

# HISTORY MATTERS

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An Undergraduate Journal of Historical Research



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Appalachian State University









*For the History Matters family*



**The History of *History Matters***  
**Appalachian State University**  
**Department of History**

Have you ever spent so much time and effort on something that you wanted to share it with other people? Have you ever felt unfulfilled receiving only a grade and your own satisfaction as rewards for your hard work? Have you ever wanted to get your work published?

For these reasons *History Matters* was founded. In the spring of 2003, Eric Burnette, a freshman at Appalachian State University, was looking for an outlet for his research paper. He was frustrated by the lack of venues for undergraduate research, and he figured that other students probably felt the same way. Dr. Michael Moore, who had edited *Albion*, a professional journal of British history, for over 25 years, began advising Burnette on how best to go about starting an academic journal for undergraduate historical research. Another Appalachian student, Matthew Manes, was asked to join the interesting experiment, and together they laid the groundwork for *History Matters*.

Our first deadline was in late January 2004. For the editorial staff, it was an extensive and time-consuming process of reading, revising, and communicating with both the authors and the Faculty Editorial Board. In the end, the collaboration published one research paper, one research essay, and three editorial book reviews. This first issue of *History Matters: An Undergraduate Journal of Historical Research* was published online on April 28, 2004.

From the beginning, Burnette and Manes wanted to expand the journal. The more students who were involved, the more students who had the opportunity to be published and the better those papers would be. The 2004-2005 school year saw the participation of the University of North Carolina Asheville and Western Carolina University, as well as submissions from half a dozen schools nationwide. The 2005 issue was published with two research papers, one from Appalachian State University and one from a student at Villanova University. Five book reviews from all three participating departments were also published.

Since 2004, *History Matters* has grown drastically. Over the years our submission base has increased from 11 papers in 2004-2005 to 136 papers in 2016-2017. We now receive submissions from all over the United States from distinguished universities including Yale, Harvard, Brown, and Stanford. *History Matters* has also expanded internationally. We have received submissions from Canada, Great Britain, Australia, and South America while also employing international staff members as contributing editors.

Today *History Matters* continues to grow and prosper thanks to a supportive faculty, department, university, and, most importantly, the students who have worked hard on their papers and work with us to get them published.





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# “TO MAKE MY HAPPINESS AND HIS OWN:” MALE HOMOSEXUALITY IN CATHERINIAN RUSSIA

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Homosexuality in early-modern Russia is an elusive subject. A generation of homophobic, Stalinist repression and a lack of academic interest on both sides of the Iron Curtain leave historiographers interested in studying the queer history of Russia before the advent of the nineteenth century without the array of source materials needed to develop comprehensive monographs.<sup>1</sup> Due to this setback, modern scholarship tends to avoid a crucial period in Russia’s queer history: the eighteenth century. Due to the re-structuring of society and masculinity under Peter the Great, the changing gender dynamics during the reign of the five empresses, and the emergence of Russia as a European power, the eighteenth century produced a series of contradictions between public and private spaces, yielding a nuanced view of homosexuality which scholars of queer history ought to explore further. Analysis of the male-male relationships in the Muscovite state and the exploration of urbane culture in nineteenth-century Moscow and St. Petersburg yield promising avenues for queer academic study, but material for the 1700s is scarce. Eighteenth-century Russia, however, specifically during the reign of Catherine II, the Great (r. 1762-96), offers an excellent case study of the paradox of Russian queer history—the separation between public and private.<sup>2</sup> Despite strong, doctrinal, public stances against male homosexuality, both the ecclesiastical and state authorities in Catherinian Russia tolerated homosexuality as long as it remained private.

The first legal outlawing of male homosexuality came in the form of Peter the Great’s 1716 Military Statutes, followed closely by the 1720 Navy Statutes.<sup>3</sup> The codes draw their assessment of sodomy from

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<sup>1</sup> Dan Healey, “Can We ‘Queer’ Early Modern Russia?” in *Queer Masculinities, 1550-1800: Siting Same-Sex Desire in the Early Modern World*, ed. by Katherine O’Donnell and Michael O’Rourke (Houndsmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 109-10.

<sup>2</sup> Healey, “Can We ‘Queer’ Early Modern Russia?,” 109.

<sup>3</sup> Marianna G. Muravyeva, “Personalizing Homosexuality and Masculinity in Early Modern Russia,” in *Gender in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Marianna Muravyeva and Raisa Maria Toivo (New York: Routledge, 2013), 212-13.



two previous military guides, the *Concise Code of 1708* and the *Carolina*, Holy Roman Emperor Charles V's statutes, which defined sodomy as "unnatural adultery" with the penalty of burning after death.<sup>4</sup> Articles 165 and 166 of Peter's statutes concerned illicit sexual behavior among soldiers. Article 165 banned *smeshayetsiya so skotom*, or "non-rational animals/beasts," and Article 166 specifically addressed sodomy, roughly described as *muzh s muzhem muzhelozhstvuet*, translated closely to "men with men engaging in male-on-male relations."<sup>5</sup> The Military Statutes recognized different levels of homosexuality and proscribed different punishments for each: two consenting adults (*muzh s muzhem muzhelozhstvuet*) and between an adult and a minor (*otroki*).

The differentiation between levels of homosexuality is important in understanding the historical place of Peter's code, but also the realm of male homosexuality in his Russia. Chiefly, the statutes draw a distinction between consensual and nonconsensual sex. Unique from European models, Peter's code provides recourse for same-sex rape. Marianna Muravyeva argues that Peter I personally edited these statutes on sodomy, alternating the crimes of consensual sex and rape by degree of punishment: perpetrators of nonconsensual sex received "penal labor in the galleys."<sup>6</sup> This punishment exactly mirrored the punishment for opposite-sex rape, leading Muravyeva to conclude that the difference between consensual and nonconsensual sex ("sexual violence") outweighed the differences between "same-sex and opposite-sex offenses."<sup>7</sup>

In addition to its recognition of different types of sex, Peter's statutes reaffirmed the relegation of male homosexuality to the private sphere. As Laura Engelstein asserted in her monograph, *The Keys to Happiness*, Peter's statutory codes concerned male-to-male intercourse solely in its public manifestation; soldiers, in service of the state,

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<sup>4</sup> *The Concise Articles. Selected from the ancient Christian military laws, that is, on the fear of God and punishment of other evils. In particular: murder, adultery, theft, treason, infidelity, etc.* in M. Rozengeim, *Ocherk istorii voenno-sudnykh uchrezhdenii v Rossii do konchiny Petra Velikogo* (St. Petersburg: M. Ettingera, 1878), 294-313; J. Kohler and W. Scheel, eds., *Die Peinliche Gerichtsordnung Kaiser Karls V: Constitutio Criminalis Carolina* (Berlin: Scientia Verlag, 1900), Art. CXVI.

<sup>5</sup> Art. 165 and 166, *Voinskie Artikuli pri tom zhe i kratika primechaniya 1714 g.* in N. L. Rubinshtayna, *Voinniye Ustavi Petra Velikogo*, (Moscow: 1946), 77-78.

<sup>6</sup> Art. 166-167, *Voinskie Artikuli*, 78; Muravyeva, "Personalizing Homosexuality," 213.

<sup>7</sup> Muravyeva, "Personalizing Homosexuality," 213.

performed a public function, ergo their actions were necessarily public.<sup>8</sup> As the statutes primarily articulated an ethical code for “men deprived of full-civilian status” and “sex between men affects the official system of ordered relationships,” the act of sodomy ceased to be a private matter between individuals, becoming a public matter affecting the state.<sup>9</sup> Further, the fact that the statutes include an indictment of sodomy suggests that the practice among soldiers was widespread enough to warrant the attention of the tsar-reformer.

In eighteenth-century Russia, sodomy was not a criminal offense. While Peter’s Military Statutes outlawed sodomy in the armed forces, male homosexuality was not illegal in civilian Russia until 1835. Articles 677 and 678 of the Penal Code of 1835 outlawed both *muzhelozhstvo* (roughly, “a man lying with a man”) and *skotolozhstvo* (“a man lying with a beast”) for non-military personnel, becoming the first Russian civic statute to penalize sodomy.<sup>10</sup> The issue arose in a proposed civil code developed from 1755-1766, however.<sup>11</sup> The draft code incorporated elements left out of the 1716 statutes, namely the punishment for consensual homosexual intercourse between minors. Based on age, those younger than fifteen faced flogging with a rod, individuals fifteen to twenty-one years old were to be sent to a monastery, and those over twenty-one years of age faced Siberian exile.<sup>12</sup> The 1755-66 draft never solidified into law, however, so homosexuality, while condemned by the ecclesiastical hierarchy, remained technically legal. Thus, the period of 1716-1835 remains a period when male homosexuality was not officially banned from civil society, meaning that officially there was no civil reaction against the act.

Naturally, the Russian ecclesiastical hierarchy did not condone sodomy, like its Byzantine predecessors and Catholic and Protestant

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<sup>8</sup> Laura Engelstein, *The Keys to Happiness: Sex and the Search for Modernity in Fin-de-Siècle Russia* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1992), 58.

<sup>9</sup> Engelstein, *The Keys to Happiness*, 58-59.

<sup>10</sup> *Svod zakonov ugolovnykh* (St. Petersburg: Second Section of his Majesty’s Own Chancery, 1835), 213.

<sup>11</sup> V.N. Latkin, *Uchebnyk ugolovnogo prava perioda imperii (XVIII I XIX vv.)* (Moscow: Zeretsalo, 2004), 47-54.

<sup>12</sup> A.A. Vostokov, ed. *Proiekt Ugolovnogo Ulozheniia, 1754-1766 gg.* (St. Petersburg: Stasiulevitch, 1882), 167.

neighbors. Peter the Great transferred jurisdiction over sex crimes, including same-sex crimes, however, to the state in 1722, meaning the Russian Orthodox Church lost its direct control over their prosecution.<sup>13</sup> Yet, as the primal social institution in Imperial Russia, the Church maintained a general level of influence—people confessed to priests and secular courts turned towards ecclesiastical authorities for guidance on rulings and punishments.<sup>14</sup> While officially condemning the practice of homosexuality (jurists used the term *muzhelozhstvo*, or the act of men having sex with men, not “sodomy”), church authorities, through the medium of confessional guides, allowed some leniency in definition. One such guide from the late 1780s defined *muzhelozhstvo* as both men who fornicate *s muzheskim polom*, with the male sex, but also non-vaginal intercourse between husband and wife and “suggests that a priest...give the penitent some form of explanation to make sure he or she understood the sin first,” before deciding penance.<sup>15</sup> The lack of a unified definition greyed the areas of homosexuality and its punishment, which, as Eve Levin argues, creates a hierarchy of sexual practices. The Russian Orthodox Church officially preached homosexuality as a sin but viewed it a harmless variant, lacking a unified definition or punishment.<sup>16</sup>

Both temporal and spiritual law in Catherinian Russia, in theory, forbade homosexual relations between men, yet in the application of these principles, the fluidity of definition becomes evident. Despite the rigidity of theological doctrine, Levin demonstrated how the Russian Orthodox Church did not necessarily view male homosexuality as dangerous. One case, involving a monk, Anatole, and a servant boy, Vasily, demonstrated the leniency of church officials in individual cases. Further, the state apparatus mirrored this leniency in matters considered “private.” Given the nature of Russian autocracy, this apparatus centralized in the person of the sovereign. Catherine II, as empress, was no stranger to issues of sodomy. Two cases involving nobles close to her court, Peter Saltykov and Grigori Teplev, demonstrated the Empress’

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<sup>13</sup> *Polnoe Sobranie zakonov Rossiiskoi Imperii* (St. Petersburg: 1830), VI, 3963.

<sup>14</sup> Muravyeva, “Personalizing Homosexuality,” 210.

<sup>15</sup> Muravyeva, “Personalizing Homosexuality,” 210.

<sup>16</sup> Eve Levin, *Sex and Society in the World of the Orthodox Slavs, 900-1700*, (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1989), 197-211.

lack of prosecution of men widely known to be engaging in sexual activity with other men. Both the church and the state publically forbade sodomy and male homosexuality, yet they were quite tolerant of it in private.<sup>17</sup>

The homosocial spaces of monasteries yielded a number of recorded cases of illicit interactions between monks and sometimes among the service boys of the order. One such case reached the Holy Synod, Peter the Great's lay administration of the Russian Orthodox Church, in 1767. The complaint originated from Ambrosias, the archimandrite of Makariev Zheltovodsky Monastery, near Lyskovo in the modern Nizhny-Novgorod oblast. According to Ambrosia, one of the monks, Anatole, carried on an extended sexual relationship with Vasily, a thirteen-year-old service boy. After admonishment from the archimandrite and confession, Anatole continued to see Vasily in his cell, as well as take on another service boy as a sexual partner. Vasily, in testifying to Ambrosias, revealed he continued his sexual relationship with Anatole because he was jealous of the new affair. Despite punishment and being sent away from the monastery, Vasily once again found his way back to Anatole. After dispatching a special investigator, the Holy Synod made an interesting judgment—it did nothing. The case remained internal and was never handed over to the secular authorities. The authorities only handed down basic reprimands: Anatole received a transfer to a different monastery, and the boys were whipped.<sup>18</sup> The Holy Synod, although technically under the imperial apparatus, was primarily an ecclesiastical authority, and it maintained the privacy of the matter. Because the transgression occurred inside the private space of the monastery, it never reached the public; thus, the state never intervened.

Outside of the church apparatus, the state occasionally dealt with accusations of homosexuality. Catherine II inherited one case from her predecessor, the Empress Elizabeth Petrovna, in the form of Peter Vasilievich Saltykov. Peter was the brother of Sergei Saltykov, one of

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<sup>17</sup> Elena B. Smilianskaia, "Fortunetellers and Sorcerers in the Service of a Russian Aristocrat of the Eighteenth Century: The Case of Chamberlain Petr Saltykov," *Russian History*, vol. 40 (2013): 364-66.

<sup>18</sup> *Polnoe sobranie postanovlenii I rasporiazhenii po vedomstvu pravoslavnogo isapovedaniia Rossiiskoi imperii*, series 3 (St. Petersburg: Sinodal'naia tipografiia, 1910), vol. I, no. 418, 476-79.

Catherine's favorites while she was Grand Duchess, and a man whom Catherine described as "a fool in every sense of the word, and he had the most stupid physiognomy...a man of no importance."<sup>19</sup> Peter Saltykov faced investigation during the period of 1758-1765 for the attempted murder of his wife, Maria Solntseva-Zasekina, by means of black magic and contracted sorcerers.<sup>20</sup> In 1758, during the investigation, the Secret Chancellery uncovered that the root of Peter's marriage woes was a sexual relationship with a male serf. The serf, one Vasily Kozlovsky, "testified at the investigation that he performed homosexual acts on his lord Petr Saltykov, 'out compulsion by his lord;' that it began in 1751 when his master was still a bachelor; that he admitted his sin at confession, and that he had done penance for these sins."<sup>21</sup> Peter Saltykov planned to kill his wife and use magic to gain favor with first the Empress Elizabeth Petrovna, who cloistered him in a monastery, then later Catherine upon her accession and after his release by Peter III. Finally, in 1765, Catherine forced him into private retirement and the threat of cloistering should his meddling with sorcery continue.<sup>22</sup> In this case, Peter Saltykov's homosexuality was not the issue—he received punishment for conspiracy against the person of the sovereign, not for sodomy. Despite the publicity of his latter acts, neither Elizabeth Petrovna nor Catherine II cared about his sexuality. His relationship with his serf, though wrought with power imbalances, fit into the idea of the

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<sup>19</sup> Catherine II, *The Memoirs of Catherine the Great*, trans. by Mark Cruse and Hilde Hoogenboom (New York: Random House, 2006), 92. The Russian word for the men the empresses chose as their sexual partners was "фаворит," which most directly translates as "favorite." The relationships between the favorite's and the empresses should not be misconstrued as purely platonic or entirely romantic. While the empresses almost certainly loved their favorites, they had no intentions of granting them autocratic power. The favorites held prominent ministerial positions while in favor, and courtiers used them to gain the ears of the empresses, though true power still rested with the tsarinas; The lineage of Catherine's children has often been a point of historical debate. Catherine implies throughout her memoirs that Paul was not the biological offspring of Peter, but rather the son of Sergei Saltykov, one of Catherine's lovers sanctioned by Elizaveta in her desire for an heir. Anna, too, may have been the progeny of Count Stanislaw Poniatowski, a Polish envoy to the Russian court and a man Catherine essentially made King of Poland after her ascension to the Imperial throne. Peter III, rumored to be impotent, likely suffered from phimosis and received a circumcision in the early 1750s. The similarities in appearance and temperament shared by Peter III and Paul I make it likely that Peter was truly Paul's father, despite Catherine's implied claims. For more on this debate, see John T. Alexander, *Catherine the Great: Life and Legend* (New York: Oxford UP, 2001).

<sup>20</sup> Smilianskaia, "Fortunetellers and Sorcerers," 364-66.

<sup>21</sup> Smilianskaia, "Fortunetellers and Sorcerers," 366-67.

<sup>22</sup> Smilianskaia, "Fortunetellers and Sorcerers," 377-79.

“private sphere.” Much like the monastery where Anatole and Vasily pursued their sexual relationship, the estate where Peter Saltykov compelled his serfs into sexual acts, consensual or not, was hidden away from the public stage and therefore not the concern of the state.

The most high-profile case of male homosexuality in Catherine’s reign involved Grigori Teplov, a statesman and early supporter of Catherine’s *coup d’état*. Vlas Kucheev, a serf, accused Teplov in 1763 of forcing his servants into sodomy.<sup>23</sup> Teplov’s sexuality was apparent: Giacomo Casanova recorded in his travel memoirs that Teplov’s “vice was that he loved boys,” and that the counselor kept a retinue of his own “favorites,” one of whom almost seduced Casanova.<sup>24</sup> The minister was also widely known to promote men in exchange for sexual favors.<sup>25</sup> Despite the lack of secrecy from foreign visitors of his sexual preferences and actions, Teplov escaped punishment from the Empress. When she heard about the accusation, Catherine did nothing. She ordered the case closed and went on to appoint Teplov to the Senate. Much like the Anatole/Vasily and Peter Saltykov cases, the act of sodomy did not warrant an official response from the state, in the form of the Empress.

Just as it is false that same-sex relationships did not exist in Russia before the fifteenth century, though some scholars assert that the lack of evidence indicates a lack of action, the idea that Russia was devoid of gay men until the nineteenth century is fallacious. Dan Healey presents the ironic truth in his article “Can We ‘Queer’ Early Modern Russia?” that the lack of infrastructure and research on “queer” topics limits the ability of aspiring studies on queer Russia.<sup>26</sup> The absence of source material itself illuminates the fact, however, that male homosexuality was a private, rather than public, issue in eighteenth-century Russia. The historical record presents modern historians with a slim sampling of cases, implying that only high-profile cases garnered mainstream attention; the state, it seems, did not care what happened behind closed doors, so long as it remained out of the public eye. The cases of Peter Saltykov and Grigori Teplov demonstrate that even popularly-known gay men did not necessarily face recourse from the state. Conspiring against the Empress interested the state, not the sexuality of an individual. Even the ecclesiastical hierarchy, manifested

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<sup>23</sup> Muravyeva, “Personalizing Homosexuality,” 216.

<sup>24</sup> Casanova, *The Memoirs of Jacques Casanova*, vol. X, 234, 249.

<sup>25</sup> Muravyeva, “Personalizing Homosexuality,” 217.

<sup>26</sup> Healey, “Can We ‘Queer’ Early Modern Russia?,” 108.

in the Holy Synod, did not always strike hard and fast against known cases of sodomy. The outcome of the inquiry against Anatole and Vasily demonstrated the lack of enforcement from above. The monastery, like the estates of the nobles, represented a private space that the authorities were hesitant to violate. As Muravyeva asserts, homosexuality was deviant, but not dangerous to the state. Homosexual men could not live without fear of recourse—the threat of punishment was real enough in the public sphere.<sup>27</sup> Thus, to be a homosexual man in Catherinian Russia was to not transgress the line of publicity yet exercise a genuine autonomy in private.

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<sup>27</sup> Muravyeva, “Personalizing Homosexuality,” 218.

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# CHERNOBYL AND GLASNOST: THE POLITICAL FALLOUT THAT CHANGED THE COURSE OF A NATION

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## Introduction

During the latter half of the 1980s, the Soviet Union was a nation in trouble. As such, the communist nation faced internal strife among various nationalities, a down-turn in the nation's economy, and burgeoning voices of dissent questioning the communist basis of the USSR. In response to these issues, the General Secretary, Mikhail Gorbachev, supported reforms with the hope that it would strengthen the Soviet Union and its ideals. One such reform was *glasnost*, or "openness." While not a new idea in Russia, this idea of "openness" was introduced by Gorbachev to help bring reform to the struggling communist nation.<sup>28</sup> This adapting to *glasnost* was to be in both the political and social issues facing the nation through the ability of the media and ordinary citizens being able to question and even criticize the Soviet government openly.<sup>29</sup> With the adoption of *glasnost* as a way to help bring about reform, Soviet leaders were hoping to bring about change, but not so drastic of change that could threaten the very existence of the U.S.S.R.

