

Traveling Dissent: Activists, Borders, and the U.S. National Security State

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Abstract

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During the cold war, U.S. officials developed an expansive national security state that linked socialist, communist, and decolonizing states with “domestic,” and often racialized, left-wing political movements. Attending to how the state after 1945 attempted to manage the unprecedented circulation of bodies, commodities, and ideas through technological advancements, particularly in air travel, I demonstrate how “internal” and “foreign” security were mutually constituted projects. As travel became an important instrument of U.S. foreign policy, officials viewed travel by anti-war and anti-racist activists, particularly to non-capitalist countries, as threatening to U.S. security and an imagined community of global capitalism. The construction of these activists’ travels as subversive, I contend, informed the development of laws and surveillance technologies aimed at both disrupting transnational social movements and strengthening the nation-state’s borders when distinctions between the “foreign” and the “domestic” appeared to quickly erode. The free movement of U.S. citizens deemed acceptable to

the U.S. state was largely premised on procedures intended to demobilize those considered threatening and outside the political community. Mechanisms of travel control helped to constitute and reconsolidate global racial hierarchies and U.S. empire through the construction of particular mobilities as racialized and subversive, and states as threatening and illegitimate due to their opposition to U.S. capitalism. By situating the history of post-1945 transnational, leftist social movements in the context of the national security state's development, I demonstrate that these struggles over mobility were crucial sites in which officials, activists, and the larger public debated the boundaries of state power, the global role of the U.S., and the meanings of security, a debate which continues to define our contemporary political moment.

This project analyzes different methods by which the state attempted to control travel outside of the U.S., including passports, geographic travel restrictions, and surveillance at airports and other mechanisms that constituted a cold war mobility regime. I explore how travel to the Soviet Union and China in the 1950s, Cuba in the 1960s, and a spate of hijackings to Cuba in the late 1960s and early 1970s prompted the development of new mechanisms to control exit and international mobility. By focusing on the conflict between transnational activists and the state over mobility, including attempts by activists to circumvent restrictions on their movement, I demonstrate how institutions largely not considered as part of the national security state, such as the Passport Office and the Bureau of Security and Consular Affairs, were crucial in shaping a U.S.-led international system and policing the country's borders. In sum, "Traveling Dissent" demonstrates how transnational social movements shaped and challenged the national security state and how a mobile public came to be understood as a threat to the state requiring constant surveillance.

For Lisa and my parents, Bob and Roberta

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Introduction

“The Borders Are My Prison”

In 2010, Jameel Algibhah eagerly awaited his flight to visit family in Yemen. Anticipation turned to disappointment for the Bronx resident, however, when Transportation Security Administration (TSA) officials denied him access to the plane. During the previous year, Algibhah refused to work for the FBI as an informant in mosques and an agent provocateur in online chatrooms. That day in 2010, Algibhah learned he had been placed on the “No-Fly List,” joining an estimated twenty-to-eighty thousand individuals.¹ While Algibhah’s and others’ court cases forced the U.S. government to make limited reforms, the list remains operative. Other travelers are subjected to heightened security screenings or closely monitored prior to boarding.² Countries including Canada and Mexico have created their own surveillance lists and cooperated with U.S. government officials to restrict or hinder the mobility of those deemed threatening by the U.S. government. Most recently, the Trump administration requested Mexican border authorities to refuse entry to journalists critical of the administration’s immigration policies. U.S.

¹ Philip Bumb, “The FBI Allegedly Used the No-Fly List to Coerce Muslims to be Informants,” *The Atlantic*, April 23, 2014, Accessed May 8, 2019. <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2014/04/the-fbi-allegedly-used-the-no-fly-list-to-coerce-muslims-to-be-informants/361098/>; Rebecca Gordon, “How Two Peace Activists Wound Up on the Government’s No-Fly List.” *The Nation*, September 21, 2015. Accessed September 21, 2015. <http://www.thenation.com/article/how-two-peace-activists-wound-up-on-the-governments-no-fly-list/>.

² Behavior that could lead one to be placed on a list as part of the Quiet Skies program includes watching the gate from afar, changing attire prior to boarding, changing directions while walking through the terminal, “strong body odor,” and “face touching.” Jana Winter, “Welcome to the Quiet Skies,” *The Boston Globe*, July 28, 2018, Accessed May 8, 2019. <https://apps.bostonglobe.com/news/nation/graphics/2018/07/tsa-quiet-skies/>

Customs and Border Patrol authorities have routinely subjected critical journalists and activists to invasive searches and interrogations as reprisals for their writing and political activism.³

Jameel Algibhah's experiences mirrored those faced by Elizabeth Gurley Flynn nearly fifty years prior. In January 1962, the State Department's Passport Office revoked her passport as required under the 1950 McCarran-Walter Act, also known as the Internal Security Act. Under the Act's Section Six, it was illegal for individuals belonging to organizations required to register with the Attorney General to apply for, use, or renew a passport. Then National Chairwoman of the Communist Party, USA (CPUSA), Flynn had enjoyed a long career as a radical labor and feminist organizer, and was no stranger to government repression. Having spent twenty-eight months in prison after her conviction under the Smith Act, Flynn now struggled for her right to leave the country. Through the procedural gears of the Subversive Activities Control Board and the Board of Passport Appeals, her "right to travel [was] destroyed." Denying Flynn and others the right to *leave* the United States was, in her words, "to imprison [her] within the borders of the U.S.A."⁴ She was not alone in making this analogy. Others, including the esteemed legal scholar Zechariah Chafee and journalist William Worthy, analogized their confinement to the U.S. to a type of imprisonment. Writing in 1952, Chafee noted that if freedom was understood in its most basic sense as the "absence from physical restraint," then "the distinction between restriction to a jail, to a city, to a state, or to a nation is merely one of degree."⁵ For Flynn and others, the

³ Ryan Devereaux, "Journalists, Lawyers, and Activists Working on the Border Face Coordinated Harassment from U.S. and Mexican Authorities," February 8, 2019, Accessed May 8, 2019. <https://theintercept.com/2019/02/08/us-mexico-border-journalists-harassment/>

⁴ Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, "The Borders Are My Prison," *The Worker*, August 12, 1962.

⁵ Zechariah Chafee, "Passport Refusals for Political Reasons: Constitutional Issues and Judicial Review," *The Yale Law Journal* 61, no. 2 (1952): 190. The Supreme Court would rule Section Six unconstitutional in 1964. See *Aptheker v. Secretary of State*, 378 U.S. 500 (1964)

borders were not only obstacles to entry, but their “prison.”⁶ These stories highlight the need to not only consider the restriction of mobility as related to entry, but also the history of the politics and policies that have severely restricted and prevented *egress*.

“Traveling Dissent” explores the historical threads connecting Algebah’s and Flynn’s struggles. I argue that during the cold war, U.S. officials developed an expansive national security state that linked socialist, communist, and decolonizing states with “domestic,” and often racialized, left-wing political movements.⁷ Attending to how the state after 1945 attempted to manage the unprecedented circulation of bodies, commodities, and ideas through technological advancements, particularly in air travel, I demonstrate how “internal” and “foreign” security were mutually constituted projects. As travel became an important instrument of U.S. foreign policy, officials viewed travel by anti-war and anti-racist activists, particularly to non-capitalist countries, as threatening to U.S. security and an imagined community of global capitalism. The construction of these activists’ travels as subversive, I contend, informed the development of laws and surveillance technologies aimed at both disrupting transnational social movements and strengthening the nation-state’s borders when distinctions between the “foreign” and the “domestic” appeared to quickly erode. The free movement of U.S. citizens deemed acceptable to the U.S. state was largely premised on procedures intended to demobilize those considered threatening and outside the political community. Mechanisms of travel control helped

⁶ Flynn, “The Borders Are My Prison.”

⁷ My use of the lowercase “cold war” serves to recognize that there was no universal experience in the time marked by the global competition between the Soviet Union and the United States. In addition, many of the conflicts during the post-World War II era were inflected by and enmeshed with the superpower conflict but stemmed from longer processes of colonialism and imperialism. See Heonik Kwon, *The Other Cold War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010) and Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

to constitute and reconsolidate global racial hierarchies and U.S. empire through the construction of particular mobilities as racialized and subversive, and states as threatening and illegitimate due to their opposition to U.S. capitalism. By situating the history of post-1945 transnational, leftist social movements in the context of the national security state's development, I demonstrate that these struggles over mobility were crucial sites in which officials, activists, and the larger public debated the boundaries of state power, the global role of the U.S., and the meanings of security, a debate which continues to define our contemporary political moment.

This project analyzes different methods by which the state attempted to control travel outside of the U.S., including passports, geographic travel restrictions, and surveillance at airports and other mechanisms that constituted a cold war mobility regime. I explore how travel to the Soviet Union and China in the 1950s, Cuba in the 1960s, and a spate of hijackings to Cuba in the late 1960s and early 1970s prompted the development of new mechanisms to control exit and international mobility. By focusing on the conflict between transnational activists and the state over mobility, including attempts by activists to circumvent restrictions on their movement, I demonstrate how institutions largely not considered as part of the national security state, such as the Passport Office and the Bureau of Security and Consular Affairs, were crucial in shaping a U.S.-led international system and policing the country's borders.⁸ In sum, "Traveling Dissent" demonstrates how transnational social movements shaped and challenged the national security state and how a mobile public came to be understood as a threat to the state requiring constant surveillance.

Freedom of Movement: A Genealogy

⁸ Prior to 1952, the Passport Office was called the Passport Division. I use Passport Office in this introduction to discuss the institution's powers throughout the period under investigation.

Through the nineteenth century, “freedom” and “movement” were inseparable concepts in Anglo-American law and U.S. history more broadly. One’s freedom could be indexed by the degree of their ability to move. Contests over mobility were also sites of racialization. The meanings attached to and consequences of being unrestrained in mobility was contingent on and embedded within a set of class, gender, and racial hierarchies that enabled the mobility of some through the control of others. The freedom of movement of Europeans was integral to the process of settler colonialism and their interpretation of mobility was central to the Doctrine of Discovery. Euro-American settlers justified their movement into Native land on the basis that the indigenous peoples were *too* mobile and thus lacked a notion of landed property.⁹ Restraints on mobility were reserved through the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century for those deemed racially inferior whose freedom to move threatened the existing social order. In U.S. history, being able to move, largely unrestrained, was a crucial part of and consequence of whiteness.

Measures designed to document or regulate movement within the U.S. in the nineteenth century both reflected and strengthened racial hierarchies, and were reserved for those deemed “dangerous” or “foreign” to the nation.¹⁰ Laws designed to circumscribe African Americans’ freedom of movement, such as curfews, pass systems, racial segregation statutes, and restrictions on accessing different modes of transportation, proliferated across the country in the nineteenth century. Historian Elizabeth Stordeur Pryor has argued that the Constitution’s Fugitive Slave

⁹ Greg Grandin, *The End of the Myth: From the Frontier to the Border Wall in the Mind of America* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2019); Hagar Kotef, *Movement and the Ordering of Freedom: On Liberal Governances of Mobility* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015).

¹⁰ John Torpey has noted that documents were required for those “foreign” to the French Revolution including both enemies of the Revolution and those born outside the France. John Torpey, *The Invention of the Passport: Surveillance, Citizenship, and the State* (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 46-49.

Clause effectively rendered “all African American movement as fugitive behavior” and deputized whites in the surveillance and confinement of black people.¹¹ Black sailors’ mobility up and down the coast was simultaneously fundamental to the functioning of the economy and a threat to the slave system. Passports issued by Southern port cities facilitated surveillance and mollified the tensions between their mobility, capitalism, and slavery.¹²

While concern over African Americans’ mobility persisted through the twentieth century, the state developed new mechanisms to control movement *into* the country after the Civil War. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the U.S. and other settler-colonial nations developed an international system of border and migration controls designed to restrict the mobility of Asian workers. These restrictions were concomitant with Euro-American demands for extraterritoriality in Asia and the insistence that Asia “open up” to trade and resource extraction. Along with U.S. exports, American missionaries freely traveled to Asia in order to proselytize and establish schools in the name of “saving” and “civilizing” the population. Racial hierarchies undergirded a worldview that permitted the freedom of movement of Euro-Americans bringing “civilization” to the continent and the exclusion of allegedly “uncivilized” Asians from the U.S.¹³ At the same time, Euro-American imperialism in China devastated local industries and regional economies. In an effort to survive and initially enticed by the California Gold Rush, Chinese workers began migrating to the Americas where their labor was in high demand. An anti-Chinese movement developed calling on the federal government to prevent

¹¹ Elizabeth Stordeur Pryor, *Colored Travelers: Mobility and the Fight for Citizenship before the Civil War* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2016), 48.

¹² Pryor, *Colored Travelers*, 110-111.

¹³ Adam McKeown, *Melancholy Order: Asian Migration and the Globalization of Borders* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 9; Radhika Viyas Mongia, “Race, Nationality, Mobility: A History of the Passport,” *Public Culture*, 11 no. 3 (1999): 527-556.

Chinese workers, derisively called “coolies,” from coming to the U.S. on the grounds that they were unfree migrants who threatened the livelihood and health of white workers. As a result, the U.S. federalized immigration control and severely limited Chinese migration. Signed in 1882, the Chinese Exclusion Act not only led to the development of the modern U.S. immigration policing infrastructure but introduced controls on the ability of Chinese and Chinese Americans to leave the country. Chinese exempted from the restrictions, which included teachers and merchants, had to obtain a Section 6 certificate to facilitate their migration. Should anyone of Chinese descent wish to temporarily leave the U.S., they were required to obtain a reentry permit. The control over *egress* served as a complement to Chinese exclusion: no other immigrant group was required to obtain a reentry permit through the repeal of Chinese exclusion in 1943. Possessing these reentry documents, guaranteed in Section 4, and birthright citizenship did not guarantee admittance as immigration inspectors often regarded Chinese American citizenship claims and reentry papers as fraudulent. Officials presumed all individuals of Chinese descent, regardless of nationality, were excludable. Immigration officials assessed individuals on their ability to speak English, their bodily comportment, and their knowledge of the area surrounding the port of entry.¹⁴ Control *egress* functioned as a means of securing a racial order within the U.S. and preserving immigration restrictions.

Experiences in the interwar period and World War II shifted the relationships between movement, the state, racial hierarchy, and freedom. Despite the expiration of the World War I-

¹⁴ Moon-Ho Jung, *Coolies and Cane: Race, Labor, and Sugar in the Age of Emancipation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008); Paul A. Kramer, “Imperial Openings: Civilization, Exemption, and the Geopolitics of Mobility in the History of Chinese Exclusion, 1868-1910,” *The Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era*, 14, no. 3 (2015): 317-347; Erika Lee, *At America’s Gates: Chinese Immigration during the Exclusion Era, 1882-1943* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 41, 100-110.

era Travel Control Act in 1921, Europe's maintenance of a passport regime challenged the conflation of mandatory state documentation with social danger. Initially, Americans understood the documentary requirements as an affront to notions of middle-class respectability and an attack on their character.¹⁵ They objected to divulging personal information to a remote, impersonal bureaucracy. These reservations dissipated by the 1930s as individuals became more accustomed to new bureaucratic procedures related not only to the passport but also the New Deal welfare state.¹⁶

The universal requirement for travel documentation in the 1940s, surveillance, and subsequent travel control measures was justified through the language of paternal safety and helped to construct racial liberalism. The state's disavowal of explicit white supremacy and embrace of "domestic" reforms (individual rights and nominal desegregation) that did not disrupt larger structural inequities was concomitant with the rise of the U.S. as the preeminent capitalist power in the world at the conclusion of World War II. Officials sought to depict the U.S. as an exceptional nation and that the country's attempts at overcoming racial exclusion legitimated its global hegemony. Rather than formal colonial control, the U.S. championed the creation of nominally equal nation states under the umbrella of American global economic and military power. This global empire was justified in the U.S. and abroad through the language of security

¹⁵ I use the terms "American" and "U.S." interchangeably, although I recognize that the term "American" is not restricted to the United States.

¹⁶ Craig Robertson, *The Passport in America: The History of a Document* (Oxford, UK; New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 230-240; For the Social Security Act, see Sarah Igo, "Social Insecurities: Private Data and Public Culture in Modern America," in *Shaped by the State: Toward a New Political History of the Twentieth Century*, eds. Brent Cebul, Lily Geismer, and Mason B. Williams (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2019), 27-61. For the importance of World War II in the growing acceptance of a larger U.S. state, see James T. Sparrow, *Warfare State: World War II, Americans, and the Age of Big Government* (Oxford, UK; New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

and safety, that, while on its face was race-neutral, perpetuated global racial hierarchies. The state relied on processes of racialization that disaggregated the public into the categories of “safe” and “subversive.” These categories were also mapped onto countries increasingly divided into two worlds. Those individuals and countries categorized by the U.S. state as “safe” were considered “worthy” of state protection while those deemed “subversive” and “threatening” were rendered as “legitimate” targets of repression and state violence. Enabling the mobility of some U.S. travelers to countries deemed acceptable to the U.S. reproduced whiteness as the power to command state protection. At the same time that the U.S. depicted itself as a racially liberal state, it created a global security state that honed and expanded the use of state violence and policing of policed immigrants and those deemed politically subversive.¹⁷

Travel control was an important tool in shaping this world order. In the wake of World War II and the growing antagonism between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, and eventually Third World nationalism, U.S. officials identified the cultural work of tourism as a vital instrument of U.S. foreign policy. Both the Truman and Eisenhower administrations pursued a “consumer

¹⁷ My thinking on the relationship between racial liberalism and security has been informed by Omi and Winant’s concept of the racial state and Moon-Kie Jung’s conceptualization of the U.S. as an “empire-state.” For most of U.S. history, the state was organized on the premise of repressing, dispossessing, and excluding nonwhite peoples. The state and law played a crucial role in the creation of racial categories and racialization. However, the state did not simply impose racial categories and shape racialization processes. Rather, the state is itself “racially structured.” Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States from the 1960s to the 1990s* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 82. Sociologist Moon-Kie Jung expands on this concept of a “racial state” and reconceptualizes the U.S. as an “empire-state” in which sovereignty and groups of people are hierarchically organized. Jung’s theorization an “empire-state” avoids the reification of the “foreign” and the “domestic,” and enables an examination of “and...connections between, the heterogenous histories of peoples who have been racially subjected to and have struggled against the U.S. empire-state, without overlooking significant differences and particularities. Moon-Kie Jung, *Beneath the Surface of White Supremacy: Denaturalizing U.S. Racisms Past and Present* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015), 57. See also Nikhil Pal Singh, *Black is a Country: Race and the Unfinished Struggle for Democracy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004).

diplomacy” to ensure the continued flow of dollars to recovering European economies amidst the growing strength of Western European communist parties and hostility within the United States to foreign aid.¹⁸ Tourism held the potential to convince U.S. citizens of the need for strong international alliances to counter the Soviet Union. Technological advancements and government financing led to a boom in American tourist travel abroad. In 1953, over one million Americans traveled abroad; in 1959, that number rose to seven million, with the vast majority going to Europe, Canada, and Mexico.¹⁹ Armed with U.S. dollars, these tourists were interpolated into a larger project of U.S. empire.

This traveling public, however, needed to be carefully disciplined. Officials feared that ordinary Americans’ behavior abroad could create antagonisms between these tourists and host countries, thus lowering the esteem of the United States abroad and diminishing U.S. visitors’ perceptions of host countries as serious political allies.²⁰ The Passport Office, foreign policy officials, and other branches of the national security state increasingly worried that the revelation of continued racial discrimination and violence at home would blemish the image of the U.S. abroad. “Traveling Dissent” chronicles how the extension of crisis politics and emergency

¹⁸ Christopher Endy, *Cold War Holidays: American Tourism in France* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 5.

¹⁹ Christina Klein, *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945-1961* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 104.

²⁰ The U.S. government invested millions of dollars into international travel and utilized the infrastructure developed during World War II to construct what Endy calls the “military-tourism complex.” Endy, *Cold War Holidays*, 35. See also Jennifer Van Vleck, *Empire of the Air: Aviation and the American Ascendancy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013) and Vernadette Vicuña Gonzalez, *Securing Paradise: Tourism and Militarism in Hawai‘i and the Philippines* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013). Dennis Merrill argues that tourism facilitated the growth of the post-World War II empire, but other countries attempted to shape this encounter to suit their own needs. Dennis Merrill, *Negotiating Paradise: U.S. Tourism and Empire in Twentieth-Century Latin America* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2009).

powers from the late 1930s through the cold war not only normalized and strengthened travel control measures, but reoriented the relationship between the state, freedom, and mobility. At the same time that American officials publicly championed the freedom of movement, they claimed that communists and “subversives” sought to abuse this freedom in order to compromise the American state, which was the sole guarantor and protector of these freedoms. The imposition of geographic travel restrictions reflected and shaped a global order that justified the confinement of dissidents in the U.S. and the use of violence abroad, largely against nonwhite peoples, to overturn governments that challenged the U.S. empire. Restrictions on the freedom of movement, through passport denials and revocations, geographic restrictions, and airport surveillance, were enacted in the name of protecting U.S. security and freedom. Freedom, courts and security officials argued, required the curtailment of actual existing freedom.

Mainstream critics of U.S. travel control policies largely did not question this equation of security and freedom. Writing in 1952, for example, the legal scholar Fowler Harper, did not object to the control of movement, “one of the greatest liberties recognized and protected by the common law,” but rather the lack of due process guarantees. Harper understood freedom and security as existing at polar opposites, and that the latter could be “restricted when the public good so requires.” National security, he argued, was “a public good of the highest order.”²¹ He and other commentators argued that freedoms of some, given some checks and balances, needed to be sacrificed in order for the preservation of the nation-state and freedom.

Whereas officials and liberal commentators understood travel as a means to cultivate support for U.S. foreign policy and the just rewards for obtaining middle-class status, activists emphasized that travel was fundamental to the creation and sustenance of bonds of international

²¹ Fowler Harper, “Our Paper Curtain,” *The Nation*, March 1, 1952, 200.

solidarity required to overcome a world created through imperialism, colonialism, and capitalism. For them, the question was not about correctly calibrating individual rights with the security prerogatives of the state. Rather, the freedom of movement championed by workers, journalists, and students was ancillary to a global transformational project. To them, it was crucial and revealing to witness the experiments in the Soviet Union, China, Cuba, and elsewhere, in order to transform the world. Only through witnessing these projects themselves could they assess their merits without the mediation of the U.S. government or corporate media. Restrictions on movement, they argued, could not be divorced from the larger project of U.S. empire.

The National Security State and Travel Control

Since the conclusion of WWII, the national security state has been understood as a core set of institutions, including the Department of Defense (DOD), the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and the National Security Council (NSC).²² All of these agencies developed in the wake of World War II after the passage of the 1947 National Security Act. Greatly influenced by the rise of geopolitics in international relations theory during the 1930s, advisers in the Truman administration understood national security through “correlations of power.” The nation’s security, these officials argued, was considered threatened whenever another state could directly attack the U.S., weaken its economy, or compromise its military supremacy. A number of scholars have asserted that World War II shattered earlier beliefs in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans’ efficacy as barriers to military attack. Historian Melvyn Leffler has argued that national security policy aimed not only to prevent the nation from being attacked, but sought to create an

²² I recognize that the modern state was, from its colonial origins, a national security state. I will trace this process in future research. However, for the purposes of this dissertation, I begin my analysis in the early twentieth century.

international ecosystem that closely mirrored U.S. domestic political institutions, encouraged economic growth, and made it possible for “industrial core nations...[to] find markets and raw materials in the underdeveloped periphery” of the colonized and decolonizing world.²³ To these officials, American security was threatened whenever any power could potentially gain superior position within or disrupt this system. The development of the national security state and its reigning ideology required the U.S. to permanently reorient its political economy towards the threat of total war. As a consequence, the national security state led to the insulation of foreign policy decisions from public accountability, the rise in state secrecy, the integration of military and civilian life, and, more broadly, the militarization of U.S. society.²⁴

Historians debate the genealogy of the institutions of the postwar national security state. Historian Alfred McCoy argues that U.S. colonialism in the Philippines served as the laboratory and foundation for the creation of a “domestic” surveillance state. Insulated from constitutional and legal restraints in the Philippines, military officials developed and honed novel tactics, bureaucratic processes, and surveillance technologies. These instruments and personnel traveled to the U.S. through the “capillaries of empire” during the World War I era, during which a surveillance state applied these lessons to so-called “subversive” populations in the U.S., namely

²³ Melvyn Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), 10.

²⁴ For militarization, see Michael Sherry, *In the Shadow of War: The United States Since the 1930s* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995); for the set of institutions and the reigning ideology of national security, see Michael Hogan, *A Cross of Iron: Harry S. Truman and the Origins of the National Security State, 1945-1954* (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Melvyn Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power*; Douglas T. Stewart, *Creating the National Security State: A History of the Law That Transformed America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008); and Daniel Yergin, *Shattered Peace: The Origins of the Cold War and the National Security State* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1977), among others.

African Americans, labor organizers, the Left, and immigrants.²⁵ Others, such as Daniel T. Stewart, cite World War II, particularly Pearl Harbor, as a paradigm-altering event that shifted dominant beliefs regarding international relations and the U.S.'s position in the world.²⁶ Recently, historians of U.S. foreign relations have underscored the importance of the New Deal and the late 1930s for the emergence of what would subsequently be labeled the national security state. Andrew Preston argues that a "national security doctrine" emerged as a consequence of FDR's New Deal and his conception of economic security as dependent on a stable global environment. The New Deal's regulation of capitalism to address its crisis could be applied, FDR and others argued, to the international system in order to both preserve capitalism and prevent the spread of fascism.²⁷ Daniel Bessner also sees in the 1930s a crucial moment for the national security state's development. The collapse of the Weimar Republic led some German-exile intellectuals who would be fundamental to the national security state and affiliated think tanks, such as RAND, to embrace antidemocratic politics in the name of saving democracy. Intellectuals such as Hans Speier argued that democracy's salvation in the face of authoritarianism, a term which collapsed Nazism and Soviet communism, required its

²⁵ Alfred McCoy, *Policing America's Empire: The United States, the Philippines, and the Rise of the Surveillance State* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009), 17. For the rise of surveillance in World War I, see Christopher Capozzola, *Uncle Sam Wants You: World War I and the Making of the Modern American Citizen* (Oxford, UK; New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 173-205; Mark Ellis, *Race, War, and Surveillance: African Americans and the United States Government during World War I* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2001).

²⁶ Douglas T. Stewart, *Creating the National Security State*. Daniel Yergin also cites World War II and the immediate post-WWII years as crucial.

²⁷ Andrew Preston, "Monsters Everywhere: A Genealogy of National Security," *Diplomatic History* Vol. 83, no. 3 (2014), 490-491.

transformation into “rule *for* the people, whose interests were determined by expert-influenced elites.”²⁸

Viewing the national security state from the vantage of the Passport Office and debates over travel control challenges the narrow post-1945 institutional and elite framework that has dominated the field. In so doing, it opens up space to examine how transnational flows of peoples and ideas both molded and tested the national security state, and how both “foreign” and “domestic” factors shaped the security state. The U.S. state’s response to American solidarity efforts to defend the Spanish Republic in the Spanish Civil War is illustrative. Spanish left-wing political parties cohered into a Popular Front and won the 1936 election on a platform of land reform and lessening inequality. That July, fascist generals organized a coup d’état against the elected government. While European nations, along with the U.S., pledged not to sell weapons to either side of the conflict, Nazi Germany and fascist Italy provided soldiers and materiel to the Nationalists, and the Soviet Union assisted the Spanish Republic. The Communist International called for the organization of military units from around the world, the International Brigades, to ward off the fascist threat. The CPUSA, which under its Popular Front strategy during the Great Depression reached its apogee in public support, organized the Abraham Lincoln Brigade. The ability of nearly three thousand Americans to travel to defend the Spanish Republic from fascism at a time when the U.S. declared itself neutral highlighted both the strength of left-wing internationalism and the state’s inability to prevent their departure. This experience led to greater state repression against the U.S. Left, strengthened the cooperation between the Passport Office and the FBI, and broadened the President’s war and emergency powers.

²⁸ Daniel Bessner, *Democracy in Exile: Hans Speier and the Rise of the Defense Intellectual* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018), 2.

“Traveling Dissent” also demonstrates the need to interrogate the institutional categories utilized by scholars to examine the national security state. The understanding that national security was fundamentally an “international” facing project is encapsulated in Melvyn Leffler’s definition of national security as a category of analysis: “National security policy encompasses the decisions and actions deemed imperative to protect domestic core values from external threats.”²⁹ This definition largely reflects the National Security Act’s nominal division of intelligence work into separate spheres, and as such, most national security scholars divorce “internal” security and “external/national” security projects. In contrast, I argue that scholars should not take this separation at face value. Rather, historians must interrogate how these boundaries were created, ignored, manipulated, and negotiated.³⁰ Policymakers in the late 1940s and beyond questioned the very ability to separate the “domestic” and “foreign.” The Intelligence Survey Group, convened in 1947-1948 to evaluate the national security state’s infrastructure, highlighted how officials feared that detaching “counter-intelligence and counter-espionage activities” failed to reflect cotemporary conditions. “[F]ifth column activities and espionage,” they wrote, “do not begin or end at our geographical frontiers, and our intelligence to counter them cannot be sharply divided on any such geographical basis.”³¹ The Passport Office

²⁹ Melvyn P. Leffler, “National Security,” in *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, 2nd ed., ed. Michael J. Hogan and Thomas G. Paterson (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 123.

