressive social movements include an independent electoral wing? Another way to frame this question is: Can an inside-outside strategy for left-wing organizing and institution building alter the Democratic Party, itself, or at least change the way it governs? The analyses of DARE, IPC, and OPIC also begs the question of whether or not progressives scale up electoral and social movement efforts to the level of presidential politics.

The question of presidential politics for the left is vexing. Many leftists have articulated reasons for running and abstaining from electoral politics, especially in the presidential arena.¹⁵ There are several reasons why one can support left-wing progressives running in national politics. National campaigns raise questions about the assumptions of the status quo within either of the major parties. Left-wing progressive presidential politics can give supporters clear focal points for action—the Democratic Party as well as particular issues pertaining to domestic and foreign policy. Left-wing candidates can use national campaigns to highlight particular issues that Republicans and Democrats would not discuss. Left-wing candidates can also push the frontrunner and the party platform leftward.

However, presidential campaigns can become graveyards for social movements. Regarding the arguments against running, left-wing progressives have had to contend with various structural obstacles including competing in the two-party, winner-take-all, Electoral College system and the struggles with placing candidates onto ballots in all fifty states. Also,

¹⁵ The Editors, "The Nader Campaign and the Future of US Left Electoral Politics," *Monthly Review* (February 2001); Robert Brenner, "The Paradox of Social Democracy: The American Case," in *The Year Left: An American Socialist Yearbook 1985*, eds by Mike Davis, Fred Pfeil, and Michael Sprinker (New York: Verso, 1985); Bill Fletcher, Jr. and Danny Glover, "Visualizing a Neo-Rainbow," *The Nation*, January 27, 2005.

left-wing organizations may have to divert needed financial and human resources away from mass movement building and into electoral organizing.

Electoral campaigns, especially presidential ones, develop around a single charismatic leader. The fate of the social movement depends upon how the candidate responds to the campaign's success or failure. If the winning candidate is not intimately connected with an independent social movement, then the elected official could ignore their social movement constituency, or maybe worse, move to demobilize the social movement. In the worst case scenario of defeat, if the candidate loses, then it is possible the movement loses, as the political parties, their supporters, and members of the media may see the loser's politics as discredited. In the best case, the candidate returns to building an oppositional social movement that could continue to pressure local, state, and national elected officials. Ultimately, electoral campaigns, especially if they do not spring from a social movement, only have one objective—to win and place the candidate into office.

Jesse Jackson's Rainbow Coalition represents an example of the best and worst case scenarios of the fusion of social movement and electoral politics.¹⁶ Jackson's campaigns during the 1980s gave voice to a progressive politics that harkened back to the 1970s. With Reaganism serving as the Rainbow Coalition's focal point, Jackson articulated a platform that incorporated railed against multinational corporations and the "economic violence" of plant closure. Jackson

¹⁶ Conversations around Jesse Jackson's 1984 and 1988 campaigns are rather polarized. Political scientists Adolph Reed, Jr. and Robert C. Smith view Jackson's campaigns as expressions of symbolic politics while Ronald Walters contends that Jackson sought to use leverage politics in order to transform the Democratic Party. Max Elbaum saw Jackson's campaigns as important in accounting for left organizing during the 1980s. Adolph Reed, Jr. *The Jesse Jackson Phenomenon: The Crisis of Purpose in Afro-American Politics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986); Robert C. Smith, *We Have No Leaders: African Americans in the Post-Civil Rights Era* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1996); Ronald W. Walters, *Freedom Is Not Enough: Black Voters, Black Candidates and American Presidential Politics* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005); Max Elbaum, *Revolution in the Air: Sixties Radicals Turn to Lenin, Mao, and Che* (New York: Verso, 2002); Howard Brick and Christopher Phelps, *Radicals in America: The U.S. Left Since the Second World War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

supported the antiapartheid movement and challenged U.S. foreign policy in Latin America.¹⁷

Unlike in 1984, when Jackson appealed mostly to African Americans, Jackson popularized his platform as he aspired to deepen and expand his multiracial coalition.