During this time, however, the Soviet Union would be tested. On April 26, 1986, "a series of explosions" occurred at the fourth reactor in the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Station in Ukraine.<sup>30</sup> While the accident itself would be one of the worst nuclear accidents the world had ever seen, it would also become one of the biggest challenges to the reform-minded Gorbachev and to the nation itself. Considering the seriousness

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<sup>28</sup> "Glasnost and Perestroika," The Cold War Museum, <http://www.coldwar.org/articles/80s/GlasnostandPerestroika.asp> (accessed February 15, 2018).

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Svetlana Alexievich, "*Voices from Chernobyl*," Translation by Keith Gessen, (London: Dalkey Archive Press, 2005,) 1.

of the events at Chernobyl, under the banner of *glasnost*, it could have been expected that the government would have wanted to share as much as information as possible to answer the questions of the many citizens living near Chernobyl, and of those countries outside the Soviet Union. This would not be the case, as the Soviet Union leaders would opt to obscure what actually happened on that fateful April morning. This inability of the nation's leaders to communicate what exactly happened in a timely manner would become a "severe setback for glasnost at [this]time."<sup>31</sup> Therefore, to gain a better insight into this relationship between Chernobyl and the idea of *glasnost*, one must acquire a better understanding of this historical event and how it would test the Soviet Union's ability to be open and honest of the events at the infamous nuclear reactor during this time of *glasnost*.

### **History of Glasnost**

*Glasnost*, as an ideology to help reinvigorate the Soviet Union, was introduced as a way to implement the overarching reform of *perestroika*, or restructuring. According to Gorbachev in his book, *Perestroika: New Thinking for our Country and the World*, *perestroika* meant " [An] objective necessity for renovation and acceleration."<sup>32</sup> Through the implementation of *perestroika*, it was Gorbachev's plan to unite socialism with democracy and revive "The Leninist concept of socialist construction both in theory and in practice."<sup>33</sup> He went on to say, "We are conducting all our reforms in accordance with the socialist choice. We are looking within socialism, rather than outside it, for the answer to all the questions that arise."<sup>34</sup> By Gorbachev looking "within socialism" for the remedies to fix what ailed the nation, there would have to be open dialogue to pinpoint exactly what the problems were and what could be potential remedies for the issues faced by the Soviet Union. In his book, *Gorbachev's Glasnost: The First Phase of Perestroika*, Joseph Gibbs provides historical background and context for *glasnost*. According to Gibbs, the word was first used in a political sense under Tsar Nikolay I and was meant to be an internal discussion concerning social and economic reform, but it was not meant for public

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<sup>31</sup> Festus Eribo and Gary D. Gaddy, "Pravda's Coverage of the Chernobyl Nuclear Accident at the Threshold of glasnost," *Howard Journal of Communications* 3, no. 3/4 (Winter/Spring 1991): 249, accessed September 12, 2016.

<sup>32</sup> Mikhail Gorbachev, *Perestroika: New Thinking for Our Country and the World*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1987), 35.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, 36.

consumption as was seen later with an official set of censorship guidelines introduced under his rule for the first time.<sup>35</sup> Later Vladimir Lenin would use the word *glasnost* “in discussing a qualified kind of public criticism ... he also wrote frequently of *kritika i samokritika* (criticism and self-criticism).”<sup>36</sup> Lenin also wrote about the “need for open, critical discussion of ideas within party ranks ... [yet] he differentiated this from broader criticism of what he deemed fundamental party tenets.”<sup>37</sup> However, for Gorbachev, his focus on *glasnost* was not “the right to know [but rather] on the utility of an informed citizenry to the regime.”<sup>38</sup> This idea was supported in Gorbachev’s book *Perestroika* when he states, “the new atmosphere is, perhaps, most vividly manifest in *glasnost*. We want more openness about public affairs in every sphere of life.”<sup>39</sup> However, while Gorbachev may have been saying something one way, as was noted in a Soviet political reference from 1989, the way *glasnost* was officially sanctioned may have been slightly different.<sup>40</sup> The entry from this Soviet political reference stated: “*Glasnost*-Maximum openness and truthfulness in the activity of state and public organizations...But at the same time *glasnost* is not synonymous with universal permissiveness, the undermining of socialist values; it is invoked to strengthen socialism...”<sup>41</sup> As can be seen from the early years of the USSR through Gorbachev’s time as General Secretary, *glasnost* was to be looked upon as a way to be open about how the Soviet government and society

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<sup>35</sup> Joseph Gibbs, *Gorbachev’s Glasnost: The Soviet Media in the First Phase of Perestroika*, (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 1999), 12, accessed October 5, 2016, <http://web.b.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.snhu.edu/ehost/ebookviewer/ebook/bmxlYmtfXzQ5NTYxX19BTg2?sid=a61302eb-f344-4289-a746-4bf5ad1c13b0@sessionmgr101&vid=6&format=EB&rid=>

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Isaac J. Tarasulo, ed., *Gorbachev and Glasnost: Viewpoints from the Soviet Press*, (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 1989), xxi.

<sup>39</sup> Mikhail Gorbachev, *Perestroika: New Thinking for Our Country and the World*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1987), 75.

<sup>40</sup> Joseph Gibbs, *Gorbachev’s Glasnost: The Soviet Media in the First Phase of Perestroika*, (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 1999), 13-4, accessed October 5, 2016,

<http://web.b.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.snhu.edu/ehost/ebookviewer/ebook/bmxlYmtfXzQ5NTYxX19BTg2?sid=a61302eb-f344-4289-a746-4bf5ad1c13b0@sessionmgr101&vid=6&format=EB&rid=1>.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

should function, but not so open that it would jeopardize the foundation that the socialist government was built upon, thus possibly preventing *perestroika* from having the desired effect on the nation.

### **Historiography of the Collapse of the USSR**

While an understanding of *glasnost* is important to the discussion of Chernobyl, a brief historiography of the collapse of the USSR is required to understand the dynamics of the nations and why Chernobyl may have been a pivotal point in the history of the last years of the nation. During the time leading up to the disintegration of the Soviet Union there were events that unfolded that alone, or in a combination, could have precipitated the eventual breakup of the nation. Considering the breakup of the Soviet Union happened in a relatively short amount of time, with no major conflict involved during this event, it is no wonder historians and researchers have looked at this event from various angles to see what could have set off such an event. Some historians have pointed to the rise in nationalism among the many ethnic states that made up the Soviet Union. In her book, *The End of the Soviet Empire: The Triumph of the Nations*, H el ene Carr ere d'Encausse, explains that it was through the rebelling of nation that brought along the collapse.<sup>42</sup> Other historians, such as Rafael Reuveny and Aseem Prakash, looked at how the Soviet led war in Afghanistan contributed to the downfall of the Soviet empire. In the article, "The Afghanistan War and the Breakdown of the Soviet Union," Reuveny and Prakash argue that the Soviet war in Afghanistan while a crucial factor in the disintegration of the USSR, it was not the only reason for the breakup.<sup>43</sup> They broke their argument down into several areas where the war affected Soviet politics, such as the perception of the Soviet leadership, how the military was viewed by Soviet citizens, and the legitimacy of the Soviet government over non-Russian groups, especially those who felt they were fighting a Russian war against Afghanistan.<sup>44</sup> Next, the war itself created a new level of "political participation, [which] started to transform the press/media before *glasnost*, [the war] initiated the first shots of *glasnost* and created a significant mass of war veterans (*Afghansti*) who formed new civil

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<sup>42</sup> H el ene Carr ere d'Encausse, *The End of the Soviet Empire: The Triumph of the Nations*, (New York: Basic1992), 270.

<sup>43</sup> Rafael Reuveny and Aseem Prakash, "The Afghanistan War and the Breakdown of the Soviet Union," *Review of International Studies*, 25 no. 4 (1999): 693, accessed April 29, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20097629>.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

organizations weakening the political hegemony of the communist party.”<sup>45</sup> Next, in an article by Howard J. Sherman titled “Rise and Fall of the Soviet Union,” the author explains that due to the refusal of those in the ruling class to implement expensive “technological improvements” the result was low “Soviet growth, shortages, and rising prices,” which was contradictory to what the ruling class wanted, which was “rapid growth ... [and] to keep [their] privileged position.”<sup>46</sup> The author concludes, “The revolution ending the Soviet Union came mostly from ... within the Soviet ruling class... [which] recognized a need for reforms to make the system more efficient...”<sup>47</sup> This thinking eventually led to the ruling class wanting a more efficient system, but still have a hold on their “powerful positions.”<sup>48</sup> As can be seen from the historiography, the Soviet Union was faced with many issues that, in the end, contributed to its downfall. Yet, what guided the Soviet Union and her leaders during these challenging times were two ideas, *glasnost* and *perestroika*. However, whatever the challenges were facing Soviet Union leaders, they did not quite have the impact on the nation’s citizens, and the world at large, as the explosion at Chernobyl would have during this time period. Considering the implementation of *glasnost* was supposed to be the beginning of a more open Soviet society, the explosion at Chernobyl would make the leaders pause in going forth with this plan. Instead of applying the concept of “openness” and making available all information concerning the accident, Soviet leaders were unable to share with its citizens, and the rest of the world, exactly what happened at Chernobyl.

### **History and Reporting of the Chernobyl Accident**

The accident at Chernobyl in 1986 was foreshadowed by the problems that plagued the nuclear power plant while it was being constructed. During the construction of the power plant, there were areas of concern that were noted by the KGB on February 21, 1979. In the memorandum, it explained there were “design deviations and violations of construction and assembly technology ... occurring at various places in the construction of the second generating unit of the Chernobyl

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Howard J. Sherman, “Rise and Fall of the Soviet Union,” *International Journal of Political Economy* 24, no. 1 (Spring 1994): 15, accessed April 27, 2016, <http://web.b.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.snhu.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=a61302e-b-f344-4289-a746-4bf5ad1c13b0%40sessionmgr101&vid=15&hid=125>.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, 17.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, 17.

*AES*...and these could lead to mishaps and accidents.”<sup>49</sup> It also noted that certain aspects of the build did “not conform to the designer’s specifications”<sup>50</sup> The memorandum also highlighted that due to “inadequate monitoring of the condition of safety equipment...170 individuals suffered work-related injuries.”<sup>51</sup> From these statements, while not directly related to the fourth reactor (the one that was at the center of the 1986 accident) it can be inferred that if the second reactor had construction flaws, the other reactors more than likely had similar issues. Then, just over a month later, a special commission was sent to the Chernobyl site to investigate the claims of inadequate building methods, and it found that “there indeed were instances of deviation ... and substandard construction practices.”<sup>52</sup> Finally, a report was issued on September 10, 1982 from the Kiev sector of the KGB stating that on September 9, 1982, when the power was increased on a fuel unit that was being revamped, “there was a break in one of the ... fuel assemblies...the column where the fuel assemblies [were] located broke. In addition, the graphite stack became partially wet.”<sup>53</sup> Throughout its early history, and just six years before the accident that would test the concept of *glasnost*, the Chernobyl power plant proved to be not as reliable as was shown in this report.

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<sup>49</sup> Andropov, IU, “Construction Flaws at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant (AES)” (February 21, 1979) in Koenker, Diane P. and Ronald D. Bachman, eds., *Revelations from the Russian Archives: Documents in English Translation*, (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1997), 500, accessed September 8, 2016, <http://www.heinonline.org/HOL/Page?handle=hein.forrel/revrusarch0001&id=1&size=2&collection=forrel&index=forrelot>.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Central Committee of the CPSU, “On Flaws in the Construction of the Chernobyl AES,” (March 23, 1979), in Koenker, Diane P. and Ronald D. Bachman, eds. *Revelations from the Russian Archives: Documents in English Translation*, (Washington DC: Library of Congress, 1997), 502, accessed September 8, 2016, <http://www.heinonline.org/HOL/Page?handle=hein.forrel/revrusarch0001&id=1&size=2&collection=forrel&index=forrelot>.

<sup>53</sup> “Report of KGB’s Governance about the Emergency Stop of Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant Unit No. 1 on 9 September 1982,” September 10, 1982, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, State Archive of Security Service of Ukraine, fond 65, file 1, volume 5, p. 164. The printed version of the document is published at the Pripjat-city website, [pripjat-city.ru](http://pripjat-city.ru), which cites the document no. 9 in “Documentary Materials. From Archives of VUChK-GPU-NKVD-KGB,” accessed February 16, 2018, <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/121675.pdf?v=aac7c7d4610797468ceeac685ab46ebd>.

While the Soviet Union was able to work its way through the negative reporting of one of its nuclear reactors, the ability to keep such information within the control of the Politburo, which was the principal policy making committee of the Soviet communist party, would be challenged after April 26, 1986.<sup>54</sup> On this day, an urgent, secret report was issued from the First Deputy Minister of Energy and Electrification. The memo stated that on the same day at 1:21 a.m., when the generating unit 4 at the Chernobyl plant was taken off-line for “planned repairs...an explosion took place in the upper part of the reactor compartment.”<sup>55</sup> It explained the damage done to the reactor, which included various areas that collapsed due to the explosion, and also stated that the roof caught fire.<sup>56</sup> According to the memo, the fire was extinguished by 3:30 a.m., and steps were taken to “cool down the reactor core.”<sup>57</sup> The only casualties reported were: “nine operations staff members and twenty-five paramilitary firefighters were hospitalized.”<sup>58</sup> Most importantly in the memo, a member of the USSR Ministry of Health felt it was not necessary to implement any “special measures, including evacuation of the city’s population.”<sup>59</sup>

While this was the initial report from inside the USSR, days would pass until an official statement from Soviet leaders to the rest of the world describing the events at the Chernobyl plant would be released. Until then, rampant speculation took over the Western world as to what exactly happening in Pripyat, the town nearest to the accident. What drove this speculation was the fact Swedish officials were noticing a spike in radioactivity. Also concerning, if it was coming from a Soviet reactor, there were no reports being issued of a possible accident by the Soviets. In the days following the accident, the world would learn of the gravity of the situation and what possible ramifications the world may face in the wake of such a horrific accident.

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<sup>54</sup> “Politburo: Definition of Politburo in English by Oxford Dictionaries,” Oxford Dictionaries: English, Accessed March 26, 2018, <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/poliburo>.

<sup>55</sup> N. Makukhin, “Regarding the Accident on Unit No. 4 of the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant (AES),” (April 26, 1986), in Koenker, Diane P. and Ronald D. Bachman, eds. *Revelations from the Russian Archives: Documents in English Translation*, (Washington DC: Library of Congress), 1997, 503, accessed September 8, 2016, <http://www.heinonline.org/HOL/Page?handle=hein.forrel/revrusarch0001&id=1&size=2&collection=forrel&index=forrelot>.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.



One issue that needs to be scrutinized in regards to the reporting of the accident itself is how and when information about the accident was released to the public. While not widely known, eyewitness accounts of the accident report a fire occurring earlier than the accepted day of Saturday, April 26, 1986. In the book *Voices from Chernobyl* by Svetlana Alexievich, an evacuee from the town Pripyat, Nadezhda Vysotskaya, stated “It happened late Friday night.” She explained that her husband had notified her there was “some sort of fire at the nuclear plant... [And] we [were] not to turn off the radio.”<sup>60</sup> Due to Vysotskaya’s accounts of the events at the plant, it can be inferred that officials at the plant may not have understood the dangers, thus there was no official word of the extent of the damage until early the next morning.

This account is supported by what experts at the time were saying when the accident initially occurred. In a *New York Times* article (April 30, 1986), reporter Philip M. Boffey included information from American intelligence reports which placed the beginning of the accident as early as that Thursday or Friday, prior to the official date of April 26, which was a Saturday.<sup>61</sup> The reporter also backed up this claim in the article with information from a Yale University physicist, Allan Bromley, who “estimated that the accident probably occurred Friday morning, based on the time it took radiation to reach Scandinavia.”<sup>62</sup> This discrepancy of when the accident may have initially occurred could be chalked up to the idea that the power plant officials did not know the severity of the accident at the time. Yet, even when the initial early morning reports of the 26<sup>th</sup> were sent to Soviet officials, it would still take the Politburo several days to report the events at Chernobyl to the rest of the world.

As the Soviets dealt with the news coming from Northern part of the Ukraine, Western European countries were reporting changes in their atmosphere. According to an article in the *Los Angeles Times* (April 29, 1986), reports of the first signs of a nuclear accident were the high levels of radiation noticed on April 27 by authorities in Finland and Sweden,

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<sup>60</sup> Svetlana Alexievich, “*Voices from Chernobyl*,” Translation by Keith Gessen, (London: Dalkey Archive Press, 2005,) 156.

<sup>61</sup> Philip M. Boffey, “Assessment of U.S.: Intelligence Sources Say Accident Began Days Ago and Continues,” *New York Times*, April 30, 1986, accessed September 19, 2016,

<http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.snhu.edu/hnpnewyorktimes/docview/110966240/fulltextPDF/EA59BC3F216D4849PQ/1?accountid=3783>.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

which were over “750 miles northwest of the Chernobyl plant.”<sup>63</sup> While there were elevated levels of radiation seen in these countries, the article did note that the amounts of radiation were not at dangerous levels and that the quality of the air was expected to return to safe levels within days.<sup>64</sup> Due to the fact that no notification was made of an accident by the Soviets to neighboring countries, some believed the higher-than-normal radiation came from a leak at Forsmark Power Station near Stockholm, Sweden.<sup>65</sup> After looking at the patterns of where there was high levels of radiation, a Swedish Embassy spokesman from Moscow stated, “the leak was coming on the prevailing wind from the east.”<sup>66</sup> At the conclusion of the article, the author noted that when Soviet authorities were contacted by the Swedish Embassy “and asked about the leak,” the Soviet authorities stated they did not know anything “about any nuclear accident...”<sup>67</sup> Finally, overall coverage of the accident was rampant. In the *New York Times* alone, there were 102 stories published between April 26 to May 9, 1986.<sup>68</sup> While the world saw a spike in radiation levels, and it was suspected the source of the radiation was somewhere in the Soviet Union, it would be days before the Soviets provided information to the rest of the world as to what exactly was happening in the communist nation.

### **Reporting and Response of the Accident from the USSR**

Although changes to radiation levels were seen within a couple of days of the accident, there would be an even a longer wait for Soviet media to report that such a catastrophic event occurred within their borders. As explained in his book *The Gorbachev Factor*, Archie Brown states the first reports from Soviet officials to the Soviet people came on April 28.<sup>69</sup> On this day during the state-run news broadcast, a short

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<sup>63</sup> William Eaton, “Soviets Report Nuclear Accident Radiation Cloud Sweeps Northern Europe; Termed Not Threatening,” [Home Edition], *Los Angeles Times*, April 29, 1986, accessed September 4, 2016.

<http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.snhu.edu/news/docview/292296382/A1A738CA0FA14D76PQ/10?accountid=3783>.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Festus Eribo and Gary D. Gaddy, “Pravda’s Coverage of the Chernobyl Nuclear Accident at the Threshold of glasnost,” *Howard Journal of Communications* 3, no. 3/4 (Winter/Spring 1991): 247, accessed September 12, 2016, <http://web.a.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.snhu.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=6&sid=95509ff3-fa28-42e3-ad37-9c4c1bc5bd88%40sessionmgr4007&hid=4104>.

<sup>69</sup> Archie Brown. *The Gorbachev Factor* (Oxford: University Press, 1996), 163.

fourteen-second report aired stating there was an accident, in which “steps were being taken to deal with the situation,” and that the government formed an inquiry commission.<sup>70</sup> Next, according to a *New York Times* article from April 29th, a reporter, Serge Schmemann, explained that only one government newspaper in the Soviet Union, *Izvestia*, had mentioned the accident on the same day his article appeared in the *New York Times*.<sup>71</sup> Another report of the accident did not appear until April 30<sup>th</sup> in the Soviet newspaper, *Pravda*.<sup>72</sup> As noted by researchers Festus Eribo and Gary D. Gaddy in their study titled *Pravda’s Coverage of the Chernobyl Nuclear Accident at the Threshold of Glasnost*, the researchers looked at the coverage *Pravda* provided of the accident. One such article titled “From the Council of Ministers of the USSR,” which placed the article on page two, in the bottom right corner, thus not placing it in a very conspicuousness spot.<sup>73</sup> A week after the accident, on May 6, TASS issued an update on the progress being made at the accident site stating, “the situation is under control ... the level of radiation has dropped ... [and] additional measures to deal with the effects of the accident have been taken.”<sup>74</sup> This was not the only coverage of the accident from Soviet news agencies; there were actually 22 articles concerning the accident published in *Pravda* during the time period between April 26- May 9, 1986.<sup>75</sup> However, when comparing the Soviet coverage to the Western nations’ reporting of the accident, it can be seen the Soviets did have a hard time in knowing how and when to release information regarding the accident, thus indicating that they did

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<sup>70</sup> "Chernobyl Russian Soviet TV News Announcement," YouTube, 2012, accessed September 17, 2016. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RuWIIIiTLbFM>.

<sup>71</sup> Serge Schmemann, “2 Deaths Admitted: Moscow, in Terse Report, Asserts the ‘Radiation Situation’ is Stable,” *New York Times*, April 30, 1986, accessed September 19, 2016,

<http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.snhu.edu/hnpnewyorktimes/docview/110970353/fulltextPDF/EA59BC3F216D4849PQ/5?accountid=3783>.