³⁰ In a recently published volume, historians James T. Sparrow, William J. Novak, and Stephen W. Sawyer call on historians of the U.S. state to examine the “boundary conditions” of state “where the limits of government authority have revealed the principles of its operation.” Boundaries were not merely given nor reacted upon, but rather strategically crafted and deployed for particular purposes. James T. Sparrow, William J. Novak, and Stephen W. Sawyer, “Introduction,” in *Boundaries of the State in US History*, eds. James T. Sparrow, , William J. Novak, and Stephen W. Sawyer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 6-7.

³¹ “Report from the Intelligence Survey Group to the National Security Council.” NARA II, RG 59, Records of the Executive Secretariat, NSC Files: Lot 66D 148, Box 1555. *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1945-1950, Emergence of the Intelligence Establishment*, eds. C.

and other agencies associated with policing travel embodied this model. Their power not only policed the boundaries of the “foreign” and “domestic,” but the categorization of the passport as both an “internal” security and foreign policy document enabled the state to widen its jurisdiction and work between the very boundaries it established. Officials investigated how the behavior of individuals abroad would reflect on the U.S., and whether travel would potentially compromise industrial and political security in the U.S. Even those able to receive a passport were liable to have it rescinded if their actions contradicted or challenged U.S. prerogatives. Thus, the passport served as an instrument of post-exit social control.³² Understanding travel control as a multifaceted instrument enables us to see the contentious processes through which borders were imagined and constructed at a moment when new technologies, warfare, and economic power transcended those borders at a more rapid pace.

Examining travel control cannot be divorced from examining the larger processes of U.S. empire in the second half of the twentieth century. Few historians of the security state have examined the Passport Office as an institution or its power over mobility . In an era when men dominated the instruments of national security policy, until 1977, the Passport Office was led by two women, Ruth B. Shipley (1928-1955) and Frances G. Knight (1955-1977). Both worked closely with the FBI and counted among their allies virulent anticommunists in Congress and the State Department. Together, they and other bureaucrats accumulated millions of pages on U.S. citizens and evaluated whether individuals questionable political commitments should be

Thomas Thorne, Jr. and Davis S. Patterson (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1996), Document 358. Last Accessed May 15, 2019.

<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945-50Intel/d358>

³² This conceptualization borrows from legal scholar Dan Kanstroom’s argument that deportation serves as an instrument of “post-entry social control.” See Dan Kanstroom, *Deportation Nation: Outsiders in American History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007), 91-130.

permitted to leave the U.S. By 1971, the Passport Office confirmed to congressional investigators the existence of what it termed a “lookout list,” a “secret, computerized file of 243,135 Americans whose applications for passports may be of interest to intelligence and police agencies.”³³ When discussed, travel control is most often utilized as an index of *domestic* political repression during the Second Red Scare, or limited to the denial of passports in the 1950s.³⁴ Moshik Temkin’s recent work is an exception. He details how France and the U.S., with distinct motivations, collaborated to police American and other activists in France critical of the Vietnam War in order to sever the connective tissues of internationalist movements.³⁵ Scholar Jeffrey Kahn has recently chronicled the legal history of passports in the twentieth century U.S. Kahn documents how justices and lawyers rooted the right to travel in the Fifth Amendment rather than the First which offered substantially more constitutional protections for travel.³⁶

This dissertation expands on Kahn’s work by setting the legal framework into a broader political and social context to demonstrate travel control was shaped by the unforeseen consequences of administrative processes, activists’ determination to cross national borders, and law. In addition, I examine the competing meanings attached to mobility within the security state and amongst activists themselves. Finally, I examine the shifting modalities of travel control

³³ Passport Office has Secret File,” *New York Times*, February 11, 1971.

³⁴ See, for example, Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 61-63; Ellen Schrecker, *Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company 1999), 271-272.

³⁵ Moshik Temkin, “American Internationalists in France and the Politics of Travel Control in the Era of Vietnam,” *Outside In: The Transnational Circuitry of US History*, eds. Andrew Preston and Douglas C. Rossinow (Oxford, UK; New York: University of Oxford Press, 2017), 247-268.

³⁶ Jeffrey Kahn, *Mrs. Shipley’s Ghost: The Right to Travel and Terrorist Watch Lists* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2013).

otherwise ignored by Kahn and other scholars, including the imposition of geographically targeted travel restrictions and the development of the first airport security program.

“Traveling Dissent” also follows the call issued by historian Jennifer Luff for a “social history of the modern security state.” Luff’s model differs from Margot Canaday’s social history in that the former asks historians to consider the “ways in which citizens often collaborated in [the security state’s] construction.”³⁷ Individuals were not mere objects of the security state. In fact, many non-state actors, often unwittingly, shaped the contours of the security state through their subversion of boundaries and public critiques. The passport application provides one example of this process. This application placed the individual within the nexus of the security apparatus and began a process of securitizing the individual’s mobility and identity. It was through this process that an individual became “legible” to the state, in the words of anthropologist James C. Scott.³⁸ However, the Passport Office’s ability to prevent the mobility of those they considered politically suspect was contingent on the information they and other agencies possessed. Files contained documents produced by various entities beyond the Passport Office, including State Department officials, embassies abroad, airline and passenger-ship companies, various citizens, and intelligence agencies. The file itself traveled through different institutional channels to the FBI, CIA, the country and area desks of the State Department, and the Department of Justice (DOJ). Each time it traveled, the file and the applicant’s journeys took on new contexts and new meanings, and catalyzed relationships and operations through which

³⁷ Jennifer Luff, “Covert and Overt Operations: Interwar Political Policing in the United States and the United Kingdom,” *The American Historical Review* 122, no. 3 (2017): 755. Margot Canaday defines her approach as one in which the state is best seen through what officials, “at all levels, do. Margot Canaday, *The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 5-6.

³⁸ James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 2-3.

security functioned. As this this dissertation's chapters demonstrate, individuals could complicate the efforts of state officials through purposeful omissions of their itineraries and departure dates, and applying close to their date of departure. Rather than high-profile left-wing figures, such as William Patterson, W.E.B. Du Bois, or Paul Robeson, organizations mobilized local activists with a lower national profile. Due to the failure of the passport regime to prevent unauthorized travel, security officials resorted to geographic travel restrictions in order to prevent travel to particular countries and consolidate the state's control over mobility. Travel control practices emerged and were reformulated through quotidian negotiations and actions, not as a result of prefigured plans. These vulnerabilities in the state's regime were generative of new security measures that remain with us to this day.³⁹

This project is also in conversation with the work of scholars who have interrogated the relationships between security, insecurity, and the law. In the past nearly two decades after September 11, 2001, scholars have sought to examine the histories of and novel changes produced by laws like the Patriot Act and War on Terror. Some commentators understood the

³⁹ Thank you to Christian Anderson who pointed me to Timothy Mitchell's work to develop this line of argument. Timothy Mitchell, *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002). My analysis of the security state has also been influenced by recent work in anthropology. Matthew S. Hall calls for an associational perspective of the state that examines how material objects and communication mobilize and reorganize system of knowledge and individuals into different assemblages that enable what gets labeled state power. Such a perspective avoids the reification of the boundaries of "state" and "society" and enables scholars to interrogate how these boundaries become historically constructed and negotiated. Matthew S. Hall, *Government of Paper: The Materiality of Bureaucracy in Urban Pakistan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012). Hall builds off of Timothy Mitchell's influential 1991 article; Timothy Mitchell, "The Limits of the State: Beyond Statist Approaches and their Critics," *The American Political Science Review* 85, no. 1 (1991): 77-96. My understanding of security practices and the state has also been shaped by Michel Foucault's lectures on biopower, governmentality, and war. Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977-1978*, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Picador Books, 2007); Michel Foucault, *Society Must be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-1976*, trans. David Macey (New York: Penguin Books, 2003).

moment as a rupture in history, as the beginning of a new era that unleashed unforeseen surveillance technologies and executive power. Many, following Giorgio Agamben, understood the War on Terror as a “state of exception” in which the executive declared itself outside of the law in the name of the law.⁴⁰ Others understand emergency powers as unexceptional to the law. To dichotomize “normal” and “exceptional” law suggests that there is an ahistorical, apolitical “normal” function of law. Even critics of the War on Terror have echoed the objections made at mid-century by Fowler Hopper: that war requires that rights be calibrated or “balanced” with concerns over national security. Others have challenged this equation. Historian Mary Dudziak argues that the persistence of war through the twentieth and twenty-first centuries demonstrates that rather than an exception, war and emergency powers have become the norm.⁴¹ Political theorist Mark Neocleous locates the normalization of war powers in the confrontation between capital and workers at the turn of the twentieth century. Neocleous notes that the law and the state of exception are not antithetical, but rather than “*suspending* the law, violent actions conducted in ‘emergency conditions’ have been legitimized *through* law on the grounds of necessity and in the name of security.”⁴² “Traveling Dissent” follows this second line of argument. As demonstrated, Congress routinely gave the Executive and Secretary of State wide discretionary authority in the realm of travel control in the name of national security, which were largely confirmed by the courts. Understanding travel control enables us to understand how

⁴⁰ Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception*, trans. Kevin Attell (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005).

⁴¹ Mary Dudziak, *War Time: An Idea, Its History, Its Consequences* (Oxford, UK; New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 5.

⁴² Mark Neocleous, *Critique of Security* (Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), 71.

emergency powers became normalized through the discourse and politics of security over time, and how individuals attempted to resist this normalization.

Travel Control and Borders

This dissertation also expands on migration and borderlands studies to demonstrate how the airport came to be understood as a legal border. Scholars have excavated the ways in which the notion of sovereign, territorial borders have been both constitutive of regimes of exclusion and overcome through the personal relationships, economic ties, and cultural ligaments of borderland communities.⁴³ The majority of this literature focuses on exclusionary migration laws and the distinct political economies of the U.S.-Mexico and U.S.-Canadian borderlands. Borders emerged as important sites of sovereign power in the late nineteenth century as the U.S., Canada, and other settler colonial states attempted to prevent the migration of Chinese, Japanese, and Indian workers. While new scholarship examines the externalization of migration control and the policing of borders, we still know very little about the processes by which people were allowed to *leave* the country. Officials concerned with the *departure* of individuals, regardless of citizenship status, utilized immigration law and practices as a foundation for exit control. However, borders do not merely operate at the territorial demarcations of the nation-state, but rather exist and structure social practices in a variety of locations, from Indian reservations to

⁴³ Chicana feminist scholar Gloria Anzaldúa has described the U.S.-Mexico border as “*una herida abierta*,” an open wound unable to be completely healed. While borders attempt to stop the bleeding, “before a scab forms it hemorrhages again, the lifeblood of two worlds merging to form a third country – a border culture.” The border itself hopes to seal this wound of violence. The “border culture” is a sign of the simultaneous excess of state violence *and* the inability for the nation-state to contain a particular cultural formation produced in and through that violence. Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, 3rd Ed. (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 2008), 25.

heterogeneous urban communities in Chicago.⁴⁴ This dissertation explains how the airport as a national security space operated as a border through the latter half of the twentieth century. The airport was imagined as a space threatened by both social movements against white supremacy in the U.S. and international anticolonial movements. Airport security was a site of racialization. Its function, among other things, was to “contain” dissidents through the applications of surveillance technologies designed to “clear” some individuals for travel while impeding the movement of others.

While travel control practices developed out of and were distinct from immigration laws and procedures, it is important to understand them as interconnected processes of mobility control. Sociologist Ronen Shafir’s work on globalization as a mobility regime is useful for understanding these connections. Shafir argues that contemporary theorizations of globalization overemphasize it as a rupture from more traditional understandings of sovereignty and territoriality. Rather than understanding closure and openness as antithetical principles, Shafir posits that globalization should be understood as related aspects of the same mobility regime. The regulation of exit and entry are not synonymous but rather exist “along a continuum of

⁴⁴ The historiography of borders and borderlands history of the Southwest is too voluminous to cite here. Examples include Kelly Lytle Hernández, *Migra! A History of the U.S. Border Patrol* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010); Joseph Nevins, *Operation Gatekeeper: The Rise of the “Illegal Alien” and the Making of the U.S.-Mexico Boundary* (New York: Routledge, 2002); Mae Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004); Seema Sohi, *Echoes of Mutiny: Race, Surveillance, and Indian Anticolonialism in North America* (Oxford, UK; New York: University of Oxford Press, 2014). For a discussion of the need to expand borderlands studies, see Kelly Lytle Hernández, “Borderlands and the Future History of the American West,” *Western Historical Quarterly* 43 (2011): 325-330. For how the border and citizenship operate in Chicago, see Nicolas De Genova and Ana Y Ramos-Zayas, *Latino Crossings: Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and the Politics of Race and Citizenship* (New York: Routledge, 2003). For the externalization of migration control, see Elliot Young, *Alien Nation: Chinese Migration in the Americas from the Coolie Era through World War II* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2014).

practices designed to consolidate a mobility regime in general and to strategically distance suspect social elements in particular.”⁴⁵ Mobility regimes are multiscalar and are connected by a particular operational logic, or as Shamir argues, a “paradigm of suspicion” that connects movement with crime.⁴⁶ Seeing these controls as along a continuum allows scholars to examine the distinct yet connected facets of each, and to root them in the same historical context. The cold war mobility regime described here sought to simultaneously encourage the movement of individuals who would benefit the U.S., among them tourists, representatives of capital, and soldiers, while preventing the departure and entry of those deemed subversive to the state. This mobility regime drew its knowledge, laws, and infrastructure from the experiences of immigration exclusion. It operated at various scales including the local through the submission of applications, the state through investigation of individuals by the Passport Office, and the global through travel restrictions, embassy surveillance, and the expiration of travel documents. However, the very mobility regime that sought to simultaneously encourage movement and demobilize dissidents produced the very means through which this could mobility regime could be resisted, manipulated, and negotiated.

Social Movement History

In addition to highlighting organizations largely overlooked in the historiography, such as the American Committee to Survey Labor Conditions in Europe and the Student Committee for Travel to Cuba, this dissertation documents how the national security state was challenged and shaped by transnational forces and non-state actors. Recent work by Aaron J. Leonard and Conor A. Gallagher has demonstrated the necessity of fully examining the relationships between social

⁴⁵ Ronen Shamir, “Without Borders? Notes on Globalization as a Mobility Regime,” *Sociological Theory* 23, 2 (2005), 206.

⁴⁶ Shamir, “Without Borders?,” 203.

movements and the security state. They document the creation of a Maoist organization by the FBI called the Ad Hoc Committee for a Marxist-Leninist Line in 1962 that sought to foment unrest within the CPUSA by exploiting the ongoing Sino-Soviet split. Leonard and Gallagher document how the FBI sought to use the Ad Hoc Committee and its infrastructure through the early 1980s to disrupt communist and Maoist organizations in the U.S. Their work underscores the importance of examining how “determined, organized resistance and political repression are intimately intertwined.”⁴⁷ “Traveling Dissent” also expands on the literature of political policing by documenting the ways political policing in the cold war era operated abroad as well as in the U.S.⁴⁸ Defeating the Left was not an end unto itself; government repression was part of a larger project of creating a world conducive for capitalism and U.S. power. “Traveling Dissent” demonstrates not only how social movements and activists impacted and contested the cold war mobility regime, but how repression and surveillance of the Left was foundational to the refinement and expansion of the security state’s surveillance powers.

Following Leonard and Gallagher’s argument, “Traveling Dissent” emphasizes the importance of examining questions of state power and transnationalism in tandem. This is not to

⁴⁷ Aaron J. Leonard and Conor A. Gallagher, *Heavy Radicals: The FBI’s Secret War on America’s Maoists The Revolutionary Union/Revolutionary Communist Party 1968-1980* (Winchester, UK; Washington, D.C.: Zero Books, 2014), 3. For more on the Ad Hoc Committee, see also Aaron J. Leonard and Conor A. Gallagher, *A Threat of the First Magnitude: FBI Counterintelligence & Infiltration From the Communist Party to the Revolutionary Union 1962-1974* (London, UK: Repeater Books, 2017).

⁴⁸ Most of the extensive literature on cold war-era political policing focuses on either the domestic repression of the CPUSA or the FBI’s COINTELPRO program. For COINTELPRO see Ward Churchill and Jim Vander Wall, *The COINTELPRO Papers: Documents from the FBI’s Secret Wars Against Dissent in the United States* (New York: South End Press, 1990); David Cunningham, *There’s Something Here: the New Left, the Klan, and FBI Counterintelligence* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), among others. For the FBI’s work in Operation SOLO, which sought to document any connections between the Soviet Union and CPUSA, see John Barron, *Operation SOLO: The FBI’s Man in the Kremlin* (Washington: Regnery Publishers, 1996).

discount the crucial and enlightening work of scholars critiquing the nation-state as the sole frame of analysis.⁴⁹ However, particularly within the context of transnational social movements, the omission of the state can operate to replicate narratives of globalization which construct a teleology of a more inclusive U.S. nation-state and global environment, and depict borders as antiquated and easily overcome. “Traveling Dissent” documents how struggles over mobility both generated new forms of state power *and* resistance.⁵⁰ Paul Kramer has recently promoted the use of “the imperial” as a category of analysis to examine asymmetrical power relations to operate at multiple scales.

Notes on Sources

This dissertation draws upon an array of sources, including archival documents, newspapers, travel diaries, Congressional hearings, and embassy cables. Some of these sources have not been cited in previous scholarship, including the recently declassified documents from the FBI’s file of the American Committee to Survey Labor Conditions in Europe (nearly one

⁴⁹ The literature on transnational methodology has expanded greatly over the last twenty years. Examples include Laura Briggs, Gladys McCormick, and J.T. Way, “Transnationalism: A Category of Analysis,” *American Quarterly* 60, no. 3 (2008): 625-648; Micol Seigel, “Beyond Compare: Comparative Method after the Transnational Turn,” *Radical History Review* 91 (Winter 2005): 62-90; David Thelen, “The Nation and Beyond: Transnational Perspectives on United States History,” *Journal of American History* 86, no. 3 (1999): 965-975; Ian Tyrrell, *Transnational Nation: United States History in Global Perspective since 1789* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007). For a critique on the language of the “transnational” that promotes the idea of a “transborder” to emphasize the border’s structural and haunting impact on Mexican immigrant communities in the U.S. West, see Lynn Stephen, *Transborder Lives: Indigenous Oaxacans in Mexico, California, and Oregon* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007).

⁵⁰ A noted exception to this silencing of the state are imperial histories of the United States which have explored transnational dimensions of state building. However, these studies have often been confined to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. See Alfred McCoy and Francisco A. Scarano, eds., *The Colonial Crucible: Empire in the Making of the Modern American State* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009). See also Paul A. Kramer, “Power and Connection: Imperial Histories of the United States in the World,” *American Historical Review* 116, no. 5 (2011): 1348-1391.

thousand two hundred pages and counting) and William Worthy's passport file (approximately three thousand pages). I also conducted oral history interviews with several of the subjects of this dissertation. Historians of the national security state are hamstrung by the increased use of security classifications to withhold documents and the slow pace of declassification. Even when able to obtain records from organizations such as the FBI and CIA, most documents contain extensive redactions for reasons ranging from legitimate privacy concerns to vague national security justifications. Historians must also be careful with such documents and understand that published and archival documents largely reflect the interests and politics of the agency that produced them. In order to understand both the perspectives of the security state and the activists whose travels the state attempted to curtail, I conducted interviews with a range of participants, including two informants for the security state.

Chapter Outline

This dissertation is composed of five chapters that trace different dimensions of the story outlined above. Chapter One charts the development of the Passport Office's authority and its place within the national security state. I first demonstrate how officials used established practices and laws for immigration exclusion as a template for the first Travel Control Act. Concern over egress crystalized during World War I when military and intelligence officials highlighted that individual citizens cooperating with enemy nations could easily move through the nation's borders. The Travel Control Act remained in force until 1921, and the Office's work increasingly concentrated on policing the movement of suspected left-wing radicals amidst the First Red Scare. Debates over the meanings of national security and neutrality, and the increased use of emergency powers in the late 1930s formed the context for the Office's increasing efforts to police individuals even in the absence of war. The chapter then considers the question of how

the Passport Office became, as an institution that defined and policed a normative traveling public for the projection of U.S. power abroad, became a crucial part of the national security state.

While the denial of travel documents proved to be one crucial method of preventing the departure of suspected radicals during the Second Red Scare, the Passport Office's ability to contain all dissidents remained incomplete. Chapter Two examines how a small organization affiliated with the CPUSA, the American Committee to Survey Labor Conditions in Europe (ACSLCE) evaded the state's travel controls. Members of radical unions, such as the Union of Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers of America (UE), and the CPUSA traveled to Western and Eastern Europe in 1951 and 1952 in order to document the social and political conditions faced by ordinary workers in Russia, France, and Italy. The ACSLE successfully traveled to the Soviet Union through simple measures, including applying for passports at the height of the travel season, recruiting people with smaller profiles, and using non-U.S. flagship aircraft. However, this was not just the story of an organization successfully able to escape the Passport Office's policing power. Recently declassified FBI documents demonstrate that the Bureau successfully placed at least one informant in the group with the intention of exploiting the connections forged by the organization and expanding its surveillance operations abroad. The FBI and State Department were at odds over the controls that could be deployed to control travel. Whereas the FBI hoped to exploit the organization for intelligence, the State Department feared that any cracks in their "paper curtain" would result in negative publicity and Congressional investigations. The imposition of geographic travel restrictions to countries not at war with the United States was a novel travel control instrument and, I argue, resolved competing interests in the national security state. Travel was not completely banned. Rather, it was carefully scrutinized

managed in ways that prohibited individuals from traveling to proscribed states, largely socialist and communist, unless they received permission from the Passport Office. Violators of the bans faced potential fines, imprisonment, and the suspension of their ability to leave the country.

Chapter Three examines how geographic travel restrictions were legitimated by the U.S. legal system and extended the political policing power largely identified with the early 1950s. It focuses on the case of William Worthy, an anticolonial journalist with the *Baltimore Afro-American*, to examine how country-specific travel restrictions operated within a racialized power structure. Travel restrictions classified China as a racialized, threatening enemy, even as they obscured the role of U.S. imperialism in the region. These restrictions also aimed to sever the roots of transnational movements striving to construct an alternative to U.S. capitalism. Worthy was the first journalist to travel to China after the imposition of the travel ban in 1950, and his experiences with the national security state complicate the existing narrative of McCarthyism and the Passport Office. Many historians cite the 1957 *Kent* decision ruled it unconstitutional to deny passports on the basis of one's political beliefs until the Attorney General had ordered a final registration order as a sign of the waning power of travel control powers. In contrast, I argue that Worthy's case demonstrates the normalization and extension of these security mechanisms.

Examining the experiences of the Student Committee for Travel to Cuba (SCTC) in the 1960s, Chapter Four examines how and why these geographic travel restrictions became difficult to enforce. As Cuba came to be understood as an "internal" security threat to the United States, officials at the State Department and FBI viewed SCTC as the material link connecting "domestic" social movements to "foreign" socialist and communist movements. Although breaking the travel ban to assert "travel rights" was the not the intended purpose of the SCTC,

the state's failure to convict the organization's leaders for violating the ban removed the threat of prison and/or fines for violating travel bans.

Chapter Five examines the birth of contemporary travel control, airport security, and the centrality of race to its genesis. All prior attempts at preventing the departure of activists in the 1950s and 1960s had confronted the inability of authorities to prevent the departure of individuals from U.S. airports. The use of international aircraft and multi-country routes confounded the state's ability to prevent individuals who intended to travel to restricted countries from departing the U.S. However, while the concern over the connections between U.S. radical social movements and international movements remained, methods for policing these connections shifted. The fear over these connections motivated the architects of the first airport security program. The chapter concludes by examining how the metal detector replicated the logic of the passport system which rendered every traveler, regardless of political profile, a potential threat in need of close surveillance.

Chapter 1

Towards Permanent Emergency: The Passport Division and Controlling Mobility, 1918-1952

In late 1947, longtime CPUSA journalist and leader Max Weiss submitted a passport application to attend the upcoming meeting of the National Convention of the Communist Party of Italy. Although Weiss' request was still under consideration when the convention met, State Department official John E. Peurifoy believed it raised "a serious and fundamental policy question as to whether a passport should be issued to an American citizen, avowedly a member of the Communist Party, to travel to a disturbed area with the definite policy of engaging in activities contrary to our foreign policy."⁵¹ Economic, political, and social conditions in Europe at the time were of immediate concern to top officials. As postwar recovery efforts languished, Western Europe political parties, including communists, demanded greater structural transformations than liberal capitalism could provide. U.S. officials feared the inclusion of communist parties in postwar coalition governments in countries such as France and Italy, worrying that such governments would lead to the legitimization of communist parties globally and portend the fall of Western Europe. This reflected the assumption that all communist parties followed the dictates of the Soviet Union rather than retaining local autonomy. In response, the U.S. used Italy's 1948 election as a laboratory for the development of "political warfare," a

⁵¹ Peurifoy and Lovett, "Passports for Communists," January 8, 1948. Folder "1947-1950 PD-Communists," Box 1, Records Relating to Passports, 1944-1953, General Records of the Department of State, Record Group (RG) 59, National Archives at College Park, College Park, MD (NACP).

program developed to counter communism and other radical critiques of capitalism through the weaponization of foreign aid, political consultation, and clandestine operations.⁵²

The restriction of mobility through passport control was crucial to this foreign policy. While laws and emergency powers originating in the late 1930s and World War II empowered the Passport Division to significantly circumscribe Americans' ability to travel abroad, could the Division suspend an individual's right to travel in the name of national security absent active hostilities? There was a consensus that Weiss' opposition to U.S. foreign policy and his travel to Italy could prove "harmful to...[U.S.] objectives [there]..." but neither his beliefs nor political affiliations were crimes.⁵³ This chapter explores several questions that both government officials and those they sought to restrict grappled with in the aftermath of World War II. Could the state determine where an individual could and could not travel, or did such power exist only during an actual war? To what degree could Americans be politically active abroad, and could the state define the boundaries of permissible behavior? Did Americans' freedom of speech end at the territorial limits of the nation-state, or were these rights recognized as inhered in the person rather than the territory? Was it legitimate to prevent individuals from leaving the country?

Max Weiss' case also demonstrated the global stakes of detaining U.S. citizens within the nation. Peurifoy believed a denial of Weiss' travel rights could be justified due to the latter's political views and "the historical power in the Secretary [of State] to deny a

⁵² For more on the U.S. in Italy, see Kaeten Mistry, "The Case for Political Warfare: Strategy, Organization and US Involvement in the 1948 Italian Election," *Cold War History* 6, no. 3 (2006): 301-329. Mistry argues that the "success" of the US's interventions in the election is questionable, and that such claims are tied to larger Italian and American narratives either to explain away real strategic and political difficulties amongst Italian leftist parties and braggadocio among CIA cheerleaders. Kaeten Mistry, "Approaches to Understanding the Inaugural CIA Covert Operation in Italy: Exploding Myths," *Intelligence and National Security* 26, no. 3 (2011): 246-268.

⁵³ Peurifoy and Lovett, "Passports for Communists," January 8, 1948.

passport...whenever its issuance would be prejudicial to our foreign policy.” Such action, however, risked being interpreted as “an abridgement of the rights of such a citizen to obtain an indicia [sic] of citizenship” and provide fodder for critics of U.S. foreign policy at home and abroad. On its face, this would appear to contradict the U.S.’s stated commitment to “preserving the freedom which we are struggling to preserve.”⁵⁴ As the cold war began framing most policy decisions, officials attempted to illustrate to the world, particularly decolonizing nations, that the U.S. supported the freedom of movement, while simultaneously narrowing political imaginations through political repression, including the removal of some individuals’ ability to leave the country. Many State Department officials rejected Peurifoy’s hesitancy. To them, it was perfectly legitimate and coherent to curb the rights of alleged communists and promote the freedom of movement; the latter, they argued, was only possible through the denial of the former’s ability to travel internationally. State Department legal adviser Richard W. Flournoy believed that the continued validity of FDR’s Executive Order 7856, which provided the Secretary of State with discretionary authority over the issuance of passports, and World War I-era immigration laws fully justified the withholding of passports. He rejected the suggestion that the state required concrete evidence to contain an individual within the U.S., recommending that “the mere lack of ‘evidence of subversive purpose’ is not enough to justify the issuance of a passport to an avowed Communist.” Such political beliefs and “participation in the Communist movement under the Third International cannot be in accord with full loyalty to the United

⁵⁴ Peurifoy and Lovett, “Passports for Communists,” January 8, 1948.

States.”⁵⁵ For Flournoy and others, obtaining the passport was not a right, but instead a reward for political loyalty.

The internal debates within the State Department over travel policy highlight many of the questions raised by the postwar impulses to simultaneously promote American power via global exchange and silence critics of such a project. Discussions over the extent and use of state power had immediate and global ramifications. Although the cold war provided an opening for moderate civil rights reform at the cost of larger socioeconomic and political changes globally, the same cannot be said for the freedom of movement. To understand the growth of global travel amidst increasing state control over international mobility, we need to look beyond the post-WWII cold war era and situate the development of the passport as an instrument of political policing in the larger context of shifts in immigration law and understandings of war and state power.