One of Jackson's most vital contribution to progressive politics during the 1980s was the institutionalization of the Rainbow Coalition after the 1984 election. Jackson sought to nationalize Chicago mayor Harold Washington's efforts to build a progressive multiracial electoral coalition. Akin to Cockrel's Detroit Alliance for a Rational Economy, the Rainbow Coalition would serve as the independent political organization that would challenge Democrats and help thrust its leader into office. However, the Rainbow attracted black leftists such as Ron Daniels, California Representative Ronald Dellums, labor organizer Bill Fletcher, Jr., and Jack O'Dell. Jackson's Rainbow Coalition also enjoyed support from leftist organizations such as the League of Revolutionary Struggle and the Communist Party.¹⁸

Jackson fared better in the 1988 campaign than he did four years earlier. He finished second to Michael Dukakis. Jackson earned nearly 7 million votes in 1988 compared to 3.2 million in 1984. He won thirteen contests. However, Dukakis failed to pick Jackson as his running mate. Instead, Dukakis chose a more conservative Democrat, Texas Senator Lloyd Bentson. Even though Jackson remained the one of the most influential African American Democrats, the party failed to view him as its new standard bearer. That distinction would go to the more conservative-oriented Democratic Leadership Council (DLC). Jackson's campaign defeated the DLC in the 1988 Democratic primary, as he outperformed its candidate, Tennessee Senator Al Gore.

¹⁷ The Democratic Party also represented another as Jackson sought internal reforms. Manning Marable, *Race, Reform, and Rebellion: The Second Reconstruction and Beyond in Black America, 1945-2006* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2007).; Jesse Jackson, "A Chance to Serve," in *Keep Hope Alive: Jesse Jackson's 1988 Presidential Campaign*, ed. Frank Clemente (Boston: Keep Hope Alive PAC & South End Press, 1988).

¹⁸ Elbaum, 276-279.

Ultimately, Jackson's Rainbow Coalition suffered two defeats after the 1988 election—one by the centrist Democratic Leadership Council, and the other by Jackson, himself. Al From founded the organization in response to President Ronald Reagan's 1984 landslide reelection. Centered on the southern wing of the Party, From and his associates articulated a "third way" politics that claimed to be "neither conservative or liberal but both and different."¹⁹ The organization would also speak for "national" rather than "special interests."²⁰ Effectively, From and the DLC aspired to push the party rightward. The DLC endorsed the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and law and order policies.²¹ And between 1988 and 1992, the DLC consolidated power within the party. From asked Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton to lead the DLC in 1990. The organization also sought to marginalize Jesse Jackson. The DLC supported the institution of Super Tuesday in an effort to stop Jackson's 1988 primary campaign. The DLC also distanced itself from Jackson in subsequent years, from Bill Clinton indirectly criticizing Jackson at a DLC function in 1990 to disinviting Jackson from a subsequent gathering.²²

Meanwhile, and to the dismay of the Rainbow's supporters, Jackson made two decisions that sealed the fate of the Rainbow Coalition. Jackson restructured the organization in 1989 because, according to Ron Daniels, he sought "'a light and lean operation."²³ Thus, the Rainbow would explicitly serve Jackson's interests rather than work to build a progressive organization that could challenge the DLC and the Democratic Party. Ultimately, Jackson pursued elite brokerage politics, deciding to align himself closer to the Democratic Party during the early

¹⁹ Quoted in Bruce Miroff, *Liberals' Moment: The McGovern Insurgency and the Identity Crisis of the Democratic Party* (Lawrence: University of Kansas, 2009), 274.

²⁰ Kenneth Baer, *Reinventing Democrats: The Politics of Liberalism from Reagan to Clinton* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2000), 67.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 180-181.

²² *Ibid.*, 183-186.

²³ Quoted in JoAnn Wypijewski, "Rainbow's Gravity," *The Nation*, July 15, 2004, <https://www.thenation.com/article/rainbows-gravity/>, accessed July 31, 2016.

1990s. The Rainbow's demobilization was complete when Jackson decided not to run for the Democratic Party's nomination in 1992.

Jackson's demobilization of the Rainbow Coalition begs the question about what happens with Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders and his supporters after 2016. Will they seek to build an independent left-wing party that would eventually run in national elections? It would make sense for them to take Sanders's advice—build from the bottom-up, develop a presence in local politics in as many states as possible.²⁴ Obviously, the question, then, becomes what happens to the other leftist political parties such as the Green Party and the Socialist Alternative. Does one of those organizations emerge as the electoral vehicle for Sanders's supporters, or do his supporters start a new party and incorporate those leftist parties?

The biggest lesson of progressive electoral politics is it is not enough to just win elections. The question regarding the efficacy of taking over public institutions concerns the strategy of building enough power to push elected officials to adopt and implement progressive policies. While it would appear easier for progressives to run candidates for national office, they would probably need the existence of an independent left-wing party that is focused on winning elections and a progressive social movement that's concerned with serving as an influential outside force working simultaneously to build more power within and outside of established political institutions.

²⁴ Amanda Marcotte, "Sanders wants you to run: Bernie's plan to turn regular Americans into agents of the progressive movement," *Salon.com*, June 27, 2016, http://www.salon.com/2016/06/27/sanders_wants_you_to_run_bernies_plan_to_turn_regular_americans_into_agents_of_the_progressive_movement/ accessed August 1, 2016.

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