<sup>72</sup> Festus Eribo and Gary D. Gaddy, “Pravda’s Coverage of the Chernobyl Nuclear Accident at the Threshold of Glasnost,” *Howard Journal of Communications* 3, no. 3/4 (Winter/Spring, 1991): 247-8, accessed September 12, 2016, <http://web.a.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.snhu.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=6&sid=95509ff3-fa28-42e3-ad37-9c4c1bc5bd88%40sessionmgr4007&hid=4104>.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid*, 247.

<sup>74</sup> Associated Press, “Soviet Statement and TASS Dispatch on Chernobyl Accident,” *New York Times*, May 6, 1986, accessed September 4, 2016, <http://www.nytimes.com/1986/05/06/world/soviet-statement-and-tass-dispatch-on-chernobyl-accident.html?pagewanted=print>.

<sup>75</sup> Festus Eribo and Gary D. Gaddy, “Pravda’s Coverage of the Chernobyl Nuclear Accident at the Threshold of glasnost,” *Howard Journal of Communications* 3, no. 3/4 (Winter/Spring 1991): 249, accessed September 12, 2016.

not have a full understanding of how *glasnost* may have been utilized in such a situation.

While the events of the accident were being reported by both the Eastern and Western presses, Mikhail Gorbachev finally took to the airwaves of Soviet television on May 15th, more than two weeks after accident and explained that due to the gravity of the situation, Soviet officials had to “urgently and adequately” look at the information available before it was released “through diplomatic channels to foreign governments.”<sup>76</sup> This speech from Gorbachev does answer partially why there was such a lag in response to what was happening in the Soviet Union, and Soviet officials' actions during the weeks between the accident and the Gorbachev speech supported the delay. During this time frame, work was being done to find out exactly what happened and to minimize the effects of the accident. In his memoirs, Gorbachev explained that upon hearing the news of the accident on the morning of April 26<sup>th</sup>, he immediately called for a meeting of the Politburo, where “it was decided to send to the site immediately a government commission headed by Boris Yevdokimovich, Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers.”<sup>77</sup> Along with nuclear power station specialists, the commission also included doctors and radiologists, who all reached the site the same evening they were dispatched.<sup>78</sup> The reports from the commission, coming the day after their arrival to the accident site, confirmed there was an explosion, two were people killed, many more were hospitalized “for radiological observations,” the fire was coming under control, the other reactor units were shut down, and the explosion resulted in the releasing of radioactive material.<sup>79</sup> Gorbachev explained that the reports coming from the commission confirmed what was initially reported in the internal Soviet memo, but in his memoirs, he rejected “the accusation that the Soviet leadership intentionally held back the truth about Chernobyl. We simply did not know the whole truth yet.”<sup>80</sup> From this statement it is clear Gorbachev wanted to be seen as being a leader willing to share information. While at first it may have seemed reasonable Gorbachev wanting to hold back information to

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<sup>76</sup>, Mikhail Gorbachev, “‘True,’ May 15, 1986 Speech by Mikhail Gorbachev on Soviet Television,” *Pripyat.com*, accessed September 17, 2016, <http://pripyat.com/documents/pravda-15-maya-1986-g-vystuplenie-m-s-gorbacheva-po-sovetskomu-televideniyu.html>.

<sup>77</sup> Mikhail Gorbachev, *Memoirs*, (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 189.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*

ensure accuracy; it would be this need to be accurate that would stoke the idea the Soviets were not as forthcoming as they should have been during this time of crisis and uncertainty.

In the higher echelons of Soviet rule, decisions were made concerning how and when to release information regarding the accident at Chernobyl. In his book *Glasnost*, Gibbs highlighted that the debate that occurred at the Politburo dealt with what amount of information to release.<sup>81</sup> The discussion itself took place on April 28, two days after the official reported date of the accident. At this point in the crisis, considering Soviet officials were still talking about what information to release, what made Soviet officials hold back vital information regarding the nuclear disaster? According to Gibbs, there was a debate among various members at the Politburo as to what should have been released regarding the accident.<sup>82</sup> One member, Gaydar Aliyev, remembered the majority of the Politburo members ““were against the idea of releasing any [information];”” eventually, Aliyev explained that a decision was reached that only reports should come from TASS.<sup>83</sup> Gibbs offers an alternative narrative to what happened according to Gorbachev. According to the former General Secretary, after some debate, it was decided that information would be released completely, and without delay, “so long as it was reliable.”<sup>84</sup> In this statement, it can be understood that Gorbachev was willing to allow information to be released but it had to be verified so as to be reliable, thus putting up a boundary that would still delay the release of information.

This back-and-forth of what to release and when culminated in an April 29<sup>th</sup> secret report from within the Soviet Union that included memos of confirmation for outside nations regarding the events at Chernobyl. In the top-secret memo from the Central Committee, as Soviet officials were guarding the information being released to the world, steps were being taken to minimize the effects of the radiation. The Council of Ministers of the USSR stated it wanted strict monitoring of air and soil conditions and steps taken to organize “medical and other

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<sup>81</sup> Joseph Gibbs, *Gorbachev's Glasnost: The Soviet Media in the First Phase of Perestroika*, (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 1999), 40, accessed September 4, 2016

<http://web.b.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.snhu.edu/ehost/ebookviewer/ebook/bmxlYmtfXzQ5NTYxX19BTg2?sid=a61302eb-f344-4289-a746-4bf5ad1c13b0@sessionmgr101&vid=6&format=EB&rid=1>.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

assistance for the population in the Chernobyl area and in the radioactive fallout zone.”<sup>85</sup> The memo notes that information needed to be gathered regarding “the progress of efforts to eliminate the damage caused by the accident” and this information would be prepared for the rest of the Soviet Union and Western nations.<sup>86</sup> While this information from an internal Soviet memo may have been the damning of the nuclear program in the Soviet Union, if officials were willing to release this type of information during the first couple of days after the accident, the perception of the Soviet Union by its citizens may have been one where officials were seen as providing information as soon as they should have in order to protect their citizens. Even in the name of the memo, “On Additional Measures to Eliminate the Damage Caused by the Accident at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant,” there is a sense they were taking the steps necessary to minimize the effects of the accident and doing what was necessary to fix the problems caused by such an accident.<sup>87</sup>

As far as sharing information with those outside the affected area, in the memo there were two press releases to be sent to Western nations and to other regions of the USSR. In both statements, there was an outline of what occurred and when, what steps officials were taking to negate the effects of the accident, and that the “level of contamination somewhat exceeds acceptable norms but not to such a degree that it requires measures to protect the population.”<sup>88</sup> This internal KGB report showed what officials initially knew, and that they had a plan of action to notify the rest of the world of the accident, but this type of limited reporting in the days immediately following the accident would be taken, by the rest of the world, as the Soviet officials not being as open as they could have been in the era of *glasnost*.

Yet, as Soviet officials were debating about what to release, Western nations were coming to their own conclusions as to the extent of the damage within the USSR. In an article from May 1, reporter Bernard Gwertzman noted there were “unconfirmed estimates of as

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<sup>85</sup> Central Committee of the CPSU, “Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union: On Additional Measure to Eliminate the Damage Caused by the Accident at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant (AES),” (April 29, 1986), in Koenker, Diane P. and Ronald D. Bachman, eds., *Revelations from the Russian Archives: Documents in English Translation*, (Washington DC: Library of Congress), 1997, 505, accessed September 8, 2016, <http://www.heinonline.org/HOL/Page?handle=hein.forrel/revrusarch0001&id=1&size=2&collection=forrel&index=forrelot>.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

many as 500 deaths ... [and that] thousands of people were being evacuated from the area of the damaged plant.”<sup>89</sup> Also, included in the same report by Gwertzman was information from a Dutch radio operator that “not one, but two reactors ... [were] melted down, destroyed and burning.”<sup>90</sup> This inaccurate reporting did not go unnoticed by Soviet officials. It was addressed during Gorbachev’s speech to his nation concerning the accident. He made his displeasures of Western nations very clear, in particular the United States, of launching an “unbridled anti-Soviet campaign, ” which included that there were “‘thousands of victims’, ‘mass graves of the dead,’ [a] ‘desolate Kiev’ and that ‘all land in [the]Ukraine [was] poisoned.’”<sup>91</sup> While it may be understandable for a leader of a nation to be upset about rumors concerning his nation, it may have been avoided if only he and the rest of his government were willing to share the needed information concerning the accident.

### **Conflicting Information**

As some news was released to Soviet citizens and the world concerning the accident, and with Soviet officials reporting elements of the explosion were either under control or getting under control, what was actually occurring at the site was not necessarily being reported. During those initial days after the explosion, conflicting information was being released to the public. For instance, on April 29<sup>th</sup>, early reports from Soviet news agencies stated the “‘radiation situation [had] been stabilized,’” as noted in a *New York Times* article by Schmemmann.<sup>92</sup> Yet, in another *New York Times* article from the same day by Philip M. Boffey, according to experts there were already indications that “the graphite core of the Chernobyl reactor...had caught fire and was burning

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<sup>89</sup> Bernard Gwertzman, “Reactor Still Afire, U.S. Says; Soviet Reports Danger Down; Europeans Denounce Secrecy,” *New York Times*, May 1, 1986, accessed September 4, 2016,

<http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.snhu.edu/news/docview/425899754/fulltext/8239C8FC713F40B8PQ/1?accountid=3783>.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> Mikhail Gorbachev, “‘True,’ May 15, 1986 Speech by Mikhail Gorbachev on Soviet Television,” *Pripyat.com*, accessed September 17, 2016, <http://pripyat.com/documents/pravda-15-maya-1986-g-vystuplenie-m-s-gorbacheva-po-sovetskomu-televideniyu.html>

<sup>92</sup> Serge Schmemmann, “2 Deaths Admitted: Moscow, in Terse Report, Asserts the ‘Radiation Situation’ is Stable,” *New York Times*, April 30, 1986, accessed September 19, 2016,

<http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.snhu.edu/hnpnewyorktimes/docview/110970353/fulltextPDF/EA59BC3F216D4849PQ/5?accountid=3783>.

fiercely.”<sup>93</sup> While there may be contradictory statements between these two reports from the same day, clarification is given in a KGB report May 4<sup>th</sup>. In the secret report it states that “the graphite [was] burning in the reactor, which [led] to periodic radioactive release into the atmosphere.”<sup>94</sup> Western authorities already had an idea of what was occurring at the power plant, but it had not been verified by the Soviets. While the fact that radioactivity was being released due to the graphite fire was known to Soviet officials, this information was not shared with outside news agencies, who were left to guess as to what exactly happened at the power plant.

While it would seem believable that a secretive nation would not share such information with the outside world, such practices would not seem as logical when dealing with those who lived in the shadow of the Chernobyl power plant. According to one Soviet official, this was done to avoid panic throughout the area. Vladimir Matveevich Ivanov, former First Secretary of the Stavgorod Regional Party Committee, described a concerted effort to not heighten the state of worry and confusion. Ivanov explained telegrams were being sent from the Central Committee that stated: “you must prevent a panic.”<sup>95</sup> Yet, while Soviet officials did not want a panicked public on their hands, it would be this lack of information, or rather not being open with the public, that would cause panic to ensue. Such hysteria was experienced in a city eighty-three miles away from Chernobyl.<sup>96</sup> In a secret document from May 22, 1986, Vladimir Gubarev, who at the time was a reporter for *Pravda*, highlighted the panic in Kiev, induced by the fact there was “lack of information”.<sup>97</sup> Also, according to Gubarev, this feeling of panic was

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<sup>93</sup> Philip, M. Boffey, “Assessment of U.S.: Intelligence Sources Say Accident Began Days Ago and Continues,” *New York Times*, April 30, 1986, accessed September 19, 2016,

<http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.snhu.edu/hnpnewyorktimes/docview/110966240/fulltextPDF/EA59BC3F216D4849PQ/1?accountid=3783>.

<sup>94</sup> “KGBs Report on Options of Chernobyl Nuclear Disaster Elimination,” May 4, 1986. Accessed September 4, 2016, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Pripyat-city website, pripyat-city.ru, <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/1216470>.

<sup>95</sup> Svetlana Alexievich, “*Voices from Chernobyl*,” Translation by Keith Gessen, (London: Dalkey Archive Press, 2005,) 200.

<sup>96</sup> Vladimir Gubarev, “Observations at the Chernobyl Site,” (May 23, 1986) in Koenker, Diane P. and Ronald D. Bachman, eds., *Revelations from the Russian Archives: Documents in English Translation*, (Washington DC: Library of Congress), 1997, 510, accessed September 8, 2016,

<http://www.heinonline.org/HOL/Page?handle=hein.forrel/revrusarch0001&id=1&size=2&collection=forrel&index=forrelot>.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.



further enhanced by the fact that citizens of Kiev were witnessing children of party officials being evacuated while dance programs were shown on television instead of providing basic information concerning the “radiation condition in the city.”<sup>98</sup> This need of Soviet officials to shield their citizens from the truth was also evident in the area surrounding Chernobyl. In the town of Pripyat, a town close to Chernobyl, Soviet officials also did not want the populace to know about the accident and its effects. According to Yevgeniy Brovkin, an instructor from Gomel State University, a rumor circulated that Soviet officials had given the order that books were to be taken from the local library concerning radiation, events at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and x-rays, so as not to cause a panic.<sup>99</sup> He explained there were no medical bulletins or information issued to the people living near Chernobyl.<sup>100</sup> Here again was a chance for Soviet officials to put into practice the idea of *glasnost*, but they chose to withhold all pertinent information to those who should have known what exactly they would possibly be facing in the days after the accident. But that would not be the case.

In addition, by not informing its populace of all necessary information concerning the accident, Soviets also held back information on the long-term health impact from the explosion. It showed earlier that the Soviets were willing to let the world believe radiation levels were stabilizing, but from internal memos in later years, this was not entirely the case. Looking at the Chernobyl plant as a whole, it did not have the protective structures which may have prevented “radioactive material [escaping] into the environment, according to a fact sheet on the *Nuclear Energy Institute* (NEI) website.”<sup>101</sup> This assessment from the NEI was supported by the secret report from Gubarev where he explained that while officials were at the start of “eliminating the consequences of the accident...” there would still be “severe radioactive contamination...”<sup>102</sup> This statement and the assessment from the NEI

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Svetlana Alexievich, “*Voices from Chernobyl*,” Translation by Keith Gessen, (London: Dalkey Archive Press, 2005,) 89.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> “Fact Sheet: Chernobyl Accident and its Consequences,” March 2015. *Nuclear Energy Institute*, accessed September 16, 2016, <http://www.nei.org/Master-Document-Folder/Backgrounders/Fact-Sheets/Chernobyl-Accident-and-Its-Consequences>.

<sup>102</sup> Vladimir Gubarev, “Observations at the Chernobyl Site,” (May 23, 1986) in Koenker, Diane P. and Ronald D. Bachman, eds., *Revelations from the Russian Archives: Documents in English Translation*, (Washington DC: Library of Congress), 1997, 510, accessed September 8, 2016,

showed the extent of the environmental damage, which again was not so readily shared by Soviet official in the days and weeks after the accident, even if they only released the information in a timely manner.

While Soviet officials were willing to release some, but not all, relevant information, the government was more concerned with protecting the reputation of the Soviet Union. This idea was highlighted in an article titled “Truth was an Early Casualty,” written by Alexander Sich in which he states: “In a sense, the Chernobyl accident was just one of the many misfortunes misrepresented by the Soviet government over the decades in its continuing effort to shape public perceptions of domestic disasters, natural and manmade.”<sup>103</sup> While this article was published ten years after the Chernobyl accident, this claim can be justified by an article that appeared soon after the accident on April 29, 1986. In a *Newsday* article (April 29, 1986), a United Press International writer disproved the Soviet Officials’ claim that the Chernobyl nuclear accident was a first for the nation.<sup>104</sup> In the article, the reporter noted that in 1957 there was a nuclear accident that was referred to as the “Kyshtym disaster” in which the extent of the damage, or the number of casualties, was not known.<sup>105</sup> Next, a source from the Soviet Union, Zhores Medvedev, spoke about a nuclear waste explosion where deaths and injuries were in the thousands.<sup>106</sup> In this case, due to the severity of the accident dozens of villages were cast-aside and taken off Soviet maps.<sup>107</sup> In these examples, the patterns of denials and half-truths when it came to nuclear mishaps were standard operating procedure for the Politburo. However, with the world demanding information on Chernobyl due to such overwhelming evidence of a nuclear mishap, Soviet officials would not be able to hold back the information as

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<http://www.heinonline.org/HOL/Page?handle=hein.forrel/revrusarch0001&id=1&size=2&collection=forrel&index=forrelot>.

<sup>103</sup> Alexander R Sich, “Truth was an Early Casualty,” *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientist* 52, no. 3. (May/June 1996): 32, accessed September 9, 2016, <http://web.b.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.snhu.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=a61302eb-f344-4289-a746-4bf5ad1c13b0%40sessionmgr101&vid=19&hid=125>.

<sup>104</sup> United Press International. 1986. “Earlier Accident Indicated: [CITY Edition].” *Newsday*, April 29. Accessed September 4, 2016. <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.snhu.edu/news/docview/285462778/fulltext/BA45F93EE16549B4PQ/40?accountid=3783>.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*

Politburo members had wanted to originally. Unfortunately for Politburo member, the world soon came to know all that happened at Chernobyl.

### **Continuation of Secrecy and its Effects**

For its part, Chernobyl was the test the Soviets should have passed by putting into practice the concept of *glasnost*. As it has been seen through the various accounts of the accident, at times, there was more concealing of facts than sharing of information, yet eventually the whole story of Chernobyl was shared with the world. As Gibbs explains, while the coverage of the accident “was centralized and handled with a heavy dose of spin control” it was still reported on by the media.<sup>108</sup> The type of reporting would prove to be a point of great discussion for those who wrote about the accident in later years. In articles and books looking at the accident and the Soviet’s handling of it, it would be seen that the Soviets did not do all they could have done in reporting accurate and timely information to the those immediately affected by the explosion, and to the surrounding Western nations. In an article titled “Chernobyl and Glasnost: The Effects of Secrecy on Health and Safety” by Alexander Shlyakhter and Richard Wilson, the authors state, “The inevitable result of such secrecy subsequent to the Chernobyl Accident was a breakdown of trust between the Soviet citizens and the central government...”<sup>109</sup> While Gibbs does point out that the Soviets did in fact report what happened at Chernobyl, Shlyakhter and Wilson underscore the consequences of delaying the reporting with the idea there was a loss of trust between the government and the people of the Soviet Union.

The months and years following the accident would also prove Shlyakhter and Wilson’s arguments as accurate. While the Soviets were willing to share what happened at Chernobyl, there were still instances where, if they were able to, they would try to shield the outcome of the explosion from everyone outside the accident site. In Sich’s article, while Soviet officials were trying to play off the containment of the

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<sup>108</sup> Joseph Gibbs, *Gorbachev’s Glasnost: The Soviet Media in the First Phase of Perestroika*, (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 1999), 89, accessed September 4, 2016

<http://web.b.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.snhu.edu/ehost/ebookviewer/ebook/bmxlymtfXzQ5NTYxX19BTg2?sid=a61302eb-f344-4289-a746-4bf5ad1c13b0@sessionmgr101&vid=6&format=EB&rid=1>.

<sup>109</sup> Alexander Shlyakhter and Richard Wilson, “Chernobyl and Glasnost: The Effects of Secrecy on Health and Safety,” *Environment* 34, no. 5: (June 1992): 25, accessed September 9, 2016,

<http://web.b.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.snhu.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=a61302eb-f344-4289-a746-4bf5ad1c13b0%40sessionmgr101&vid=21&hid=125>.

accident site as “the most difficult and heroic engineering tasks ever undertake,” the reality was much different.<sup>110</sup> According to the author, “[the construction of the sarcophagus] was marred in an inept and reckless attempt to conceal the extent of the accident...”<sup>111</sup> Even a year after the accident, concerns were still being raised as to reliability of Soviet facts surrounding Chernobyl. Bill Keller reported in the *New York Times* in 1987 that Soviet journalists were “complaining that gaps of information [remained]...”<sup>112</sup> Keller included information from two *Moscow News* reporters covering a one-year anniversary visit to Chernobyl: “‘The formulation ‘not for publication’ is being used more and more often. There are people who do not seem to understand that rumors and hearsay are generated not by facts and figures, but by their absence.’”<sup>113</sup> While at first Soviet officials were unwilling to share what they knew, the nuclear accident became the “turning point” for how the Soviet officials dealt with bad news.<sup>114</sup> According to Keller, after the accident, citizens were able to watch, for instance, documentaries concerning the “emergency evacuation and resettlement of the population,” and interviews of health and energy officials concerning the actions of Soviet “firemen who battled the blaze.”<sup>115</sup> The reporter summarized these steps taken by Soviet officials as a way “to calm fears about lingering radiation.”<sup>116</sup> But to present a balanced analysis of the accident a year after it occurred, Keller wrote that the Soviet Union was “forthcoming ... in sharing information on the technical detail of the accident and on the measures that [had] been taken to prevent similar accidents at other nuclear plants” with Western specialists.<sup>117</sup> Still, it

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<sup>110</sup> Alexander R. Sich, “Truth was an Early Casualty,” *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientist* 52, no. 3, May/June 1996: 33, accessed September 9, 2016, <http://web.b.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.snhu.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=a61302eb-f344-4289-a746-4bf5ad1c13b0%40sessionmgr101&vid=19&hid=125>.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>112</sup> Bill Keller, “The 1986 Disaster at Chernobyl: A Year Later, Lessons are Drawn; in Soviet, Heroism and Candor Are Hailed, but Questions Linger,” *New York Times*, April 26, 1987, accessed September 4, 2016, [http://www.nytimes.com/1987/04/26/world/1986-disaster-chernobyl-year-later-lessons-are-drawn-soviet-heroism-candor-are.html?rref=collection%2Ftimestopic%2FChernobyl%20Nuclear%20Accident%20\(1986\)&action=click&contentCollection=timestopics&region=stream&module=stream\\_unit&version=search&contentPlacement=4&pgtype=collection&pagewanted=print](http://www.nytimes.com/1987/04/26/world/1986-disaster-chernobyl-year-later-lessons-are-drawn-soviet-heroism-candor-are.html?rref=collection%2Ftimestopic%2FChernobyl%20Nuclear%20Accident%20(1986)&action=click&contentCollection=timestopics&region=stream&module=stream_unit&version=search&contentPlacement=4&pgtype=collection&pagewanted=print).