The cold war heightened the use of the passport as a means of political repression, but the Passport Division’s control over mobility developed over the first half of the twentieth century and reflected Americans’ changing understanding of security, borders, and war. Prior to 1978, U.S. citizens and nations were only required to obtain a passport to depart the country when the U.S. was in a state of war or during a declared state of emergency. However, after World War II, the U.S. was technically not in a state of war with socialist and communist states. Could a passport be required absent a declared state of war? While the requirement to hold a passport signaled the existence of a state of war, its impact on Americans’ mobility was predicated and drew from precedents in immigration law. Utilized to construct a global racial order, the

⁵⁵ FDR, Executive Order 7856, March 31, 1938; qtd. in Flournoy to Tate, “The Refusal of Passports to Communists,” January 12, 1948, 2-3. Folder “1947-1950 PD-Communists,” Box 1, Records Relating to Passports, 1944-1953, RG 59, NACP.

document proved malleable for what would be termed “internal security” in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

The national security state was fixated on communism because they understood it as an international threat to capitalism, colonialism, and white supremacy. After the Russian Revolution, Communism replaced anarchism as both the most popular radical political project globally and the ideological enemy of the U.S. state. The Bolshevik call for the transformation of World War I from an inter-imperial conflict into a global anticolonial and anti-imperial struggle challenged the Wilsonian vision of a postwar world system.⁵⁶ The Third Communist International, otherwise known as the Comintern, provided a vehicle through which communists and radicals could challenge colonialism as a global front. The organization nurtured links between radical organizations across national boundaries, and its declared commitment to national liberation, particularly in Africa and Asia, led to communism’s popularity among colonized peoples already waging liberation struggles. As historian Minkah Makalani argues, black and Asian radicals challenged the intellectual boundaries of Marxism to retheorize the relationships between race, capitalism, colonialism, and revolution. For example, Indian radical

⁵⁶ For the popularity of anarchism in the U.S., see Jennifer Guglielmo, *Living the Revolution: Italian Women’s Resistance and Radicalism in New York City, 1880-1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010); Kenyon Zimmer, *Immigrants against the State: Yiddish and Italian Anarchism in America* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2015). On the relationships between anarchist movements, colonialism, and state repression, see Benedict Anderson, *Under Three Flags: Anarchism and the Anti-Colonial Imagination* (New York: Verso, 2005); Moon-Ho Jung, “Seditious Subjects: Race, State Violence, and the U.S. Empire,” *Journal of Asian American Studies* 14, no. 2 (2011): 221-247; Julia Rose Kraut, “Global Anti-Anarchism: The Origins of Ideological Deportation and the Suppression of Expression,” *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies* 19, no. 1 (2012): 169-193; and Alexander Noonan, “‘What Must Be the Answer of the United States to Such a Proposition?’ Anarchist Exclusion and National Security in the United States, 1887-1903,” *Journal of American Studies* 50, no. 2 (2016): 347-376. For Wilsonianism and the anticolonial challenges to it, see Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (Oxford, UK; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

Manabendra Nath (M.N.) Roy argued that national liberation struggles could not be subsidiary to European proletarian revolution but that eradicating colonial structures in Africa and Asia would provide the foundation for revolution in Europe and beyond. In the United States, African American and Afro-Caribbean radicals participating in the African Blood Brotherhood, including Claude McKay, quickly understood the opportunity presented by the Comintern to foster global networks. They too pushed the Comintern to understand racial hierarchy as central to capitalism and colonialism, organize African diasporic and colonized peoples, and organize an anticolonial conference convened in Brussels in 1927.⁵⁷ Measures to control mobility, as demonstrated below, were designed to hinder the development of these networks.

This chapter argues that the passport controls largely identified with McCarthyism of the 1950s had their precedents in immigration law and the late 1930s. In the late 1930s, officials increasingly understood U.S. security as indelibly connected to the security (largely defined as maintaining stable, nominally representative governments allowing access to U.S. corporations) of other countries. Officials worried that absent a state of war, the U.S. had little control over the geography and conduct of individuals leaving the U.S., regardless of citizenship status. Their conduct, they noted, could prove detrimental to the U.S. despite their physical presence abroad. The Passport Division's powers grew as a result of this developing understanding of national security. The containment of political opponents within the borders of the U.S. dovetailed with immigration exclusion. Whereas the latter aimed to expel and exclude "foreign" ideologies and racialized non-white populations, the former was designed to dissipate the "contagion" of these very ideologies.

⁵⁷ Minkah Makalani, *In the Cause of Freedom: Radical Black Internationalism from Harlem to London, 1917-1939* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 79-97.

While we continue to learn how the state has utilized deportation and immigration laws to exclude those deemed racially or politically inadmissible to the nation, we know very little about the processes by which people were permitted or denied the right to *leave* the country. Passport denial and revocation, historians have documented, was a key instrument of government repression aimed at removing criticisms of U.S. foreign policy from the world stage and nationalizing freedom movements.⁵⁸ However, the processes by which people were denied a passport, or why travel control came to be understood as a key instrument of political policing, remain largely unexplored. In part, this absence reflects the dearth of accessible records. The State Department retains thousands of records related to passports and those transferred to the National Archives have yet to be opened to scholars. Moreover, it also reflects the ongoing destruction of records at all levels of the federal government. Requests for individual passport files using the Freedom of Information Act revealed that a significant portion of these records were destroyed in the 1980s. Finally, a conceptual gap between histories of mobility, transnational social movements, and the national security state also contributes to this scholarly absence. This divide is replicated in the histories of policing social movements where the “foreign” and “domestic” are treated as separate domains of historical inquiry.

This chapter bridges this divide by placing “internal security” and actions abroad – typically referred to as “national security” – within the same analytical frame. In what follows, I explain how the Passport Division accrued its authority to construct and police a traveling public. I also examine the place of the Passport Division within the national security state, and how the

⁵⁸ For example, see Mary Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Nikhil Pal Singh, *Black is a Country: Race and the Unfinished Struggle for Democracy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004); Penny Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937-1957* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997).

passport came to be understood as an “internal security” document. Part one details how immigration law served as a template for the first laws and policies crafted to control egress from the United States. Officials understood the containment of individuals deemed dangerous by the state as complementary to immigration exclusion. Part two explains how shifting conceptions of national security, neutrality, and the development of emergency powers in the late 1930s and World War II formed the foundation for the Passport Division’s authority in the early cold war. I then document how the passport operated as a national security document in the early cold war amidst the creation of a permanent state of emergency. Throughout the interwar period and the early cold war, the Division played a crucial role in the production of a normalized traveling public. At the same time that governments worldwide developed mechanisms to facilitated unprecedented levels of international capital and individual mobility, borders were reconstructed through documentary regimes and immigration laws affecting both foreign migrants and U.S. citizens. Enabling the mobility of some required disabling the mobility of others both within and outside the nation. Political repression, I demonstrate, was never understood as an end unto itself but was foundational to the larger, global order the U.S. aimed to establish and maintain.

Exclusion and Containment

Despite nineteenth century precedents, the requirement to possess a passport to *leave* the United States was a product of World War I.⁵⁹ By 1918, officials with the State Department,

⁵⁹ The Page Act (1875) and Chinese Exclusion Act (1882) ushered in a documentary regime governing international mobility. The 1882 Act required those exempt Chinese men and women in China to obtain certificates confirming their personal identity, class, and reputation. Those wishing to leave the U.S. temporarily needed to obtain certificates to ensure reentry. However, the Scott Act of 1888 denied reentry rights to those who could not prove “they had a wife, child, or parent in the United States, or owned at least \$1000 of property.” Torpey, *The Invention of the Passport*, 99. For the use of the passport to police immigrants, particularly from Asia, see Adam McKeown, *Melancholy Order*; Torpey, *The Invention of the Passport*; Craig Robertson, *The Passport in America*; Radhika Viyas Mongia, “Race, Nationality, Mobility: A

military intelligence, Bureau of Immigration, and Justice Department believed a passport law was necessary due to the questionable legality of the State Department's wartime practice of requiring passports for egress. Such legislation would not only solidify the state's control over mobility, they argued, but would facilitate the development of an infrastructure to "adequately investigate citizens way in the interior of the country who apply for passports."⁶⁰ Officials' anxieties centered on the U.S.-Mexico borderlands as the fear of the Mexican Revolution and the Zimmerman telegram was compounded by the ability of so-called "friendly aliens," in this case "Turks and Syrians," to cross multiple times undetected.⁶¹ While longstanding agreements with the British along the Canadian border, a product of efforts at policing and excluding Asian workers and anticolonial dissidents, and transit companies along the coast offered a sense of security to officialdom, the U.S.-Mexico border was described as an anarchic space available for anyone, friend or foe, to escape notice and travel elsewhere. Conceptually moving the border within the country extended the power of the state and added containment to the document's prior exclusionary function. Passports were a tool in a global war and supplemented the immigration officials and military guards already present.⁶²

To officials, containment and immigrant exclusion were not antithetical modalities of power, but mutually reinforcing processes of controlling mobility. Anti-radicalism and xenophobia dovetailed in the official justifications for requiring passports to manage the egress

History of the Passport." For a discussion on the passport and race in the nineteenth century, see Elizabeth Stordeur Pryor, *Colored Travelers*, 103-125.

⁶⁰ U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Control of Travel From and Into the United States: Hearings before the Committee on Foreign Affairs*, 65th Cong., 2nd sess., 1918, 9.

⁶¹ U.S. Congress, House, *Control of Travel*, 6.

⁶² Rachel St. John, *Line in the Sand: A History of the Western U.S.-Mexico Border* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), 138-147.

of people regardless of citizenship status. Despite the emphasis placed on the measures' intent to police non-citizens, Warren O'Brian, head of the Justice Department's War Emergency Division, argued that "the danger to this country, so far as spy activity and the destruction are concerned is much greater from the naturalized...and the native citizen than from the enemy alien." As of January 1, 1918, only three of the approximately two hundred convicted under the Espionage Act were classified as "unnaturalized Germans" thus proving to O'Brian "that our own citizens are the people...causing us the most trouble."⁶³ Military Intelligence Captain Henry T. Hunt earlier cited the case of a suspected American spy for Germany who returned to the U.S. from Holland after, they assumed, completing a mission or receiving instructions. In such instances, Hunt noted, laws and the lack of personnel prevented his office from surveilling the suspect's activities. The government could not refuse this individual entry rights, due to their citizenship, and were unable to thwart his departure to Europe with potentially sensitive information gathered while in the U.S.⁶⁴ Due to this incapability, State Department official Richard W. Flournoy emphasized that in such cases, individuals needed to be contained within the United States: "There is more danger in his going out than in his coming in."⁶⁵

The Justice Department, Military Intelligence, and State Department obtained their desired law when Woodrow Wilson signed the Travel Control Act in May 1918. While the Act's first section reiterated prior immigration statutes, Section Two made passports mandatory after a presidential proclamation declaring it necessary for public safety. Violators could face up to \$10,000 in fines and a twenty-year prison sentence. The Travel Control Act bolstered prior immigration and anti-radical legislation. In 1917, Congress barred immigration from almost the

⁶³ U.S. Congress, House, *Control of Travel*, 29.

⁶⁴ U.S. Congress, House, *Control of Travel*, 10-11.

⁶⁵ U.S. Congress, House, *Control of Travel*, 12.

entirety of the Asian continent and enabled the deportation of immigrants, largely anticolonial activists, within five years of arrival.⁶⁶ A year later, Congress clarified how it defined excludable anarchists. The Immigration Act of 1918, or Alien Anarchist Act of 1918, enumerated a wide array of deportable offenses, including holding revolutionary political beliefs.⁶⁷ Together with the Sedition Act, Espionage Act, and Immigration Act of 1918, the requirement for passports conjoined the policing of politics in immigration and egress.

Though the state continued to utilize the passport as a tool of social control to police internal and external “threats” through the early 1920s, the reliance on immigration law proved difficult. Although the Travel Control Act of 1918 was still in force through 1921, it did not define who could and, consequently, could not obtain a passport. At the height of the First Red Scare, State Department officials began developing procedures and criteria to deny passports to those supportive of the anarchism and the Bolshevik Revolution. As of November 1920, each individual inspector could only refer to their own judgement when assessing individual cases. The applications that catalyzed the development of formal procedures included one from a *London Daily Herald* journalist, who had previously been issued a passport to report on conditions in Western Europe but had instead traveled to Estonia and Russia without State Department approval. Intercepted letters written home from Russia revealed the journalist’s sympathies with the Russian Revolution. Even more egregious to officials, his passport was reportedly taken while abroad and “given to a dangerous Bolshevik agitator by the name of Malkin who would endeavor to gain admission to the United States through its use.”⁶⁸ Though a

⁶⁶ Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*, 18; Sohi, *Echoes of Mutiny*, 3.

⁶⁷ Capozzola, *Uncle Sam Wants You*, 202.

⁶⁸ W.L. Hurley to Norman H. Davis, “Policy re issue of passports to Bolsheviks, persons connected with Bolshevik organizations or persons who espouse the Bolshevik cause,” November 30, 1920, in U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, *The Right to Travel*:

Passport Division inspector denied the journalist's subsequent application, Congressional pressure on behalf of the journalist forced a reconsideration. Chief of Passport Control Philip Adams noted that while immigration law empowered the state to exclude "[f]oreign agitators," his office was effectively powerless to deny entry to U.S. passport holders. While the canon of World War I fell quiet, Adams noted that the specter of Bolshevism remained and manifested itself in the holders of U.S. passports who were crucial nodes in a global conspiracy challenging Euro-American global power. Although active hostilities permitted wide latitude in the refusal of passports in the eyes of some officials, denial needed to be calibrated to the present state of the world since the war's unofficial conclusion no longer provided easy justification for the infringement of certain rights. This shift in the global environment raised several crucial questions that anticipated debates in the early cold war. Who could be denied a passport? By what criteria would applicants be judged against? Would everyone's passport be valid for the same duration, or would certain applicants receive limited passports due to concerns regarding either their political beliefs or conduct? Could the state restrict where an individual traveled? For instance, Adams did not believe figures like the "Parlor Bolshevik," who neither openly called for revolution nor collaborated "with agents of the Bolsheviks," should be denied the right to travel abroad. However, this "Parlor Bolshevik" would not travel unencumbered and un surveilled; Adams proposed that the passport's validity be limited "to a few months of travel only" in order to facilitate surveillance abroad by embassies and consulates, and coerce "good

Hearings before the Subcommittee on Constitutional Rights of the Committee on the Judiciary, 85th Cong., 1st sess., 1957, 360.

behavior” on the part of the traveler.⁶⁹ Making such distinctions required the development of criteria and policies defensible in court.

Passport officials once again turned to immigration law to resolve this issue of political taxonomy. The standards, titled Passport Code No. 5000 “Refusals in the case of anarchists and revolutionary radicals,” nearly replicated verbatim the October 1918 Alien Anarchist Act.

Passports could be refused to:

Citizens who are anarchists; citizens who believe in or advocate the overthrow by force or violence of the Government of the United States or of all forms of law; citizens who disbelieve in or are opposed to all organized government; citizens who advocate or teach the assassination of public officials; citizens who advocate or teach the unlawful destruction of property; citizens who are members of or are affiliated with any organization that entertains a belief in, teaches, or advocates the overthrow by force or violence of the Government of the United States or of all forms of law, or that entertains or teaches disbelief in or opposition to all organized government, or that advocates the duty, necessity, or propriety of unlawful assaulting or killing of any officer or officers, either of specific individuals or of officers generally, of the Government of the United States or of any other organized government, because of his or their official character, or that advocates or teaches the unlawful destruction of property.⁷⁰

The only change Adams made, the substitution of “alien” with “citizen,” was not a conceptual leap. For years, anarchism and communism were viewed as “foreign,” often racialized, ideological threats to the U.S. That adherents would be denied egress followed from the logic that anarchists and communists should not have been permitted to enter the country in the first place. Possessing a passport was a sign not simply of legal citizenship, but one’s claims to national belonging. Passports, then, were not a right, but a privilege bestowed upon those

⁶⁹ Philip Adams to G. Howland Shaw, “Refusal of passports to Bolshevists, persons connected with Bolshevist organizations or persons who espouse the Bolshevist cause,” December 3, 1920, 1, in U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, *The Right to Travel*, 357.

⁷⁰ Philip Adams, “Passport Code No. 5000,” n.d., in U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, *The Right to Travel*, 343.

deemed acceptable. While controlling egress complemented and extended extant immigration policing, policies regarding passport-holder's mobility were much more susceptible to change due to concerns over civil liberties and shifts in geopolitics. With the final peace treaty signed and ratified between the U.S. and Germany in 1921, the wartime measure controlling mobility was cancelled by Congress in 1921, and until 1941, a passport was no longer legally required to depart the country.⁷¹

While it may have been unnecessary to obtain a passport to leave the U.S., other countries did not remove their entry regulations. For naturalized citizens traveling abroad, obtaining a passport could be crucial for re-entering at a moment of severe immigration restrictions. Through the 1920s, 1.6 million passports were issued, a sharp spike from 200,000 issued in the 1910s.⁷² In 1926, Congress passed the Passport Act which gave the Secretary of State legal authority to issue passports per instructions provided by the president. The Act was passed at a moment of global collaboration to produce a document-based international system of controlling borders and mobility. In 1920 and 1926, the League of Nations convened international meetings with the intention of easing the wartime documentary requirements, but instead “ended up cementing the warfare system.”⁷³ The requirement for passports did not signal the rejection of internationalism, but rather embodied what historian Glenda Sluga terms a “new internationalism,” that did not view the nation and international as antithetical constructions.⁷⁴

⁷¹ Jeffrey Kahn, *Mrs. Shipley's Ghost*, 86.

⁷² Craig Robertson, *The Passport in America*, 216. See also Mark Mazower, *Governing the World: The History of an Idea* (New York: Penguin Press, 2012), 157-158.

⁷³ Robertson, *The Passport in America*, 218.

⁷⁴ Glenda Sluga, *Internationalism in the Age of Nationalism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 12, 17-18.

Despite the passage of the Passport Act, with some significant exceptions, denials on the basis of political beliefs and associations did not occur regularly until the late 1940s. The context of the Great Depression and strength of the Left in the early 1930s put political pressure on officials to provide passports to those who would later be denied. Moissaye Joseph Olgin, a naturalized citizen from Russia and founding editor of the Yiddish daily *Freiheit*, obtained a passport both in 1920 and 1924 to visit the nascent Soviet Union. He reapplied for a passport in 1931 to visit Germany, Austria, France, and Russia. Allen T. Klots, an assistant to then Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson, believed that Olgin's reported status as a Communist Party leader, his editorial position of "the largest Communist daily in the United States," and past participation as a delegate to the Fifth World Congress of the Communist International in 1924 were sufficient grounds to deny the application. If permitted to travel, Klots warned, Olgin "[would be] the instrument through which the Russian headquarters of the Communist International is attempting to foment revolution in America."⁷⁵ Although Stimson agreed with Klots' assessment, he believed the journalist should nonetheless be supplied a passport. Stimson based his opinion on a consideration of optics. Denying Olgin's application, he argued, would provide Olgin and others "evidence that our Government is a class Government...and that the passport is really refused to Olgin because he is a representative and fighter for the working classes." Showing his own classist inclinations, Stimson argued "that the harm which might be thus done among the ignorant and at present suffering members of our population" as a result of denying Olgin's application "is much greater than anything that Olgin could do by his

⁷⁵ Allen T. Klots to Henry L. Stimson, "Issue of Passport to Moissaye Joseph Olgin, a Communist," May 4, 1931; in Hearings, U.S. Congress, Senate, Subcommittee on Constitutional Rights, U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, *The Right to Travel*, 335.

propaganda or his present proposed trip to Europe.”⁷⁶ In the midst of the Great Depression, denying the journalist a passport threatened to confirm the suspicions of millions that the state was against their own interests. Even William A. Foster, then Chairman of the CPUSA, obtained a passport in 1933 shortly after the U.S. officially recognized the Soviet Union despite efforts by the Eastern European Affairs desk to convince the Secretary of State to deny the application.⁷⁷ The State Department ultimately concluded that denying Foster’s application “would invite an attack on the Administration from the radical element in this country and would offer that element a vehicle for spreading undesirable propaganda at a time when it is important that that should not be done.”⁷⁸ Unlike what occurred in the late 1940s, the global strength of the left and the crisis of capitalism forced officials to grant documents to those otherwise deemed political opponents.

“Safeguarding the State”

The Great Depression and the growing presence and power of the Left in the United States further shifted passport policies. Although a state of war was permanently cemented with the maintenance of passport controls throughout the globe, American citizens were not legally required in the U.S. to obtain a passport to depart and reenter the country. Those who were otherwise considered *persona non grata* because of their political beliefs were provided

⁷⁶ Henry L. Stimson, Memorandum, “Issue of Passports to Communists,” May 5, 1931; in U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, *The Right to Travel*, 334.

⁷⁷ Robert F. Kelley to Wilbur J. Carr, “Issue of passports to Communist Leaders,” April 29, 1933; in U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, *The Right to Travel*, 333. While Foster would receive the passport in 1933, he was denied a passport in 1931 by Secretary Stimson on the grounds that he was on parole and that having a passport would prevent him from appearing before the New York Parole Commission as required.

⁷⁸ Wilbur J. Carr to Cordell Hull, “Issue of Passport to William Foster, Prominent Communist Leader,” May 2, 1933; in U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, *The Right to Travel*, 332.

passports. As fascism spread through Europe and the invasion of Ethiopia foreshadowed another global conflict, Congress and many Americans sought to retain a neutral position. Three incidents, including a “spy hysteria,” demonstrated to both the general public and the U.S. government that ideas of neutrality were growing outdated due to the increasing interpenetration of the two hemispheres.⁷⁹ Was it entirely possible to isolate a country from the rest of the world in an age of increasing transportation, trade, and communication networks? Could these crises be confined to their place of origin, or did their effects spill over into other parts of the globe? U.S. officials and ordinary Americans alike discovered in the 1930s that world conditions and shifts in ideas regarding war and national security made earlier notions of neutrality increasingly obsolete.⁸⁰ Attempts to police and maintain neutrality demonstrated the very porousness of the nation’s borders, convinced many that the United State faced not only “foreign” threats but internal subversion. For the Passport Division, attempts to preserve neutrality dovetailed with its efforts to contain antifascism and consolidate control over international mobility.

The threat of fascism in Ethiopia and Spain in the 1930s highlight how efforts to preserve neutrality intersected with policing the global left. Between 1935 and 1939, Congress passed legislation aimed at preventing entry into what was viewed as a European conflict. Among the provisions were restrictions on travel to countries at war. In the wake of Italy’s October 1935 invasion of Ethiopia, President Roosevelt called for Americans to avoid traveling on ships of

⁷⁹ The term “spy hysteria” is from Francis MacDonnell, *Insidious Foes: The Axis Fifth Column and the American Home Front* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 4. For more on the importance of understanding the interwar period as one centered on a debate over the meaning of neutrality rather than between two discrete foreign policy agendas (internationalism v. isolationism), see Brooke Blower, “From Isolation to Neutrality: A New Framework for Understanding American Political Culture, 1919-1941,” *Diplomatic History* 38, no. 2 (2014): 345-376.

⁸⁰ Blower, “From Isolation to Neutrality,” 350; 363-374.

countries at war.⁸¹ While tens of thousands of African Americans mobilized to defend Ethiopia's sovereignty, long a symbol for anti-colonialism within the African diaspora, only two African Americans made it to the battlefields. Threats by the State Department to revoke the citizenship of those traveling to Ethiopia with the intention of fighting severely dampened efforts to repel Italy.⁸² The U.S. government, however, was not as successful in preventing Americans from reaching Spain to defend the fledgling Republic from a fascist coup. Although the State Department unilaterally stamped passports "Not Valid in Spain," between three and four thousand volunteers joined the fight against fascism since the Travel Control Act did not apply to civil wars and the State Department initially only warned travelers that the U.S. could not guarantee their safety.⁸³ In response to the anti-fascist mobilization, the State Department announced in March 1937 that it would bar travel to the country by "requiring all Americans who apply for passports to travel abroad to make affidavits that it is not their intention to go to Spain and that passports will not be used for travel in Spain."⁸⁴ Those discovered to have used their passports to travel to Spain faced potential perjury charges. That May, Congress passed another Neutrality Act which barred travel on ships of "belligerent nations." Such bans, however, required other countries to enforce U.S. laws as once abroad, there was very little the

⁸¹ David Riesman, Jr., "Legislative Restrictions on Foreign Enlistment and Travel," *Columbia Law Review* 40, no. 5 (1940): 827-829.

⁸² Teishan Latner, "Irresistible Revolution: Cuba and American Radicalism, 1968-1992 (PhD. diss., University of California, Irvine, 2013), 107-108; William R. Scott, "Black Nationalism and the Italo-Ethiopian Conflict 1934-1936," *Journal of Negro History* 36, no. 2 (1978), 128-129. Italy's invasion prompted a worldwide movement. See Joseph Fronczak, "Local People's Global Politics: A Transnational History of the Hands off Ethiopia Movement of 1935," *Diplomatic History*, 39, no. 2 (2015): 245-274.

⁸³ "Curbs U.S. Passports," *New York Times*, January 12, 1937. This position regarding "state protection" could not be waived in the 1950s as the chapter on Worthy demonstrates.

⁸⁴ "U.S. Bars Americans From Going to Spain; Members of Ambulance Units Are Included," *New York Times*, March 4, 1937. Initially, the ban included humanitarian workers, but public outcry led to exceptions.

government could do to contain the traveler. In fact, France arrested some American volunteers who intended to travel to Spain via France.⁸⁵ While no one was prosecuted for using their passport to travel to Spain, the Justice Department attempted to indict suspected recruiters in February 1940 following FBI “raids [of offices] in Milwaukee and Detroit” associated with the International Brigades.⁸⁶ Through the control of mobility, Congress and the Passport Division sought to simultaneously preserve neutrality and contain a global left.

While the commitment to neutralism waned between 1938 and 1941, the state’s control over mobility greatly expanded because of growing concerns over espionage and subversion. In 1938, the FBI announced that they had uncovered a Nazi espionage ring centered in New York City through a sting operation in which one member, Guenther Gustav Rumrich, impersonated the Secretary of State and instructed the New York Passport Division office to “deliver 35 passport blanks to the Hotel Taft in the name of Edward Weston.”⁸⁷ Ultimately, eighteen individuals were indicted, but only four were convicted as the remaining fourteen were in Germany and beyond the Justice Department’s jurisdiction.⁸⁸

Although there was concern of Nazi German subversion, to Congressional anticommunists and Passport Division personnel, the greater “crime” was the unauthorized involvement of Americans in the Spanish Civil War. The volunteers’ actions not only violated official U.S. policy, but, they argued, signaled the existence of a Soviet-led global conspiracy that easily transgressed nation-state borders. Anticommunists based their accusations on W.G. Krivitisky’s confessional memoir *In Stalin’s Secret Service* which claimed that commanding

⁸⁵ “French ‘Capture’ 25 On Way to Spain,” *New York Times*, March 28, 1937.

⁸⁶ Riesman, Jr., “Legislative Restrictions,” 808. The Attorney General chose not to prosecute.

⁸⁷ Francis MacDonnell, *Insidious Foes*, 55.

⁸⁸ For more on the case, see MacDonnell, *Insidious Foes*, 49-72.

officers in Spain confiscated the passports of American volunteers and shipped them to Moscow to facilitate the travel of Soviet espionage agents to the United States. In 1939, the Division initially estimated that 1,500 passports were taken to Moscow, but an official in the 1950s later testified that the number was closer to six hundred.⁸⁹ The concerns over false passports materialized in the Rubens-Robinson case of 1937 and 1938. In early December 1937, an American couple, Donald and Ruth Robinson, were reported by the U.S. embassy as missing in Moscow. Ruth had earlier reported that her husband had been taken to a hospital after contracting pneumonia. A few days later, the State Department announced that the disappeared individuals used assumed names and traveled to the Soviet Union on false passports. Donald L. Robinson had died at the age of four in 1909 in New York and Ruth Robinson (née Birkland) had died in 1915 at the age of five. Both "Robinsons," who in actuality had the last name Rubens, applied for passports in April 1936. While Ruth Rubens was convicted of entering the Soviet Union on "a false passport" and would be released a few months later, her husband appears to have been executed as he was convicted of "espionage," though it is unclear whether he was indeed a non-Soviet agent. Ruth would ultimately renounce her U.S. citizenship and naturalize as a Soviet citizen in 1939.⁹⁰

The investigation into their identities ballooned into a larger probe into the infrastructure of left-wing internationalism. It was soon discovered that the Rubens had procured passports

⁸⁹ "Thinks Spies Hold 'Lost' Passports," *New York Times*, August 13, 1939; U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, *Communist Passport Frauds: A Staff Study*, staff study prepared for the Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws of the Committee on the Judiciary, 85th Cong., 2nd sess., 1958, 9-10.

⁹⁰ "American Couple Vanish Mysteriously in Moscow," *New York Times*, December 10, 1937; "Link Rubens Name in 'Robinson' Case," *New York Times*, December 28, 1937; "Jailers Were Kind, Says Mrs. Rubens," *New York Times*, June 23, 1939; "Mrs. Rubens Takes Soviet Citizenship," *New York Times*, November 17, 1939.

through a network that also supplied forged or altered U.S. passports to noncitizens traveling to Spain. Ashley J. Nicholas of the Passport Division, who took the lead on the case, had already forged a long-standing relationship between the Justice Department and Passport Division during the investigation into the World Tourist Travel Agency, the primary tourist company facilitating travel to the Soviet Union and, in the mid-1930s, Spain. The passport ring was allegedly “responsible” for obtaining passports for “many aliens, said to have joined the ranks of the Loyalist army in Spain.”⁹¹ Passport Division Chief Ruth B. Shipley believed that she had discovered a vast network including 50 individuals connected through communist publications and false birth records. As a result of Nicholas’ work and the records subpoenaed from World Tourist Travel Agency, the CPUSA’s General Secretary Earl Browder, Financial Secretary William Weiner, and two journalists of communist papers were convicted of using fraudulent names on past passport applications.⁹² Although Browder’s sentence of four years in prison would be commuted by Roosevelt in 1942, a recognition of the Soviet Union’s ally status, the Nazi-Soviet Pact of 1939 dramatically reduced the CPUSA’s popularity and increased hostility

⁹¹ “Rubens Witness Seized as Member of Passport Ring,” *New York Times*, March 29, 1938.

⁹² Ruth Shipley to Mr. Yardley, April 24, 1940. Folder “PD-Administration,” Box 1, Records Relating to Passports, 1944-1953, RG 59, NACP. Using the World Tourist Travel Agency records, the Justice Department found evidence that would have enabled them to prosecute other leaders of the CPUSA. However, the statute of limitations for passport fraud at the time was three years. Browder’s admission, who must have believed that the statute limitations had expired, of using false names during testimony in front of the Dies Committee certainly did not help his case. Maurice Isserman claims that the Roosevelt Justice Department had no intentions to prosecute Browder for passport fraud but was forced to amidst the pressure of the Dies Committee and Browder’s accidental confession. For more on Browder’s prosecution and the Communist Party in the late 1930s, see Maurice Isserman, *Which Side Were You On? The American Communist Party During the Second World War* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1982), especially 46-53.

from an anti-New Deal Congress encouraged Roosevelt to pursue repressive actions against the Party and its allies.

The Rubens-Robinson Case, the investigation into American participation in the International Brigades, and the prosecution of Earl Browder served as a barometer of Americans' anxieties about borders and neutrality. Increasingly, concerns over passports were understood through the lens of national security. As a result of the passport cases and the loss of Brigade members' passports, the Passport Division informed consulates and embassies of the known lost passports, and recalled all existing passports to be replaced with a newly designed model.⁹³ In 1938, FDR issued Executive Order 7856 giving the Secretary of State wide latitude to determine where a passport (and thus an individual) could travel by enabling the Department "to withdraw or cancel a passport already issued, and to withdraw a passport for the purpose of restricting its validity or use in certain countries."⁹⁴ Between 1939 and 1941, the Passport Division instructed all Customs and Immigration officials to confiscate and submit to the Division the passports of all citizens, with some exceptions, returning to the United States to the State Department for close inspection "for any indication of alteration or for any violation of the Neutrality Act." All submitted passports were retained until the application for another passport was filed.⁹⁵ A Departmental order in 1939 reduced the validity of passports for Europe from two years to six

⁹³ U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, *Scope of Soviet Activity in the United States: Hearings before the United States Senate Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws*, 84th Cong., 2nd sess., 1956, 1221. One author claims that the new passports had a red cover. Graham Stuart, "Safeguarding the State Through Passport Control," *Department of State Bulletin* 12, no. 3 (June 10, 1945): 1066-1070, 1066.

⁹⁴ Kahn, *Mrs. Shipley's Ghost*, 88.

⁹⁵ Stuart, "Safeguarding the State," 1068.

months. All potential travelers to Europe were required to seek Departmental approval of their justification and intended route.⁹⁶

Changes in the Travel Control Act reflected larger shifts in conceptions of national security. Despite Roosevelt's declaration of an "unlimited national emergency" in May 1941, the Travel Control Act remained inoperative. Although the U.S. was not officially at war, the Roosevelt administration warned that modern tactics of warfare and increasing global connectivity challenged existing conceptions of defense and security. In a radio fireside chat explaining the order, Roosevelt warned listeners that "Our Bunker Hill of tomorrow," he warned, "may be several thousand miles from Boston." American national security was bound up in the "continued safety of homes in Nova Scotia or Trinidad or Brazil."⁹⁷ While immigration law excluded people and ideas identified as "foreign" and "threatening," it was also possible that threats could emanate from within and be projected abroad from the United States and compromise U.S. national security.

Officials argued that laws governing international mobility needed to be amended to grapple with these new realities. While immigration enabled the control of U.S. borders from entry, controlling egress of both citizens and noncitizens remained an unsettled issue. The 1940 Nationality Act consolidated preexisting immigration laws and made it easier for citizenship to be revoked. Treason became an offense for which one could lose their citizenship, and naturalized citizens were prohibited from staying longer than three years in their country of

⁹⁶ U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Appropriations, *Department of State Appropriation Bill for 1941: Hearings Before the Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations*, 76th Cong., 3rd sess., 1939, 95.

⁹⁷ "May 27, 1941: Fireside Chat 17: On An Unlimited National Emergency," *University of Virginia, Miller Center*, last accessed December 15, 2018, <https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/may-27-1941-fireside-chat-17-unlimited-national-emergency>.

origin, and five years in other countries.⁹⁸ FDR also heightened immigration screening and moved the Immigration and Naturalization Service from the Labor Department to the Department of Justice, reflecting how national security increasingly framed issues of migration control. Through 1941, State Department officials, in particular Secretary of State Breckenridge Long, amended visa controls in order to block European Jews from entering the U.S.⁹⁹

Reflecting the tightening of borders from entry, the State Department simultaneously advocated for more power to control egress. At the request of the State Department, New York Democrat Sol Bloom introduced H.R. 4973 which proposed six changes to the Travel Control Act. First, the bill expanded the Act's applicability to both war and "whenever there exists a state of war between, or among, two or more states...." Second, rather than limited to only moments when "public safety" was in danger, the amended law would enable the president to restrict mobility when they believed "that the interests of the United States require restrictions and prohibitions...be imposed upon the departure of persons from and their entry into the United States...." It was also proposed that the barrier for enacting the law would be reduced from whenever a president "found" it necessary to whenever the President considered U.S. interests required further control over entry and egress. Fourth, the proposed amendments reduced the penalties for violations from "\$10,000 or 20 years imprisonment, or both, to \$5,000 or 5 years, or both" since experience demonstrated that onerous sentences often resulted in acquittals.¹⁰⁰ Two other changes enabled the state to bar from entry noncitizens even when they possessed

⁹⁸ For more on the history of expatriation, see Nancy L. Green, "Expatriation, Expatriates, and Expats: The American Transformation of a Concept," *American Historical Review* 114, no. 2 (2009): 307-328, esp. 317.

⁹⁹ For more on FDR's perceptions of and his administration's policies regarding the Holocaust, see Richard Breitman and Allan J. Lichtman, *FDR and the Jews* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013).

¹⁰⁰ Ruth B. Shipley, *Congressional Record*, 87 (1941), 5048.

legitimate travel documents and prosecute violators of the law even after its expiration.¹⁰¹ These proposed changes dramatically expanded the power of the Passport Division and marked the transformation of the passport into a national security document.

Support for the legislation reflected a growing consensus that individual travelers could easily disrupt U.S. foreign policy or national security through their movement and activity abroad. The State Department advocated for the bill after an eighteen-month study by a committee of intelligence officials from the Army, Navy, and FBI. Testifying in support of the legislation, Secretary of State Breckinridge Long argued that the state was unable to control the movement of “foreign agents” and citizens who left the country contrary to the interests of the state.¹⁰² Only other countries could require U.S. citizens obtain a passport for entry; without a declaration of war or changes to the law, the Department could not require documentation.¹⁰³ A passport requirement to exit the country, Ruth B. Shipley argued, would enhance the Division’s surveillance powers to determine a traveler’s intent, destination, and whether such travel would “be inimical to the best interests of the United States or against the public safety.”¹⁰⁴ Control over citizens was not only necessary, but non-citizens as well. Avra Warren, then Chief of the Visa Division and an ally of Long’s interest in excluding European Jews, provided two examples as to why “public interest” needed to be the litmus for controlling mobility rather than the more restrictive framework of “public safety.” Visas, he reminded Congress, only covered entry. One example Warren provided was the case of a German national who worked in a defense factory in

¹⁰¹ Public Law 114, “An Act to amend the Act of May 22, 1918 (40 Stat. 559), 252.

¹⁰² U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, *H.R. 4973 An Act to Amend the Act of May 22, 1918 (40 Stat. 559): Hearings before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs*, 77th Cong., 1st sess., 1941, 2, 7.

¹⁰³ U.S. Congress, House, *H.R. 4973*, 23.

¹⁰⁴ U.S. Congress, House, *H.R. 4973*, 27.

Buffalo and was “recalled into Germany by his Government to repaid [sic] damages to a phenol plant...” which was bombed by Great Britain. Warren argued that he could not prove that the public’s safety was at risk, but it was self-evident that “in the interests of the United States” the German worker “should not have gone back to Germany.”¹⁰⁵ “You might have a situation,” Warren continued, “where an alien or an American citizen, or an alien who is naturalized, who wants to go to Central or South America or the Dutch East Indies there to engage in industrial or commercial sabotage that” challenged U.S. interests, but not necessarily “American public safety.” It was evident that travel of particular individuals, regardless of citizenship status, could immediately or potentially compromise U.S. interests. However, the framework of “public safety” was far too narrow and only applied to “conditions only existing in the United States.” Framing the law around “national interest” provided a wider framework inclusive not only of domestic conditions, but those abroad as well.¹⁰⁶ This reflected a distillation of a national security paradigm that identified U.S. security as enmeshed in the perceived security abroad.¹⁰⁷ However, the definition of “national security” was not self-evident and reflected a particular vision of U.S. imperial power.

Debate over the legislation focused on the potential for civil liberties abuses and the meanings of a national emergency and national security. While past neutralists ultimately agreed to the main thrust of the bill, they objected to the unlimited nature of the state of emergency and delegation of more discretionary authority to the president. Michigan Republican Bartel Jonkman criticized the expansion of discretionary power through the substitution of “find” with “deem,” and the indefinite nature of “national interest.” The latter, he argued, “is so broad it would defy

¹⁰⁵ U.S. Congress, House, *H.R. 4973*, 31.

¹⁰⁶ U.S. Congress, House, *H.R. 4973*, 32.

¹⁰⁷ See Preston, “Monsters Everywhere.”

limitation or definition” and could lead to significant abuses of power.¹⁰⁸ While “public safety” suggested a measurable and material phenomenon, what and who defined national interest was indeterminate and ultimately political. For Jonkman, an opponent of the New Deal, this was another example of abuse of constitutional powers through the issuance of executive orders and exceeded the powers delegated to the Wilson administration during WWI.¹⁰⁹

These concerns over executive overreach emanated from both conservative critiques of the New Deal and a legitimate concern over civil liberties. Senator Taft objected to the broad nature of the bill as it “would deal with any situation, for all time to come, whenever there exists between two or more nations a state of war to which are not a party.” “The proposed powers,” he continued, “are practically unlimited over all travel over the borders of the United States; and it seems to me they ought to exist only when there is a real emergency.” Taft’s proposed amendment to the bill, which would limit the law’s applicability to the emergency declared in May 1941, still gave very broad authority, he admitted.¹¹⁰ Robert LaFollette, Jr., one of the founders of the America First Committee, supported Taft’s amendment out of a concern over civil liberties. In the past, he utilized his chairmanship of a committee to investigate and reveal the longstanding practices of business owners using surveillance, private detectives, and threats to thwart labor organizing. LaFollette, Jr. objected to the bill as written because of the lack of a sunset provision. He argued that this represented an abrogation of power from Congress to the President. Since only the latter could determine when an emergency existed, the lack of a sunset provision threatened to extend emergency powers beyond the emergency itself.¹¹¹ Politicians did

¹⁰⁸ U.S. Congress, House, *H.R. 4973*, 15.

¹⁰⁹ Bartel Jonkman, *Congressional Record*, 87 (1941), 5050.

¹¹⁰ Robert Taft, “Departure From and Entry Into the United States of Aliens,” *Congressional Record*, 87 (1941), 5385.

¹¹¹ Robert LaFollette, Jr., “Departure From and Entry Into the United States of Aliens,”

not object to an unlimited application of the law to noncitizens., however In the final legislation, the state could control the entry and exit of “aliens whenever there exists a state of war between, or among two or more states....”¹¹² While their objections would ultimately be adopted, and the Act was applied to American citizens only under the duration of the current national emergency, that emergency did not end until 1952. While the law was passed in June 1941, FDR did not issue a proclamation making the law active until November 1941. “Such sweeping restrictions upon travel,” the *Washington Post* argued, “would be entirely without justification in time of peace. In the present twilight zone between peace and open warfare they are a national necessity.”¹¹³

During World War II, the Passport Division’s responsibility, in the words of the State Department’s Graham Stuart, was to “safeguard and maintain the security of the state.”¹¹⁴ Passports were to be valid for only six months, and for the first time, could only be used for travel to specific destinations, enabling the department to “channelize” movements into routes and geographies beneficial for the war effort.¹¹⁵ The six-month validity period enabled the state to closely monitor passport holders and provided the opportunity to withdraw their passport when they checked-in with a consulate or embassy abroad for renewal. While possession of a passport allowed one to leave the country, to return, one’s passport had to contain evidence of its inspection abroad by an embassy official.¹¹⁶ These policies expanded the reach of the Division’s

Congressional Record, 87 (1941), 5387.

¹¹² Public Law 114, 253.

¹¹³ “Controlling Travel,” *Washington Post*, November 17, 1941.

¹¹⁴ Stuart, “Safeguarding the State,” 1070.

¹¹⁵ FDR’s proclamation in 1941 which provided the Secretary of State the authority to control passports and thus international mobility also enabled the Secretary of State to deny non-citizens the right to leave the country.

¹¹⁶ Kahn, *Mrs. Shipley’s Ghost*, 91.

surveillance capabilities, as the entire globe became of vital interest to U.S. security. All applications during the war were first reviewed by the FBI.¹¹⁷ The Division was also charged with determining the citizenship of those attempting to return from years abroad and did investigatory work for citizenship review boards established in 1942 per the 1940 Nationality Act. While facilitating the movement of hundreds of thousands of troops, engineers, advisers, diplomats, and merchant sailors, they also certified the citizenship of military industrial employees in the U.S. and abroad. Seafarers were particularly scrutinized as some officials considered them to be potential espionage agents, and the Passport Division operated as an intelligence agency, forwarding suspicious cases to the War Department or FBI.¹¹⁸ During and after the war, the traveling public was simultaneously considered endangered and threatening to the state. As the department sought to construct a human geography of war, it aimed to screen out those considered threats to the state.

The mini-Red Scare of the late 1930s and World War II transformed the Passport Division into a powerful office able to control the international mobility of U.S. citizens and non-citizens alike. Central to this power was the evolving concept of national security and the declaration of a wartime national emergency. Ultimately, the resumption of Red Scare in the aftermath of World War II confirmed the fears of politicians who objected to the indeterminate language of “public interest” and “national interest,” and the use of emergency powers. Such framing gave the security state wide latitude to deny Americans whom they found to be politically dangerous to travel abroad. It was not immediately certain, however, that the Division would continue to enforce the restrictions in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

¹¹⁷ Dean Acheson to Charles A. Eaton, draft letter, April 22, 1947, 2. Folder “PD-Legislation,” Box 1, Records Relating to Passports, 1944-1953, RG 59, NACP.

¹¹⁸ Stuart, “Safeguarding the State,” 1068-1069.

Documentation and the “Postwar” Years

The retention of the World War II mobility regime was not at all predictable. In the mid-1940s, there was a burgeoning belief internationally that extensive identity papers and rigorous border checks were not only unnecessary, but harmful to economic growth. In April 1947, per the recommendation of the UN Economic and Social Council, experts from twenty-four nations gathered in Geneva to discuss the liberalization of passport and visa requirements. Some participant countries advocated for the abolition of passports in lieu of other documents. Belgium, for example, proposed that national identity cards be used to verify an individual’s identity at ports of entry.¹¹⁹ While the passport’s function as a confirmation of personal identification was not questioned, Belgium’s proposal challenged the passport’s role in controlling a traveler’s destination and duration abroad, and decentralized the power over mobility since such cards (already in use in Belgium) could be distributed at the regional level. Such a position, however, was a rarity. Despite the oft-repeated desire for a return to a pre-1914 travel regime in which passports were largely unnecessary in Europe but required for Asian migrants, most postwar nations concluded that contemporary conditions were unique.¹²⁰ Proposals that gained wide support included the standardization of passports, the consolidation of inspections, and the simplification of passport application procedures.¹²¹ United Nations

¹¹⁹ “Meeting of Experts on Passports and Frontier Formalities, Third Plenary Meeting,” April 15, 1947, 2. E/CONF/PASS/PC/SR/3, Central Decimal File 1945-1949, Box 2361, RG 59, NACP.

¹²⁰ “Meeting of Experts on Passports and Frontier Formalities, Draft Report to the Economic and Social Council,” April 22, 1947, 2-3. E/CONF/PASS/PC/SR/13, Central Decimal File 1945-1949, Box 2361, RG 59, NACP. For the development of a global documentary regime to control identity and mobility, see McKeown, *Melancholy Order*.

¹²¹ “Meeting of Experts on Passports and Frontier Formalities, Draft Report to the Economic and Social Council,” 3.

member states believed that the reduction of such barriers was important for sustaining cooperation in the postwar order.¹²²

U.S. officials reservedly agreed with some of these proposals and aspired to create an international legal regime that facilitated the movement of American capital. As early as 1946, the Commerce Department supported the U.S.'s participation in the conference and the abolition of wartime controls on U.S. citizens' mobility to facilitate American dominance in global trade. International travel, the Commerce Department argued, was the "greatest 'commodity' import in peacetime and furnished far more U.S. exchange to customer countries than any other commodity item."¹²³ Herbert A. Wilkinson of the Commerce Department believed that the conference provided an opportunity for the U.S. to "drive for liberalization of controls" on trade and more broadly.¹²⁴ The chief U.S. delegate, George Tait, then American Consul General in London, received instructions that the U.S. delegation was to promote "increased intercourse between nations through the medium of tourist travel." "[I]nternational travel" Acting Secretary of State Dean Acheson commented, "is of the greatest importance in promoting friendships and improving cultural relations among nations."¹²⁵ This was of particular importance given the rising competition and hostility between the United States and Soviet Union over resources and political alliances. Economic conditions also shaped the perceived role of travel in U.S. foreign policy. Since the Bretton Woods Conference in 1944, the U.S. had advocated for greater

¹²² "Meeting of Experts on Passports and Frontier Formalities, Third Plenary Meeting," 10.

¹²³ W. Averell Harriman to James F. Byrnes, December 12, 1946. 511.1 Geneva/12-1146, Central Decimal File 1945-1949, Box 2361, RG 59, NACP.

¹²⁴ "Report of Meeting, Plans for Proposed Meeting of Experts to Prepare for World Conference on Passports and Frontier Formalities," December 9, 1946, 2. File "Conference on Passport and World Frontier Formalities," Box 9, Subject Files, 1944-1951, RG 59, NACP.

¹²⁵ Dean Acheson to George Tait, April 10, 1947. 511.1 Geneva/4-1047, Central Decimal File 1945-1949, Box 2361, RG 59, NACP.

economic liberalization and international mobility as part of its effort to construct "an economic regime emphasizing the principles of free trade."¹²⁶ Although tourism would not be embraced as a crucial foreign policy instrument until 1948, by 1946-1947, some officials understood the economic and political value of Americans traveling abroad, particularly amidst the looming economic crisis in Western Europe.¹²⁷ State Department officials increasingly grew pessimistic over the economic and political conditions in Europe, which had failed to recover to prewar levels.¹²⁸ To Acheson, facilitating the transfer of hard U.S. currency through tourism "[helped] keep international trade alive and enables foreigners to buy American goods and pay interest on our loans."¹²⁹ U.S. political and economic dominance necessitated the creation of a world order that facilitated the movement of Americans and American capital.

Alongside the demand for countries to lower barriers to entry, the U.S. advocated for measures that strengthened the legal architecture of immigration exclusion embodied in the 1924 Immigration Act and the 1940 Nationality Act. Speaking at the opening of the conference, the conference's chair, C.D. Carew Robinson of Great Britain, questioned both the efficacy and morality of the existing mobility regime. Passports and visas, designed to "hinder the entrance of undesirable aliens," were neither foolproof nor emblematic of the spirit embodied by the United Nations. It was possible, he suggested, that rather than functioning as intended, such regulations "create[d] many difficulties for people who respected the laws and regulations and might militate against international intercourse, whilst the really undesirable alien would not hesitate to avail

¹²⁶ Endy, *Cold War Holidays*, 35.

¹²⁷ Endy, *Cold War Holidays*, 43.

¹²⁸ Michael J. Hogan, *The Marshall Plan: America, Britain, and the Reconstruction of Western Europe, 1947-1952* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 30.

¹²⁹ Dean Acheson to George Tait, April 10, 1947. 511.1 Geneva/4-1047, Central Decimal File 1945-1949, Box 2361, RG 59, NACP.

himself of illegal means of entry."¹³⁰ Robinson highlighted two key tensions of the existing mobility regime. First, he recognized that the law produced the very problem, "illegal means of entry," it aspired to control and prevent. Second, he underscored how policing migration and international mobility potentially rendered moot the aspirations of those delegates working to prevent another outbreak of global warfare. The U.S., however, refused to seriously consider any suggestion of lowering travel restrictions or the liberalization of passports and visas on the basis of U.S. immigration law. Objections to Belgium's identity card proposal were rooted in the fact that such cards had no room for visas, thus eliminating the remote border control procedures at U.S. embassies and consulates. The U.S. delegation pushed for any advisory document from the meeting to distinguish between countries with and without immigration restrictions, and for any country without immigration quotas or few restrictions to eliminate visa requirements altogether.¹³¹ The U.S. was the lone supporter of its own measure. Ruth B. Shipley believed that promoting U.S. imperial dominion and the retention of travel controls were not antagonistic ambitions. The passport, she argued, provided greater assurances that the U.S. would not only readmit a U.S. citizen accused by another country of "misbehavior," but that the U.S. could deport those "not wanted."¹³² The U.S. maintained this position at other conferences, including the 1948 Pan-American Conference. That year, officials argued that the conference's proposal to standardize border inspections and create hemispheric identity cards potentially compromised the

¹³⁰ C.D. Carow-Robinson, "Meeting of Experts on Passports and Frontier Formalities," April 15, 1947, 9-10. Central Decimal File 1945-1949, Box 2361, RG 59, NACP.

¹³¹ "Meeting of Experts on Passports and Frontier Formalities, Sixth Plenary Meeting," April 17, 1947, 2. Central Decimal File, 1945-1949, Box 2361, RG 59, NACP.

¹³² "Draft Report to the Economic and Social Council," April 22, 1947, 2-5. Central Decimal File, 1945-1949, Box 2361, RG 59, NACP.

U.S.'s immigration quotas. Retaining strict controls over mobility enabled the projection of U.S. global power and invigorated its exclusionary immigration regime.

Efforts to reimagine or reform the relatively nascent international mobility regime failed. Though some countries tepidly supported calls for a return to minimal travel controls, most could not consider any alternative and a larger conference never materialized. For U.S. officials, the retention of immigration and visa restrictions, and advocacy for greater international mobility in the name of "free trade" were not contradictory. In their vision, controlling movement did not compromise true freedom since the latter could only come through the control of movement. Disciplining and controlling illicit mobilities (the "illegal immigrant") guaranteed the freedom of liberal national subject. Passports not only helped to ensure both the state's deportation and immigration control powers but would also prove crucial to the regulation of who would be allowed to leave the U.S. in light of the resumption of the cold war.

Despite the passport's function as a verification of the holder's identity to inspectors' abroad, security officials in the National Security Council (NSC), State Department, and FBI understood the document as a crucial instrument of "internal security." The Division's position in the emerging national security apparatus was defined in NSC Report 17 (NSC-17), written by the NSC's internal security adviser, former FBI agent J. Patrick Coyne.¹³³ Situated at the interstice of the "foreign" and the "domestic," the Passport Division's border policing functions made it a vital part of the NSC's Interdepartmental Committee on Internal Security and spoke to the elasticity of the term "internal security." While "internal security" often overlapped with other fields, including national security, NSC-17 defined the term broadly "to the defense and

¹³³ Ellen Schrecker, "Immigration and Internal Security: Political Deportations During the McCarthy Era," *Science & Society* Vol. 60, no. 4 (1996-1997): 393-426, 398.

protection within the United States and its territories of the people, government, and related institutions from all hostile and destructive actions on the part of persons, groups and nations.”¹³⁴

Reflecting the national security paradigm which cohered during the Roosevelt administration, while "threats" were constructed as "foreign" to the nation, and thus legitimate targets for various forms of state violence, their geographic origins were undefined. Communism's potential to disrupt the existing world order transformed the program outlined in NSC-17 as a defense of society itself. "From the very beginning of organized living, of society," Coyne and others wrote, "there have existed negative elements which would tear down and destroy the established order by force and violence." Should the U.S. fail, NSC-17 warned, "it is not impossible that there will be no nation." The indeterminacy of internal security's boundaries was a function of how many in the national security state understood communism as a global threat quickly able to insinuate itself into all social strata. Due to the hydra-like qualities, banning the CPUSA was not enough; communism's strength, NSC-17 warned, drew from a "complex and comprehensive pattern of activities combining both legal and illegal operations..."¹³⁵

Constructed as a "foreign" problem aimed at disturbing a political community's interior, communism was understood as a conspiracy which flaunted established borders. The Party's internationalism and wide range of causes were interconnected concerns. The report's authors argued that Comintern and Soviet assistance were foundational to the CPUSA's ability to insinuate itself into "domestic" political issues, particularly those dealing with labor and race.

¹³⁴ "A Report to the National Security Council by the Executive Secretary on the Internal Security of the United States [NSC-17]," June 28, 1948, 5. *Documents of the National Security Council, 1947-1947*, Reel 1, ed. Paul Kesaris (Washington, D.C.: University Publications of America, 1980).

¹³⁵ NSC-17, 8.

Coyne accused the CPUSA of “[inciting] race prejudice and race hatred under the mendacious guise of furthering legitimate racial causes.” Social movements, particularly the black freedom movement, that emphasized the connections between decolonization and racial justice at home were imagined as the product of outside agitators or ideas. While the CPUSA posed was a threat to the existing social order through its demands for full racial equality, its most significant impact had been and continued to be in empowering labor. The power of unions and the CP’s influence, Coyne argued, could “seriously impair the internal security of the United States and to possibly render us incapable of waging complete war, if necessity demanded it.” For NSC-17’s authors, it was essential to understand the CP’s internationalism and “its association with foreign agents and foreign agencies” as “the single greatest single menace and the most complex problem confronting our internal security system today.”¹³⁶ Demobilizing members and allies would be one crucial method to simultaneously sever these international ties and root-out "foreign" ideas, movements, and people.

The Passport and Visa Divisions were at a unique position in this schema due to their roles in defining and policing the boundaries of the "foreign" and "domestic." NSC-17 recommended that visa controls be tightened through extensive collaboration and record sharing between the various intelligence agencies and branches of government since it was primarily through obtaining visas and "illegal entry" that "[p]enetration of the United States by foreign agents" was possible. Deportation was also recommended as a vital tool for political policing, even if unrelated to political movements since "the large number of illegal entries which are reportedly occurring on a continuing basis" needed “corrective steps...[to] be taken in the

¹³⁶ NSC-17, 20.

interests of the Nation's internal security."¹³⁷ The Passport Division was tasked with preparing for a future conflict by developing plans for a new war-time passport; the limitation of all travel outside the U.S. except for "instances of imperative necessity"; the requirement that all travelers hold a passport; and the thorough cross-referencing of all applications with the intelligence agencies.¹³⁸ All of these recommendations would either be undertaken by 1952 or were already the Division's unofficial policy in 1948. The passport's function as an "internal security" document was intricately connected to its purpose abroad. Passport denial and revocation, in the eyes of the Passport Division and other agencies, severed the international networks that led to Moscow. In turn, that containment produced the conditions that required, in the eyes of the national security state, pervasive surveillance and policing at home of left political formations.

The Passport Division had a dual mandate to verify citizenship and inform Department officials of any damaging information on individual applicants.¹³⁹ This policing power, however, depended on its possession of and capacity to efficiently access large swaths of paper records. Passport applications alone were insufficient to fulfill the Division's security responsibilities. Director Shipley noted it took more than one single item on an application to raise the Division's suspicions. Information had to be carefully cross-referenced against an ever-growing record of indexes and files. The Division maintained two distinct indexes. The first, a General Passport Index, was a collection of 3x5 inch index cards "referring to any individual on whom adverse information [had] been received" and by 1956 had grown to over 18 million names. The second

¹³⁷ NSC-17, 27. See also Schrecker, "Immigration and Internal Security" for a discussion of political deportations during the 1950s.

¹³⁸ NSC-17, 28.

¹³⁹ Shipley to Robinson, "Memorandum of July 10, 1947, Coordination of Security Clearance," July 17, 1947. Folder "PD-General 1947-1950," Box 2, Records Relating to Passports 1944-1953, RG 59, NACP.

was a “Fraud Section” that was organized alphabetically and contained a “summary of adverse information relating to individuals and file numbers of papers from which information was taken.” So-called “‘Stop’ cards which [had] been accumulated for years in the general name index” represented the Division’s greatest stopgap measure. If the Division received “adverse information” from both government and private sources, a “stop” card was created.¹⁴⁰ Index cards were color coded in a similar logic to today’s terror alerts: red indicated the office possessed evidence of possible subversive intentions and orange indicated that the applicant’s citizenship was in doubt.¹⁴¹ The inspector combing through the index would then use the information on the card to reference other materials prepared by various intelligence agencies, the FBI, and State Department.