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, accessed February 16, 2018.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, accessed February 16, 2018.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*

was noted in the article that “Soviet handling of unpleasant news is often reluctant and incomplete,” by stating that Soviet officials had not “cooperated fully [with Western official] with efforts to calculate the initial radiation exposure by Chernobyl residents and rescue workers...”<sup>118</sup> Instead of being forthright with Soviet citizens and Western nations even well after the accident, the Soviet government preferred to continue to maintain the tradition of obfuscation.

### **Changes in the Media Coverage and the Political and Social Effects**

Such was the reporting of the Soviet Union concerning Chernobyl. Due to the Soviet Union’s unwillingness to report about the events at Chernobyl as should have been in the spirit of *glasnost*, questions and doubts lingered for years following the accident. Although the accident itself was devastating not only physically to the people and the environment, it could also be considered devastating to how the Soviet people thought of their government. While criticism of the Politburo from foreign nations and from Soviet citizens may have been brutal, this may not have been the outcome if the ideals of *glasnost* were put to the test and the releasing of information regarding the Chernobyl nuclear accident was done in a timely and purposeful manner. However, that was not the case. Instead, the Soviet Union’s mishandling of the release of information, this mishandling of information gave rise to questions and doubts that would eventually work their way through various areas of the USSR and affect the perception of the Soviet Union by her people. Throughout much of its history, the Soviet government had firm control of information. However, in its pursuit to maintain a firm grip on its image as a strong and mighty nation through one of the worst nuclear accidents in the history of mankind, it nonetheless lost the ability to hold together the states and the people that made up the union.

In an article on the website *Committee to Protect Journalist*, Ann Cooper asserts: “The accident, though shrouded in secrecy at first, eventually marked the beginning of a broader easing of censorship and secrecy.”<sup>119</sup> The connection between the lack of openness in the reporting of Chernobyl and how *glasnost* came to be embraced more

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> Ann Cooper, “The Death of Glasnost: How Russia’s Attempt at Openness Failed,” *Committee to Protect Journalist*, April 27, 2015, accessed September 21, 2016, <https://cpj.org/2015/04/attacks-on-the-press-death-of-glasnost-russia-attempt-at-openness-failed.php>

fully in the media and society was to be the pivotal point of how the Soviet Union changed. Also, through these changes, while not entirely connected to the events and the aftermath of the Chernobyl nuclear accident, would chip away at the iron grip that held together a nation.

In the years following the accident, various articles would be published in the Soviet press that would be an entirely different way of reporting other events in the USSR. These types of articles were compiled and published in a book titled *Gorbachev and Glasnost: Viewpoints from the Soviet Press*. In this book, there are various articles that show a different approach the Soviet media took after the Chernobyl accident. While not attributed to the accident itself, considering the articles in the book were published between 1987 and 1988, it can be inferred that the media became more aggressive in how it covered the various areas of Soviet society and were not shying away from the difficult news stories of the day. In *Gorbachev and Glasnost*, the editor, Isaac J. Tarasulo, wrote that the events of the accident in 1986 “dramatically changed both *Gorbachev* and the nation’s perception of *glasnost*.”<sup>120</sup> Such changes as to what was being reported were seen in articles from various news agencies, such as covering the underground economic activity of the black market (“Black Market: People, Goods, Facts” published September 1987), an article questioning the reasoning for the famines that were witnessed in 1917 USSR (Published in *Novy Mir*, 1988), and finally, a debate of sorts on whether or not the reforms taking place in the Soviet Union would be beneficial for the nation played out on the editorial pages of two Soviet newspapers between a Leningrad college professor and the editorial staff at *Pravda*.<sup>121</sup> The college professor, Nina Andreyeva, in an article published in *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, defended the traditional ideals of socialism by advocating “viewing events in their ‘class’ context and call[ed] Stalin’s repressions justified because they advanced the cause of socialism.”<sup>122</sup> In response to her letter, the editorial staff at *Pravda* published “Principles of Perestroika: The Revolutionary Nature of Thinking and Acting,” reassuring and encouraging those who supported *perestroika* and *glasnost* and to keep fighting for change.<sup>123</sup> While these articles were not tied to Chernobyl, they do show how the press took on a more active

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<sup>120</sup> Isaac J. Tarasulo, ed., *Gorbachev and Glasnost: Viewpoints from the Soviet Press*, (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 1989), xxi.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid*, 108, 11-2, 277, 291.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid*, 277.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid*, 291.

role in informing the public on different aspects of the society after the accident, thus empowering a nation's citizenry to not only take part in the political discourse of a nation, but to arrive at the total societal transformation.

### **Final Numbers from Accident**

Although the Soviet Union tried to hold back the potentially negative information regarding the accident as a way to shield their government from criticism, the truth of the accident and the final tally was not as bad as perceived by the outside world. According to a fact sheet from the NEI, “twenty-eight reactor staff and emergency died from radiation and thermal burns within four months of the accident.”<sup>124</sup> There were 7,000 cases of thyroid cancer diagnosed in those who were under eighteen.<sup>125</sup> As of 2005, fifteen children had died of disease.<sup>126</sup> Also, compared to the unconfirmed foreign reports at the time of the accident, according to a 2011 United Nations study, “Most emergency workers and people living in contaminated areas received relatively low whole-body radiation doses.”<sup>127</sup> These statistics should not be interpreted as a reason for the Soviet Union not to have released information during the time of the accident; it would actually be the contrary. If these numbers, especially those numbers that immediately could have been verified (number of dead, and the actual level of radiation exposure), were released in a timely manner, it would have gone a long way in subsiding the fear of the Soviet citizens and the rest of the world.

### **Conclusion**

In the aftermath that was the Chernobyl accident, the Soviet Union and her leaders were to learn some hard but valuable lessons. Gorbachev noted the importance of Chernobyl in implementing *glasnost*, saying that he thought about it “in terms of pre-Chernobyl and post-Chernobyl.”<sup>128</sup> Also, as explained in Brown's book, Gorbachev

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<sup>124</sup> “Fact Sheet: Chernobyl Accident and its Consequences,” March 2015, *Nuclear Energy Institute*, accessed September 16, 2016, <http://www.nei.org/Master-Document-Folder/Backgrounders/Fact-Sheets/Chernobyl-Accident-and-Its-Consequences>.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>128</sup> Mikhail Gorbachev, “Turning Point at Chernobyl,” *Project Syndicate*, April 24, 2006, accessed September 4, 2016, <https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/turning-point-at-chernobyl>

understood “this event shook us immensely...it was in fact a turning point in terms of the development of openness.”<sup>129</sup> Up until the moment of the accident, *glasnost* was thought of as a way to bring to the people of the Soviet Union what their government was working on to improve the society as a whole. Yet, when Chernobyl happened, a real openness was needed to not only send out accurate and timely information, but to reassure a populace that was more than likely scared to death of what was happening within their border. Also, this needed openness would have gone a long way in informing the rest of the world exactly what was going on within the borders of the USSR. Soviet officials had a hard time finding their footing in knowing what information should have been released and when it should have been released. Instead, officials opted to just release what they felt was needed to be released and hoped it would be enough to stop the questioning of the events of Chernobyl. It was true, as Gorbachev stated: there was a pre-Chernobyl and a post-Chernobyl, and the biggest difference between the two time periods was for the one prior to the accident, the Soviet Union may have had a fighting chance in surviving as a nation; however, after the events of Chernobyl and the mishandling of the information coming out about the accident, there was no way a nation such as the USSR would have been able to survive under such a cloud of distrust.

The accident at Chernobyl was an opportunity to prove that Soviet society had changed in a new era of openness. However, due to the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, the Soviet Union would find it hard to release the necessary information to not only those countries affected by the radiation fallout, but also to their very own citizens. This showed that the Politburo had a hard time melding together the concept of *glasnost* and dealing with the difficult news coming out of Chernobyl. This accident could have been the moment in time when the world may have seen a new era in the Soviet Union where their ideals of *glasnost* were shown in a more adept handling of facts concerning Chernobyl. That would not be the case. Instead, the Soviet Union lost an opportunity of a nation’s lifetime - the chance to reform its image on the world stage. What would have been the perception of the Soviet Union if it had truly been open and honest with all information right from the beginning when the accident occurred? Would there have been a breakup of the USSR? Would those populations who sought

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<sup>129</sup> Archie Brown, *The Gorbachev Factor*, (Oxford: University Press, 1996), 163.



independence have changed their mind in a sudden realization that their government was treating them as adults who could handle the bad news, and deal with the consequences? While the 1986 nuclear accident at Chernobyl was a physically devastating accident to those who lived near it, the rippling, political effect of the fallout was felt throughout the Soviet Union as eventually the USSR disintegrated. The Soviet leadership may have hoped that by regulating the release of information regarding the Chernobyl accident it could stave off criticism of itself. However, this was not the case. In fact, the complete opposite occurred. There was not a true effort made in implementing the idea of *glasnost* to help the nation navigate itself through one of the worst nuclear accidents and its aftereffects. Finally, and most importantly, it was this withholding of information that reinforced the belief of an overbearing, secretive government in the minds of Soviet citizens and its media, and soon this belief would give way to the eventual breakup of the Soviet Union.

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# AN EXAMINATION OF POPULAR EDUCATION MOVEMENTS IN POST-CARNATION REVOLUTION PORTUGAL

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The Revolutionary Period in Progress (PREC) was a period of mass revolutionary activity in Portugal after the fall of fascism in 1974. After the revolution, left-wing movements of varying degrees of radicalism led the political process and transition to democracy between the years 1974 and 1981. It was during this period when left-wing organizations attempted to implement socialist policies and values in Portugal through a series of agrarian reforms, nationalizations, and popular education movements.

While scholarship on the economic reforms and practices of the Portuguese during this period are abundant, scholarship discussing popular education movements is limited. The available literature provides an analysis of pedagogical practices of the popular education movements, as well as a discussion of the relationship between popular education and the development of democracy in post-revolution Portugal. Throughout this review, I will provide a historical overview of this period, and discuss the available scholarly sources related to this topic.



The Portuguese Carnation Revolution of 1974 brought about the collapse of the longest lasting dictatorship in Western Europe. The Estado Novo (New State) dictatorship<sup>130</sup>, which existed for 41 years, stagnated the development of Portuguese culture, education, and society. By the fall of the dictatorship in 1974, Portugal was considered by the international community to be one of the most underdeveloped nations in the Western world. Portugal had the highest illiteracy rate in Europe, with an estimated 40 percent of the population being functionally illiterate.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> The Estado Novo was the far-right authoritarian regime that ruled Portugal from 1933-1974.

<sup>131</sup> *Urge pôr fim ao analfabetismo*. 1976. Brochure. University of Coimbra AC70 Archives. Coimbra.

The first provisional government known as the National Salvation Junta, was tasked with transitioning Portugal from an authoritarian state to a democratic state. The National Salvation Junta (a left-wing military government<sup>132</sup>) formed by the Armed Forces Movement (MFA) promoted popular education as central to the development of democracy in Portugal. By the 20<sup>th</sup> century, sociologists and other thinkers had determined that there was a correlation between educated nations and a high efficacy of their democracy. To smoothly transition Portugal from a fascist dictatorship to a democratic state, many Portuguese academic and government officials advocated for the literacy programs, as well as a reconstruction of the Portuguese public education system. This platform of popular education was at the core of the Armed Forces Movement's provisional government. After the revolution, some of the strongest advocates for popular education emerged from the Portuguese left, specifically Portuguese communists and socialists.

In July 1974, General Vasco Gonçalves was chosen to be the Prime Minister of Portugal. Gonçalves, while not a member of the Portuguese Communist Party, received the bulk of his support from the radical Portuguese left. Gonçalves was a staunch supporter and advocate for the development of socialism within Portugal.<sup>133</sup> Under his leadership, the nationalization of major industries occurred, agrarian reforms were implemented, as were the first literacy and health education campaigns.

It was during the first months of Gonçalves' government that the National Pro-Union of Portuguese Students (Pro-UNEP) initiated the first literacy and health education campaigns in the summer of 1974.<sup>134</sup> This campaign, organized by students from various leftist movements, formed with the goal of promoting literacy and basic health education to the northernmost regions of Portugal, specifically the regions of Trás-os-Montes, Beiras, and Minho.<sup>135</sup> The Pro-UNEP campaigns occurred in

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<sup>132</sup> The MFA (Movimento das Forças Armadas) consisted of military officials who had become radicalized during the Portuguese Colonial Wars in Africa. Influenced by anti-imperialistic and left-wing opposition to the war, the leadership of the MFA brought these ideals into their leadership during and after the Carnation Revolution.

<sup>133</sup> Teles, Viriato, and Alberto Pimenta. *Contas à vida: histórias do tempo que passa*. Lisboa: Sete-Caminhos, 2005.

<sup>134</sup> *Educação Sanitária E Alfabetização*. 1974. Newspaper Clipping. ADUP REIT - Recortes de imprensa [1919-1987]. Porto.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*

what is considered to be the most conservative and traditional regions of Portugal.

Supported by the MFA, the political motives behind the movement were to increase support for the left-wing government and encourage the development of socialism in Portugal. During this period, a strong division emerged within Portuguese society. It became increasingly apparent that ideals of the Portuguese Revolution and the revolutionary potential of the working class were non-existent in Northern Portugal.<sup>136</sup> Support for the Portuguese radical left was also extremely limited in these regions, as seen in the destruction of the Communist Party headquarters in the Northern city of Famalicão.<sup>137</sup> The MFA and the Pro-UNEP used the popular education campaigns as a tool to spread support for MFA.

Central to this campaign, were the critical pedagogical theories of Brazilian Marxist philosopher Paulo Freire.<sup>138</sup> According to scholars Steven Stoer and Roger Dale, Freire's work has had an undeniable influence on the radical Portuguese left and popular education campaigns.<sup>139</sup> Freire's theories, specifically those found in his 1968 work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, were the ideological basis of the Pro-UNEP literacy campaigns of 1974.<sup>140</sup>

By the end of the summer in 1974 and the end of the Pro-UNEP campaigns, the MFA initiated two of its popular education campaigns, the first known as the Cultural Promotion and Civic Action Campaigns which began in autumn of 1974, and the Student Civic Service Campaigns, which began in the spring of 1975. These campaigns, while still promoting literacy, specifically focused on reshaping Northern Portuguese culture into one based on working-class values: "one culture born of the people."<sup>141</sup> As this suggests, the MFA's popular education campaigns were heavily politicized compared to the Pro-UNEP's campaigns.

The Student Civic Service Campaigns, which began in 1975, consisted of large numbers of young college students from various

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<sup>136</sup> Graham, Lawrence S., and Harry M. Makler. *Contemporary Portugal: the revolution and its antecedents*. Austin: Univ. of Texas P., 1979.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> *UNIDADE ESTUDANTIL COM O POVO TRABALHADOR*. 1974. Post-card. University of Coimbra AC70 Archives. Coimbra.

<sup>139</sup> Stoer, Stephen, and Roger Dale. "Apropriações políticas de Paulo Freire: um exemplo da revolução portuguesa." (1999).

<sup>140</sup> *UNIDADE ESTUDANTIL COM O POVO TRABALHADOR*. 1974.

<sup>141</sup> Stoer, Stephen, and Roger Dale. "Apropriações políticas de Paulo Freire: um exemplo da revolução portuguesa." (1999).



organizations and political movements. The SCS campaigns were the least politicized of the two MFA campaigns as a result of its members coming from many different political movements, specifically the moderate socialists, progressive Catholic, and Communist movements.<sup>142</sup> They focused heavily on reporting the material conditions of Northern Portugal and the promotion of literacy, health, social security, cultural activities, and sports. These campaigns were modeled after the Cuban popular education movement of the 1960s.<sup>143</sup> In relation to the other popular education movements of this era, the SCS campaigns were the most politically moderate and were the least influenced by political motives. This is due to the SCS being a creation of the 5<sup>th</sup> Provisional Government and not a single revolutionary organization.<sup>144</sup> The SCS campaigns, due to the political diversity of its stakeholders, were responsible for documenting the severe poverty in the rural areas of Portugal and took part in numerous disaster relief efforts throughout the nation.<sup>145</sup> However, this is not to say that the existing literature on the topic does not present any political motive. The SCS campaigns were still left-wing, and their ideals and goals were influenced by the left. However, unlike the other campaigns on this era, the SCS campaigns neither arose from a single, politically homogeneous constituency, nor did they benefit a single political organization or political party.

During the Cultural Promotion and Civic Action Campaigns, the MFA, a military-led government, promoted itself as educators and enablers of the democratic process in the North. In 1975, Prime Minister Gonçalves stated the goal of the MFA and its *Acção Cívica* (Civic Action) Movements was to promote unity between the people and the MFA.<sup>146</sup> This ideal of popular unity and the reconstruction of Portugal with the MFA was demonstrated in multiple propaganda posters of this time which often featured socialist imagery and slogans emphasizing solidarity with the Portuguese working class.

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<sup>142</sup> de Oliveira, Lusa Tiago. "Schools without walls during the Portuguese Revolution: the Student Civic Service (1974/77)." *Portuguese Journal of Social Science* 4, no. 3 (2005): 145-168.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> Gomes, Isabel Pereira, et al. "The Portuguese Literacy Campaigns after the Carnation Revolution (1974-1977)." *Journal Of Social Science Education* 14, no. 2 (June 1, 2015): 69-80.

It was during this period that the MFA promoted *Dinamização Cultural* (cultural dynamization or promotion). The focus of the Cultural Dynamization campaign was to promote the ideal of *Poder Popular* (popular power) throughout Portugal with an emphasis on Northern Portugal as the MFA considered northern regions the most underdeveloped regions of the nation in terms of education and culture. Popular Power, as an ideal, was promoted by Prime Minister Gonçalves as a central part of the popular education movements. As part of the “fight for socialism,” popular power was described as the complete reconstruction and “proletarianization” of Portuguese culture.<sup>147</sup>

Popular Power, central to the dynamization movement, was presented as a collective movement to empower the Portuguese people, whom they argued were victims of class warfare by the Estado Novo.<sup>148</sup> The MFA used the ideal of popular power to gain popular support for its efforts of building a socialist Portugal. The cultural dynamization and popular education campaigns, inspired by the Cuban literacy campaigns, promoted working class unity, socialist ideals, and attempted to lessen the role of the Church in Portuguese society.<sup>149</sup>

As part of these campaigns, many student organizations challenged patriarchal gender roles in Portuguese society. Portuguese society and culture had placed an emphasis on traditional gender roles; for example, the role of women in traditional Portuguese culture was limited to unpaid domestic work. Women also had significantly higher illiteracy rates than men, with almost 50% of women older than 35 classified as functionally illiterate.<sup>150</sup> The MFA civic action campaigns (initiated by the MFA’s Ministry of Education and Culture), alongside the cultural dynamization campaigns, attempted to eliminate illiteracy among women, promoted the use of contraceptives, and through film, theatre, and the arts, promoted socialist egalitarianism and working class unity.<sup>151</sup> The MFA’s attempt to create a cultural revolution in Northern Portugal was an essential part of its attempt to increase popular support

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<sup>147</sup> Correia, Ramiro, Pedro Soldado, and João Marujo. *MFA, dinamização cultural, acção cívica*. Distribuição, Ulmeiro, 1976.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> Correia, Ramiro, Pedro Soldado, and João Marujo. *MFA, dinamização cultural, acção cívica*. Distribuição, Ulmeiro, 1976.

<sup>150</sup> Gomes, Isabel Pereira, et al. "The Portuguese Literacy Campaigns after the Carnation Revolution (1974-1977)." *Journal Of Social Science Education* 14, no. 2 (June 1, 2015): 69-80.

<sup>151</sup> de Oliveira, Lusa Tiago. "Schools without walls during the Portuguese Revolution: the Student Civic Service (1974/77)." *Portuguese Journal of Social Science* 4, no. 3 (2005): 145-168.

for their left-leaning government in the face of challenges from the growing influence of the moderate Socialist Party. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Gonçalves, the MFA's provisional government extensively used socialist imagery in its work and attempted to rally the working poor of Northern Portugal to its cause.

Within the provisional government, factionalism began to emerge as support for Gonçalves' socialism began to wane. In March of 1975, an attempted right-wing coup failed, and in April, the social democratic Socialist Party won a majority in the 1975 Constituent Assembly. Moderate factions began to take back control of the Portuguese government because support for Gonçalves' leadership was limited to the Portuguese Communist Party and the Portuguese Maoists. This political tension reached its peak during the *Hot Summer of 1975*, during which a series of land occupations and acts of sabotage were perpetrated by Portuguese Communists in support of Gonçalves. These land-occupations were instances in which landless Portuguese farmers and workers occupied large farms and operated revolutionary collectives in which they promoted the ideals of Popular Power and workers control over the means of production. These occupations quickly became a contentious issue within Portuguese politics and led to growing hostility from the moderate and right wings of the Portuguese government towards the Portuguese left and Gonçalves' leadership.

In August 1975, Gonçalves delivered a forceful speech denouncing his political opponents; this speech was interpreted by the opposition as an instigation of violence against them. Due to the growing influence of the moderate Socialist party and a growing fear of a civil war instigated by Gonçalves, President Francisco da Costa Gomes dismissed Gonçalves from his post as Prime Minister in September 1975.<sup>152</sup>

The period after the fall of Gonçalves was marked by great political discontent on the part of the Portuguese communists. By this time, the radical left had lost its influence within the provisional government and, more importantly, the constituent assembly.<sup>153</sup> The radical left was fearful that many of the goals of the revolution would be abandoned and that its efforts would be in vain. Portugal was now experiencing great economic turmoil due to the withdrawal and

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<sup>152</sup> Mailer, Phil, and Maurice Brinton. *Portugal, the impossible revolution?* Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2012.

<sup>153</sup> Graham, Lawrence S., and Harry M. Makler. *Contemporary Portugal: the revolution and its antecedents*. University of Texas Press, 1979.

expulsion of Portugal from global markets and the World Trade Organization due to the influence of the radical left. Portugal had been shut out from world markets, inflation had skyrocketed, and there was a massive influx of refugees, or *retornados*, from its former colonies. By spring of 1976, the first Portuguese Constitution was ratified. The constitution contained many concessions to the radical left, specifically regarding agrarian reform, and, more importantly, established the goal of transitioning the Portuguese state into a socialist society. However, these concessions were not enough for the Portuguese Communists, who at this point were fighting for survival, relevancy, and their revolution. Once again popular education would play a role in promoting popular support for the Communists.

The last major popular education and literacy movement of the post-Carnation Revolution era known as the *Alfa Movement* was organized by the Union of Communist Students (UEC) in the summer of 1976.<sup>154</sup> The UEC, in its Alfa campaign, promoted literacy and *animação cultural* or cultural animation within the poorest and rural areas of Portugal.<sup>155</sup> Cultural animation was an attempt by the Left to reinvigorate Portuguese Culture and to reshape it into a culture based upon working class values.

The Alfa Movement was most active during the summer of 1976, specifically in August and September. The UEC described its efforts as a movement to break 41 years of “fascist obstructionism,” through a series of campaigns involving, literacy, culture, sports, and student/working class unity.<sup>156</sup> The UEC argued that 41 years of fascist dictatorship in Portugal led to the development of “colonização cultural” (cultural colonization) in the interior regions of Portugal (Alentejo, etc.) that led to the stifling of the initiative and creativity of the rural Portuguese people.<sup>157</sup> The UEC attempted to increase popular support for its movement and the Communist Party by sending student brigades to spread popular culture among the students and to carry out films, theater productions, and form youth organizations to promote literacy through culture and media. The UEC argued that, in order for remnants of fascism to be destroyed and to defeat reactionaries within the

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<sup>154</sup> de Oliveira, Lusa Tiago. "Schools without walls during the Portuguese Revolution: the Student Civic Service (1974/77)." *Portuguese Journal of Social Science* 4, no. 3 (2005): 145-168.

<sup>155</sup> *Urgê pôr fim ao Analfabetismo*. 1974. Brochure. University of Coimbra AC70 Archives. Coimbra.

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*

provisional government, the “harmonious development of man” must occur through sports, alongside cultural education, literacy campaigns, and health education campaigns.

Close analysis of the literature about popular education in post-revolution Portugal indicates that the radical left used popular education campaigns as a tool to foster support for socialist revolution in Portugal, and to an extent they were successful. The literature on this topic, while limited, typically analyzes the popular education movements in Portugal from a sociological perspective, with an emphasis on the specific means and efficacy of the literacy and education programs. One of the earliest scholarly analyses on popular education movements in Portugal was written by António Teodoro and was published within the scholarly periodical *Seara Nova* in 1975. Teodoro argues that the education system implemented by the fascist Estado Novo government was implemented to “mold [the] national consciousness to the values and interests of the big bourgeoisie.”<sup>158</sup> Teodoro argues that the Estado Novo government implemented Catholicism, statism, and nationalism into the education system to hinder the development of the Portuguese working class to secure cheap and obedient labor for the industrial and agricultural industries. Teodoro argues that for the successful development of democracy to occur in Portugal, education and specifically literacy need to be at the forefront of the MFA’s agenda. Teodoro’s analysis reveals the ideological framework behind the popular education movements.

Many of the scholarly works on the Portuguese popular education movements focus on the relationship between education and the development of democracy in Portugal. In *Educação e processo democrático em Portugal* (Education and Democratic Process in Portugal), author Rui Grácio, who served as the Pedagogical Advisor for the MFA during PREC, argues that popular education is an inseparable aspect of the development of democracy in Portugal. Similar to Grácio’s work, authors Stephen Stoer and Roger Dale offer an analysis of the pedagogical practices and influences found throughout the popular education campaigns in their work *Apropriações políticas de Paulo Freire: um exemplo da revolução portuguesa*. Within this, the authors discuss the relationship between Freire’s critical pedagogy, the popular education movements, and the Portuguese left, specifically how Freire’s ideas on the democratization of schools, and consciousness raising

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<sup>158</sup> Teodoro, António. "Educação e Ensino." *Seara Nova*, January 1974, 9-13.

(Conscientização), both of which were considered and prevalent in the development of curriculum in the public schools of Portugal and the Cultural Dynamization Campaign.<sup>159</sup>

Later scholarly works tend to focus on the relationship between popular education and democracy as well, although with an emphasis on the specific practices of the different campaigns. In *Schools without walls during the Portuguese Revolution: The Student Civic Service*, published in the Portuguese Journal of Social Sciences, author Isabel Gomes offers

an analysis of the cultural and educational programs promoted during this era, and the challenges the students faced while on the campaigns. De Oliveira argues that the students “were affected by a combination of political conflicts and social dynamics, that demanded a new form of political language and social experiences.” This article provides an exceptional insight into the many challenges the students faced during their participation in the literacy campaigns of 1975, specifically regarding the cultural differences between the students and the residents of the rural and underdeveloped regions of Portugal. De Oliveira also provides an in-depth analysis of feminist tendencies within the SCS movements; she describes how gender equality, specifically female liberation, was central to the cultural development projects that occurred in the underdeveloped regions of Portugal.

The available scholarly work on this topic, however, does not offer an in-depth analysis of the actions and influence of the Portuguese left during this period. The available literature emphasizes the sociological and pedagogical aspects of the movement and does not present an analysis on the motivations of the Portuguese left to embark on the popular education campaigns. There are, however, numerous works from the organizations that took part in the campaigns, such as the Union of Communist Students and the Armed Forces Movements, that provide an insight into the ideological debates, methods, and motives of the Left during this period. An in-depth scholarly analysis from a political-historical lens is noticeably absent from the available literature.

While neither the Portuguese Communist Party nor any other far-left political party ever controlled the Portuguese government, their influence is apparent in the creation of the first Portuguese Constitution and the founding of the fourth republic. Throughout history, left wing

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<sup>159</sup> Stoer, Stephen, and Roger Dale. "Apropriações políticas de Paulo Freire: um exemplo da revolução portuguesa." (1999).

social and political movements used popular education as a tool to promote their ideology, Portugal is no exception to this.<sup>160</sup> Popular education campaigns were used as “weapons” in the class struggle to eliminate the influence of imperialism and fascism from the Portuguese economy and culture, and to an extent, the left was successful in this. After the revolution, women’s rights had advanced considerably, and the literacy campaigns exposed the extremely high levels of poverty and lack of basic resources and infrastructure in Portugal.<sup>161</sup> The popular education efforts, specifically health education campaigns, correlated with a lower infant mortality rate and a higher life expectancy rate throughout the nation. In terms of literacy, and enrollment in schools, the period after the Carnation Revolution saw an increase in enrollment in public schools and a rise in the literacy rate, especially among women in rural areas.

The popular education efforts put forth by the Portuguese left were an essential part of the development of democracy in Portugal. The existing scholarship on these efforts explores the complex relationship between education and the development of Portuguese democracy. Today, the ideals of the popular education can be seen through the democratization of Portuguese schools and the continuing effort to eliminate illiteracy and provide access to public education in the decade after the Carnation Revolution.

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<sup>160</sup> On the use of popular education elsewhere see:

Bob, Boughton. 2010. "Back to the Future?: Timor-Leste, Cuba and the return of the mass literacy campaign." *Literacy And Numeracy Studies*, Vol 18, Iss 2 (2010)

<sup>161</sup> Gomes, Isabel Pereira, et al. "The Portuguese Literacy Campaigns after the Carnation Revolution (1974-1977)." *Journal Of Social Science Education* 14, no. 2 (June 1, 2015): 69-80

## **Appendix Appendix A**

“PODER POPULAR és tu, operário, és tu camponesa, és tu, soldado e marinheiro, és tu, mãe pobre, pescador és tu, morador de bairro de lata, és tu, vítima da exploração capitalista, és sem terra e sem arado, és tu, funcionário esmagado pela burocracia, és tu, pequeno agricultor e industrial vítima dos intermediários e do capitalismo, és tu, criança, sem golfe sem creche, sem escola, sois todos vós, vítimas da exploração capitalista, do colonialismo, do fascismo, do imperialismo

PODER POPULAR: Sois todos vós,  
ORGANIZA - VOS  
LUTA PELO SOCIALISMO  
CONSTRUINDO O PODER POPULAR”

“You are a worker, you are a peasant, you are a soldier and a sailor, you are a poor mother, a fisherman, it is you, a resident of the tin district, you are the victim of capitalist exploitation, you are landless and without plowing , You, an employee crushed by the bureaucracy, are you, small farmer and industrial victim of intermediaries and capitalism, you, child, without golf without day care, without school, you are all victims of capitalist exploitation, colonialism, fascism , of imperialism.

POPULAR POWER, for all  
ORGANIZE  
FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM  
BUILDING PEOPLE'S POWER”

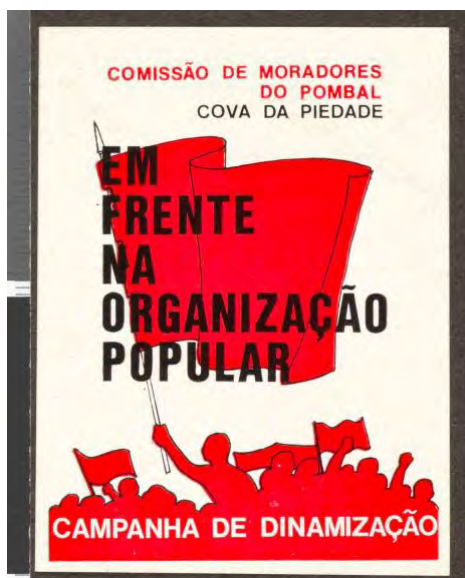
Source: Correia, Ramiro, Pedro Soldado, and João Marujo. *MFA, dinamização cultural, acção cívica*. Distribuição, Ulmeiro, 1976.

## **Appendix B**

This image is of a poster from the Cultural Dynamization campaigns.

Note the socialist imagery featured in the background. The text translates to: Straight ahead in popular organization, Dynamization campaign.





Source: "Em frente na organização popular. Campanha de dinamização", CasaComum.org, Disponível HTTP: <http://www.casacomum.org/cc/visualizador?pasta=09844.326> (2017-4-25)

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*UNIDADE ESTUDANTIL COM O POVO TRABALHADOR.* 1974. Postcard. University of Coimbra AC70 Archives. Coimbra.

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# HOT LINE RING: RICHARD NIXON AND THE HOT LINE MODERNIZATION AGREEMENT OF 1971

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The presidency of Richard Nixon is one marked by extreme highs and extreme lows. Arguably, two of the biggest highs occurred in 1972, when Nixon shocked the world by visiting the People's Republic of China in February and then went to Moscow to conclude the Strategic Arms Limitations Talks (SALT). Connecting these two monumental events was something that occurred a year prior. On 30 September 1971, the United States and the Soviet Union signed the "Agreement Between the United States of America and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics on Measures to Improve the U.S.A.-U.S.S.R. Direct Communication Link," commonly known as the "Hot Line Modernization Agreement."<sup>162</sup> This agreement is commonly overlooked by historians when analyzing Nixon's foreign policy, as the historic events of 1972 overshadow this small, largely technical agreement. While a small detail in both the history of SALT and Nixon's foreign policy, the Hot Line Modernization Agreement has more significance than it first appears. In foreign policy, small events can become more important than initially thought. The Hot Line Modernization Agreement is such an event, as it was one of many tools in Nixon's pursuit of closer ties with the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China. By examining the details of this event, a greater understanding of the big picture of Nixon's foreign policy and delicate process of negotiations can be understood.

Before even becoming president, Nixon urged closer ties with China. Ever since Mao Zedong's Communist forces had emerged victorious in the Chinese Civil War in 1949, the United States had no

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<sup>162</sup> Department of State, "Agreement between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on Measures to Improve the U.S.A.-U.S.S.R. Direct Communications Link (With Annex, Supplementing and Modifying the Memorandum of Understanding with Annex, of June 20, 1963)," 30 September 1971, TIAS no. 7187. <https://www.state.gov/t/isn/4787.htm> (accessed August 25, 2017).

formal relations with Mao's China. During his world tour of 1967, Nixon met with the leaders of both Pakistan and Indonesia, two nations with diplomatic relations to China, and asked them about the possibility of a rapprochement between China and the United States.<sup>163</sup> In October of the same year, Nixon published his famous "Asia After Vietnam" article in *Foreign Affairs* where he argued for "pulling China back into the world community."<sup>164</sup> Henry Kissinger, Nixon's national security advisor and later secretary of state, had also urged a rapprochement with China while working for Nelson Rockefeller's presidential campaign in 1968.<sup>165</sup> When Nixon became president in January 1969 and appointed Kissinger as his national security advisor, there were now two men in the White House with similar attitudes towards China.

The United States knew a Sino-Soviet split had been festering for several years. In March 1969, the split escalated. Moscow and Peking had primarily engaged in a war of words, but they were now shooting at each other along the Ussuri River, near the Sino-Soviet border. The clashes would continue into the fall.<sup>166</sup> American intelligence believed, "The potential for such a [Sino-Soviet] war clearly exists."<sup>167</sup> Being the shrewd politician he was, Nixon, with Kissinger's encouragement, saw this situation as a great opportunity to potentially exploit the rift between the two dominant communist nations while simultaneously achieving closer relations with both. Nixon was also greatly aided by the fact the Chinese were similarly beginning to contemplate moving closer to the United States to protect themselves from the Soviets.<sup>168</sup> Nixon's policy of balancing relations with the Chinese and Soviets would become known as Triangular Diplomacy.

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<sup>163</sup> Chris Tudda, *A Cold War Turning Point: Nixon and China, 1969-1972* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2012), 2.

<sup>164</sup> Richard Nixon, "Asia After Vietnam," *Foreign Affairs* 46, no. 1 (October 1967), 123. Available at ProQuest (accessed October 7, 2017).

<sup>165</sup> Henry Kissinger, *White House Years* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1979), 165.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid*, 171-182.

<sup>167</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976, Volume XII, Soviet Union, January 1969-October 1970*, ed. Erin Mahan (Washington: Government Printing Office, 2006), Document 73. Available at <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v12/d73>.

<sup>168</sup> Margaret MacMillan, "Nixon, Kissinger, and the Opening to China," in *Nixon in the World: American Foreign Relations, 1969-1977*, ed. Fredrick Logevall and Andrew Preston (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 117-118.

In his inaugural address, Nixon revealed what he hoped his presidential legacy would be when he stated, “The greatest honor history can bestow is the title of peacemaker.”<sup>169</sup> To demonstrate his desire to receive that honorific title, he proclaimed to the world the United States was “entering an era of negotiation. Let all nations know that during this administration our lines of communication will be open.”<sup>170</sup> These were not empty words. According to Nixon biographer John Farrell, “Nixon still harbored his bold romantic dreams” of being known as a peacemaker.<sup>171</sup> One of the ways for him to earn this honor would be to improve Soviet-American relations. This strategy of improving relations with the Soviet Union would become known as *détente*. SALT would come to play a major role in this new policy.

The Hot Line Modernization Agreement is something frequently overlooked by historians when examining SALT and *détente*. Historians of American-Sino relations from the Nixon era also gloss over it. This is not surprising due to the fact the Hot Line Agreement was largely technical in nature and is not significant enough on its own to dramatically alter historical understanding. The first person to write a history of SALT was the American reporter John Newhouse, in *Cold Dawn: The Story of SALT*, which was published in 1973 and contains no mention of the Hot Line Modernization Agreement.<sup>172</sup> In the 1980s, American historians such as Robert Litwak and Richard Stevenson began to try and chronicle the history of *détente*. Both these historians, however, focused more on the “big picture” idea of *détente*, and how it fit into American foreign policy. Only Stevenson mentions the Hot Line Modernization Agreement when discussing SALT, but dedicates one line to it.<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>169</sup> Richard Nixon, “Inaugural Address,” *The American Presidency Project* by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley (January 20, 1969). Available at <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=1941> (accessed September 18, 2017).

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>171</sup> John Farrell, *Richard Nixon: The Life* (New York: Doubleday, 2017), 354.

<sup>172</sup> John Newhouse, *Cold Dawn: The Story of SALT* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973).

<sup>173</sup> Litwak focused specifically on how *détente* with the Soviet Union was an integral part of the Nixon Doctrine in *Détente and the Nixon Doctrine: American Foreign Policy and the Pursuit of Stability, 1969-1976*. Stevenson focused on what he sees as the four different phases of *détente* between the United States and the Soviet

With the ending of the Cold War in the 1990s, a new set of historians emerged to write about détente. Interestingly, two of the most prominent historians to write on détente during the 1990s were former government workers who were, in one capacity or another, affiliated with the Nixon administration: William Bundy and Raymond Garthoff. Bundy served for a short time as an adviser to Nixon on Vietnam (after having previously done so for Presidents Kennedy and Johnson) and Garthoff was a member of the United States SALT delegation. While working at the Brookings Institution, Garthoff published *Détente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations from Nixon to Reagan*. Garthoff argues détente between the United States and Soviet Union ultimately was a failure, meaning rapprochement was not achieved, because there “was a fatal difference in the conception of [détente’s] basic role by the two sides.”<sup>174</sup> The Soviets and Americans had different expectations for what détente would produce, which led to both sides being let down and accusing the other of betraying the ideas of détente. Bundy, for his part, is highly critical of Nixon and Kissinger in his work *A Tangled Web: The Making of Foreign Policy in the Nixon Presidency*. Bundy charges that while Nixon and Kissinger were able to score short term successes in détente, they ultimately failed because of their secrecy with Congress and the American public.<sup>175</sup>

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, historians have continued to write on and argue over détente. The main argument is centered on fitting détente into the geopolitical context of the Cold War. Historians such as Jeremi Suri, Jussi Hanhimaki, and Daniel Sargent have argued that détente was, at its core, a conservative policy that aimed to stabilize the Cold War.<sup>176</sup> The

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Union in, *The Rise and Fall of Détente: Relaxations of Tension in U.S.-Soviet Relations, 1953-1984*.

<sup>174</sup> Raymond Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations from Nixon to Reagan* (Washington DC: Brookings Institute, 1994), 1126.

<sup>175</sup> William Bundy, *A Tangled Web: The Making of Foreign Policy in the Nixon Presidency* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1998), 529. Writing in between these two works was Keith Nelson, who in 1995 published *The Making of Détente: Soviet-American Relations in the Shadow of Vietnam*. Nelson argued that détente was oversold to the American public and Nixon was more concerned with the appearance of success than in any concrete results.

<sup>176</sup> To Suri, détente was a worldwide conservative reaction to the chaos of the 1960s. See, Jeremi Suri, *Power and Protest: Global Revolution in the Age of Détente* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003). Hanhimaki argues “détente was, essentially a conservative policy, aimed at stabilizing a situation that was...threatening the proper functioning of American foreign policy.” See, Jussi Hanhimaki, *The Rise*

political chaos of the 1960s, the arms race, the war in Vietnam, and the declining power of the United States all created an unstable world. Détente was seen by world leaders, both in capitalist and communist states, as a way to return stability to the Cold War, they argue. While all these historians contribute to the historical understanding of détente, none address the Hot Line Modernization Agreement.