The mere presence of "adverse information," however, was not enough to deny a passport in the late 1940s and raised more questions than answers about the boundaries of state power and the definition of the "political" during the ongoing state of emergency after World War II. Could the Passport Division control not only who left the country, but also Americans’ destinations and activities abroad? By what criteria was a high degree of control over individual behavior after they left the U.S. warranted? In April 1947, prior to the publication of NSC-17, the Latin American Affairs bureau proposed the prohibition of active involvement in the local politics of all other countries. Those suspected of political activities would be first issued a warning by local U.S. representatives and forfeit the ability to renew their passport if they continued. But other

¹⁴⁰ W.H. Young to Boykin, “Suggestion for Mr. Charles E. Odegaard that the Department issue a statement of policy...,” August 18, 1950. Folder “PD-General (II),” Box 2, Records Relating to Passports 1944-1953, RG 59, NACP.

¹⁴¹ U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Un-American Activities, *Investigation of the Unauthorized Use of United States Passports – Part 1: Hearings before the Committee on Un-American Activities*, 84th Cong., 2nd sess., 1956, 4314.

officials disagreed with such a policy, believing it to be "too hit or miss" or too lenient.¹⁴² Still others worried that prohibiting all political activity abroad raised thorny constitutional and geopolitical problems. They were concerned that such a policy would effectively silence "distinguished Americans [such] as Henry Wallace," whose 1947 European tour sparked controversy over his critiques of U.S. foreign policy and advocacy for a "new deal for the world."¹⁴³ Speaking first to a gathering of students in Great Britain and then a wider-public over radio, the former Vice President critiqued the hyper-militarization of the U.S. and the abandonment of New Deal type programs within the U.S. and abroad. Wallace also mocked those who called for the revocation of his passport as a means to silence his criticisms and *The New York Times*, no admirer of Wallace, editorialized that the revocation of his passport "would not only deprive him of his Constitutional right of free speech but magnify out of all proportion the authority he enjoys in this country and cause Europeans to think that our Government has something to fear what he is saying."¹⁴⁴ The state had to assess whether the public criticism at home and abroad was less damaging than revoking Wallace's ability to travel. Though it is conceivable that Wallace's political standing and his 1948 presidential campaign spared him

¹⁴² Robinson to Silver, "Control of Political Activity by American Citizens Abroad," April 14, 1947. Folder "PD-General, 1947-1950," Box 2, Records Relating to Passports 1944-1953, RG 59, NACP.

¹⁴³ Neal to Robinson and Ruth Shipley, "Projects," April 8, 1947. Folder "PD-Administration (II)," Box 1, Records Relating to Passports 1944-1953, RG 59, NACP.

¹⁴⁴ "Wallace Defies Critics in Senate, to Continue Talks," *New York Times*, April 14, 1947; "Answering Mr. Wallace," *New York Times*, April 17, 1947. *The New York Times* editorial board disagreed with Mundt and other anticommunists regarding Wallace. They noted that to remove his right to speech internationally through the removal of his passport would be to play into the hands of the greatest foreign critics of the U.S. In addition, they noted, it would be to over-exaggerate Wallace's political capital in the U.S. "Mr. Wallace's Mission," *New York Times*, April 14, 1947. Wallace critiqued the U.S.'s foreign aid to Turkey and Greece. A mere two years later, the mainstream press would have no difficulty endorsing the denial of passports to suspected or actual members of the CPUSA.

from having his passport revoked, his travels and critiques raised fundamental questions about not only the role of the U.S. in the world but also how freedom and the political would be defined in the cold war era.

Whereas Wallace's travels sparked a debate over the perceived value of using passports as a tool of political policing, the case of William Dickman revealed tensions within the State Department over the power to control mobility in the absence of a declared state of war. Some officials fretted about both the efficacy and legality of denying passports to applicants belonging to or suspected of past membership in the CPUSA and other allied organizations. William Dickman applied for a passport in late 1947 to pursue work in Greece and Turkey as a Department of War contractor amidst the U.S.'s efforts to combat local insurgencies rebelling against autocratic regimes. Dickman's membership in the National Maritime Union and an accusation against him in front of a House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) hearing raised suspicions in the Passport Division. To evaluate his case, officials contacted its New York offices, HUAC, and the FBI to ascertain whether Dickman was a genuine member of an alleged Central Audit Committee in the CPUSA. Despite being unable to find concrete evidence that would confirm or refute Dickman's own membership, the Passport Division sought out information about his associates whom they believed to be CP members.¹⁴⁵

Hamilton Robinson of the Office of Controls, who came under attack from both Democrats for being overzealous in managing the Loyalty Boards and Republicans for being too lenient, believed there was insufficient evidence of Dickman's "subversive" political beliefs to warrant denying a passport. He also objected to rejecting the application on the basis of

¹⁴⁵ "Memorandum for the Files William Dickman," December 12, 1947. Folder "PD-Passports," Box 1, Records Relating to Passports 1944-1953, RG 59, NACP.

contemporary geopolitical conditions, even for travel to the frontlines of the cold war. The office, he believed, could "not deny a passport to such an employee on security grounds unless the case were such that we would deny the passport regardless of whether the individual were [sic] going abroad to participate in the Greek-Turkish Program." That passports could not be restricted geographically was a departure from World War II precedents.¹⁴⁶ To some officials, the absence of a declared state of war, despite the continued application of FDR's national emergency, necessitated a carefully calibrated system to evaluate passports. Though it is unclear what Dickman's actual relationship to the U.S. government was or whether he actually traveled to Korea, the episode demonstrates that the beginning of the cold war did not automatically lead to using passports for political policing and disagreement within the state over the boundaries of state power. As will be discussed in subsequent chapters, such area restrictions would become the political norm during the 1950s and 1960s.

The applications of left-wing journalists, including Max Weiss and Abraham B. (A.B.) Magil, a reporter for the communist *Daily Worker* and *Morning Freiheit*, were more problematic. Although Weiss was unable to attend the convention in Italy, Magil's case resulted in a different outcome. In January 1948, the State Department's policy was to provide passports to "American citizen Communists or supporters of Communists when" there was a lack of evidence that the intended travel was "for subversive purposes." However, minus substantive evidence, the Passport Division denied applications of those whose travel was "believed to...subvert the interests of the United States."¹⁴⁷ Although this policy did not deny passports on the basis of an

¹⁴⁶ Robinson to Ruth Shipley, "William Dickman," December 15, 1947. Folder "PD-Passports," Box 1, Records Relating to Passports 1944-1953, RG 59, NACP.

¹⁴⁷ Robinson to Peurifoy, "Current Policy on Issuing Passports and Visas to Communists." January 16, 1948. Folder "1947-1950 PD-Communists," Box 1, Records Relating to Passports 1944-1953, RG 59, NACP.

applicant's political beliefs, the retention of the WWII era language of "interests" provided the department with a tremendous degree of latitude. Evidence of subversive intent would be based on information provided by the FBI and the final decision rested with the Secretary of State.¹⁴⁸ The context of the Geneva Conference on Freedom of Information produced a different result for A.B. Magil. Initially, Magil applied for a passport to report on conditions in Palestine, and following procedure, the FBI provided a thirty-four page report on the evidence of "Mr. Magil's activities as a long time revolutionary writer, organizer, and propagandist" including articles Magil published in *New Masses* from the 1930s and immediate post-war years that provided irrefutable evidence to the Bureau and the Passport Division of Magil's communist beliefs.¹⁴⁹ His application was denied, but a second submitted two days later to attend the Geneva Conference in order to criticize the U.S.' denial as a violation of the UN Charter produced a different, but exceptional result. In contrast to Passport Division and other government officials, U.S. representatives at the conference believed denying Magil's passport application would smack of hypocrisy. Although they considered Magil among "worst opponent[s] [of a] democratic system within our ranks," they defended his right to report on the conference on the grounds that it would demonstrate the U.S.'s strong commitment to press freedoms. Denying Magil's passport was an ineffective measure to counter his beliefs especially because the *Daily Worker* would reprint material produced by "Tass and other propaganda as malignant as anything he may write." In a struggle between two countries and systems, they argued, the "[b]eneficial effects on middle countries will be manifold through providing evidence that we believe firmly that truth will grow through diversity of news presentation and our faith in having

¹⁴⁸ Ruth B. Shipley to Mr. Allen, No Subject, March 29, 1948. Folder "1947-1950 PD-Communists," Box 1, Records Relating to Passports 1944-1953, RG 59, NACP.

¹⁴⁹ Ruth B. Shipley to Allen, March 29, 1948.

all sides viciously slanted against us.”¹⁵⁰ The Passport Division followed the Geneva delegations’ recommendations and begrudgingly issued Magil a passport.

Magil's case would prove to be unique. Amidst Weiss' case in February 1948, George C. Marshall asserted that a Secretary of State already possessed the power to deny passports at his/her discretion.¹⁵¹ Diplomat Charles E. Bohlen believed that "The burden of proof" for a passport "should be on [the] applicant to prove his purpose is not to subvert U.S. interests," and legal adviser Richard W. Flournoy questioned whether participation in the CPUSA could "be in accord with full loyalty to the United States."¹⁵² Through 1948 and 1949, the State Department advocated for legislation that would criminalize the attempt “to conceal in a passport application membership in a party or organization whose purpose it is to subvert our form of government” or to “falsify the purpose of travel abroad.”¹⁵³ Despite some concerns that such legislation was unnecessary given the “Secretary’s discretionary power in granting or refusing passports” and potentially unconstitutional, passport denial was included in bills introduced by Richard Nixon and Karl E. Mundt in 1948 and 1949 that passed both houses but failed to overcome Truman's veto.¹⁵⁴ Such power, however, would be enshrined in the 1950 Internal Security Act and 1952 Immigration and Nationality Act.

¹⁵⁰ Troutman to Secretary of State, Telegram 326, March 31, 1948. Folder “PD-Passports,” Box 1, Records Relating to Passports 1944-1953, RG 59, NACP.

¹⁵¹ George C. Marshall, “Memorandum for Mr. Lovett,” February 25, 1948. Folder “1947-1950 PD-Communists,” Box 1, Records Relating to Passports 1944-1953, RG 59, NACP.

¹⁵² Charles E. Bohlen to Mr. Lovett, February 23, 1948; Richard W. Flournoy to Mr. Tate, “The Refusal of Passports to Communists,” January 12, 1948, 3. Folder “1947-1950 PD-Communists,” Box 1, Records Relating to Passports 1944-1953, RG 59, NACP.

¹⁵³ Cherp to Nicholson, Amshey, and Broecker, “Draft Letter on Passport Issuance to Communists,” January 3, 1949. Folder “1947-1950 PD-Communists,” Box 1, Records Relating to Passports 1944-1953, RG 59, NACP.

¹⁵⁴ Ailshei to Boykin, “Letter to Sen. Wiley re passports,” January 5, 1949. Folder “1947-1950 PD-Communists,” Box 1, Records Relating to Passports 1944-1953, RG 59, NACP.

Although both pieces of legislation had a dramatic effect, particularly on immigrants, they merely reconfirmed Passport Division practices since the WWII era. The Internal Security Act required the CPUSA and affiliated organizations to register with the federal government, widened the INS' deportation powers, empowered the FBI to selectively detain individuals, and denied members of listed organizations the right to apply for passports or for government officials to issue a passport to such an applicant.¹⁵⁵ Violating Section Six, which related to passports, could result in a fine of \$10,000 and/or five years imprisonment. While Truman's Proclamation 2914 declaring a national emergency in December 1950 made it necessary to obtain passports to travel, the amended 1940 Travel Control Act was reiterated in the 1952 Immigration Act, which widened the requirement for passports from during times of war to all national emergencies declared by the president. It would only be in 1978 that passports were made mandatory for international travel at all times, unless bilateral agreements made them unnecessary.

Despite the fact that Section Six of the Internal Security Act would only legally come into effect in 1961, the Passport Division enforced its provisions and wielded enormous power over who was considered subversive and thus politically "confined" to the U.S. As one State Department lawyer declared, the 1950 legislation neither diminished nor increased the Secretary of State's authority over passports. "The Act," he wrote, "merely [made] what was before a discretionary right of refusal mandatorily exercisable in certain specified contingencies."¹⁵⁶ What the Act did widen, however, was the range of individuals who might have their passports denied.

¹⁵⁵ Julian Zelizer, *Arsenal of Democracy: The Politics of National Security – From World War II to the War on Terrorism* (New York: Basic Books, 2010), 104.

¹⁵⁶ Adrian S. Fisher to Samuel Boykin, "Issuance of Passports to Communist Journalists," February 5, 1951. Folder "PD/Passports," Box 2, Records Relating to Passports 1944-1953, RG 59, NACP.

Exercising its power as if Section Six were in effect would possibly "be more strict than the Internal Security Act in that it would operate to deny passports to some individuals who do not have any working relationship with the Communist movement."¹⁵⁷ Many believed that the Division was now empowered to deny passports to "Communist journalists" regardless of the legitimacy of their press credentials.¹⁵⁸ What the Act accomplished was to make mandatory the denial of passports to suspected communists or communist sympathizers, a decision that had previously been made at the discretion of the Secretary of State.¹⁵⁹

Passport Division practices and anticommunist legislation reaffirmed the passport's function as an instrument to protect the state and raised significant constitutional questions over the boundaries of emergency powers. Denial of a passport not only symbolized the removal of the state's protection of an individual, but as one critic at the time insisted, it meant "under existing world conditions" the state "actually imposes confinement of citizens to the United States."¹⁶⁰ Prior to the Internal Security Act's passage, State Department officials raised the concern that there were no statutes stipulating on what grounds a citizen could be denied a passport. The only requirement was that, regardless of citizenship status, the individual claimed

¹⁵⁷ "Guidance Memorandum for the Application of New Sections 51.135 – 51.143 Inclusive of 22 CFR – Passports," September 16, 1952, 2. Folder "PD/Denials and Appeals Procedure, 1952," Box 1, Records Relating to Passports 1944-1953, RG 59, NACP.

¹⁵⁸ Samuel Boykin to Adrian S. Fisher, "Issuance of Passports to Communist Journalists," November 16, 1950. Folder "1947-1950 PD-Communists," Box 1, Records Relating to Passports 1944-1953, RG 59, NACP.

¹⁵⁹ Adrian S. Fisher to Samuel Boykin, "Issuance of Passports to Communist Journalists," February 5, 1951. Folder "PD/Rejections," Box 2, Records Relating to Passports 1944-1953, RG 59, NACP.

¹⁶⁰ "Standards to be Applied in Considering Passport Applications," July 28, 1952, 1. "PD/Denials and Appeals Procedure, 1952," Box 1, Records Relating to Passports 1944-1953, RG 59, NACP.

"allegiance...to the United States."¹⁶¹ Passport Division official W.H. Young argued that passports were more than a symbol of citizenship. Instead, the passport verified the bearer's allegiance and affective ties to the nation. Anyone who challenged U.S. foreign policy or who "does not so conduct himself abroad so as to indicate clearly his attachment to the principles of the American government and whose activities, either at home or abroad, promote the interests of a foreign country or a political faction therein should not be privileged to bet the bearer of an American passport." Perceived loyalty not only determined one's ability to obtain a passport, but constituted the precondition for state protection while traveling abroad: "The right to receive the protection of this government is correlative with the obligation of the person claiming such protection to give his undivided allegiance to the United States."¹⁶² Such protection was always discretionary, however. One State Department attorney noted that "a passport does not so commit this Government" to protecting the passport bearer "as the Department must always decide in any particular situation what, if any, diplomatic protection it will extend."¹⁶³ Protection was not an inherent right but needed to be weighed against a variety of factors particularly geopolitical interests. While the state did not wish to protect those abroad whose actions violated "national interests," it had to theoretically allow the passport holder to reenter the nation. Thus,

¹⁶¹ W.H. Young to Samuel Boykin, "Suggestion of Mr. Charles E. Odegaard that the Department Issue a Statement of Policy Concerning the Issuance of Passports to United States Citizens Going Abroad," August 18, 1950. Folder "PD/General (II)," Box 1, Records Relating to Passports 1944-1953, RG 59, NACP.

¹⁶²W.H. Young to Samuel Boykin, "Suggestion of Mr. Charles E. Odegaard that the Department Issue a Statement of Policy Concerning the Issuance of Passports to United States Citizens Going Abroad," 3.

¹⁶³ "Standards to be Applied in Considering Passport Applications," July 28, 1952, 1. Folder "PD/Denials and Appeals Procedure, 1952," Box 1, Records Relating to Passports 1944-1953, RG 59, NACP.

the passport functioned both as an extension of the paternalist power of the state and a limitation on that power.

Evaluating the impact of the legislation is difficult because the State Department did not maintain detailed statistics on passport denials. However, the case of sociologist Jerome Dwight Davis provides additional insights into the Divisions' practices. Who exactly could be denied a passport depended on the examiner's individual assessment and the amount of information held by the Passport Division, State Department, and various intelligence agencies. Davis was considered suspicious because of his connections to left-wing causes. Officials described him as "an apologist for the Soviet form of government and a strong advocate of America-Russian collaboration." They emphasized his ability to "obtain a Soviet visa prior to the issuance of his passport" and his success in traveling to Berlin with the assistance of the Soviet Embassy in Paris. His alleged solicitation of actor Paul Robeson's assistance to facilitate access to Soviet contacts was also damning in the eyes of officials. This last allegation was questionable, however, since Davis had already obtained a visa without Robeson's help. Other FBI reports listed Davis as director of an organization advocating for peaceful coexistence and a CPUSA member.¹⁶⁴ Ultimately, despite Davis' protestations and submission of evidence challenging the state's assertions, he was denied a passport and confined to the U.S. He joined a long list of famous luminaries of the left, including Paul Robeson, William Patterson, scholar Owen Lattimore, and *California Eagle* publisher Charlotte A. Bass.

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¹⁶⁴ S.D. Boykin to the Secretary and Humelsine, "Mr. Jerome DAVIS," April 24, 1952. Folder "PD/Denials and Appeals Procedure, 1952" Box 1, Records Relating to Passports 1944-1953, RG 59, NACP.

The Passport Division, later Passport Office, was one of the few faces of the national security state that Americans seeking to travel abroad had contact with, particularly after World War II. As demonstrated, the Division's power developed in tandem with immigration law and changing conceptions of national security that increasingly justified the use of emergency powers. Policing left-wing internationalism was consistently at the heart of this project. As we will see in chapter three, until the 1958 *Kent v. Dulles* decision, where the Supreme Court ruled that the Passport Division had exceeded its authority, the Passport Division wielded unchecked power to prevent Americans from traveling abroad.¹⁶⁵ *Kent*, however, only ruled that the Passport Division had exceeded its authority since the Attorney General had yet to issue final registration orders, which the Court ruled were constitutional in 1961. After 1958, the ever-growing demand for passports, the changes to travel through the rising popularity of air travel which necessitated prompt responses from the state, and the applications themselves could provide ways in which individual activists could shape the security state and circumvent its reach. In response to these pressures, the security state would increasingly turn towards the imposition of geographic travel restrictions to supplement its policing through passport controls.

¹⁶⁵ Section Six's constitutionality, and thus the question of whether the state could legitimately revoke and withhold passports on the basis of political beliefs, was not evaluated and stricken until 1964 in *Aptheker v. Secretary of State*.

Chapter 2

“An Iron Curtain, Made in Washington”: The American Committee to Survey Labor Conditions in Europe and the Struggle over Mobility in the Early Cold War

Writing in the wake of the 1952 Helsinki Summer Olympics, journalist Barbara Schaefer of *The Worker Magazine* commented that the conviviality of the games stood in stark contrast to the acrimony of world affairs. While the Truman Administration blamed the Soviet Union’s prohibitions on travel to and from the country for preventing a peaceful, stable global community, Schaefer highlighted the fact that the U.S. government itself had “rigid prohibitions against people from the United States traveling abroad and people from other countries traveling in the United States.” The Passport and Visa Divisions’ unchecked power to deny entry or egress to whomever they identified as a political threat challenged the very freedom of movement and expression that the United States purportedly championed. To Schaefer, the controls on movement were another sign of the creeping rise of fascism in the early cold war U.S. While Nazi Minister of Propaganda Joseph Goebbels coined the “Iron Curtain,” Schaefer argued the Passport Division had defined the term. The Division, she declared, “has decreed, in true Hitler fashion, that no person, whose entry or departure is not to be in the best interest of those who would see fascism come to this land, can penetrate the Iron Curtain dropped by the U.S. State Department.” She concluded her article by listing the names of individuals who had their mobility circumscribed by State Department policies and U.S. passport laws. Passport denials and revocations, visa denials, and newly imposed country-specific travel restrictions were the individual threads with which the Division wove “An Iron Curtain, Made in Washington.”¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁶ Barbara Schaeffer, “An Iron Curtain, Made in Washington,” *The Worker Magazine*, September 14, 1952.

Included in Schaeffer's list were the names of participants of a small and short-lived organization known as the American Committee to Survey Labor Conditions in Europe (ACSLCE). The organization, loosely affiliated with the CPUSA and composed of trade union members, sent three delegations to Western Europe and the Soviet Union in 1951 and 1952. Their travels not only coincided with the Second Red Scare but occurred after the passage of the draconian McCarran Internal Security Act, which denied passports to those suspected of membership in the CPUSA. The ACSLCE's voyages prompted debates of whether the state could control where an individual could travel, even if they had already departed the U.S., and if so, by what means. Their breach of Washington's own Iron Curtain, resulted in the widespread use of country-specific travel bans and restrictions during times of peace, restrictions that continue to be utilized in various guises to this day.

The ACSLCE's ability to traverse U.S. borders and cold war boundaries demonstrates that the security state's control over international mobility was incomplete. Scholars of the Second Red Scare and social movements utilize the Passport Division's revocation of the passports of activists such as Paul Robeson as an index of domestic political repression. When discussed, the Passport Division has been characterized as an omnipotent institution. To a degree, this characterization is appropriate. Some of the most famous and leading left-wing activists were denied the ability to leave the country in an effort to silence critics of U.S. foreign policy and nationalize social movements, particularly the black freedom movement. Containing those critical of U.S. policy, particularly regarding Jim Crow segregation and racial inequality in the U.S., was one way in which the U.S. attempted to shape its world image. However, less prominent activists, such as members of the ACSLCE, were able to circumvent the security state's controls due to the limitations of the surveillance system detailed in the previous chapter.

The Passport Division's incomplete surveillance archive and ACSLCE organizing strategies help to explain the success of this internationalist organization.

However, the ACSLCE was also successful in its efforts to reach Eastern Europe due to competing interests within the national security state. Recently declassified FBI files reveal that the Bureau successfully placed at least one informant in the ACSLCE. While the Passport Division worked to prevent the departure of working-class activists, the FBI understood the organization as a potential vehicle through which it could expand its surveillance operations abroad. Having lost most of its international intelligence portfolio with the creation of the CIA in 1947, the Bureau sought ways to both expand its jurisdiction and repress the CPUSA and other left-wing organizations. The FBI hoped to successfully document direct ties between the Soviet Union and the CPUSA in order to delegitimize and eventually prosecute the latter. This program coincided with efforts to convince disaffected communist leaders to cooperate with the FBI as informants.¹⁶⁷ In contrast, the State Department feared that allowing dissidents and potential communists to travel unrestricted would result in significant Congressional and public criticism. The decision to impose country-specific travel restrictions helped to overcome these differences as they enabled the state to further control who was able to depart the U.S. and their itinerary. I demonstrate that the development of geographic travel restrictions was the result of both the

¹⁶⁷ It was through this effort that the FBI secured the cooperation of Morris Childs who was an international representative and informant of the CPUSA. The FBI confronted Morris after he was expelled from the CPUSA's leadership due to his close relationship with Earl Browder. Subsequent to his expulsion, Childs suffered a massive heart attack and had mounting medical bills. In the late 1950s, Childs would regain the confidence of the Party leadership and travel to the Soviet Union and China as part of an effort to maintain lines of communication. He would gain the confidence of high officials in the Soviet Union and China. For more on the operation, dubbed Operation SOLO, see John Barron, *Operation SOLO: The FBI's Man in the Kremlin* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery Publishing, Inc., 1996); Leonard and Gallagher, *A Threat of the First Magnitude*, 29-44;

ability of the ACSLCE to circumvent existing controls and the competing agendas of the Passport Division and FBI.

The FBI's use of the ACSLCE was distinct from other projects involving the national security state and organized labor. Historians have demonstrated that anticommunist labor organizers such as Jay Lovestone and Victor and Walter Reuther of the United Automobile Workers (UAW) attempted to export their own models of trade unionism throughout the world. Both Lovestone and the Reuthers worked in the 1940s to construct alternative international institutions to challenge the power of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), an organization largely composed of unions sympathetic to the Soviet Union and communism. The Free Trade Union Committee (FTCU), founded in 1944 initially to challenge Nazism, received financing from and collaborated with the CIA to curtail the WFTU's global influence under Lovestone's leadership. By the end of the 1940s, the WFTU was severely weakened by the withdrawal of Western European and North American unions, including the CIO, which regrouped to form the anticommunist International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). The Reuthers initiated their "trade union diplomacy" at this moment of fracture.¹⁶⁸ Their efforts to export a model of anticommunist unionism that privileged collective bargaining and channeled class conflict into a byzantine maze of bureaucratic procedures was embraced by the U.S. government in its attempt to restructure global capitalism and blunt the rising power of the Left in Western Europe.¹⁶⁹ In contrast, the FBI infiltrated an organization opposed to U.S.

¹⁶⁸ Nelson Lichtenstein, *Walter Reuther: The Most Dangerous Man in Detroit* (Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 328.

¹⁶⁹ For more on anticommunist labor internationalism and collaboration with the national security state, see Anthony Carew, "The American Labor Movement in Fizzland: The Free Trade Union Committee and the CIA," *Labor History* 39, no. 1 (1998): 25-42; Thomas C. Field, Jr., "Transnationalism Meets Empire: The AFL-CIO, Development, and the Private Origins of Kennedy's Latin American Labor Program," *Diplomatic History* 42, no. 2 (2018): 305-334;

imperial power and did not attempt to shape the international labor movement. Instead, the Bureau sought to both produce evidence of the direct connections between the Soviet Union and American “subversives,” and operate as an international intelligence agency.¹⁷⁰ Transnational networks constructed for the purpose of surpassing and opposing U.S. state power could unwittingly be utilized to further the state’s own objectives.¹⁷¹

That the ACSLCE was infiltrated does not diminish the work of the individual activists involved. Indeed, the ACSLCE’s journeys reveal the possibility an alternative trajectory of labor internationalism in the early cold war. In this context, the ACSLCE’s forays into Europe represented a rebuttal to the growing power of anticommunist internationalism in the American labor movement. Their journeys to document conditions in France, Italy, Soviet Russia, and other Eastern European states were attempts to promote a left-wing internationalism centered on proletarian solidarity and anticolonialism. Although the ACSLCE was not alone in its advocacy for greater left-internationalism or peaceful coexistence with the Soviet Union, its focus on political travel distinguished it from other organizations such as the National Council for American-Soviet Friendship (NCASF). Formed in 1942 by a coalition of academics, Popular Front fellow travelers, and CPUSA members, the NCASF at first offered stringent critiques of NATO and the Marshall Plan, but by the mid-1950s began to moderate its rhetoric to emphasize coexistence and negotiations between the Soviet Union and U.S. Similar to the ACSLCE, the

Hugh Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer: How the CIA Played America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 51-68.

¹⁷⁰ For more on the J. Edgar Hoover’s hope to transform the FBI into a global policing agency, see Marc Becker, *The FBI in Latin America: The Ecuador Files* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017), 49.

¹⁷¹ I am not suggesting that the ACSLCE is to blame for their own surveillance, but rather that the development of this internationalist organization and the state’s efforts to defeat the global left must be understood together.

NCASF attempted to challenge caricatures of Russian citizens and published pamphlets that emphasized peace and the “shared humanity between Americans and Russians...”¹⁷² The ACSLCE’s travels to and reflections on Eastern Europe anticipated the NCASF’s efforts in the mid-1950s to establish “people-to-people exchanges....between the” two rival countries.¹⁷³ Organizations like the ACSLCE and NCASF that openly called for closer cooperation between the two superpowers were part of a larger effort among activists in the 1950s to navigate the turbulent waters of the Second Red Scare. This chapter emphasizes that rather than a moment of declension, the Second Red Scare should be understood as a moment of reformation within the left.¹⁷⁴

This chapter demonstrates how a transnational organization, the ACSLCE, shaped the national security state. Geographic travel restrictions applied to countries not at war with the United States developed not only as a direct response to the ACSLCE, but were also the product of contradictions within the national security state. While the FBI hoped to foster connections across borders only if it served their intelligence operations, the State Department and Passport Division attempted to deny such travel in the context of the Second Red Scare. Restrictions, I demonstrate, ultimately resolved these competing agendas by enabling the security state to

¹⁷² David Byron Wagner, “Alone Together: American Intellectuals in the American-Soviet Friendship Movement,” (PhD diss., University of California, Riverside, 2016), 139.

¹⁷³ Wagner, “Alone Together,” 159. For more on the organization through the 1970s, see Wagner, 93-181.

¹⁷⁴ There is a growing literature that challenges the notion of a hegemonic anticommunism in the 1950s United States. Examples include Gerald Horn, *Black & Red: W.E.B. Du Bois and the Afro-American Response to the Cold War, 1944-1963* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1986); Erik S. McDuffie, *Sojourning for Freedom: Black Women, American Communism, and the Making of Black Left Feminism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011); Joanne J. Meyerowitz, ed., *Not June Cleaver: Women and Gender in Postwar America, 1945-1960* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994); Kate Weigand, *Red Feminism: American Communism and the Making of Women’s Liberation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001).

channel movement beneficial to the state. The chapter first documents the development of the ACSLCE and their strategies to circumvent the restrictions on mobility enacted as a result of the McCarran Internal Security Act. I then examine how the Bureau sought to use the ACSLCE to expand the national security state's reach into Russian workplaces and homes through the use of informants placed within the organization. Next, the chapter explores the fallout from the ACSLCE's trips to Europe. I demonstrate how the ACSLCE appropriated and deployed the discourse of captivity and the "Iron Curtain" to critique U.S. passport and travel policies. The final section documents how the Passport Division ultimately decided to deploy geographic travel restrictions to further its control over mobility. According to the U.S. government, restrictions did not violate the supposed "freedom of movement" since such restrictions were not rooted in concerns of political beliefs, but the evaluation of the state's inability to offer protection to citizens in the restricted country. However, as later chapters document, such restrictions continued the logic of politically-based passport denials. Geographic restrictions were the product of U.S. policy that simultaneously promoted the movement of American citizen-ambassadors and the containment of dissidents to U.S. imperial goals.