In regard to American-Sino relations during the Nixon administration, two historians, Margaret MacMillan and Richard Tudda, have explored how American rapprochement with China impacted relations with the Soviets. MacMillan argues the United States and China both saw in each other a way to play off the Soviets.<sup>177</sup> The Chinese may have been motivated to work closely with the United States because of American-Soviet détente. Fearing encirclement, they began to look towards the United States to offset the Soviets. Conversely, Nixon had “mixed success” in playing the China card against the Soviets. Nixon and Kissinger assumed the Soviet obsession with China was a driving factor in Soviet pursuit of détente when actually the Soviets were more concerned with Europe than China.<sup>178</sup> Tudda writes that it was not until after Kissinger’s secret trip to China in July 1971 and the anger it provoked from Moscow that China became a part of the geopolitical strategy of triangular diplomacy. Nixon’s offer of a “de facto anti-Soviet alliance” with China failed, however, because the Chinese did not want to be “perceived as weak” and reliant on American power for its protection.<sup>179</sup> Neither historian, however, mentions the Hot Line in their analysis of American-Sino-Soviet relations.

To tell the tale of the Hot Line Modernization Agreement, one must begin with two other stories. The first one begins in Geneva, when the United States and the Soviet Union signed the “Memorandum of

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*and Fall of Détente: American Foreign Policy and the Transformation of the Cold War* (Washington D.C.: Potomac Books, 2013), xv. Sargent argues Nixon’s policy of détente had a “dual purpose” to “halt the strategic arms race and to persuade Moscow to accept the geopolitical status quo.” The stabilization that would result from détente would help preserve America’s global power, not undermine it. See, Daniel Sargent, *A Superpower Transformed: The Remaking of American Foreign Policy in the 1970s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 61.

<sup>177</sup> MacMillan, “Nixon, Kissinger, and the Opening to China,” in *Nixon in the World*, 112.

<sup>178</sup> Margaret MacMillan, *Nixon and Mao: A Week That Changed the World* (New York: Random House, 2007), 322-323.

<sup>179</sup> Tudda, *A Cold War Turning Point*, 207.



Understanding Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics Regarding the Establishment of a Direct Communication Link” on 20 June 1963.<sup>180</sup> This was done largely in response to the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, which had exposed the deficiencies in how the leaders of the United States and Soviet Union communicated during times of crisis. By establishing a direct line of communication, it was hoped that the chances of a nuclear war breaking out because of a misunderstanding between one of the parties would be greatly reduced. Contrary to popular belief, however, the Direct Communication Line (hereafter referred to as “Hot Line”) was not some red telephone the American and Soviet leaders could call each other on. Instead, the Hot Line was a “One full-time duplex wire telegraph circuit,” which was routed from Washington to London, to Copenhagen, to Stockholm, to Helsinki, to Moscow, and a “One full-time duplex radiotelegraph circuit,” routed from Washington to Moscow, via Tangier.<sup>181</sup> This meant messages would still have to be decoded by a radio operator, but decoding and replying time was now greatly reduced.

While it is difficult to pinpoint the beginning of SALT, the idea for the need to start talks on arms reduction began in the Johnson administration. Gerard Smith, who would head the American SALT delegation, credits Johnson’s Secretary of Defense, Robert McNamara, and Secretary of State Dean Rusk for paving the way.<sup>182</sup> During the Glassboro, New Jersey summit of 1967, Johnson tried to press onto Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin the need for talks on arms control, but the Soviet leader seemed uninterested.<sup>183</sup> A year later however, Johnson announced during his speech on the signing of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty on 1 July 1968 that the United States and Soviet Union had agreed “to enter into the nearest future into discussions on the limitation and the reduction of both offensive strategic nuclear weapons

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<sup>180</sup> Department of State, “Memorandum of Understanding Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialists Republics Regarding the Establishment of a Direct Communication Link,” 20 June 1963, TIAS no. 5362. <https://www.state.gov/t/isn/4785.htm> (accessed September 10, 2017).

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

<sup>182</sup> Gerard Smith, *Doubletalk: The Story of SALT I* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1985), 19.

<sup>183</sup> Newhouse, *Cold Dawn*, 94.

delivery systems and systems of defense against ballistic missiles.”<sup>184</sup> A summit was planned for September 1968 in the Soviet city of Leningrad (now St. Petersburg), but a day before the summit was to be announced, the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact proxies invaded Czechoslovakia to crush the reform-minded Prague Spring.<sup>185</sup> The United States backed out of the summit and SALT was delayed until a new presidency could begin.

That next president was Richard Milhous Nixon. Left for dead politically after being defeated in the California gubernatorial election of 1962, Nixon skillfully took advantage of the chaos of the 1968 presidential election and emerged victorious from the three-way contest. Despite Nixon’s desire to be known as a peacemaker, the new administration was in no rush to begin SALT. Helmut Sonnenfeldt, a member of the National Security Council, urged patience. In a briefing paper sent to Nixon shortly before he took office, Sonnenfeldt argued, “If the opportunity arises (though we need not soon go out of our way to seek it) we should engage in such conversation.”<sup>186</sup> When the Soviet Foreign Ministry announced on the same day Nixon was taking the presidential oath they were willing to begin SALT, Nixon responded coolly.<sup>187</sup> It would not be until March before National Security Study Memorandum 28, “Preparation of U.S. Position for Possible Strategic Arms Limitation Talks,” came out.<sup>188</sup> Nixon did not want to appear too eager to the Soviets, but he also wanted to form his own position on SALT and not just carry on what the Johnson administration had prepared. This delay, however, opened Nixon up to criticism from the press and members of Congress, who wanted to enter into talks as early

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<sup>184</sup> Lyndon B. Johnson, “Remarks on Signing the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty,” The Miller Center (July 1, 1968). Available at <https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/july-1-1968-remarks-signing-nuclear-nonproliferation-treaty> (accessed September 18, 2017).

<sup>185</sup> Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation*, 147.

<sup>186</sup> *FRUS*, 1969-1976, Volume XII, Soviet Union, Document 2. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v12/d2> (accessed September 20, 2017)

<sup>187</sup> Smith, *Doubletalk*, 21.

<sup>188</sup> Henry Kissinger, “National Security Study Memorandum 28,” Nixon Library (6 March 1969). Available at <https://www.nixonlibrary.gov/virtuallibrary/documents/nationalsecuritystudymemoranda.php> (accessed September 20, 2017).

as possible.<sup>189</sup> Finally in June, Nixon authorized Secretary of State William Rogers to notify the Soviets that the United States was ready to move forward with SALT, but this time, it was the Soviets turn to delay the talks by several months.<sup>190</sup> In October, it was announced that talks would begin in November in the Finnish capital, Helsinki.<sup>191</sup>

The man picked to lead the American SALT delegation was Gerard Smith. Smith began his government work in the Atomic Energy Commission in 1950. During the Eisenhower administration, he began working in the State Department, specializing in disarmament. While serving in the Kennedy administration, Smith was involved in the creation of the original Hot Line in 1963. He had taken part in nearly every arms control negotiation over the last four presidencies. In January 1969, Nixon tapped him to head the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA). As head of the ACDA, he was the logical choice to lead the American SALT delegation.<sup>192</sup> Unfortunately for Smith, Nixon and Kissinger's penchant for secrecy and back channels meant separate negotiations were being carried out outside the official SALT channels.<sup>193</sup> Smith performed his job admirably despite the difficulties of having Kissinger and Nixon running the show behind the scenes. He was also an early advocate of improving the Hot Line, possibly because he worked on its creation.

The first round of SALT began on 17 November 1969. The world's media descended on the Finnish capital, with nearly five hundred members of the press on hand. Unbeknownst to the press, however, was National Security Decision Memorandum 33 (NSDM), instructing the delegation to "develop a work program for the main talks and to acquire information concerning Soviet views in order to aid in the formation of future positions,"<sup>194</sup> or to simply, feel the Soviets out so a plan can be developed for the next round. Luckily for the Americans, the

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<sup>189</sup> Kissinger, *White House Years*, 130-138.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid*, 138.

<sup>191</sup> Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation*, 151.

<sup>192</sup> Smith, *Doubletalk*, 6-14.

<sup>193</sup> For a more in-depth analysis on the use of back channels during SALT, see Richard Moss, *Nixon's Back Channel to Moscow: Confidential Diplomacy and Détente* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2017).

<sup>194</sup> Henry Kissinger, "National Security Decision Memorandum 33," Nixon Library (12 November 1969) Available at [https://www.nixonlibrary.gov/virtuallibrary/documents/nsdm/nsdm\\_033.pdf](https://www.nixonlibrary.gov/virtuallibrary/documents/nsdm/nsdm_033.pdf) (accessed November 10, 2017).

Soviets did talk. While the United States was prepared for, and expecting, the Soviets to bring up issues like Anti-Ballistic Missiles (ABMs), they were surprised by the “strong interest in the third country problem in its ‘provocative attack’ context.”<sup>195</sup> Of course, when the Soviets spoke of “third countries,” the United States believed they were referring to one in particular: China. To the United States, however, the prospect of a third country launching a provocative attack in hopes of starting a war between the two superpowers seemed remote at best.

Similar to the concept of provocative attack was the issue of accidental launch. The head of the Soviet delegation, Vladimir Semenov, proposed “that some unspecified technical and organizational measures be agreed upon” to reduce the risk that one side may accidentally launch a nuclear weapon at the other.<sup>196</sup> Smith relayed to Nixon that “the Soviets seem to be thinking here of US/USSR communication agreements to identify rapidly the source of an attack.”<sup>197</sup> The Americans, in keeping with Nixon’s instructions, reacted mildly to the Soviet proposals. As the first meeting in Helsinki began to come to an end, both sides agreed to include these issues as points in the work program going forward with SALT, indicating its importance.<sup>198</sup> After some diplomatic haggling over dates and location, it was eventually decided the next round of talks would begin in Vienna, Austria on 16 April 1970. The Helsinki talks concluded on 22 December, and both sides returned home to begin re-evaluating their positions for Vienna.

In the United States, the committee tasked with handling SALT was known as the Verification Panel. Established in June 1969, the Verification Panel was headed by Kissinger and was comprised of the chairman of the Joint Chiefs, the deputy secretary of defense, the undersecretary of state, the CIA director, the attorney general, and Gerard Smith. After the Helsinki talks were completed, work began on trying to outline the position the United States should take in Vienna. The main issues of focus were ABMs and Multiple Independently

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<sup>195</sup> *FRUS*, 1969-1972, Volume XXXII, SALT I, 1969-1972, ed. Erin Mahan (Washington: Government Printing Office, 2010), Document 44 <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v32/d44> (accessed 20 September 2017).

<sup>196</sup> Smith, *Doubletalk*, 98.

<sup>197</sup> *FRUS*, 1969-1972, SALT I, Document 44.

<sup>198</sup> Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation*, 197.

Targetable Reentry Vehicle (MIRVs). As a result of this focus, little time was devoted to studying on how to treat the Soviet ideas of provocative or accidental attack before Vienna. In informal talks with the Soviets, however, Americans continued to explore what the Soviets had in mind regarding how to deal with accidental or provocative attacks. In a conversation at the Soviet Embassy with the Soviet ambassador, Anatoly Dobrynin, Smith asked if the Soviets had in mind improved communications as a possible solution to the accidental/provocative attack issue. Dobrynin said yes and hinted at “other methods about which the Soviets would speak with more precision at Vienna.”<sup>199</sup>

The opening of the Vienna talks was held at the Belevedere Palace, the same site where Austrian independence was restored in 1955.<sup>200</sup> This would prove to be the longest round of talks to take place during SALT, lasting nearly four months from 18 April to 13 August. It would also prove to be incredibly frustrating, as it would become clear that both sides had different takes on what SALT was supposed to accomplish. Many of the disagreements were on issues outside the scope of this paper, such as ABMs, MIRVs, the destructive power of nuclear weapons, and American airfields in Europe, also known as forward-based systems (FBS). The United States invasion of Cambodia, officially announced by Nixon on 30 April, threatened to derail the entire talks, but the Soviet reaction was minimal.<sup>201</sup> It was obvious the two sides were far apart on a host of issues, so they decided to try and go point by point through the agreed-upon work program from Helsinki. Since the issues of both provocative and accidental attacks were a part of that program, they resurfaced in Vienna. What the Soviets proposed shocked the United States.

To the American delegation, the issues associated with an accidental or provocative attack were largely technical, whereas the Soviets viewed them as political.<sup>202</sup> On 30 June, the Soviets proposed that the two sides exchange information on a host of issues, ranging from planned missile launches to accidental or third country missile launches, to prevent either side from thinking a war was breaking out

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<sup>199</sup> *FRUS*, 1969-1972, SALT I, Document 51.

<sup>200</sup> Smith, *Doubletalk*, 121.

<sup>201</sup> *FRUS*, 1969-1972, SALT I, Document 76.

<sup>202</sup> Smith, *Doubletalk*, 140.

and responding by firing. Smith suggested since the Hot Line already existed and had been created specifically to be used in the case of emergencies, the parties should upgrade it and designate it for use in the event of an accidental or provocative attack.<sup>203</sup> The Soviets were receptive to the idea of improving the Hot Line, but they had more in mind. On the evening of 7 July, one of the more interesting developments in SALT took place. During an intermission in a Rostropovich concert, Semenov handed Smith a note reading “We advocate that the [two] sides, upon availability of facts about a provocation being prepared, inform each other of this in a timely manner, so that, if necessary, measures could be taken to prevent provocative use of nuclear weapons, and in the event that provocative acts take place, both sides obligate themselves to take retaliatory action against the country which committed the provocation.”<sup>204</sup> Shocked by the Soviet proposal, Smith simply replied, “the United States appreciated the seriousness of the proposal” and he would pass it on to Washington.<sup>205</sup>

When news of the Soviet proposal reached Kissinger, he was not pleased. To him, it appeared as if “we were in effect being asked to give the USSR a free hand against China; it was a blatant embodiment of a condominium.”<sup>206</sup> A condominium in this sense referred to the idea that the United States and Soviet Union would share a monopoly of power on the use of nuclear weapons. Such an agreement would look bad not just to America’s Western European allies (nuclear and non-nuclear alike), who were dependent on American nuclear weapons for their defense, but it would almost certainly be regarded with extreme suspicion by the Chinese as well. Dobrynin would later dispute this idea, writing the Soviet objective was to achieve peaceful coexistence, not a nuclear condominium.<sup>207</sup> Nevertheless, Kissinger raised his concerns with Nixon, who agreed that the United States would reject that plan. On 9 July, Kissinger met with Dobrynin to tell him that the United States could not agree to such a radical shift in the international system that had

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<sup>203</sup> *FRUS*, 1969-1972, SALT I, Document 86 and Smith, *Doubletalk*, 140.

<sup>204</sup> *FRUS*, 1969-1972, SALT I, Document 91.

<sup>205</sup> Smith, *Doubletalk*, 141.

<sup>206</sup> Kissinger, *White House Years*, 554.

<sup>207</sup> Anatoly Dobrynin, *In Confidence: Moscow’s Ambassador to Six Cold War Presidents* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 277.

developed since the end of World War II, essentially killing the Soviet plan.<sup>208</sup> The meeting between Kissinger and Dobrynin was unknown to Smith. Kissinger's penchant for secrecy and his preference to use his backchannel with Dobrynin for negotiations meant that Smith was unaware the plan had already been rejected. Smith, however, was also skeptical of the plan and sent an "eyes only" telegram for Kissinger on 11 July outlining his views. Smith believed the Soviets had some "emotional commitment" and were trying to "achieve global political aims" with this proposal. He recommended using this as leverage against the Soviets to get a good SALT deal done.<sup>209</sup> After Smith sent this telegram for Kissinger, the Soviets dropped the idea and provocative attack was not brought up again in Vienna, suggesting that Kissinger's message to Dobrynin had been relayed to the Soviet delegation.

By rejecting the Soviet proposal of taking joint action against a third country in the event of provocative attack, the United States now had to offer some sort of solution. Back in Washington, a Working Group chaired by Dr. Laurence Lynn, Jr., a member of the National Security Council, was created within the Verification Panel to help form a position. Like the Verification Panel, the Working Group drew its members from the CIA, State Department, ACDA and the Pentagon. The Working Group was created within the Verification Panel, so all of its reports would be passed onto Kissinger. Since a provocative attack agreement had been ruled out by the United States, the issue of an accidental attack was studied instead. The concern behind accidental attack is exactly how it sounds. One side may accidentally launch a nuclear weapon at the other, possibly due to a misunderstood order or technological failure. If this occurred, both sides would communicate with the other that the attack had not been authorized, in hopes of preventing a wider war from breaking out.

The Americans believed an accidental attack was more likely to occur than a provocative one.<sup>210</sup> As a part of a solution to prevent an accidental war, the improvement of the Hot Line was recommended. The Working Group concluded that the survivability of the existing Hot Line in the event of an attack on Washington was low and both the land

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<sup>208</sup> *FRUS*, 1969-1972, SALT I, Document 93.

<sup>209</sup> Smith to Kissinger, July 11, 1970, National Security Council Files, SALT, box 878.

<sup>210</sup> Smith, *Doubletalk*, 143.

lines and radio stations could be sabotaged or deliberately attacked (a Finnish farmer had once taken down a landline with his plough). To rectify this, the Working Group suggested satellites as way to improve the survivability and recommended proposing to the Soviets the creation of a joint technical working group to study the issue further.<sup>211</sup> The recommendations were approved, and the next day, Smith presented these ideas to the Soviets. The Soviets were receptive to the idea of improving the Hot Line as a way of safeguarding against an accidental attack, and five members from each delegation were picked to further discuss the issue.<sup>212</sup>

Hoping to reach an agreement on SALT before leaving Vienna, the United States made a major proposal on 4 August. The Soviets promised to look it over, but expressed reservations over missile numbers and the linkage of offensive and defensive weapons (ABMs). After nearly four months of talks, both sides were also exhausted. The talks in Vienna came to an end on 14 August. The two sides agreed to break and meet again in November back in Helsinki.<sup>213</sup>

In Washington, the Verification Panel got back to work in preparation for the next round. After the Soviet interest in the American proposal to improve the Hot Line to ensure rapid communication in the case of an accidental attack, this issue now became one of the top priorities.<sup>214</sup> The Americans did not mind talking to the Soviets on accidental attack since they figured it would “not arouse the reaction of our Allies or the Chinese.”<sup>215</sup> An accidental attack agreement would not give the same impression of a condominium as a provocative attack agreement would. The Americans considered improvement of the Hot Line as essential for an accidental attack agreement. Before the beginning of the Helsinki talks, another NSDM was issued outlining the American negotiation position. Accidental attack and Hot Line improvement were now considered important enough to be included in

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<sup>211</sup> Paper Prepared by the Working Group for the Verification Panel, July 13, 1970, National Security Council Files, SALT, box 878 and Smith, *Doubletalk*, 281.

<sup>212</sup> Smith, *Doubletalk*, 286.

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid*, 151-152.

<sup>214</sup> K. Wayne Smith to Henry Kissinger, September 21, 1970, National Security Council Files, SALT, box 879.

<sup>215</sup> Laurence Lynn and Helmut Sonnenfeldt to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs, July 1, 1970, National Security Council Files, SALT, box 878.



the NSDM. The NSDM's main focus, however, was to get a Soviet reaction on the 4 August proposal in Vienna.<sup>216</sup> The United States did not want to offer anything new until the Soviets gave a formal reply, hoping to put pressure on the Soviet delegation. Equipped with their new instructions, the American delegation headed off to Helsinki to begin the next round of SALT.

The Helsinki talks began on 2 November and would last until 18 December. This would be a very frustrating round of talks as it was evident the two sides were far apart on a host of issues. For the Hot Line though, the Helsinki talks were important for getting the two sides closer to an agreement. Ten days after the Helsinki talks began, the Working Group assigned by the Verification Panel to study Hot Line improvement produced its report outlining different options for the United States to take. The options included a "dedicated satellite" the Soviets and United States would share or using a combination of American and Soviet satellites to provide direct communication between the two capitals. The study urged that a position be settled on so it could be proposed to the Soviets as soon as possible.<sup>217</sup> The various agencies involved in the Verification Panel studied the proposals and held a meeting on 8 December, with the purpose of reaching a consensus on what option they should present to the Soviets regarding the Hot Line. Nixon was now taking an interest in the Hot Line and wanted the Verification Panel to reach a consensus on what should be presented to the Soviets.<sup>218</sup> The American delegation formally proposed the use of satellites to improve the Hot Line, but the Soviets indicated the proposal had come too late in the talks and they would need more time to study it. The Soviet Party Conference was coming up in March 1971, and it was becoming evident the Soviets would not agree to anything substantial until the conference was complete. The talks in Helsinki came to a close

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<sup>216</sup> Henry Kissinger, "National Security Decision Memorandum 90," Nixon Library (2 November 1970) Available at [https://www.nixonlibrary.gov/virtuallibrary/documents/nsdm/nsdm\\_090.pdf](https://www.nixonlibrary.gov/virtuallibrary/documents/nsdm/nsdm_090.pdf) (accessed November 10, 2017).

<sup>217</sup> Memorandum for the Verification Panel Working Group, November 12, 1970, National Security Council Files, Institutional Files, Meeting Files-SALT, box H-006.

<sup>218</sup> HAK Talking Points for a Verification Panel Meeting, 8 December 8, 1970, National Security Council Files, Institutional Files, Meeting Files-SALT, box H-006.

on 18 December and were scheduled to resume in March 1971 back in Vienna.

The Vienna talks would prove to be of major importance for the Hot Line, with most of the technical details being settled on. Prior to departing for Vienna, an NDSM was again issued to the American delegation telling them to propose the use of the Intelsat (a multinational satellite) as the sole satellite to provide direct communication between Moscow and Washington DC.<sup>219</sup> On 23 March 1971, the Soviets announced they essentially agreed with the American proposal from December concerning accidental attack.<sup>220</sup> Now that the two sides were in agreement on accidental attack, a Joint Technical Group (JTG) was established to hammer out an agreement on the Hot Line. The main issue this Group encountered was disagreement over the type of satellite to be used. The Soviets expressed concern over the use of Intelsat, arguing that because it was an international satellite, perhaps a third country could interfere with it, which would defeat the whole purpose of switching to satellites. The Soviets then proposed each side have its own satellite, suggesting they would use their new Molniya II. The United States quickly pointed out that the Molniya II was vulnerable to third country interference as well (it would operate on the same frequency as Intelsat and Cuba was set to use Molniya as well), and would not be available for at least another two years.<sup>221</sup> While issues such as this had held up progress in other areas of SALT, here both sides were willing to compromise and make a deal. In May, the JTG produced their recommendations report on how to improve the Hot Line. In a rare sign of compromise, it was agreed that each side would be allowed to choose which satellite they wanted, with the Soviets selecting their Molniya II and the United States the Intelsat.<sup>222</sup> Multiple terminals would also be

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<sup>219</sup> Henry Kissinger, "National Security Decision Memorandum 102," Nixon Library (11 March 1971), Available at [https://www.nixonlibrary.gov/virtuallibrary/documents/nsdm/nsdm\\_102.pdf](https://www.nixonlibrary.gov/virtuallibrary/documents/nsdm/nsdm_102.pdf) (accessed November 10, 2017).

<sup>220</sup> USSR Proposals on Measures for Reducing the Danger of the Outbreak of Nuclear War, March 23, 1971, National Security Council Files, Institutional Files, Meeting Files, SALT, box H-007.

<sup>221</sup> Summary of JTG Meeting of 22 April 1971, April 22, 1971, National Security Council Files, SALT, box 880.

<sup>222</sup> Joint U.S.-U.S.S.R. Technical Group Recommendations on Modernization and Improvements of the U.S.-U.S.S.R. Direct Communications Link, May 19, 1971, National Security Council Files, SALT, box 881.

established, as the United States was worried that the president may not be in Washington if a crisis was to suddenly develop and would have no access to the Hot Line. With the technical issues agreed on, all that was left was the political side, which would be worked out in Helsinki.

Before the two sides broke in Vienna, a major shift in American policy towards SALT occurred. A back channel of negotiations between Kissinger and Dobrynin had developed as a way to break the impasse over the major issues. The main hold up was over the American insistence of linkage between offensive and defensive weapons as a part of any SALT agreement. The Soviets, on the other hand, had been pressing for a separate agreement on ABMs from the beginning, arguing SALT should only include offensive weapons. Afraid at the lack of progress the talks were making, Kissinger and Dobrynin worked out a deal that would allow for a separate ABM agreement to be made, while a freeze on offensive weapon development would be in effect until a more comprehensive agreement could be reached. On 20 May, Nixon made this change in policy official. Going into the next round at Helsinki, there was a renewed optimism a comprehensive SALT deal could be reached.

The two sides were still too far apart, however, to reach a final agreement on ABM and offensive weapons in Helsinki. The Hot Line, though, was something the two sides could agree on. A new Working Group was created to translate the JTG's recommendations from Vienna into a legal document. The United States was hoping that an agreement on Hot Line improvement would take place within the confines of an overall SALT agreement but left the option open to sign it as a separate agreement.<sup>223</sup> After the news broke that Kissinger had secretly visited China on 15 July, and Nixon's subsequent announcement he would soon visit also, Smith sent a telegram the next day to Kissinger advising a separate agreement should be made with the Hot Line to "balance" the China trip.<sup>224</sup> Nixon agreed that a separate deal could be made on both accidental attack and Hot Line improvement. The only issue now was to work out the legal details. The American delegation proposed the new agreement should be an amendment to the original 1963 document. The Soviets favored a new agreement. When pressed as to why a new

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<sup>223</sup> Henry Kissinger, "National Security Decision Memorandum 117," Nixon Library, (2 July 1971), Available at [https://www.nixonlibrary.gov/virtuallibrary/documents/nsdm/nsdm\\_117.pdf](https://www.nixonlibrary.gov/virtuallibrary/documents/nsdm/nsdm_117.pdf) (accessed November 10, 2017).

<sup>224</sup> *FRUS*, 1969-1972, SALT I, Document 179.

agreement was needed, a Soviet delegate told the Americans that his supervisors attached, “political importance to such a document within the framework of SALT.”<sup>225</sup> After Kissinger sent a memo to Nixon recommending signing a separate agreement as a “means of signaling the Soviets our continuing interest in SALT,” Nixon agreed.<sup>226</sup> Both sides needed to show that progress could be made on SALT, even though they were still far apart on any major agreement. On 30 September 1971, the agreement was signed in Washington.

What did the Hot Line Modernization Agreement accomplish? Certainly, it made the Hot Line more secure and gave it a needed technology upgrade, but aside from the practical and technical aspects what was its purpose? It is easy to dismiss the Hot Line Agreement as nothing more than a simple technical agreement that, when compared to the overall significance of SALT and détente, is a small footnote. In the writings of those who were intimately involved with SALT during the Nixon administration, Gerard Smith is the only one who attaches a powerful significance to it, arguing it was a “useful psychological impetus” that showed the world progress could be made on SALT.<sup>227</sup> The Hot Line Agreement did more than just instill confidence in SALT, however. It gave Nixon a way to appease Soviet desires for closer cooperation with the United States, while dodging the Soviet questions of provocative attack. When the Soviet delegation first proposed at Vienna in 1970 a possible agreement for joint retaliation in the event of a third country’s provocative attack, it is no wonder the Nixon administration rejected it so quickly. Such an agreement would almost certainly have killed off his ability to open up China.

The Hot Line Agreement helped keep his policy of triangular diplomacy with the Chinese from collapsing. By flat out rejecting the Soviet offer of joint retaliation, Nixon probably figured he would need to give the Soviets something. This is where the Hot Line came in. By cleverly playing on the Soviet fear of third countries, the United States suggested improving the Hot Line to prevent against outside interference. The Soviets, who initially brought up the issue of third country interference, were almost forced to agree to this. The timing of Kissinger’s secret trip to China and the announcement Nixon had

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<sup>225</sup> SALT-August 12 DCL Special Group Meeting, August 12, 1971, National Security Council Files, SALT, box 881.

<sup>226</sup> Henry Kissinger to Richard Nixon, August 5, 1971, National Security Council Files, SALT, box 881.

<sup>227</sup> Smith, *Doubletalk*, 297.

accepted the invitation to visit China, all while the SALT talks were not making much progress, was almost certainly done to help turn up the heat on the Soviets. While the United States agreed to the Soviet request of making it a separate agreement instead of an amendment to the original document, this decision was likely influenced by the Soviets stating Moscow attached political significance to the agreement. Wanting to appease the Soviets ego in some way, Nixon agreed to their request. By improving the Hot Line, Nixon dodged any formal commitment with the Soviets of joint retaliation against a third country. This helped to keep his goals of opening up China while easing tensions with the Soviet Union alive. Nixon's policy of triangular diplomacy obviously included much more than the Hot Line. This does not mean the Hot Line should be overlooked. It was one of many pieces in the puzzle of Nixon's approach to China and the Soviet Union. It was also one of the successful pieces. Rather than being relegated to being a simple footnote in history, this is how the Hot Line Agreement should be remembered.

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# THE FEDERAL JUDICIARY AND FORCED BUSING IN CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA

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On February 8, 1970, a telegram from Senator Sam J. Ervin was read aloud at a protest in front of the federal court in Charlotte, North Carolina, stating “Once again we are confronted in America with the old issue of governmental tyranny versus liberty.”<sup>228</sup> The demonstrators were protesting *Swann v. Charlotte Mecklenburg Board of Education* and its order for forced busing of students to achieve racial balance in schools. A protestor likened presiding judge James B. McMillan to King James of England, synonymous with oppression in American historical imagination.<sup>229</sup> This was indicative of McMillan’s new role as a social and political pariah. He received death threats, was hanged in effigy, and went into hiding for a short period.<sup>230</sup> *Swann* had been decided the previous November by a six-judge panel; the vote was a close 3-2-1 with three votes for the majority, two affirmative votes, and one vote for a total reversal.<sup>231</sup> One year later on April 20, 1971, this divided opinion was affirmed by the Supreme Court. For a unanimous majority, Chief Justice Warren E. Burger wrote that U.S. district courts held broad and flexible powers to remedy school segregation. The court explicitly authorized federal judges to use mathematical ratios to set a goal for racial balance in public schools. Further, it deemed the use of “non-contiguous attendance zones” to be within the scope of the federal judiciary’s power when remedying school segregation.<sup>232</sup> This meant that school children could be bussed across pre-existing school attendance zones to achieve racial balance. This court decision

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<sup>228</sup> Marion A. Ellis, Howard E. Covington, and Ayscue, E. Osborne, *An Independent Profession: A Centennial History of the Mecklenburg County Bar* (Davidson, NC: Lorimer Press, 2012), pg. 106.

<sup>229</sup> *Ibid.*, 105.

<sup>230</sup> *Ibid.*, 104.

<sup>231</sup> Chicago-Kent College of Law at Illinois Tech. "Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education." Oyez. <https://www.oyez.org/cases/1970/281> (accessed April 15, 2017).

<sup>232</sup> *Ibid.*

vindicated McMillan's decision from a legal standpoint. However, angry constituent letters continued to pour in, often simultaneously addressed to multiple recipients at various levels of government: to the president, judges, congressmen, senators, and local politicians.<sup>233</sup>

The troubled narrative of American desegregation did not start with *Swann*; progress on this issue had starting gaining steam four years earlier in Topeka, Kansas. *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* (1954) laid out a basic legal principle with regards to segregation: "separate but equal" segregation of public facilities violated the Fourteenth Amendment's Equal Protection Clause. With regards to public schools, the court held that segregation instilled ideas of racial inferiority in African American children to the severe detriment of their educational opportunity.<sup>234</sup> The *Brown* opinion lacked instructions for solutions to the problem which it outlawed, leading to *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka II* (1955). Here, in another unanimous decision, the Supreme Court held that the local solutions were necessary; this meant that the responsibility for desegregation fell upon school boards and district courts. Local authorities were to act "with all deliberate speed" in their desegregation efforts.<sup>235</sup>

The words "with all deliberate speed," whether by design, were not precise enough. In the 1968-1969 school year, sixteen years after *Brown II*, 58% of Charlotte's African American school children attended schools that were 99% Black or more.<sup>236</sup> Simply put, this was the problem facing James B. McMillan in 1969: how to ensure integration was carried out in a timely and deliberate manner by local school boards. In 1971, the Supreme Court affirmed McMillan's mandate for busing, the most robust method for integration seen in the United States to that point. Charlotte quickly pivoted, transforming itself from a city which dragged its feet in integration efforts to a case-study in successful integration efforts, achieving its racial balance goals in schools by the

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<sup>233</sup> [Constituent Letter, 21 December 1969], in the Sam J. Ervin Papers, Subgroup A: Senate Records #3847A, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

<sup>234</sup> Chicago-Kent College of Law at Illinois Tech. "Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka (1)." Oyez. <https://www.oyez.org/cases/1940-1955/347us483> (accessed April 15, 2017).

<sup>235</sup> Chicago-Kent College of Law at Illinois Tech. "Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka (2)." Oyez. <https://www.oyez.org/cases/1940-1955/347us483> (accessed April 15, 2017).

<sup>236</sup> *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education* (April 20, 1971), U.S. Justia Supreme Court 281.

1980s.<sup>237</sup> In *Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow: School Desegregation and Resegregation in Charlotte*, Roslyn Mickelson asserts that “Few school reforms have been as fully and successfully implemented. . .”<sup>238</sup>

Despite this apparent success, many experts on the subject, including Mickelson, agree that resegregation has occurred in Charlotte.<sup>239</sup> Scholarship on the issue attributes this to a variety of factors; these include systemic socio-economic issues like poverty and housing discrimination, and also on local institutional issues such as the nature of school boards. While this is part of a larger national trend, the immediate cause of resegregation in Charlotte was the 1999 reopening of the *Swann* case. Following a lawsuit by white parents brought against the school system, Judge Robert Potter decreed Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools to be unitary, officially halting McMillan’s mandated busing orders and bringing the era of forced busing in Charlotte to an end.<sup>240</sup> Resegregation illustrates Charlotte’s peculiarity in the context of forced busing and integration as desegregation efforts went from a tremendous success to a reversal. Following the 1999 decision, Charlotte has regressed.

There is certainly no shortage of secondary scholarship on the issue of busing. These histories fit into two broad categories, defined by the questions they answer: (1) those which evaluate the success of busing in Charlotte and (2) those which seek to understand the factors which led to resegregation. The works in the first category establish the peculiar success of busing in Charlotte via an examination of social, cultural, economic, and political factors. This category is exemplified by works such as Frye Gaillard’s *The Dream Long Deferred*, Peter Irons’ *Jim Crow’s Children*, and Chapter 5 of Matthew Lassiter’s *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South*.

Much of the existing scholarship focuses on explaining how and why resegregation is occurring in Charlotte despite the success of busing in the 1970s. Roslyn Mickelson’s monograph fits this category as well, examining the experiences of individual schools, contributing

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<sup>237</sup> Roslyn Arlin Mickelson, Stephen Samuel Smith, and Amy Hawn Nelson, *Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow: School Desegregation and Resegregation in Charlotte* (Cambridge: Harvard Education Press, 2015), pg. 1.

<sup>238</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>239</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>240</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

sociological factors, political realities, and systemic race inequalities.<sup>241</sup> With similar goals as Mickelson, Stephen Samuel Smith's *Boom for Whom?: Education, Desegregation, and Development in Charlotte* examines local politics and makes comparisons between Charlotte and other large cities.<sup>242</sup> Although Ansley T. Erickson's *Making the Unequal Metropolis* centers on Nashville, Tennessee, her examination of local political institutions in order to understand persistent education inequality also represents an important narrative on the subject.<sup>243</sup> This paper fills a gap in the existing scholarship by examining the effect of *Swann v. CMS* on attitudes towards the judiciary and the translation of those attitudes into real political action. By examining the effect of James McMillan's busing mandate on contemporary politics rather than examining the effect of contemporary politics on busing's success and ultimate demise, this paper reverses the causal relationship explored in the sources discussed above. The *Swann* decision renewed public discourse about judicial activism and federal overreach into local affairs, reminiscent of the ever-present rhetoric of States' Rights. Further, this renewed public rhetoric is certainly reflected in the actions and words of North Carolina's politicians at all levels of government.

### **Public Opinion and Swann**

In late 1969, North Carolinian politicians' mailboxes were flooded with letters concerning McMillan, *Swann*, and busing. Cross-town busing to achieve racial balance was clearly a supremely undesirable policy in the eyes of many white southerners.

In seeking to understand the immediate reaction to *Swann*, the constituent letters sent to James McMillan are of particular interest. Nearly all of the letters sent to McMillan in the months following his decision concerned busing in some form or another.. Although there were some letters thanking McMillan for his service to the Constitution, the majority of these letters were in opposition to the busing order.<sup>244</sup> A letter from a middle-school student in Charlotte read, "N\*\*\*\*rs ruin a

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<sup>241</sup> Ibid.

<sup>242</sup> Stephen Samuel. Smith, *Boom for Whom?: Education, Desegregation, and Development in Charlotte* (Albany: State Univ. of New York Press, 2004).

<sup>243</sup> Ansley T. Erickson, *Making the Unequal Metropolis School Desegregation and Its Limits* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), accessed March 20, 2017.

<sup>244</sup> Box 88, in the James B. McMillan papers #4676, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

school because they are dirty, and messy, and they like to tear things up.”<sup>245</sup> Similarly, a cryptic letter from a Presbyterian elder had anti-black Christian hate publications attached to it.<sup>246</sup> Right-wing groups like the States’ Rights League of North Carolina and the Patriots of North Carolina sent McMillan letters advocating racial purity.<sup>247</sup> These examples illustrate the unpopularity of busing in North Carolina but lack substance beyond racist rhetoric. Letters to sympathetic legislators, however, showcase the renewed rhetoric revolving around judicial activism and States’ Rights as it relates to busing.

Eddie Poe of Charlotte, son of chairman of Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools William Edward Poe, graduated from Myers Park High School in 1967 and was present in the courtroom during oral arguments in the *Swann* case. This made such an impact on him that he wrote a thesis on factors contributing to the ultimate failure of busing. He described this thesis in an email: it asserted that while McMillan thought he was doing the “right thing,” he was short on legal precedent.<sup>248</sup> Further, he claims that McMillan’s order was a failed social experiment, largely because it failed to address systemic issues like poverty.<sup>249</sup> While he did not expand on his reasoning behind these claims, they offer a useful window into the mindset of contemporary white Charlotteans. Although Poe does not mention judicial overreach, his are in accordance with the general attitudes of white North Carolinians during this tumultuous period.

In the files kept by NC Representative Charles Raper Jonas and NC Senator Sam J. Ervin there are thousands of constituent letters – both of those men kept files for letters concerning education and busing specifically. From 1969 to 1972, Jonas represented North Carolina’s Ninth District as a Republican.<sup>250</sup> This district included all of

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<sup>245</sup> [Constituent Letter, 25 August 1969], in the James B. McMillan papers #4676, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

<sup>246</sup> {Constituent Letter, 23 December 1969}, in the James B. McMillan papers #4676, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

<sup>247</sup> [Constituent Letter, 25 January 1970], in the James B. McMillan papers #4676, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

<sup>248</sup> Eddie Poe, "Swann v. CMS (1971), Forced Busing, and William Edward Poe," e-mail message to author, April 6, 2017.

<sup>249</sup> Ibid.

<sup>250</sup> [Abstract], in the Charles R. Jonas Papers #4528, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Mecklenburg County as well as surrounding rural counties, and his constituents were those most directly affected by forced busing. The opinions of North Carolinians living in the Piedmont, especially of Mecklenburg County, are extensively represented in his papers.<sup>251</sup> Senator Ervin served as a Senator for the state of North Carolina from 1954 to 1974; letters in his papers serve to paint a broader picture of public opinion in North Carolina beyond Charlotte.

During his twenty-year tenure, Sam J. Ervin served on the Senate's Judiciary Committee, where his responsibilities were as follows. Generally, the committee is responsible for oversight of the judiciary, meaning that they consider nominations and pending legislation which concerns the judiciary.<sup>252</sup> Sitting on this committee, he frequently, even more so than Jonas, received letters from constituents concerning the judiciary. In particular, there are hundreds of letters concerning *Swann* and court-ordered busing. On December 21, 1969, one constituent claimed that one man, James McMillan, had taken away the freedom of all Americans via his interpretation of the law.<sup>253</sup> Similarly, another constituent asserted that federal judges thought themselves to be "gods," instead of men and that "liberal courts ought to be restrained."<sup>254</sup> A letter dated October 29, 1969, simply requested that Senator Ervin do everything in his power to limit the "powers of the forces being used to strangle our schools."<sup>255</sup> This letter is a blatant example of a constituent asking for a legislator to curb the power of the courts in response to *Swann*. All of this language reveals a contemporary attitude towards the courts: any decision which is politically liberal is an overreach.

Another constituent letter received on December 29 of the same year describes a grassroots committee forming the basis of a national effort to reinstate freedom of choice and notes Ervin's support for legislation pursuant to this goal. This legislation is explicitly and specifically hostile to federal courts, advocating "that no federal court, at

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<sup>251</sup> Ibid.

<sup>252</sup> Us senate website

<sup>253</sup> [Constituent Letter, 21 December 1969], in the Sam J. Ervin Papers, Subgroup A: Senate Records #3847A, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

<sup>254</sup> [Constituent Letter, 8 May 1969], in the Sam J. Ervin Papers, Subgroup A: Senate Records #3847A, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

<sup>255</sup> [Constituent Letter, 28 October 1969], in the Sam J. Ervin Papers, Subgroup A: Senate Records #3847A, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

any level, would have jurisdiction to compel the attendance of students at particular schools to bring about ‘racial balance.’” The letter goes a step further, extending this prohibition on federal jurisdiction to include the assignment of faculty to different schools pursuant to racial balancing.<sup>256</sup> The existence of this grassroots group and its demands displays the extent to which public opinion had solidified against the judiciary in the months following *Swann*.

A letter dated September 6, 1969, asked Ervin for his expertise on the constitutionality of court-ordered busing. His response asserted that McMillan’s decision demonstrated a blatant disregard for Congressional intent as it relates to Title IV of the Civil Rights Act.<sup>257</sup> This represents the concerns of a constituent but also Ervin’s position on the issue. Another such letter asked “why has congress [sic] allowed the courts to blatantly violate statutory law?”<sup>258</sup> Ervin’s response invoked sectionalism rhetoric reminiscent of the pre-Civil War and Reconstruction eras by positing that the federal government unfairly targeted the South in demanding racial balancing.<sup>259</sup> Via analysis of these constituent letters, it is evident that a renewed and robust public rhetoric about the federal judiciary emerged in 1969.