Formation of the ACSLCE

The exact origins of the ACSLCE and its relationship with the CPUSA and other organizations are obscure. The group's chief organizer, Irving Charles Velson, was the son of the famous labor radical Clara Lemlich Shavelson credited with galvanizing the 1909 New York City shirtwaist worker strike.¹⁷⁵ Like his mother, Velson was a member of the CPUSA and union

¹⁷⁵ Irving changed his name to Charlie Velson to facilitate organizing among non-Jewish workers. Annelise Orleck, *Common Sense and a Little Fire: Women and Working-Class Politics in the United States, 1900-1965*, 2nd ed. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 245.

organizer with the Industrial Union of Marine and Ship Building Workers of America in New York City.¹⁷⁶ According to Velson's FBI file, his CPUSA membership led to his expulsion from the union's leadership in the early 1940s. Despite the extensive surveillance of Velson through World War II, his FBI file fell dormant in the immediate postwar years until April 1951, just prior to the first delegation's departure.¹⁷⁷

Unsurprisingly, the ACSLCE delegations were organized secretly through preexisting networks in the U.S. labor and peace movements. In addition to Clara Lemlich Shavelson, most delegates were members or in the leadership of union locals expelled or punished by the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in 1949-1950 for their refusal to abide by the Taft-Hartley Act. Participants reported that they were selected by their local union leadership to represent the organization on the delegation. Hilliard Ellis of Chicago was one of the first black presidents of an UAW local when elected to the position in 1946 and reportedly a member of the CPUSA. Myrtle Dennis of Cleveland was an organizer for the radical Union of Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers of America (UE) and later a member of the National Negro Labor Council and Sojourners for Truth. William Glenn of Grand Rapids, Michigan was active in the local Communist Party and in the late 1940s was ousted from the presidency of his local NAACP chapter for his attempts to center labor rights along with civil rights in the organization's work. While the ACSLCE's membership was concentrated in Northeastern and Midwest cities, representatives from Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay Area joined the first two delegations in the spring and summer of 1951. Some representatives were selected because of their apolitical reputation, such as Jack Blackwell of the Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter

¹⁷⁶ For more on Clara Lemlich Shavelson's politics after the 1909 strike, see Orleck, *Common Sense and a Little Fire*, 215-249.

¹⁷⁷ Summary Report, "Irving Charles Velson," January 25, 1944, FBI File 65-HQ-694-16.

Workers in Idaho, in order to bolster the delegation's claims as a fact-finding entity, recruit new supporters for the policy of peaceful coexistence, and ensure that as many participants as possible could obtain a passport.

That the ACSLCE was successful at the height of the Second Red Scare in mobilizing travelers to Europe in the first place was a significant accomplishment. In 1947, the Truman Administration formalized its Federal Loyalty Program to remove those suspected of communist sympathies or membership in the Party from government employment. This program, which emerged in the context of growing conservative attacks against the New Deal, resulted in the investigation and dismissal of tens of thousands of government employees, particularly those who sympathized with the Popular Front, civil rights advocates, feminists, and gays and lesbians.¹⁷⁸ That same year, Congress passed the Taft-Hartley Act in reaction to the increase of worker militancy in the immediate postwar period. The law greatly constrained unions' ability to organize and strike, prohibited closed shops, authorized right to work laws, and required leaders to submit affidavits forswearing their membership in communist organizations. In 1949, the CIO expelled eleven of its most militant and left-wing unions, which accounted for approximately twenty percent of the CIO, whose leadership refused to sign the affidavits.¹⁷⁹ The federal government also successfully prosecuted eleven leaders of the CPUSA under the Smith Act in 1949. Finally, in 1950, Congress overrode Truman's veto and passed the Subversive Activities

¹⁷⁸ David K. Johnson, *The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004); Landon R.Y. Storrs, *The Second Red Scare and the Unmaking of the New Deal Left* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012).

¹⁷⁹ Robert W. Cherny, William Issel, and Kieran Walsh Taylor, "Introduction," *American Labor and the Cold War: Grassroots Politics and Postwar Political Culture*, eds. Robert W. Cherny, William Issel, and Kieran Walsh Taylor (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2004), 1; Ellen Schrecker, "Labor and the Cold War: The Legacy of McCarthyism," *American Labor and the Cold War*, 7-24.

Control Act (the Internal Security Act) which required the CPUSA and other organizations to register with the federal government, authorized emergency detention, and allowed for the deportation, exclusion, and denaturalization of Communist Party members or those accused of membership in a “front” organization. Section Six of the Act prohibited members of the Party and organizations ordered to register with the Subversive Activities Board from applying for a passport, requesting its renewal if already issued, and to use a passport to travel. The Act also made it illegal for Passport Division employees to knowingly issue a passport to those ordered to register. Although Section Six would not be enforceable until 1961 after the CPUSA exhausted all of its appeals, Ruth B. Shipley argued that the Division believed they had a Congressional “mandate,” and that “although the penal provisions of Section 6 did not become operative immediately, the Department should carry out the spirit of the act and begin at once to refuse passports to members of Communist organizations.” While the Division had been denying passports to suspected CPUSA members since the late 1940s, the perceived “mandate” enabled officials, beginning in February 1951, to deny passports to journalists, a category of applicants they were hesitant to deny prior to the Act’s passage.¹⁸⁰

Such a degree of government repression would seem to militate against the emergence of an organization designed to nurture left internationalist politics. Given the repeated assertion that Soviet agents were secretly working within U.S. borders to undermine its policies and way of life, any manifestation of connections between the U.S. Left and Soviet Union could have provided fodder to anticommunist critics. In addition, the ACSLCE’s development contradicted some CPUSA policies implemented in the wake of cold war repression. The successful

¹⁸⁰ Mrs. Shipley to Mr. Humelsine, “Problem of Withholding Passports From American Citizens,” August 7, 1951. Folder “PD/Passports,” Box 2, Records Relating to Passports 1944-1953, RG 59, NACP.

prosecution of the leadership and CPUSA organizers throughout the country prompted the Party to rapidly decrease its visibility in American politics. However, the Party's leadership, particularly William Z. Foster, remained committed to its internationalism. Foster's beliefs were emboldened by the rising strength of left-wing parties in Western Europe, the strength of communist parties in the European labor movement, the emergence of Eastern European socialism, and the success of the Chinese Revolution.¹⁸¹ While the relationship between Velson and Foster is unclear, this enthusiasm for the rising success of the Left internationally may help to explain the emergence of the ACSLCE.

Although the level of government and private repression, particularly the Passport Division's policies, narrowed the possibility for a group such as the ACSLCE to operate and travel abroad, the organization formed at a moment when the Division's practices and filters were not fully refined. During 1951, the Passport Division employed just over two hundred in Washington, D.C. and thirty-two personnel in its regional offices in New York, San Francisco, Boston, Chicago, and New Orleans.¹⁸² These clerks, on average, processed an estimated fifteen hundred to two thousand applications per day in FY 1951.¹⁸³ Participants on the first and second

¹⁸¹James R. Barrett, *William Z. Foster and the Tragedy of American Radicalism* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 249.

¹⁸² U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Appropriations, *Departments of State, Justice, Commerce, and the Judiciary Appropriations for 1953: Hearings before the Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations*, 82nd Cong., 2nd. Sess., 1952, 558-561.

¹⁸³ Ashley J. Nicholas in U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, *Unauthorized Travel of Subversives Behind the Iron Curtain on United States Passports: Hearings before the Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws of the Committee on the Judiciary*, 82nd Cong., 1st sess., 1951, 12.

delegations applied for passports during the height of the transatlantic tourist season, and joined over half a million other U.S. citizens traveling to Europe that year.¹⁸⁴

To circumvent the national security state's barriers, the ACSLCE deployed several strategies to work within, not against, the normative traveling public. The first involved the passport application, a key instrument of the Passport Division's surveillance apparatus. In addition to providing requisite identification information, excluding race which was not requested at the time, and travel itinerary, the application activated a set of procedures that simultaneously manufactured normative travelers and security threats. Applicants names were checked against an ever-expanding color-coded index system that reflected a larger database of individual files. If an individual was in the index and their card was red or orange, the color indicated that the Division or another agency either possessed information suggesting they were a security risk or placed a stop order preventing the individual from departing the country. By 1956, this central index contained over eighteen million index cards.¹⁸⁵ However, only those who had previously applied for a passport were included in the Division's archives. A vast majority of the participants neither had previously applied for a passport nor were national figures in the North American Left, thus hindering one key instrument of the Division's policing power. A second strategy involved the listing of destinations, which the Division also used to measure an individual's potential subversive intent. Charles Velson instructed delegates to list France and England, the two most popular destinations for U.S. tourists, or Western Europe as their intended destination. Participants Alan Richard Greenfield and Myrtle Ophelia Dennis (under the name

¹⁸⁴ U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Appropriation, *Departments of State, Justice, Commerce, and the Judiciary Appropriations for 1952: Hearings before the Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations*, 82nd Cong., 1st sess., 1951, 1134.

¹⁸⁵ U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Un-American Activities, *Investigation of the Unauthorized Use of United States Passports – Part 1*, 4314.

Laura Dennis) applied to travel to Europe, and Esther Goldberg listed Israel, England, and France as destinations. A third strategy involved delaying submission of an application until a few weeks prior to the trip in order to expedite the process and indirectly pressure clerks amidst an already heavy workload. William Aloysius Wallace, a participant on the first trip, applied for a passport on April 12, 1951, just ten days before the first group departed for Western Europe. Wallace later testified that he and others were instructed to insist that the Passport Department quickly provide the passports given the short notice.¹⁸⁶ Multiple applicants on the first trip also indicated that they planned to travel via cruise ship rather than by plane, the real vehicle they used to reach Europe. Finally, others sought congressional support for their passports, including William Glenn, for whom a young Gerald R. Ford personally intervened to obtain a passport (something that he would very quickly come to regret and attempt to rectify in order to save his political career).

While the national security state became aware of the possibility of a left-leaning union delegation touring Western Europe in early April 1951, the Passport Division and FBI adopted competing positions on whether to prevent the group's departure. The Passport Division was charged with containing such political formations in the U.S., and requested FBI assistance to identify potential members in order to facilitate the denial or revocation of their passports. The Bureau, however, understood the ACSLCE as a potential vehicle to expand its surveillance networks abroad. Beginning with the Pittsburgh office, the St. Louis, Baltimore, San Francisco, and New York offices quickly provided information gleaned from informants regarding the organization and its members. Special Agent Edward Soucy advised the Bureau on April 13th

¹⁸⁶ William Aloysius Wallace in U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Un-American Activities, *Investigation of the Unauthorized Use of United States Passports – Part 1*, 4329.

that an informant in Pittsburgh had been contacted by Velson to join a “delegation to visit Europe to bring greetings of peace from America to those countries.”¹⁸⁷ The St. Louis office advised the Bureau that they did not believe that their informant would be able to obtain a passport in time for the delegation’s departure.¹⁸⁸ Hoover instructed regional offices that they were to provide the names of participants “so that all departures can be confirmed” by the New York office, suggesting that Hoover had no intention for the Bureau to try to halt the departure of the organization.¹⁸⁹

Ultimately, the Bureau was able to identify five of the eighteen delegates prior to their Air France flight from New York on April 22nd. William Glenn of Grand Rapids, Michigan was the first to be identified by the Detroit FBI office. Glenn had long been the target of FBI and Michigan State Police surveillance as a former local leader of the NAACP and labor movement. After promptly alerting Hoover that Glenn was black, the Detroit Office informed the FBI Director that Glenn had secured a passport and planned to travel to England from New York, possibly via ship. To the Detroit Office, Glenn’s potential departure constituted a security threat, given that he was “a devoted and rather intellectual Communist” and they believed he was travelling to further the CPUSA’s goals. Since Glenn applied for a passport “for vacation and pleasure,” the Detroit office believed that they may be able to pursue perjury charges upon his return.¹⁹⁰ By April 20th, the San Francisco Office obtained the identity, through informant SF

¹⁸⁷ Soucy to Director and SAC New York, April 13, 1951. FBI File, 100-HQ-380686, 100-380686-XI(u).

¹⁸⁸ SAC, St. Louis to Director, FBI, April 17, 1951. FBI File, 100-HQ-380686.

¹⁸⁹ Hoover to SAC, Baltimore, et. al., April 19, 1951. FBI File, 100-HQ-380686.

¹⁹⁰ FBI Detroit to Director FBI and SAC, New York, “William Melbourne Glenn, SM-C,” April 18, 1951. FBI File, 100-HQ-306597, Box 11, Series X FBI Documents, William Melbourne Glenn Papers, Collection no. 49, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department, Grand Rapids Public Library (GRPL).

1413, of three suspected members: Oran Jenkins, Margaret Francis Johnson, and her spouse, John Allen Johnson. Velson, according to the informant, contacted a California Labor School employee coordinating the local delegates and issued instructions that the three were to contact Velson upon their arrival to New York and that they would depart for Europe on Sunday April 22nd at 9:15 in the morning. The San Francisco Office had files on the three delegates selected. Oran Jenkins was reportedly an unemployed mariner with an FBI file who in 1950 was “screened off the President Wilson by” the Coast Guard “as [a] poor security risk.” The Johnson, the San Francisco Office noted, were longtime members of Communist Party organizations in Alameda County.¹⁹¹ Their identities were quickly forwarded to the State Department’s Division of Security and the Central Intelligence Agency. While the FBI could have, theoretically, acted to prevent the ACSLCE’s departure if they became aware of the exact means of their transportation, Hoover had other plans.

Worker Internationalism or International Espionage?

The competing impulses of the Passport Division, FBI, and other intelligence agencies stemmed from the Bureau’s hope to repurpose the committee’s travel to suit their and other intelligence agencies’ own ends through the presence of an informant. The Bureau did assist the Passport Division and Justice Department in identifying as many delegates as possible, but could not immediately ascertain the identities of the remaining eleven. The New York office confirmed the itineraries of the five known delegates: Glenn, Jenkins, the Johnsons, and Isaac Alexander Wright of Pittsburgh. Wright, an official within the Pittsburgh local UE, testified in 1956 that he had been active as a paid FBI informant since 1943. It is unclear whether the Passport Division

¹⁹¹ Harry Kimball to Wash and [redacted], April 20, 1951. FBI File, 100-HQ-380686.

was aware of Wright's duplicitous role, but they did expedite his passport application.¹⁹² In light of the "small number in [the] delegation, and presence of informant," the New York office advised that attempts to physically surveil the airport and obstruct their departure were both unfeasible and unwise. Since U.S. Immigration and Customs officials only inspected arriving passengers, such actions could require a large presence of FBI agents that would, in turn, threaten to reveal the identity and/or presence of an informant.¹⁹³ Hoover advised FBI Legal Attachés stationed in US embassies in Paris and London to provide the Bureau with information regarding their activities in Europe, which were believed to be connected with the international peace movement.¹⁹⁴

Upon Wright's return, he conducted a series of interviews with his FBI handlers providing detailed information not only about ACSLCE members, but also on Eastern European social and economic conditions. Of Myrtle Dennis, Wright responded that she "did not admit she was a member of the Communist Party but did admit she worked in the Progressive Party and the Women's Peace Movement." He described Alex Serota as "a typical old line Communist" and Frank Wedl, he reported, "admitted he was a member of the Communist Party."¹⁹⁵

Wright provided a detailed, day-to-day summary of the delegations' movements, discussions, and meetings with foreign dignitaries and labor representatives. In France and Italy, the bookend locations of the trip that took the delegation through Western and Eastern Europe, the ACSLCE was hosted by the radical trade unions Confédération générale du travail (CGT)

¹⁹² [Redacted, signed Soucy at bottom] to Director and SAC New York, Teletype, April 19, 1951. [redacted], April 20, 1951. FBI File, 100-HQ-380686.

¹⁹³ New York to Washington, Director, April 21, 1951. FBI File, 100-HQ-380686.

¹⁹⁴ Hoover to Legal Attaché, London, Paris, April 21, 1951. FBI File, 100-HQ-380686-9.

¹⁹⁵ SAC [redacted] to Director, FBI, "Communist Party – USA, International Relations," May 23, 1951, 1,6. FBI File, 100-HQ-380686.

and Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro (CGIL). In both countries, union leaders and rank-and-file members lambasted the Marshall Plan and expressed optimism regarding the future of their respective communist parties in upcoming elections. CGT representatives informed their American comrades that French workers opposed the “American occupation of the Port of Le Havre” and the basing of American soldiers intended, they argued, “to force the Marshall Plan down [European] throats.” However, the CGT expressed optimism in the potential for the French Communist Party in the next election if “the vote on non-proportional representation would pass in the next election.”¹⁹⁶ In Italy, the delegation met with individuals who had been recently deported from the U.S. for their political beliefs and representatives of CGIL. The union’s secretary expressed similar sentiments regarding the impact of U.S foreign. policy in Europe. He implied that the Marshall Plan’s emphasis on imports produced high unemployment and inflation.¹⁹⁷ The American visitors would echo these sentiments in their speeches and written reflections published in the U.S. While the national security state was surely not surprised by European workers’ dissatisfaction with the Marshall Plan, Wright’s comments provided evidence of the possibility of the creation of transnational networks to challenge American global power.¹⁹⁸

The Committee’s interactions with representatives from other countries in Russia and Eastern Europe provided further evidence, to the security state, of the delegation’s ideological

¹⁹⁶ SAC [Redacted] to Director, FBI, “Communist Party – USA, International Relations,” May 28, 1951, 2. FBI File 100-HQ-380686.

¹⁹⁷ SAC [redacted] to Director, “Communist Party, USA, International Relations,” June 12, 1951, 4. FBI File 100-HQ-380686-23.

¹⁹⁸ For more on the CGT, CGIL, and the national security state’s reactions to the two unions, see Alessandro Brogi, *Confronting America: The Cold War between the United States and Communists in France and Italy* (Chapel Hill: The University Press of North Carolina, 2011).

commitments and its place within a larger network of global activism. Since the success of the Bolshevik Revolution, the Soviet Union provided a haven for anticolonial and labor organizers. Its cities, primarily Moscow, served as a contact zone where individuals renewed their commitments to communism and left-wing internationalism through socializing and debating with one another while touring the country. This continued through the 1950s. The American delegation dined and toured facilities with representatives from China, Cuba, East and West Germany, North and South Korea, Great Britain, and elsewhere. Over the quotidian and intimate setting of dinners and small parties, the travelers learned about conditions in newly socialist states, those in the process of decolonizing, and the state of labor and peace movements in the U.S. The Cuban delegation noted that due to the particular conditions on the island, the Communist Party aspired to “achieve Socialism by gradual legislation” but feared a violent crackdown on the island due to recent U.S. propaganda efforts.¹⁹⁹ Wright himself gave a toast pledging American “solidarity for peace and friendship” and aspiring for an economy aligned with world peace.²⁰⁰ Of particular interest to the U.S. national security state were comments made by the Chinese and Korean delegates on the state of the Korean War. The Chinese delegate Wu Lou reported that Chinese casualties were much lower than reported in Western media and that he believed that there was “a 70% chance that” the UN would “invade China.” The Korean delegation “advised the informant that the United Nations were bombing the huts in Korea and the factories which belonged to the capitalists” and that “Koreans will move back” the area after

¹⁹⁹ SAC [Redacted] to Director, “Communist Party – USA International Relations,” June 1, 1952, 2-3. FBI File 100-HQ-380686.

²⁰⁰ SAC [Redacted] to Director, “Communist Party – USA International Relations,” June 1, 1952, 3. FBI File 100-HQ-380686.

attacks ceased.²⁰¹ While such comments were intended to harden Wright's antiwar position, his role as an informant transformed them into potentially actionable intelligence for the purpose of challenging the global antiwar movement and furthering the Korean War.

Of most interest to the U.S. national security state, however, was the information Wright relayed about the socioeconomic conditions of life and non-military installations in Eastern Europe due to his relatively uninhibited mobility. After departing Paris, the delegation traveled to Prague where they toured recently reconstructed chemical and leather factories. En route to Moscow, the delegation stopped briefly in Minsk, where the airport, Wright reported, had been reconstructed after being destroyed during the war.²⁰² The unhindered mobility of the delegation was a product of the Central Trade Union's interest in challenging U.S. "propaganda" that the Soviets "only show foreigners what [they] want [visitors] to see." After a dinner celebrating the delegation's arrival, the Russian union spokesperson advised that the delegation was able to visit any area they wished, except for "military bases and the atomic projects," and stay in the country for as long as they desired. The Americans devised an extensive list including "factories, schools, hospitals, rest homes, the Kremlin, docks, construction work, the inside of workers homes and the privilege of talking to the workers." To this, the sponsors added "culture centers, art centers, [the] subway, Lenin's tomb and the opera."²⁰³

Wright provided the security state a detailed portrait of Soviet industry, labor, and social welfare policies, emphasizing the modernity of the Soviet Union and the seeming lack of gender

²⁰¹ SAC [Redacted] to Director, "Communist Party – USA International Relations," June 1, 1952, 2. FBI File 100-HQ-380686.

²⁰² SAC [Redacted] to Director, FBI, "Communist Party – USA, International Relations," May 28, 1951, 5. FBI File 100-HQ-380686.

²⁰³ SAC [Redacted] to Director, FBI, "Communist Party – USA, International Relations," May 28, 1951, 6. FBI File 100-HQ-380686.

segregation in manufacturing. Regarding the Stalin Autoworks outside of Moscow, which he described as “efficient and modern,” Wright reported that the factory had “two assembly lines” producing trucks, the kind of which he later observed at the May Day parade, and sedans “similar to the American Chevrolet, but smaller.” The Stalin Autoworks employed approximately sixteen thousand, of which “Thirty per cent of the employees are women.”²⁰⁴ The delegation then visited a Kabka cigarette factory, which employed 4,000 workers, three-fourths of whom were women. The informant had some knowledge of cigarette mass production, providing details about the differences between Russian and American production methods.²⁰⁵ Wright also explained that in the Russian Social Security system, “benefits were granted at age 60 or 25 years in industry, whichever came first” and that those working in “hazardous industries...received a pension at age fifty or twenty years.” Receiving a pension did not prevent the individual from working, and they could continue to receive benefits; however, if they were employed in a “hazardous industry” they “must change to a non-hazardous” job. Women received seven-weeks paid leave prior to childbirth, and for seven weeks after received “pay and one-half.”²⁰⁶

The delegation’s, and thus the informant’s, ability, to freely examine domestic spaces and shops provided a picture of Russian life otherwise obscured to U.S. officials confined to the embassy. Delegate members were also provided access to workers’ homes, and they “visited two housing projects” where the “delegates talked to the tenants and examined the buildings.”

²⁰⁴ SAC [Redacted] to Director, FBI, “Communist Party – USA, International Relations,” May 28, 1951, 7. FBI File 100-HQ-380686.

²⁰⁵ SAC [Redacted] to Director, FBI, “Communist Party – USA, International Relations,” May 28, 1951, 7. FBI File 100-HQ-380686.

²⁰⁶ SAC [Redacted] to Director, FBI, “Communist Party – USA, International Relations,” May 28, 1951, 8-9. FBI File 100-HQ-380686.

Compared to public housing in the United States, “the rooms were larger...and [had] higher ceilings.” They were well lit, had heating, and that “there was no indication of overcrowding.” Each married couple, he reported, was “entitled to two rooms plus a kitchen and bath, and an additional room for every two children.” Rent was “3% of the worker’s salary regardless of the number of rooms he has.”²⁰⁷ In contrast to images of scarcity, stores in Moscow “appeared to be well stocked with clothing, hardware and electrical appliances” and that “people were proud that all the products were made in the Soviet Union.” He also provided estimated costs of common consumer goods, including wine (a fifth for \$2), cigarettes (45 cents per pack), “work shoes” (\$4), and dress shirts (\$5-\$6).²⁰⁸ As these brief interactions with residents and workers created the bonds of international solidarity, they also provided an avenue for the security state to extend its networks into areas otherwise unknowable by U.S. agents bound to the US embassy.

The intimacies of internationalist comradeship also provided Wright an avenue for obtaining information about Soviet weapons and military capacity. Through a discussion over drinks with an interpreter named Chausse “Nina” Kaluzskoye, Wright inquired as to why “signs of preparedness for war” appeared absent in the cities and countryside they visited. Nina responded, unsurprisingly, that military-grade aircraft manufacturing, weapons manufacturing, and “chemical plants were not around any of the big cities and that only select Soviet workers knew where they were.” Nina, who reportedly was inebriated, also suggested that public estimates of Soviet “war production were only 50% of the true figures.” Wright delved further into asking about the Soviet Union’s nuclear and chemical weapons programs. Nina revealed to

²⁰⁷ SAC [Redacted] to Director, FBI, “Communist Party – USA, International Relations,” June 1, 1951, 4. FBI File 100-HQ-380686.

²⁰⁸ SAC [Redacted] to Director, FBI, “Communist Party – USA, International Relations,” June 1, 1951, 5. FBI File 100-HQ-380686.

Wright that the country possessed “three types” of nuclear weapons and “several types of gases.”²⁰⁹ It is currently unclear whether the information Nina claimed to possess was factual or even noteworthy to U.S. security agencies. However valuable, J. Edgar Hoover forwarded Wright’s observations to the National Security Council, Department of State, CIA, and the various intelligence divisions within the military.

The allure of an unrestricted, undercover operative able to reach the most intimate spaces of Soviet civil society was powerful for U.S. intelligence agencies, particularly the U.S. Army’s G-2 division. Hoover actively disseminated Wright’s observations and pushed an unnamed Special Agent to “obtain” any information “concerning matters of possible interest to other government agencies and committees charged with coordinating foreign intelligence.”²¹⁰ American intelligence agencies reportedly had difficulties in accurately determining the state of Soviet affairs and industrial capacity due to “the travel restrictions enforced on the U.S. diplomatic personnel behind the Iron Curtain” along with the “extreme security measures adopted by these countries.” The Air Force communicated that its intelligence service was “extremely desirous of any type of collateral information on Soviet targets” since their current knowledge of Soviet civil society and industrial capacity was “based solely on low-level plain text intercepts and estimates, most of which” were outdated and insufficient.²¹¹ Wright’s ability to navigate not only the world of the American Left but to serve as an amateur ethnographer of

²⁰⁹ SAC [Redacted] to Director, FBI, “Communist Party – USA, International Relations,” June 1, 1951, 9. FBI File 100-HQ-380686.

²¹⁰ Hoover to SAC [redacted], June 14, 1951. FBI File, 100-HQ-380686

²¹¹ V.P. Keay to A.H. Belmont, “Informant Coverage Within Delegations Selected by the Communist Party, U.S.A. for a Tour of the U.S.S.R.,” May 25, 1951, 2. FBI File, 100-HQ-380686.

Soviet society motivated the Bureau and other agencies to cooperate on such matters in order to brief future informants traveling to Europe.²¹²

As the security state grappled with the ramifications of their plans to exploit these transnational networks for intelligence, Velson continued his work organizing a second delegation to depart that summer. As the Committee's Secretary, Velson wrote to various unions and invited their leadership to nominate participants for the second trip. Similar to the CP's Depression-era emphasis on the American qualities of the CPUSA, Velson argued that the delegation's journey helped to advance Abraham Lincoln's visions of "uniting the working peoples of all countries." "International goodwill and understanding," he wrote, "depend to no small extent on the first hand [sic] knowledge we American trade unionists have of the living and working conditions of our fellow trade unionists throughout Europe." The committee hoped to quickly assemble "an initial delegation of fifty or sixty American trade unionists" to accept recent invitations from French and Italian unions and depart in early June.²¹³

In response to these organizing efforts, the State Department moved to inhibit the first delegates' mobility and prevent future visits of suspected working-class leftists to both Western and Eastern Europe. Upon their return from Western Europe, each delegate's passport was cancelled and physically confiscated by INS officials.²¹⁴ Local FBI offices cooperated with the Passport Division and State Department to prevent the international mobility of suspected ACSLCE members. In May, the Chicago Field Office requested that the Bureau "place stop notices with the Passport Division" against the names of Herbert March, Joseph Marlovitz, and

²¹² F.J. Baumgardner to A.H. Belmont, "American Committee to Survey Labor Conditions in Europe," 1, June 15, 1951. FBI File 100-HQ-380686-102.

²¹³ Velson letter, May 4, 1951, in FBI File, 100-HQ-380686.

²¹⁴ "Passports of 2 Seized: Woman Penalized Had Headed a Delegation to Moscow," *New York Times*, May 23, 1951.