Jonas was on the House Judiciary Committee, charged with similar responsibilities as Ervin. The first letter in Jonas’ civil rights correspondence folder, dated October 31, 1969, opposes integration because of the means by which it was ordered – busing. The author invokes the ‘silent majority’ identity, claiming that white citizens will stand up to the tyranny being wrought by the federal courts, especially James B. McMillan.<sup>260</sup> Interestingly, the letters were not organized by date. This suggests that, given the letter’s foremost position in the folder, that Jonas or his staff found it particularly important. Countless letters of

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<sup>256</sup> [Constituent Letter p. 1, 29 December 1969], in the Sam J. Ervin Papers, Subgroup A: Senate Records #3847A, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

<sup>257</sup> [Constituent Letter, 9 September 1969], in the Sam J. Ervin Papers, Subgroup A: Senate Records #3847A, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

<sup>258</sup>[Constituent Letter, 5 December 1969], in the Sam J. Ervin Papers, Subgroup A: Senate Records #3847A, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

<sup>259</sup> [Response Letter, 5 December 1969], in the Sam J. Ervin Papers, Subgroup A: Senate Records #3847A, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

<sup>260</sup> [Constituent Letter, 25 August 1969], in the Charles R. Jonas Papers #4528, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.



a similar tone and argument followed, many of which explicitly decried McMillan's decision as an instance of federal overreach. Further, these letters pleaded for a return to 'freedom of choice.'<sup>261</sup> In other words, these letters besieged Jonas to introduce legislation which would outlaw busing in the name of preserving the individual freedom which they perceived to be under assault by federal courts.

This claim is further supported by polls and surveys administered by North Carolinian politicians during this time period. James Holshouser, a North Carolina gubernatorial candidate in 1972, polled potential voters on 'issue clusters,' asking respondents to rank the issues in order of their importance. Busing was deemed the most important, with 29 percent of the vote.<sup>262</sup> This indicates a general concern about busing on the part of North Carolinians.

A more in depth poll revealed the intersection of attitudes towards the judiciary and forced busing in Charlotte. The 1969 "Jonas Survey" was administered by Charles R. Jonas to the constituents of the Ninth District which includes Charlotte. First, it asked whether or not respondents agreed that the federal government had too much power over citizens and local government to which 65 percent agreed.<sup>263</sup> Second, it asked if respondents thought that integration was being pushed too quickly in Charlotte to which 57 percent responded yes.<sup>264</sup> Unsurprisingly, the results from this question were clearly divided along racial lines. Sixty percent of white respondents felt that integration was being pushed too quickly while only 13 percent of black respondents agreed with that sentiment.<sup>265</sup> While not about busing specifically, the percentages established the general sentiment towards integration and demonstrated the distinctly racial nature of this question. Third, the survey asked if respondents believed that "recent court decisions have strengthened our efforts to enforce our law." Here, 74 percent of respondents said that the decisions weakened law enforcement.<sup>266</sup> Again, while this question does not specifically mention busing, it denotes attitudes towards courts in general. Finally, the Jonas Survey asked

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<sup>261</sup> [Folder 487], in the Charles R. Jonas Papers #4528, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

<sup>262</sup> [1972 Issue Cluster Poll], in the Jim Holshouser Papers #5586, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

<sup>263</sup> [Jonas Survey p. 28], in the Charles R. Jonas Papers #4528, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

<sup>264</sup> *Ibid.*, 47.

<sup>265</sup> *Ibid.*, 47.

<sup>266</sup> *Ibid.*, 48

respondents if they thought race was a chief problem in their area and, if so, how it was a problem. 22 percent of respondents answered ‘yes,’ race was a paramount problem in their area. Most importantly, 19 percent of those who responded ‘yes’ said that race was a problem specifically because of forced busing.<sup>267</sup> Of those troubled by Charlotte’s race relations, busing was of paramount concern. Taken together, the responses to these four questions suggest that Jonas’ constituents were more concerned with busing as it related to federal overreach than as a race relations issue. Considering that integration is an inherently racial issue, these survey numbers suggest a profound conclusion: in 1969, North Carolina’s ninth district was more concerned with federal overreach by the judiciary than with race relations.

Via an examination of both quantitative and qualitative evidence, a clear picture of post-*Swann* opinions on busing, judicial activism, and federal overreach emerges. Polls indicate the effect that McMillan’s order had on the population: a surge of anti-federal and anti-court sentiments. Further, they show that the chief concern among most North Carolinians was that of forced busing. Constituent letters from the time period, when taken in concert with these polls, indicate a renewed public discourse on judicial activism and the perceived erosion of individual rights at the hands of federal courts. This rhetoric, often expressed in constituent letters, manifested itself in the actions of North Carolinian politicians at the local, state, and national level.

### **The School Board, State Politics, and Swann**

As is required in a functioning democracy, politicians are bound by the will of their constituents. In this instance, North Carolina’s state and local politicians acted accordingly; they translated the concerns of their constituents about busing from mere rhetoric into political action. The experience of William Edward Poe, the chairman of Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools, serves to illustrate *Swann*’s effect on local politics and the 1972 gubernatorial race, especially the campaign of James Holshouser, serve as examples of the effects of forced busing on North Carolina state politics. Taken together, these analyses demonstrate the tenuous relationship between local and state politicians in North Carolina and the federal judiciary.

William Edward Poe and James B. McMillan were foreordained to come at odds with each other. Poe was a stubborn proponent of

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<sup>267</sup> Ibid., 49.

neighborhood schools and McMillan appointed by Lyndon B. Johnson, a staunch defender of civil rights. Interestingly, they knew each other before *Swann* as they both taught at the Institute of Government in Chapel Hill, North Carolina.<sup>268</sup> Both lawyers, they had been on opposite sides of many trials.<sup>269</sup> As Chairman of the School Board in 1969, Poe strongly opposed busing and was “instrumental in furthering the Board’s appeal to the United States Supreme Court.”<sup>270</sup> According to a history of the Mecklenburg County Bar, Poe’s opposition was grounded in the idea that McMillan had gone beyond the law. To him, the law had been settled in the *Brown* cases. Poe rested the blame on McMillan, asserting that he “took that one over from almost the word go. . . and dictated the course of the trial. . .”<sup>271</sup> However, Poe instantly ceased his opposition after the 1971 decision and helped to implement the order. This is attributed to his steadfast devotion to the rule of law.<sup>272</sup> In 1974, Poe sat before a Senate panel headed by Sam Ervin. He asserted that busing was failing and lamented the idea that Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools seemed to be “permanently under the command of a federal district judge.”<sup>273</sup> Despite the fact that William Poe adhered to the Supreme Court’s decision in this matter, his initial opposition and his continued disdain towards busing are parallel to the rhetoric of Charlotte’s citizens: a federal judge overstepped his bounds in a foray into the responsibilities of local government.

James Holshouser ran for the governor’s office in 1972, three years after *Swann* was decided by McMillan. Previously a representative in the North Carolina General Assembly, Holshouser was a well-known conservative politician. Materials from his 1972 campaign prominently feature busing as a watershed issue in state politics at the time. Relatedly, many of his materials concern the court’s role in state politics.

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<sup>268</sup> Albert Coates, *The Story of the Institute of Government, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill: Out of a Classroom in Chapel Hill* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1981), pg. 161.

<sup>269</sup> Marion A. Ellis, Howard E. Covington, and E. Osborne. Ayscue, *An Independent Profession: A Centennial History of the Mecklenburg County Bar* (Davidson, NC: Lorimer Press, 2012), pg. 108.

<sup>270</sup> *Ibid.*, 108.

<sup>271</sup> *Ibid.*, 108.

<sup>272</sup> Nancy Black Norelli, Hugh B. Campbell, Jr., Francis I. Parker, *Resolution and Memorial in Honor of William Edward Poe* (Mecklenburg County Bar Association, April 20, 2000), pgs. 6-7.

<sup>273</sup> [Charlotte Observer Article], in the Sam J. Ervin Papers, Subgroup A: Senate Records #3847A, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

For example, an entire segment of his campaign's talking papers concern forced busing, citing figures which show that between 85 and 90 percent of North Carolinians oppose busing. Despite this, he holds that "a governor standing alone can't reverse those court decisions." Instead, his preferred solution to this issue is a constitutional amendment which would prohibit busing.<sup>274</sup> While he recognized the limitations of his political clout relative to the federal courts, the Holshouser campaign's talking papers perpetuate the notion that *Swann* was a federal overreach which ought to be reversed.

Holshouser spoke on the subject of the Supreme Court directly in a campaign speech which urged voters to be more engaged in politics; he held that increased political activism was needed to ensure the appointment of proper justices.<sup>275</sup> While his speech did not address busing specifically, the discussion of the Supreme Court indicates the prominence of the issue for his campaign. In a speech in Fayetteville he claimed education as the highest priority on his platform and exclaimed "our judicial system is supposed to provide justice for all the people!!!!" In the same speech, he expressed the need for a Republican majority in the state in order to enact "court reform."<sup>276</sup> Another speech posited that the judicial system needed "reexamination, change, and reform because the procedure[s] used are a violation of the Constitution. . ." and claimed the existence of a "deliberate" scheme to make the court partisan and activist.<sup>277</sup> From these speeches, it is clear that Holshouser's campaign was attempting to capitalize on the anti-court sentiments of North Carolinians following *Swann*.

Apart from speeches, Holshouser harped on the busing issue in the media. For a radio station questionnaire, Holshouser claimed public education (K-12) as his number one policy issue.<sup>278</sup> Similarly, a magazine advertisement by the campaign claimed the busing situation to

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<sup>274</sup> [1972 Campaign Talking Papers], in the Jim Holshouser Papers #5586, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

<sup>275</sup> [1972 Campaign Speech], in the Jim Holshouser Papers #5586, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

<sup>276</sup> [1972 Fayetteville Campaign Speech], in the Jim Holshouser Papers #5586, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

<sup>277</sup> [1972 Campaign Speech], in the Jim Holshouser Papers #5586, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

<sup>278</sup> [Radio Station Questionnaire, 1972], in the Jim Holshouser Papers #5586, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

be the greatest crisis to public schooling since the Great Depression.<sup>279</sup> A campaign ad featured a picture of Holshouser with his 8-year-old daughter, completed with a caption reading in part, “Any real solution to this problem has to come from Washington, basically from Congress.”<sup>280</sup> The verbiage of this campaign ad undermines judicial authority by denying jurisdiction to federal courts. In a Greensboro Daily News report, the Holshouser campaign asserted that “. . . in many cases you have federal judges acting in effect, as school boards.”<sup>281</sup> This is a quintessential example of the anti-court rhetoric which followed *Swann*; it claims that courts are usurping local political power.

The actions and rhetoric of Charlotte’s School Board led by William Edward Poe offer insight into the reactions of local political actors to the forced busing mandate. They are reflections of the public discourse on *Swann*, federal judges, and busing. At the next level of government, the Holshouser campaign for governor displays sustained attacks on the judiciary in the years following *Swann*. Holshouser succeeded in taking the Governor’s Mansion that year, a testament to the effectiveness of the campaign which was predicated, at least in part, on anti-busing and undermining the legitimacy of the federal judiciary.

### **National Politics and Swann**

As in the case of North Carolina’s state and local politicians, its national politicians reflected the public’s discourse on busing and the federal judiciary as well. An analysis of proposed legislation, correspondence, and speeches by Senator Sam J. Ervin and Congressman Charles Raper Jonas demonstrates their adherence to what their constituents wanted: for their representatives to work to actively undermine the judicial branch.

Section 401 (B) of Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 reads “Desegregation means the assignment of students to public schools and within such schools without regard to their race, color, religion, or national origin, but desegregation shall not mean the assignment of

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<sup>279</sup> [Magazine Campaign Advertisement, 1972], in the Jim Holshouser Papers #5586, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

<sup>280</sup> [Advertisement Copy Template], in the Jim Holshouser Papers #5586, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

<sup>281</sup> [Greensboro Daily News, March 19 1972], in the Jim Holshouser Papers #5586, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

students to public schools in order to overcome racial imbalance.”<sup>282</sup> On its face, the wording of this section appears to prohibit busing. More importantly, Ervin frequently relied on this statute to justify his attacks on forced busing, *Swann*, and the federal judiciary. His words translated into actions, typically in the form of bills and arguments in the Senate, especially on the Judiciary Committee.

In 1969, Ervin delivered a lengthy speech on a freedom of choice bill. His primary arguments were that the court had exceeded their authority because desegregation did not mean integration.<sup>283</sup> On this, a News and Observer article said “[The] Ervin bill seeks to limit the Supreme Court’s jurisdiction.”<sup>284</sup> This logic is clearly grounded in Title IV of the Civil Rights Act and his goal is clearly to undermine the judiciary. In the Congressional Record Daily Digest for April 23, 1969, it is recorded that Ervin argued and voted for the adoption of a bill which would have forbade using federal funds to be used for busing.<sup>285</sup> This is a key example of Ervin attempting to use his power in the Senate to undermine a judicial order as it betrays his methods. Further, on June 12, 1969, Ervin introduced Senate Bill 2375 in response to McMillan’s initial orders. This bill would serve to allow the U.S. Attorney General to institute upon his own motion certain actions for the desegregation of public education.<sup>286</sup> In this way, Ervin sought to provide Nixon’s executive branch an avenue through which they could undermine busing.

Senate Bill 1737 represents a culmination of previous attempts to curb busing. It is Ervin’s most robust and complete attempt to end busing. Introduced on May 8, 1973, the legislation was titled “The Student Freedom of Choice Act” and was to act as an amendment to the Civil Rights Act. It sought to forbid any federal department, agency, officer, or employee from extending federal aid to districts that used

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<sup>282</sup> H.R. 7152, 88th Cong. (1964) (enacted).

<sup>283</sup> [Newspaper Article, 1969], in the Sam J. Ervin Papers, Subgroup A: Senate Records #3847A, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

<sup>284</sup> [News and Observer Article, November 5, 1969], in the Sam J. Ervin Papers, Subgroup A: Senate Records #3847A, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

<sup>285</sup> [Congressional Digest, April 1969], in the Sam J. Ervin Papers, Subgroup A: Senate Records #3847A, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

<sup>286</sup> [Senate Bill], in the Sam J. Ervin Papers, Subgroup A: Senate Records #3847A, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

busing. Most importantly, Section 1207 read “No court of the United States shall have jurisdiction to make any decision, enter any judgement, or issue any order requiring any school board to make a change in the racial composition of the student body. . .”<sup>287</sup> A significantly weakened version of this bill was passed in 1974; the curbs on busing were to apply to future court orders only. The Washington Post characterized the bill as “mild” and asserted that it was a defeat for Ervin.<sup>288</sup> Via the bills he introduced and argued for, Ervin demonstrated his opposition to judicial activism and busing.

In April of 1974, a Congressional Digest titled “The ‘School Busing’ Controversy in the Current Congress” was published in which various politicians debated the pros and cons of busing. Sam Ervin contributed an article which argued for the curtailment of busing. He asserted that federal courts had “perverted and distorted” the Fourteenth Amendment’s Equal Protection Clause in using it to justify busing.<sup>289</sup> Later in the article, Ervin wrote on *Swann* specifically and characterized the decision as a blow for freedom and surmised that the door had closed on hopes that the courts will “return to a reasonable interpretation of the equal protection clause.”<sup>290</sup> By attacking the Court’s interpretation of the Fourteenth Amendment, Ervin severely undermined judicial authority.

Congressman Charles R. Jonas’ actions in Congress are parallel to Ervin’s in the Senate. He introduced and argued for numerous bills which would curb the jurisdiction of federal courts and end busing. On June 4, 1969, Jonas received a letter from Representative Jamie L. Whitten of Mississippi which argued that the Supreme Court is not and should not be the sole interpreter of the Constitution. The letter asked for support for what would become known as the Whitten Amendment,<sup>291</sup> which would establish a Committee on the Constitution with the ability

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<sup>287</sup> [Senate Bill 1737], in the Sam J. Ervin Papers, Subgroup A: Senate Records #3847A, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

<sup>288</sup> [Washington Post Article, 1974], in the Sam J. Ervin Papers, Subgroup A: Senate Records #3847A, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

<sup>289</sup> [Congressional Digest, pg. 108, April 1974], in the Sam J. Ervin Papers, Subgroup A: Senate Records #3847A, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

<sup>290</sup> *Ibid.*, 110.

<sup>291</sup> [Letter from Rep. Whitten], in the Charles R. Jonas Papers #4528, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

to reverse the actions made by any federal courts.<sup>292</sup> This is perhaps the most alarming attempt to undermine the power of the judicial branch and it had Jonas' support for the rest of his career in Congress. Beyond this, Jonas introduced House Joint Resolution 646 which would amend the constitution of the United States to require that "no public school student shall, because of his race, creed, or color, be assigned to or required to attend a particular school."<sup>293</sup> Another bill by Jonas, House Resolution 1575, would have prohibited involuntary busing of school children and required the adoption of freedom of choice as a national policy. Of the same vein as much of Ervin's proposed legislation, these bills demonstrate a bicameral commitment on the part of North Carolina's politicians to nullify McMillan's busing mandate.

In addition to being a member of the House Judiciary Committee, Jonas was high-ranking on the House Appropriations Committee which delegated to him much of Congress' power of the purse. The congressman introduced his "Jonas Amendment" in 1970 which made sure to withhold all funds appropriated by the act from schools carrying out busing plans.<sup>294</sup> From 1969 to 1972, Jonas attempted to limit the power of the courts via the power of the purse, constitutional amendments, and proposed legislation.

Jonas' actions with regards to the *Swann* decision and busing were not limited to the legislative process. A fact sheet issued by his campaign for Congress outlined other steps he took to end busing. On February 10, 1970, he met with Nixon to urge him to clarify his administration's position on busing. Two days later, the President issued a statement saying that he consistently opposed busing to achieve racial balance in public schools.<sup>295</sup> Here, Jonas enlisted the executive branch to aid in his fight against busing. On August 20, in a symbolic move against McMillan, Jonas flew to Washington with two leaders of an anti-busing association and delivered petitions signed by 60,000 Charlotteans urging a stay of McMillan's order.<sup>296</sup> On September 9, he filed an amicus curiae brief against in the *Swann* proceedings. Then on

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<sup>292</sup> [House Resolution 51], in the Charles R. Jonas Papers #4528, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

<sup>293</sup> [House Joint Resolution 646], in the Charles R. Jonas Papers #4528, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

<sup>294</sup> [Jonas Amendment], in the Charles R. Jonas Papers #4528, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

<sup>295</sup> [Campaign Fact Sheet], in the Charles R. Jonas Papers #4528, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

<sup>296</sup> *Ibid.*



September 21, he joined another amicus brief on behalf of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Teacher's Association.<sup>297</sup> In addition to his actions in Congress, Jonas consistently employed a variety of methods to reverse McMillan's busing order.

Charles R. Jonas and Sam J. Ervin were two of North Carolina's major political actors in the years following *Swann*. The rhetoric they employed and the legislative actions they took with regards to busing were robust and consistent. As representatives of North Carolina's citizens, they were obligated to follow the whims of their constituents, which they certainly did. They worked to undermine the judiciary because of the unpopularity of busing among North Carolinian voters.

### Conclusions

*Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg*'s impact on attitudes towards the judiciary is one chapter in a much broader historical narrative about the separation of powers and federalism. Unpopular court decisions, as demonstrated here, can ignite powerful reactions from the public and politicians. These reactions can be simple, like angry letters containing racist language from middle schoolers or pleas for a return to the good old days. They can also be more powerful, like bills, amendments, and campaigns predicated on an erosion of judicial legitimacy.

Countless court decisions in the United States aroused anger from Americans during the latter half of the twentieth century; there was uproar after *Brown v. Board* (1954), *Griswold v. Connecticut* (1965), *Roe v. Wade* (1973), and *Texas v. Johnson* (1989). This is to say that the rhetoric which followed *Swann v. Charlotte Mecklenburg* was not new. Further, it was certainly not the last time the legitimacy of the judiciary would be eroded following a controversial decision. The discourse which followed *Swann* was both a renewal *and* a continuation of rhetoric about the perils of judicial activism and the tyranny of the federal courts. It resided in the same vein of anger which followed the first school desegregation case and was awoken by the most robust integration plan seen to that point.

Anti-judiciary sentiments did not begin at the end of the twentieth century. There is a long history of the courts trying to avoid being undermined by the other branches of government. *Marbury v. Madison* (1803) saw the court attempt to balance constitutionality while not angering the president. In a classic example from the nineteenth

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<sup>297</sup> Ibid.

century, *Worcester v. Georgia* (1831) was most infamously ignored by Andrew Jackson, leading to the Trail of Tears. In the twenty-first century, *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2014) aroused animosity from the right, while *Citizens United v. FEC* (2010) and *Burwell v. Hobby Lobby Stores* (2014) garnered criticism from the left. Although the Supreme Court remains the most powerful court in the country, attacks on its legitimacy in the wake of an unpopular decision are problematic. Federal courts may have lifetime appointments but they remain without an enforcement mechanism; they must rely on the cooperation of the Executive and Legislative branches as well as state governments to enforce their decisions. Cooperation is predicated on legitimacy. If the public and the legislators do not treat the courts as legitimate, then enforcement may very well be a dubious prospect at best.

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