Michael Santina, who were believed to be nominees for representing Armour Local 347 at the WFTU congress in Vienna that summer. Should the three receive a passport, the Chicago Office requested that officials in New York contact US Immigration and Customs in order to “place appropriate stops to insure [sic] for baggage inspection....”²¹⁵ Ultimately, the revocation of their passports obstructed the local from securing representation on the delegation.²¹⁶ A month later, the Milwaukee Office requested that another “stop notice” be placed “against the name of Emil Mueller” of Wausan, Wisconsin, who they had reason to believe was going to travel to Europe to represent the local UERMA union.²¹⁷ Days prior to the second delegation’s departure in late June, the Passport Division also denied a passport to Ernest S. Judth, the chief steward of UE Local 1150 at Goodman Manufacturing Company.²¹⁸

The State Department’s initial decision to prevent the departure of ACSLCE members was complicated by a dearth of actionable intelligence and the interests of other national security institutions. Though the Passport Division and FBI were aware that approximately fifteen trade unionists were traveling to Western Europe on/or around June 18th, they knew neither the identities of more than a few nor their means of travel.²¹⁹ All of the four known or suspected

²¹⁵ SAC Chicago to Director, FBI, “Communist Party, USA, International Relations, Internal Security – C,” May 15, 1951. FBI File, 100-HQ-380686.

²¹⁶ SAC, Chicago to Director, FBI, “Communist Party, USA, International Relations, Internal Security – C,” June 2, 1951.” FBI File, 100-HQ-380686.

²¹⁷ SAC, Milwaukee to Director, FBI, “Communist Infiltration of United Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers of America, Internal Security – C,” June 14, 1951. FBI File, 100-HQ-380686.

²¹⁸ Hoover to Ruth B. Shipley, “American Committee to Survey Labor conditions in Europe,” June 15, 1951. FBI File, 100-HQ-380686; *The Worker, Illinois Edition*, July 15, 1951, 2.

²¹⁹ Stein to Director and SACs Washington and New York, “American Committee to Survey Labor Conditions in Europe,” June 16, 1951. FBI File, 100-HQ-380686

members had their passport applications denied or canceled by June 19th.²²⁰ The FBI also refused to forcibly intervene on behalf of the State Department. While the cancellation and/or removal of delegation members' passports prior to their departure would dampen the enthusiasm of the CPUSA and left-wing unions for such trips, FBI officials believed that physically preventing their departure could prevent future informants from joining ACSLCE. However, despite the success of Wright's infiltration, suggesting that the State Department refrain from cancelling passports in order to further the FBI's intelligence operations would effectively make the FBI complicit and "responsible for the activities of the delegation." Domestic anticommunism in the Second Red Scare motivated the FBI to adopt a mixed policy: while it wouldn't "encourage additional delegations," if "additional delegations do go over, we will permit informants to accompany them, if possible."²²¹ Placing informants in the organization would elevate their standing in the Party and enable the Bureau to "develop potential evidence establishing a direct connection between the USSR and the CP-USA." The Bureau concluded that "In view of the excellent intelligence potential afforded the Bureau and other intelligence agencies, it is believed that every effort should be utilized to effect this coverage." One agent proposed that the State Department be advised by the entire intelligence community through the Intelligence Advisory Committee to permit infiltrated groups to travel, especially given that the U.S. military remained interested about the possibility of repurposing the delegations for the purpose of espionage

²²⁰ F.J. Baumgardner to A.H. Belmont, "American Committee to Survey Labor Conditions in Europe," June 19, 1951. FBI File, 100-HQ-380686. Though J. Edgar Hoover learned that Fred Saniat and Warren Hoover, both members on the second delegation, were leaders in their UE locals, they were currently not under investigation. Hoover instructed the offices to immediately begin an investigation of their connections and activities. John Edgar Hoover to Ruth B. Shipley, "American Committee to Survey Labor Conditions in Europe," "Re: Warren Hoover," and "Re: Fred Saniat," June 19, 1951. FBI File, 100-HQ-380686-56.

²²¹ D.M. Ladd to The Director, "American Committee to Survey Labor Conditions in Europe," June 16, 1951. FBI File, 100-HQ-380686. Possibly 100-HQ-380686-29.

through the summer. Should no informants be selected, the IAC would be notified to determine appropriate action.²²² Ultimately, the FBI refused to provide the State Department with assistance in confiscating the passports, but, through the observation of one delegate's activities, confirmed that eleven labor delegates traveled to Europe.²²³

In the flurry of attempting to infiltrate and/or prevent the delegation's departure, the FBI and Passport Division's surveillance expanded to include anyone suspected of traveling for pleasure or on the behalf of a myriad of social justice organizations. Ben Phillips, an East St. Louis, Illinois activist with the Civil Rights Congress, was provided a passport in April 1951. The St. Louis FBI office requested that Phillips' activities be monitored should he travel abroad. Hoover also notified the Justice Department's Criminal Division of Phillips' potential trip to Europe.²²⁴ Reverend Charles M. Foggie, the chair of the Pittsburgh Negro Methodist Ministers Conference came under the surveillance and scrutiny of the security state due to his planned travel to England for a religious conference.²²⁵ A Pittsburgh-area informant alerted the Special Agent in Charge (SAC) that Foggie along with other religious leaders were contacted by Velson, and that they were potentially joining the ACSLCE.²²⁶ Ultimately, however, Foggie never

²²² V.P. Keay to A.H. Belmont, "informant Coverage Within Delegations Selected to Survey Labor Conditions in Europe and the USSR," June 28, 1951. FBI File, 100-HQ-380686.

²²³ F.J. Baumgardner to A.H. Belmont, "American Committee to Survey Labor Conditions in Europe," June 22, 1951. FBI File, 100-HQ-380686-103.

²²⁴ John Edgar Hoover to Mr. L.D. Nicholson, "Bennie Thomas Phillips, wa.," April 28, 1951. [redacted], April 20, 1951. FBI File, 100-HQ-380686.

²²⁵ Director, FBI to SAC, Boston, "American Committee to Survey Labor Conditions in Europe, Reverend Charles H. Foggie, Security Matter – C," August 3, 1951. FBI File, 100-HQ-380686.

²²⁶ Director, FBI to Asst. Attorney General James M. McInerney, "American Committee to Survey Labor Conditions in Europe," August 14, 1951. FBI File, 100-HQ-308686.

received an invitation to the Soviet Union while attending the religious conference in Oxford that summer.²²⁷

Despite the success of the first two delegations and Velson's cross-country organizing, increasing anticommunist political repression, financial barriers, and the Passport Division's policing prevented a third group from traveling until the spring of 1952. According to the organization's FBI file, Velson's attempts to recruit non-communist participants from the "maritime workers, the maritime stewards, the longshoremen, and National Maritime Union" for trips to both Europe and China floundered.²²⁸ Velson also reached out to Illinois State Representative William Lyons to discuss the possibility of joining the organization. Lyons, though interested, declined the offer fearing he would immediately be "branded as a Communist" and that the organization would expect "him to return with a favorable report on conditions in the Russian-controlled countries of Europe."²²⁹ Another obstacle to recruiting participants was finding those who could self-finance their travel and obtain the necessary vacation time.²³⁰ The Passport Division also increasingly refused passports to working-class applicants who were suspected of participating in the organization. A group of coal miners intending to travel in November 1951 were "experiencing difficulty in securing passports and six individuals who had requested passports to visit Europe had been denied."²³¹ A meeting between Velson and Soviet

²²⁷ SAC, Pittsburgh to Director, FBI, "American Committee to Survey Labor Conditions in Europe, Reverend Charles H. Foggie, Security Matter – C," December 20, 1951. FBI File, 100-HQ-380686.

²²⁸ Director to Asst. Attorney General James M. McInerney, September 20, 1951. FBI File, 100-HQ-380686.

²²⁹ SAC, Springfield to Director, FBI, "Communist Party, USA District No. 8 Springfield Division, Internal Security – C," October 30, 1951. FBI File, 100-HQ-380686

²³⁰ John Edgar Hoover to Donald L. Nicholson, "American Committee to Survey Labor Conditions in Europe," September 20, 1951. FBI File, 100-HQ-380686-88.

²³¹ FBI Pittsburgh to Director, FBI, Teletype, November 8, 1951. FBI File 100-HQ-380686-138.

officials at the Soviet Embassy in Washington, D.C. fueled concerns that the ACSLCE could serve as a vehicle for the four convicted CPUSA leaders (Gus Hall, Harry Winston, Jr., Gil Green, and Robert G. Thompson) who jumped bail to abscond to the Soviet Union using false passports.²³² Actions by the national security state and an increasingly inhospitable political environment dampened interest in the ACSLCE.

The fate of several ACSLCE delegates after their return to the U.S. must have also contributed to the difficulties of the organization in mobilizing a third delegation. All of the delegates from the first two trips subsequently lost their passports. William M. Glenn was placed on the FBI's DETCOM and COMSAB lists which made him subject to detention should a state of emergency be declared.²³³ Upon Glenn's return, he was fired for his trip to the Soviet Union and faced hostility from his coworkers who refused to work with him due to his publicized journey.²³⁴ Evidence also suggests some FBI complicity in the effort to jeopardize one participant's union membership. One letter found in the organization's FBI file contained significant information about the group's activities in Europe, and instructed the recipient to use an enclosed Air France passenger list in addition to "other evidence...to make a convincing case for the expulsion of [Allen] Johnson from the [Carpenters'] Union."²³⁵ While the government would not prosecute a traveler until 1953 when they attempted to bring charges against Myrtle Dennis for purportedly using her sister's identity to obtain a passport, the increasing cost of

²³² Hood to Washington, New York, Baltimore, and Pittsburgh, January 15, 1952. FBI File 100-HQ-380686.

²³³ SAC Detroit to Director, FBI, "William Melbourne Glenn," June 18, 1951. FBI File 100-HQ-306597, Box 11, Series X "FBI Documents, 1944-1964," William Melbourne Glenn Papers, Collection no. 49, GRPL.

²³⁴ A.H. Belmont to D.M. Ladd, "William Melbourne Glenn," July 28, 1951. FBI File 100-HQ-306597, Box 11, Series X "FBI Documents, 1944-1964," William Melbourne Glenn Papers, Collection no. 49, GRPL.

²³⁵ Redacted to Redacted, June 24, 1951. FBI File 100-HQ-380686.

associating with any progressive or leftist organization or individual most certainly played a role in discouraging potential applicants.²³⁶

Despite these significant obstacles, seven workers successfully traveled to Moscow in April 1952 to attend the International Economic Conference. The delegation's small size reflected both the difficulties in garnering support for the organization and the Passport Division's growing control over international mobility. With the exception of a delegate from Illinois, the ACSLCE's third delegation drew members from clustered in the New England and Mid-Atlantic regions, particularly New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania.

The prior success of the ACSLCE would prompt the national security state to consider alternative policies aimed at breaking these transnational and international connections. The security state's actions and the ACSLCE prompted significant debate over the legitimacy and meanings of U.S. policies in the early cold war. The debates over travel control reflected larger shifts in the meanings of citizenship, security, and state power.

Captivity or Freedom?

In reflections and statements about their trips, ACSLCE participants challenged reigning representations of the Soviet Union and critiqued U.S. travel control policies through the appropriation and application of the image of the "Iron Curtain" to their experiences in the U.S. Historian Susan Carruthers has argued that for many Americans, the cold war was understood throughout the framework of a captivity narrative. The "dense matrix of ideas, images, and practices" of captivity helped to transform World War II-era allies Russia and China into existential threats to the American way of life.²³⁷ For many, the Gulag exemplified the true

²³⁶ At the time of writing, the outcome of Dennis' prosecution is unknown.

²³⁷ Susan L. Carruthers, *Cold War Captives: Imprisonment, Escape, and Brainwashing* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 5.

nature of the Soviet Union. The U.S. government and non-state actors, including the AFL, worked to convince world audiences that the Gulag was not just a prison, but the true expression of communism. All Russians, they argued, experienced compulsory, “slave labor” and detention within the borders of the state.²³⁸ It is no surprise then that these images of containment, “slave labor,” immobility, and the Iron Curtain occupied a central place in the recollections of ACSLCE members of their experiences in Eastern Europe. Their descriptions reversed the binary opposition of a “free” West and “enslaved” East that structured most accounts of the cold war. Racial segregation in the U.S. and the security state’s travel control mechanisms, they argued, embodied the true “Iron Curtain.” Eastern European socialist states stood as foils for U.S. society and provided an image through which to critique experiences in the United States. Iron Curtain discourse was malleable and provided a language through which to explain and describe a world of tightening borders and boundaries.

ACSLCE delegates described their journey from the U.S. through Western Europe to Russia as one of expanding freedom. As they traveled through France and Italy, delegates criticized the deleterious impact of the Marshall Plan on local economies. Myrtle Ophelia Dennis of Cleveland argued that conditions in Paris stood in stark opposition to the beauty of the city’s architecture. Wages remained stagnant and she “was especially saddened to witness the large number of prostitutes on the streets.” French and Italian workers also faced growing inflation and limited ability to ameliorate their working conditions. The presence of multiple unions at one factory in France rather than an umbrella organization divided workers and diluted their power.²³⁹ In Italy, workers attributed the high levels of unemployment and low monthly wages

²³⁸ Carruthers, *Cold War Captives*, 98-136.

²³⁹ American Committee to Survey Labor Conditions in Europe, *U.S. Labor Looks at Europe* (New York: The Committee, 1951), 8.

(roughly \$50) to the Marshall Plan's impact on local industry.²⁴⁰ As the delegation moved east towards Socialist Europe, conditions markedly improved, according to Dennis. In Prague they "saw clean streets, prosperous people and stores jammed with products."²⁴¹ Marie Bowden remarked that as she moved east, it was "like walking out of the night and into the daylight" with little to "no unemployment, plenty of food" and ample housing.²⁴² Such descriptions reversed the reigning, imagined political geography of a "free West" and an "enslaved" East. For these observers, freedom and prosperity were hallmarks of socialism, not capitalism.

While recounting their observations of Russia, delegates directly confronted the cold war captivity narrative of the U.S. and implicitly critiqued both U.S. capitalism and organized labor. Throughout their 5,000 mile, three week journey in Russia, the Committee reported that they did observe neither "any speed-up" in Russian factories nor anyone "who could be characterized as a 'slave laborer.'"²⁴³ They reported that "[w]orkers spontaneously stopped at their machines when they heard that our delegation was visiting their plant and freely answered our questions." Soviet workers were reportedly shocked to hear that a team of CIO representatives who visited the country in 1945 had repudiated their prior positive observations of workers' unions and working conditions.²⁴⁴ These critiques of a "slave labor" system were implicit critiques of the American organized labor movement that had adopted a firm anticommunist position and

²⁴⁰ American Committee to Survey Labor Conditions in Europe, *U.S. Labor Looks at Europe*, 13.

²⁴¹ American Committee to Survey Labor Conditions in Europe, *U.S. Labor Looks at Europe*, 15.

²⁴² "Unionist Back from Europe Trip Compares Life in East and West," *Daily Worker*, September 5, 1951.

²⁴³ American Committee to Survey Labor Conditions in Europe, *U.S. Labor Looks at Europe*, 22.

²⁴⁴ American Committee to Survey Labor Conditions in Europe, *U.S. Labor Looks at Europe*, 23-24.

emphasized collective bargaining over the expansion of worker democracy and control of production. According to ACSLCE members, workers in the Soviet Union were more empowered and retained “tremendous power in collective bargaining” that extended beyond wages to “the point where workers can bring about the removal of factory directors who do not provide for the workers’ welfare properly.”²⁴⁵ Such depictions, the ACSLCE suggested, illuminated the fact that the discourse of “slave labor” was an effective way to redefine the coercion of capitalism as freedom.

In addition to critiquing the image of a coerced and detained citizenry, the ACSLCE emphasized that the State Department’s measures to prevent their reportage represented the true manifestation of the Iron Curtain. Prior to the second delegation’s departure, numerous workers were unable to because their passports were either revoked or only valid for a short period of time. This offered another point of contrast for the delegates. While in the Soviet Union, the delegation enjoyed “complete freedom of movement” and were able to travel in cities and villages without guides.²⁴⁶ This “freedom of movement” undergirded their claims as neutral observers. They were able to freely create their itinerary, and “selected the workers we talked to at random” in order to gain a genuine perspective. Though there was little criticism of the Soviet Union, such praise made sense in the context of the CPUSA’s position vis-à-vis the Soviet Union and the ongoing cold war. While trying to emphasize the modernity and promise of the Soviet experiment, they were also attempting to foster a peace sentiment in the United States to not only end the Korean War but the entire cold war struggle. While they did not reflect on the impact of

²⁴⁵ Joseph Clark, “U.S. Unionists Hail USSR Amity at End of 3-Week Visit,” *Daily Worker*, July 20, 1951.

²⁴⁶ American Committee to Survey Labor Conditions in Europe, *U.S. Labor Looks at Europe*, 24.

their citizenship, subjectivity, and the larger context of the cold war on their mobility, their seemingly free movement through the country offered them further evidence of the U.S.'s own Iron Curtain and hypocrisy regarding the freedom of movement.

The delegation's black members critiqued the Iron Curtain of Jim Crow segregation and emphasized that they enjoyed true freedom while abroad in the socialist world. Marie Bowden, a participant on the second delegation from Los Angeles, described her travel as a moment when she was "freed from jimcrow [sic] for the first time in [her] life and...knew freedom until [they] returned."²⁴⁷ Hilliard Ellis, one of the second delegation's leaders, returned home to Cicero, Illinois just after the Cicero Riots in July 1951. He "was hit hard by the contrast between these two worlds as far as the Negro is concerned." His reception in Russia stood in stark contrast to conditions in the U.S. "Instead of discrimination," he remarked, "we were especially popular and honored just because we were Negroes and these people knew what our status was at home and wanted to make up to us for it." Though one could interpret such a reception as an exoticization of African Americans by Russians, this celebration of a lack of race consciousness amongst white Russians was common amongst supporters of the Soviet Union, particularly African Americans such as Paul Robeson.²⁴⁸ Robeson's *Freedom Magazine* also emphasized the divergent experiences of Bowden, Ellis, and Robeson at home and abroad. Prior to Cicero, Robeson was met with the Peekskill Riots upon his return from a tour in Europe. The experiences of Ellis and others, the editor wrote, would help ensure "ourselves against more Ciceros and Peekskills; we can guarantee a world of culture, friendship and peace instead of

²⁴⁷ "Unionist Back from Europe Trip Compares Life in East and West," *Daily Worker*, September 5, 1951.

²⁴⁸ Hilliard Ellis, "From Cicero to Moscow: USSR Fetes Negro Unionist," *Freedom*, vol. 1, no. 8, August 1951, 1.

barbarism, race hate, and war.”²⁴⁹ To Ellis and editors at *Freedom Magazine*, the racial violence of Cicero designed to impose stark boundaries in the city was echoed in the State Department’s passport regime.

Considering Travel Bans

The Passport Division’s apparent failure to prevent an organization like the ACSLCE from departing the U.S. came under heavy criticism from Senator Pat McCarran and the Senate Subcommittee on Internal Security. While ACSCLE participants stonewalled interrogations during August and September 1951 hearings, the Subcommittee focused its ire on the Passport Division’s inability to incorporate large swaths of available data on left-wing activism into its preexisting records. Senate investigators found evidence that many of the delegation members had long records of participation in Popular Front and left-wing union causes that had been included on the Attorney General’s List of Subversive Organizations. Alex Sirota, they noted, was a member of the American Jewish Labor Council, the Civil Rights Congress, and the United Furniture Workers of America since the 1940s.²⁵⁰ Senate records showed that William Glenn was active in the Michigan CPUSA, signed several petitions written by the Council on African Affairs and other organizations opposing the Korean War and deportations, and was identified by the *Daily Worker* as “the labor chairman of” the Michigan NAACP.²⁵¹ The State Department was also unaware that Oran Jenkins had worked for the California Labor School in 1948 and was barred by the US Coast Guard in 1950 from working on a steamship because he was considered

²⁴⁹ “Two Worlds – Two Welcomes: An Editorial,” *Freedom*, vol. 1, no. 8, August 1951, 1.

²⁵⁰ U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, *Unauthorized Travel of Subversives*, 3.

²⁵¹ U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, *Unauthorized Travel of Subversives*, 5.

a “poor security risk.”²⁵² It is unclear whether either the Senate or Passport Division were aware of the FBI’s infiltration of the organization. However, under existing Passport Division practice of enforcing the “spirit” of the yet-to-be activated Section 6 of the Internal Security Act, such information would have precluded these workers from traveling abroad.

In their defense, Passport Division officials revealed that its records, which provided the foundation for the Division’s security mission, could also compromise its ability to police political travelers. One of the Division’s indexes contained names and information obtained from embassies abroad and intelligence agencies gathered since 1906. A passport application was only refused, explained Passport Division Ashley J. Nicholas, if they possessed information indicating the applicant was active in “subversive” activities or a CPUSA member. Since the Department handled nearly two thousand applications a day in the late spring and summer when the delegates applied, it was impossible to check every application with every intelligence agency.²⁵³ Such consultations would necessarily delay the issuance of passports as they took between “2 weeks to three months” to fully complete.²⁵⁴ Complicating matters more, all but a few of the delegates had prior passports and other agencies did not provide the Division any assistance.²⁵⁵ Though the Division was aware of the ACSLCE’s existence and revoked the passports of a few potential participants, it lacked the infrastructure to deter such trips. Delaying the issuance of passports

²⁵² U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, *Unauthorized Travel of Subversives*, 8.

²⁵³ U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, *Unauthorized Travel of Subversives*, 10-11.

²⁵⁴ U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, *Unauthorized Travel of Subversives*, 18.

²⁵⁵ U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, *Unauthorized Travel of Subversives*, 11.

would also compromise the Division's chief mission to effectively channel movement to benefit U.S. interests.

The very catalyst of the Division's surveillance apparatus, the application, was itself an obstacle. Applications on their own lacked anything "to distinguish [the "subversive" applicant] from the ordinary traveler."²⁵⁶ The Senate's suggestion that individuals sign non-communist oaths would not itself necessarily prevent the suspected "subversive" from leaving the country. Investigating the application's witness was also too burdensome since it would necessitate significant delays and an applicant could easily find individuals willing to vouch for them.²⁵⁷ Controlling the mobility of an individual already possessing the passport was onerous. Though applicants were required to list their intended destination, there was no "penalty...to fail to disclose the countries" they would visit, only a blanket prohibition on "making a false statement." To prosecute, the state would need to prove the applicant intended to defraud the government by omitting countries from the list. It was quite reasonable to assume that an individual traveler would spontaneously change their itinerary while abroad. If the traveler was able to obtain a visa to visit a country while abroad, the Department had little power to stop them. This problem and the ability to use third countries to travel to the intended destination had haunted the Division since its attempts to stop Americans from volunteering for the Spanish Republic in the 1930s.

Senators suggested that an applicant's race or ethnicity indicated potential subversion, and inquired as to why through 1951, applicants were not required to provide to fill out such a

²⁵⁶ U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, *Unauthorized Travel of Subversives*, 12.

²⁵⁷ U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, *Unauthorized Travel of Subversives*, 18.

category. Race, Nicholas testified, was read through the attached photograph and birth certificate. The application's omission of a racial category flabbergasted segregationist Willis Smith of North Carolina, who asked the Assistant Chief of the Passport Division "is that not one of the first ways to identify a person when you say they are white, Negro, yellow, Chinese, or Japanese." For Smith, race and nationality both denoted degrees of danger and "foreignness." Smith also asked whether foreignness was a sign of subversiveness for the Division: "Are you alerted at all by the names of the parties? Can you get any indication from the country in which a person was born or his name as to whether or not that may indicate he is more likely to be in the subversive class?" Though Nicholas agreed with this logic implicitly, the ability to determine *potential* subversion abroad was made difficult by the fact that a significant number of applicants were birthright citizens and generations removed from their immigrant forebearers.²⁵⁸ Nicholas testified that the difficulty in verifying race and nationality stemmed from the varying practices of state record keepers, which reissued birth certificates if a name was changed or that prevented race from being recorded on birth certificates.²⁵⁹ Ruth B. Shipley defended her office, but noted that it had been difficult to differentiate the groups, which contained a number of black unionists, from a group of black Jehovah's Witnesses traveling to Great Britain for a convention. She noted that the itineraries of both groups were nearly identical.²⁶⁰ Shipley's comments simultaneously cast blackness as an indication of danger and as anomalous to an implicitly whitened traveling public.

²⁵⁸ U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, *Unauthorized Travel of Subversives*, 19-20.

²⁵⁹ U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, *Unauthorized Travel of Subversives*, 21.

²⁶⁰ Mrs. Shipley to Mr. Boykin, "So-Called Trade Union Groups to the Soviet Union, 1950 [sic]," July 30, 1951. Folder "PD/Passports," Box 2, Records Relating to Passports 1944-1953, RG 59, NACP.

The subcommittee's published report in December 1951 was a scathing critique of the Passport Division. From a hospital bed in Reno, McCarran criticized the Passport Division for not only compromising internal security but the entire, global anticommunist project, arguing that "While our boys fight communism on the battlefields in Korea, our State Department lets the enemy's civilian agents move at will between here and Moscow."²⁶¹ The Senate's final report argued that unlimited access to passports and thus international mobility "facilitates the Cominform's courier system and the international control of the Communist apparatus."²⁶² Due to their citizenship, the border failed to effectively bar those who were ideologically alien to the nation. To address these shortcomings, the Senate recommended that the Division reform its review process to facilitate more intelligence gathering, place a non-communist oath on passport applications, and that the ACSLCE delegate be considered for prosecution since they did not list Eastern European countries as indented destinations.²⁶³ These recommendations and the Senate's response confirmed the fears that J. Edgar Hoover and other FBI officials expressed in their exchanges over the fallout from public awareness of informants in these organizations.

Participants and sympathizers of the ACSLCE issued strong critiques of both the Senate investigation and the State Department's policies. The *Daily Worker* argued that McCarran's call for the "arrest of the 14 unionists" who visited Eastern Europe in 1951 was hypocritical. McCarran, they argued, would have celebrated their journey had they instead visited "Franco's fascist regime and [returned] with praise for his destruction of the trade unions." Defenders of

²⁶¹ "State Dept. Passport 'Laxity' is Attacked," *The Washington Post*, December 19, 1951.

²⁶² U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, *Unauthorized Travel of Subversives*, xi.

²⁶³ U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, *Unauthorized Travel of Subversives*, xii.

the ACSLCE accused McCarran and the State Department of attempting to criminalize efforts that challenged the anticommunist status quo.²⁶⁴ Participants of the first two delegations claimed that the “Iron Curtain” manifested itself in the U.S. through the dominant media’s refusal to print the workers’ thoughts; the revocation of their passports upon their return; their “[treatment] like spies”; and the loss of their jobs due to their participation in the ACSLCE.²⁶⁵

By Spring 1952, the State Department began formulating a plan to further control international mobility by controlling the destination of U.S. citizens. While country specific travel restrictions were not unprecedented, their widespread application to large portions of the globe was uncommon before 1952. From World War I through 1921, travel to countries at war and under U.S. military occupation was barred except for those with “important and urgent business” in Germany and Austria, who were permitted to depart “without passports.”²⁶⁶ In the 1930s, the State Department routinely denied passports to those attempting to join the resistance to fascism in Ethiopia and Spain. However, the Department’s ability to enforce its travel ban was limited since a passport was not required to depart the United States and travelers could reach Spain via a third country.

The ACSLCE’s successful transgression of cold war boundaries prompted the State Department to reconsider its prior policy. Consensus settled around the placement of a stamp in the passport book invalidating the document for travel to selected countries. Without such stamps, the Department could only “refuse passports to those who state in their applications the desire to travel” to the “Iron Curtain countries” and its absence could amount to “tacit approval.”

²⁶⁴ “McCarran’s Rage,” *Daily Worker*, December 20, 1951.

²⁶⁵ “Unionists Flay McCarran Unit for Attack on Trip to Europe,” *Daily Worker*, December 25, 1951.

²⁶⁶ Ashley Nichols, “Geographic Limitations on Validity of Passports During Past 40 Years and Their Application to the Cases of Journalists,” *The Right to Travel*, 189.

Should they wish to travel to such countries, travelers would either need to request permission from the Passport Division or meet with a U.S. embassy official while abroad.²⁶⁷ While officials cautioned that such restrictions could prompt criticisms abroad due to the country's ostensible embrace of "freedom of travel," they emphasized that the restrictions were not a "blanket" ban. Rather, restrictions would enable the state to further control and channel mobility from the country and a citizen's mobility abroad since they now required authorization to travel to the Eastern Bloc. In addition, the restrictions extended the logic of previously existing restrictions purportedly issued on the basis of concern for citizens' personal safety. This also reframed the logic of the restrictions from ideological warfare to personal safety. The passport, they reasoned, was a document that sanctioned the citizen as worthy of enjoying U.S. protection while abroad and "since normal protection cannot be afforded in unsettled countries, limitation of travel is the only protection available...." Finally, the stamp enabled the State Department to pursue criminal charges against the traveler should they break the restrictions outlined in the document.²⁶⁸

These restrictions were announced to the public on May 1st that as of April 28th, the State Department would stamp all new passports with a notice that travel to Albania, Bulgaria, China, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and the Soviet Union was barred for passport holders unless "endorsed under authority of the Department of State as being valid for such travel." The *New York Times* opined that, given the State Department's emphasis on the individual safety of Americans, the State Department issued the restrictions in response to the

²⁶⁷ Memorandum from the Chief of the Passport Division, "Endorsement of Passports with Respect to Travel to the USSR and Satellites," March 17, 1952. Folder "PD/Travel 1952," Box 2, Records Relating to Passports 1944-1953, RG 59, NACP.

²⁶⁸ Carlisle H. Humelsine, "Memorandum for the Secretary: Endorsement of Passports with Respect to Travel to the USSR and Satellites," n.d. Folder "PD/Travel 1952," Box 2, Records Relating to Passports 1944-1953, RG 59, NACP.

Vogeler, Oatis, and Americans imprisoned in China related to the Korean War (one of many being a CIA agent named John T. Downey). However, Vogeler had returned the year prior and the restriction on travel to Czechoslovakia had been previously issued in June 1951. Officials confided that “the new restrictions are designed to curb ‘sneak’ visits to the forbidden areas, and travel by persons who might not really understand the hazards to Americans in the Iron Curtain countries.”²⁶⁹ Travel restrictions purely on ideological grounds were largely unprecedented and issued in response to the international peace movement and the ACSLCE.

For many, the issuance of such restrictions was an extension of existing and unpopular passport policies. *The Worker* magazine reprinted the letter from the chairman of the Chicago Council of American-Soviet Friendship to Secretary of State Dean Acheson that highlighted the hypocrisy of U.S. policy. Such a policy, Mandel Terman wrote, contradicted the U.S.’s public commitment to “greater and freer international trade, exchange, and travel.” In addition, it also contradicted the politicians’ professed commitment to “peace and friendship” with ordinary Soviet citizens. World audiences would, Terman warned, remark on the “similarity” of U.S. travel restrictions “to the same sort of restriction on travel imposed by Hitler on the people of Germany.”²⁷⁰

The restrictions even had their critics among former government officials. Former Assistant General Counsel to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Nathan H. David argued that while one could justify the policy, the absence of any appeal process to challenge the Passport Division denials would lead to significant civil liberties abuses. The Passport Division ruled by fiat and claimed absolute discretionary authority, according to David. Similar to liberal

²⁶⁹ “U.S. Forbids Travel to All Soviet Bloc Without Consent,” *New York Times*, May 2, 1951.

²⁷⁰ “Blast State Dept. Ban on Goodwill Travel,” *The Worker, Illinois Ed.*, May 18, 1952.

critiques of the national security state, David called for procedural reforms. The issuance of these travel restrictions emerged as the Passport Division was increasingly denying passports on the premise that an individual's travel was against U.S. national interests. Courts had largely refused to consider cases on the claim that the Passport Division was "beyond the reach of judicial power" due to its connection to foreign policy. David called for the creation of an appeals board modeled on the history of the Loyalty Boards first created in the early forties and reformed in the late forties. If employees were able to challenge allegations of disloyalty and confront evidence, then citizens too should be able to challenge the decision on their mobility.²⁷¹ David's criticisms were echoed in liberal publications, including the *New Republic*, which decried "the hysterical blindness that has long gripped the Passport Division" that resulted in "foggy standards as loyalty to American ideals, guilt by association and conformity to accepted viewpoints in denying passports – all without hearings and without stated reasons."²⁷² The focus on procedural reform spoke to the widespread assumption of the desirability of a passport system and the existence of a state of emergency. For those further on the left, the passport regime was part of a larger security assemblage designed at maintaining U.S. global hegemony.

Travel restrictions would be routinely issued against Eastern Bloc countries until the resumption of cultural exchanges between the US and Soviet Union in 1955. It was estimated that between 1952 and 1954, the State Department approved approximately thirty applications per year for travel to the Soviet Union, with most applicants being journalists, some merchants, and academics.²⁷³ After the quasi-normalization of relations, approximately 377 U.S. travelers

²⁷¹ Nathan H. David, "Denying Passports," *New York Times*, May 18, 1952.

²⁷² " 'Midsummer-Night Madness,'" *New Republic*, Vol. 126, no. 26, June 30, 1952, 5.

²⁷³ Appendix 1, "Correspondence Between the Chairman of the Constitutional Rights Subcommittee and the Secretary of State, Concerning the Appearance of the Secretary as a Witness Before the Subcommittee," in *The Right to Travel*, 142.

were provided passports to travel to the Soviet Union between January and October 1955.²⁷⁴ It remains difficult to evaluate the impact of the issuance of the geographic travel restrictions since the Department did not keep detailed records or statistics of its denials and that it can never be known how many were dissuaded from traveling to countries such as China and the Soviet Union due to the restrictions and attached penalties for their violation. The only published passport statistics for the 1950s were in 1956, when it was estimated that of over 550,000 applications, 8,213 were denied, of which 550 were denied due to geographic restrictions.²⁷⁵ Under the existing national emergency, the State Department would unilaterally prevent travel to countries such as Cuba, Vietnam, North Korea and China until its authority was challenged in 1978 by politicians wary of unchecked presidential authority.²⁷⁶

The issuance of geographic travel restrictions solved some of government's travel control policy issues. First, though the Passport Division increased the rate of passport denials, officials believed that the issuance of geographic travel restrictions mitigated potential lapses amidst the Division's hurried investigations. Second, restrictions provided another means to channel mobility away from countries deemed inimical to U.S. interests. Travel restrictions did not compromise the national security state's interests in gathering intelligence on transnational left-wing movements. The requirement for a special endorsement ensured that the security state could regulate travel to restricted countries if it served its interests. That restrictions applied to

²⁷⁴ Appendix 1, "Correspondence Between the Chairman of the Constitutional Rights Subcommittee and the Secretary of State, Concerning the Appearance of the Secretary as a Witness Before the Subcommittee," 142.

²⁷⁵ Appendix 1, "Correspondence Between the Chairman of the Constitutional Rights Subcommittee and the Secretary of State, Concerning the Appearance of the Secretary as a Witness Before the Subcommittee," 128-129.

²⁷⁶ Daniel A. Farber, "National Security, the Right to Travel, and the Court," *The Supreme Court Review* 1981, no. 1 (1981): 263-90. For a discussion of the amendments, see the conclusion to this dissertation and Farber, 282-284.

specified countries rather than to individuals also made them more easily defensible. Whereas passport decisions applied to individuals, such restrictions were universally applied. The supposed universality and the emphasis on individual safety also reified cold war boundaries and provided a language to transform a geopolitical security strategy into an extension of the state's obligation to serve its citizens. This work made it much more difficult to challenge geographic restrictions in court and expanded the security state's power.

Chapter 3

Containing Freedom: William Worthy, Race, and Travel Restrictions to China in the 1950s

Writing to fellow journalist Ed Morrow in January 1958, William Worthy expressed his frustrations concerning his inability to obtain a passport to resume his career as a foreign correspondent in China and elsewhere. The State Department denied Worthy a passport after he violated the Department's travel restrictions preventing citizens from entering China and Hungary. Although he was "fed up with being a prisoner of State," and believed that his legal challenges to the government's actions would languish a few years, Worthy reportedly discovered a method to travel without a passport. It was possible, he noted, to use an affidavit of identity which was broadly accepted by other countries for "[r]efugees, stateless persons, Chinese students returning from here to China and other categories of travelers."²⁷⁷ Worthy intended to report on the connections, development, and progress of African and Asian anticolonial struggles, an assemblage of what he later identified as a potential "Chinese-led Fifth International."²⁷⁸ Departing the country without a passport would place the government in "a terrible...dilemma:...they could create a worldwide scandal by physically stopping me, or watch one lone Negro demolish their entire arbitrary passport set-up."²⁷⁹ Unfortunately, Worthy's planned trip would be delayed, and future journeys to Cuba and North Vietnam in the 1960s would lead to further government prosecution and surveillance.

²⁷⁷ William Worthy to Ed Morrow, letter, January 31, 1958. Folder "Passports, 2 of 4," Box 3.10, Series 3, William Worthy Papers, MS-0524, Special Collections, The Johns Hopkins University (JHU).

²⁷⁸ William Worthy to C. W. Mackay, letter, February 1958. Folder "Passports, 2 of 4," Box 3.10, Series 3, William Worthy Papers, MS-0524, JHU; William Worthy, Rough Draft, n.d. ca. 1963-1964. Folder "Preparation for China," Box 3.3, Series 3, William Worthy Papers, MS-0524, JHU.

²⁷⁹ William Worthy to C. W. Mackay, letter, February 1958.

Recent studies have excavated how Worthy engaged the revolutionary Third World. Robeson Taj Frazier's *The East is Black: Cold War China in the Black Radical Imagination* situates Worthy's travels to China and Cuba as an example of the larger affinities developing in the mid-twentieth century between Asian revolutionary movements and the black freedom movement. Worthy's journalism and experiences of state repression, Frazier reveals, not only transformed his own political consciousness but challenged U.S. justifications for its empire abroad.²⁸⁰ Legal scholar H. Timothy Lovelace's recent article focuses on Worthy's conviction of "illegal entry" and his subsequent two-year legal in order to examine how the black freedom movement and international human rights law mutually developed and shaped one another.²⁸¹ Both build upon a burgeoning field documenting the salience of left internationalism and travel for mid-twentieth century social movements. Journeys to China, Cuba, North Vietnam, the Soviet Union, and elsewhere, provided the conceptual vocabulary and experience for many, particularly participants in the black, Chicano, and Asian American movements, to understand their struggles as a connected to global decolonial projects.

While Worthy's experiences abroad and in the U.S. are critical moments in U.S. social movement history, they also form a key part in the history of the U.S. cold war mobility regime. Worthy's case demonstrates the intersections of racialization, national security projects, and controlling mobility at the height of U.S. conflict with China in the 1950s. His case coincided with the *Kent* decision that temporarily prevented the use of political beliefs as justification for passport denial. In addition, even if travelers passed the ideological scrutiny of Passport Office

²⁸⁰ Robeson Taj Frazier, *The East is Black: Cold War China in the Black Radical Imagination* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015), esp. 72-107.

²⁸¹ H. Timothy Lovelace, "William Worthy's Passport: Travel Restrictions and the Cold War Struggle for Civil and Human Rights," *Journal of American History* 103, no. 1 (2016): 107-131.

and security state officials, the U.S. state could not necessarily guarantee that individuals' behavior and speech would comport with U.S. global ambitions. Momentarily unable to indiscriminately utilize passport denial as a mechanism of political policing, the State Department turned to travel restrictions as a replacement. Travel restrictions served the same purpose as ideological restrictions since traveling to listed countries required state approval, and violators faced not only losing their passport but potential criminal prosecution. These travel bans, I show, also operated as an instrument of U.S. empire. Travel to China was suspended on the purported basis of threats to the potential personal safety of individual travelers. This language of safety obfuscated longer histories of U.S. imperial violence in the region and evoked Yellow Peril discourse to transform U.S. travelers into threatened subjects in need of protection from a supposedly inhumane, uncivilized state. This logic naturalized the national security state as a benevolent protector. National security was rendered not as a political concept to be debated in public but rather as an objective condition to be evaluated by experts, many of whom were unaccountable to the public. Worthy and his supporters understood travel restrictions as an instrument of racial control designed to both secure U.S. hegemony in the region and to sever the connections between "domestic" social movements and Asian revolutionary projects.

This chapter first offers a brief overview of U.S.-China relations that led to the issuance of travel bans during the Korean War and their continued application through the 1950s. Although the U.S. State Department and other agencies utilized the presence of U.S. prisoners as public justification for the continued travel ban, I demonstrate that officials secretly doubted the effectiveness of the travel ban in obtaining the release of these prisoners. Since some including John T. Downey and Richard Fecteau were CIA agents, their presence in the U.S. public sphere as the face of the travel ban served as a disavowal of the continued violent stance of the U.S.

against China. The prisoners served as both an example of the possible ramifications of travel and the state's exceptional power to transcend its own restrictions.

Justifications for the travel ban, however, came under question in 1956 when China preempted the U.S. and offered one-month visas to U.S. journalists. I then explore the successful journeys of William Worthy and the forty-two young people to China, detailing the networks facilitating their movements and the differing state responses to demonstrate how particular threats were imagined and responded to by the U.S. state. The last section returns to William Worthy's journey and is a close reading of the 1959 case *Worthy v. Herter*, in which I argue that the turn towards geographic restrictions became a crucial instrument to the state in light of other decisions and served to replicate ideological travel restrictions of passport denials. Reducing freedoms, the court and state paradoxically argued, was crucial to the enjoyment and protection of freedom.

U.S.-China Policy

Understanding the evolution and justification for U.S.-China travel policies necessitates situating questions regarding the movement of American citizens in the larger context of U.S.-Chinese relations. Throughout the 1950s, the question of movement between the two countries represented a larger diplomatic debate over the contours of their post-Korean War relationship. This section charts the evolution of U.S.-China relations after World War II and then explores how and why travel restrictions were imposed on the country. Efforts to restrict the mobility of Chinese in the U.S. and to deny U.S. citizens travel to China were bound up in larger concerns over the migration of Chinese to the U.S. These restrictions perpetuated the notion of a "Yellow Peril" by creating the image of an inherently threatening and expansionist China. Travel restrictions also served to erase the longer, violent history of the U.S. in Asia. Issued in the name

of protecting individual Americans from a “barbaric” enemy, travel restrictions erased the damage of European colonialism and U.S. imperial violence in the region.

Conflict between China and the United States after World War II was neither immediate nor inevitable. Rather, it was the result of mutual misconceptions and miscalculations, and within the U.S., bureaucratic rivalries and domestic anticommunism. Through late 1946, both the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the U.S. State Department advocated for a coalition government composed of the nationalist Guomindang (GMD or KMT), CCP, and urban middle classes. This coalition government, the CCP leadership hoped, would ideally provide time to increase both its support in urban industrial areas and industrial productivity to guarantee socialism’s success. The Truman Administration, on the other hand, hoped to blunt leftist-revolutions globally and any potential alliance between China and the Soviet Union. Any hopes of preventing a civil war were dashed in June 1946 when the GMD announced its resumption of military campaigns against the CCP. While the State Department still advocated for a peaceful settlement, anticommunists within the Defense Department rushed to the aid of the GMD. Truman himself advised George C. Marshall, then the head U.S. representative attempting to arbitrate a settlement between the two parties, that the diplomatic mission should unconditionally support the ideologically preferable and militarily stronger GMD, in part to avoid the Soviet Union from using a prolonged civil war to take control of the strategic region of Manchuria.²⁸²

Ultimately, anticommunist blocs within the U.S. and the Korean War led to what historian Gordon Chang terms “the great interregnum,” an unprecedented, official rupture in

²⁸² Gordon H. Chang, *Fateful Ties: A History of America’s Preoccupation with China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015), 188; Simei Qing, *From Allies to Enemies: Visions of Modernity, Identity, and U.S.-China Diplomacy, 1945-1960* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007), 57-74.

binational relations.²⁸³ Even amidst signs of the imminent success of the CCP in 1949, the Truman State Department hoped to avoid a break and instead induce a rift between the Soviet Union and China. Secretary of State Dean Acheson and negotiators attempted to convince the CCP that only U.S. loans and technologies could finance their plans for industrialization. Attempts to promote Titoism in China were opposed by the Department of Defense, Congress, and militant anticommunist organizations. When Dean Acheson publicly announced that the Truman Administration did not consider Taiwan a part of the U.S.'s global security perimeter, a coalition of organizations colloquially known as the China Lobby and its allies in Congress threatened to revoke aid and security funds earmarked for Western Europe, ultimately forcing Acheson to rescind his statement. Others, including but certainly not limited to Senator Joseph McCarthy, utilized the CCP victory in 1949 to attack the State Department and New Deal-era agencies for their "soft" position on communism.²⁸⁴ Ultimately, the U.S. recalled its personnel and severed diplomatic relations on August 2, 1949.

The outbreak of the Korean War precluded any change in the policy of nonrecognition. While newly declassified CCP documents demonstrate that China had no intention of intervening in the war unless the United States crossed the 38th parallel, race and anticommunism fused to shape policy through the Eisenhower Administration. Government officials and sectors of the American public routinely dehumanized Chinese on the mainland, arguing that they were inherently irrational and "attached a lower value to human life than did Westerners."²⁸⁵ Although

²⁸³ Gordon H. Chang, "Are There Other Ways to Think About the 'Great interregnum'?", *Journal of American-East Asian Relations* 7, no. 1-2 (1998): 117-122.

²⁸⁴ Ellen Schrecker, *Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1998), 243-258. For the gendered language of anticommunism, particularly liberal anticommunism, see K.D. Cuordileone, *Manhood and American Political Culture in the Cold War* (New York: Routledge, 2004).

²⁸⁵ Qing *From Allies to Enemies*, 159-161; Chang, *Fateful Ties*, 207.

some historians have reinterpreted the Eisenhower Administration's China policy as more flexible than originally thought, the U.S. still pursued an openly hostile and violent campaign against the Chinese, to the point that they openly threatened to use nuclear weapons against the country through 1950s. Eisenhower himself publicly announced in 1955 his willingness to use nuclear weapons against China as one would use other weapons.²⁸⁶ After seeing Dean Acheson's fate at the hands of anticommunists in the Republican Party, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles cultivated a close relationship with these forces and along with his brother, CIA director and connoisseur of covert warfare Allan Dulles, pursued a global and violent campaign to expand the U.S. empire in the decolonizing world.²⁸⁷

While travel restrictions to China originated during the Korean War, the country was also included in the first announcement of enforceable geographically based restrictions disconnected from the presence of actual war and health emergency in 1952. Truman issued his declaration of a national emergency in December 1950 in Proclamation 2914. In the name of combatting "communist imperialism," Truman beckoned unwavering loyalty and all energies be directed against a "foreign," aggressive threat.²⁸⁸ After the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, Truman issued another proclamation announcing further controls over mobility.

²⁸⁶ Chang, *Fateful Ties*, 205-206.

²⁸⁷ Historian Nancy Berkopf Tucker argues that Eisenhower was unwilling to counter the right wing of the Republican Party and that he envisioned Europe as the primary battleground for the ensuing cold war. In addition, she argues that Eisenhower intended his bellicose rhetoric to be just that, words consumed by the U.S. voting public. However, as she concedes, despite the intentions to maintain flexibility and avoid war, Eisenhower and Dulles would do anything to destabilize the Chinese government. Nancy Berkopf Tucker, *The China Threat: Memories, Myths, and Realities in the 1950s* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

²⁸⁸ Proclamation 2914, "Proclaiming the Existence of a National Emergency," December 6, 1950. <https://www.trumanlibrary.org/proclamations/index.php?pid=473&st=&st1=>. Last Accessed, February 24, 2019.

Citing Section 215 of the Act and Proclamation 2914, Truman's Proclamation 3004 in January 1953 made it was illegal to depart or enter the U.S. without a valid passport or visa.²⁸⁹

Controlling international mobility was one weapon deployed in the struggle against China. Through the mid-1950s, the U.S. prevented the movement of not only Americans to China but blocked the repatriation of Chinese students and scientists. For example, Qian Xuesen, a rocket scientist considered to be one of the founders of China's space program, lost his security clearances to work in labs at Cal Tech due to alleged communist sympathies and denied the ability to leave the U.S. until 1955.²⁹⁰ U.S. immigration and diplomatic officials also forced the return of some Chinese students who were en route to China after a brief stop in Japan.²⁹¹ These academics and experts became, in the words of historian Meredith Oyen, "Cold War hostages."²⁹² By 1955, all but two of the students wishing to return to China had received permission to depart the United States after a tentative agreement was reached regarding repatriation between the two countries.²⁹³

Preventing the departure of individuals with scientific and technical expertise complemented efforts to restrict Chinese migration to the United States. Through the mid-1950s, hundreds of thousands of Chinese American derivative citizens residing in Hong Kong applied for passports on the basis of their U.S. citizenship. Most consular and passport officials considered these claims illegitimate. Everett Drumright, the Consular General stationed in Hong

²⁸⁹ Proclamation 3004, "Control of Persons Leaving or Entering the United States," January 17, 1953. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/proclamation-3004-control-persons-leaving-or-entering-the-united-states>. Last Accessed, February 24, 2019.

²⁹⁰ Zuoyue Wang, "Transnational Science during the Cold War: The Case of Chinese/American Scientists," *Isis* 101, no. 2 (2010): 370.

²⁹¹ Meredith Oyen, *The Diplomacy of Migration: Transnational Lives and the Making of U.S.-China Relations in the Cold War* (Ithaca: Cornell University, 2016), 191.

²⁹² Oyen, *The Diplomacy of Migration*, 188.

²⁹³ Wang, "Transnational Science during the Cold War," 373, see note 12.

Kong, argued that Chinese migration constituted a national security threat in a notorious 1955 report. He perpetuated long standing anti-Chinese stereotypes, emphasizing that Chinese applicants were “inclined to fraud and perjury since they ‘lack a concept equivalent to the Western concept of an oath.’”²⁹⁴ The use of supposedly fraudulent documents constituted a national security threat since obtaining U.S. passports provided a potential avenue for communist agents to infiltrate the U.S., a claim which had no basis in fact.²⁹⁵ The Passport Office extended this Yellow Peril discourse of Drumright and others. Director Frances Knight supported the limited use of procedures of dubious scientific utility, including blood tests and x-rays, to authenticate the identities and relationships of applicants in Hong Kong. She also expressed frustration in attempting to combat purported citizenship fraud, noting that the older generation were either themselves engaged in an international immigration conspiracy or under its control.²⁹⁶ The Passport Office also proposed expanding the investigation of Chinese American applicants to discover the purpose of their travel to Hong Kong.²⁹⁷ Efforts to document and restrict Chinese and Chinese American mobility occluded the legacies of Chinese exclusion. To circumvent unjust laws, Chinese immigrants routinely challenged exclusion orders and created “evidence” of their citizenship and identity through the documentary process of immigration

²⁹⁴ Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*, 210.

²⁹⁵ Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*, 209.

²⁹⁶ Frances G. Knight to B. Tomlin Bailey, “Proposals to better cope with the Problem of Fraud at Hong Kong,” n.d., attached to Willis H. Young to Robert Cartwright, “Validity Period of Passports Issued to American Chinese,” October 16, 1956. Folder “1-C/2 Invalidation and Revalidation,” Box 5, Decimal Files, 1953-1960, Bureau of Security and Consular Affairs, RG 59, NACP.

²⁹⁷ Willis H. Young to Robert Cartwright, “Validity Period of Passports Issued to American Chinese,” October 16, 1956. Folder “1-C/2 Invalidation and Revalidation,” Box 5, Decimal Files, 1953-1960, Bureau of Security and Consular Affairs, RG 59, NACP.

officials recording oral testimony and verifying their accounts.²⁹⁸ Restricting migration and egress erased this history.

If regulating passports operated within a “Yellow Peril” framework that understood the U.S. as under threat from hordes of Chinese immigrants falsely claiming U.S. citizenship, the restriction against traveling to China by American citizens served to both erase and reify China as a racialized enemy and erase U.S. imperial violence in the region. One of the primary justifications for the travel ban was that the Chinese government imprisoned several American citizens through the 1950s. Due to these actions and the lack of a diplomatic mission in the country, the U.S. government argued, it was necessary to restrict travel since officials could not guarantee citizens’ personal safety in China. Such claims were buttressed by cultural fears over the violent treatment towards American POWs and “brainwashing” in Chinese and North Korean prisons.²⁹⁹ These prisoners not only represented a potential consequence of travel to these regions but also embodied the fears of an expansive totalitarian enemy and national weakness. Imprisonment and “brainwashing” were the natural outcomes of communism, according to those ascribing to the theory of totalitarianism, and were preventable degrees of unfreedom that required “containment” at home and empire abroad. These prisoners, largely soldiers from the Korean War, symbolized the fragility of dominant ideas of American masculinity. That the American soldier, imagined and figured largely as a white male, could not only be captured but possibly brainwashed by a racialized enemy which had a “relish for inflicting pain,” demonstrated the

²⁹⁸ Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*, 204-212.

²⁹⁹ For fears of “brainwashing,” see Caruthers, *Cold War Captives*. For a critical examination of this discourse through an analysis of the film *The Manchurian Candidate*, see Matthew Frye Jacobson and Gaspar González, *What Have They Built You to Do? The Manchurian Candidate and Cold War America* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006).

fragility of this construction.³⁰⁰ Following this logic, travel restrictions attempted to protect a white, masculine citizen subject. Even more troubling to some was the possible notion that any American would find life in China more tolerable. The decision of twenty-one soldiers, including three African Americans, who chose to remain in China after the Korean war, challenged the supposed universality of U.S. liberal democracy.³⁰¹ Travel restrictions also served to erase continued U.S. efforts to subvert the Chinese government. Since the CCP's victory and through the mid-1960s, the CIA funded, organized, and supplied anticommunist forces to invade China in an effort to destabilize the country and topple the government.³⁰² Justifications for the travel ban transformed imprisoned CIA agents, such as John Downey and Richard Fecteau, into wrongfully detained and helpless citizens. Travel restrictions constructed China as not only a dangerous and repressive country but served to disavow U.S. imperial violence Asia.

It was in this context that the Chinese government invited several American journalists to visit the country for one month in August 1956. Between 1955 and 1960, the U.S. and China held secret talks in Geneva and Warsaw to negotiate outstanding issues from the Korean War, including imprisoned U.S. personnel and citizens, and the repatriation of Chinese prevented from returning to China.³⁰³ The invitation was extended when talks sputtered, intended to highlight the hypocrisy of the U.S.' proclaimed support of the freedom of movement and to protest delays in processing repatriation. Some State Department officials considered mollifying existing travel

³⁰⁰ Susan L. Carruthers, *Cold War Captives*, 185; see also K.L. Cuordileone, *Manhood and American Political Culture in the Cold War* (New York: Routledge, 2005).

³⁰¹ Taj Frazer, *The East is Black*, 84-85.

³⁰² William Blum, *Killing Hope: U.S. Military and C.I.A. Interventions Since World War II*, 2nd ed., (Monroe: Common Courage Press, 2004), 22-27.

³⁰³ For more on these talks, see Yafend Xia, *Negotiating with the Enemy: U.S.-China Talks during the Cold War, 1949-1972* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006). William Worthy, discussed below, was invited as a journalist representing the NAACP's magazine *Crisis*.

policy. While negotiators in Geneva agreed with the travel ban in principle, they secretly doubted its efficacy in facilitating the release of imprisoned Americans since most invited journalists expressed enthusiasm with the prospect of traveling to China. The head American delegate Ambassador Ural Alexis Johnson argued that the U.S. needed to control which journalists traveled since it “Would be particularly unfortunate if only [the] most poorly qualified correspondents and those having [the] least sympathy for and understanding of US Government policy were to travel.” He recommended the Secretary of State announce that travel policy remained unmodified and that the United States could not “extend any protection” to those traveling, “making [it] clear [that] travel [was] entirely at [a] correspondent’s personal risk.”³⁰⁴

Johnson’s recommendation would go unheeded. Instead, the State Department moved to prevent journalists stationed abroad from reaching China through coordination with British colonial officials in Hong Kong and discussion with media executives. Correspondents representing the Associated Press, NBC, and *New York Times* stationed in Hong Kong, contemplated leaving their passports prior to traveling to China in order to avoid violating a technicality of the travel ban. U.S. officials successfully convinced British authorities to deny the invited journalists any documents, including affidavits of identity, that would facilitate their journey to China and return to Hong Kong.³⁰⁵ In addition to using another state’s border control mechanisms to prevent American travel to China, State Department officials pressured publishers to instruct their journalists to refrain from accepting the invitation. Rather than threatening legal actions against the journalists, officials believed it best to galvanize publishers’

³⁰⁴ Johnson to Secretary of State, Telegram #67, August 15, 1956. 911.6293/8-1556, Folder “911.6291 1-2758,” Box 5162, Central Decimal Files, 1955-1959, RG 59, NACP.

³⁰⁵ Carl McCardle, “For the Secretary,” August 14, 1956. 911.6293/8-1456, Folder “030.2A Invitations to American Correspondents to Visit Mainland,” Box 22, Decimal Files, 1954-1957, Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, RG 59, NACP.

support for the travel ban.³⁰⁶ Representatives of the Associated Press (AP) were initially reluctant to embrace this position on commercial and press freedom grounds. Frank Starzel of AP attempted to convince officials that the policy gave “unwarranted impression that the American press was a tool of the U.S. Government” and denied U.S. citizens access to news regarding conditions in China. In direct contradiction to negotiators’ assessments, the Undersecretary of State Herbert Hoover, Jr. reiterated that the fate of U.S. prisoners in China partially rested on maintaining the travel ban as leverage to induce their release. Although the U.S. purportedly championed the freedom of information, State Department officials did not wish to establish a “precedent or prerogative of a free press only to flaunt the expressed policy of the Government” regarding its relationship with China.³⁰⁷ A free press was a restricted press, and was free to express the news and editorial opinion as long as it did not interfere with U.S. national security and global power.³⁰⁸ Hoover emphasized that creating exceptions for journalists to the ban would lead to a deluge of “other citizens who from their own point of view have equally worthwhile reasons for travel to Red China and who might furnish additional political hostages to Peiping.” Despite Starzel’s emphasis that democracy fundamentally rested on an informed public, the AP agreed to instruct their reporters to refrain from traveling from China on the condition that the press be promptly informed of any changes in U.S. passport policies.³⁰⁹

³⁰⁶ Loy Henderson to Acting Secretary, Memorandum, “Travel of American Correspondents to Communist China,” August 15, 1956. 911.6293/8-1556, Folder “911.6291 1-2758,” Box 5162, Central Decimal Files, 1955-1959, RG 59, NACP.

³⁰⁷ Memorandum of Conversation, “U.S. Passport Policy as Applied to American Correspondents Having Visas for Red China,” August 17, 1956, 1-2. 911.6293/8-1756, Folder “911.6291 1-2758,” Box 5162, Central Decimal Files, 1955-1959, RG 59, NACP.

³⁰⁸ For the narrowing definitions of freedom to information and the state of the press, see Sam Lebovic, *Free Speech and Unfree News: The Paradox of Press Freedom in America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016).

³⁰⁹ Memorandum of Conversation, “U.S. Passport Policy as Applied to American Correspondents Having Visas for Red China,” 2.

The freedom of movement and information in the eyes of officials in the Eisenhower State Department were contingent upon a particular vision of a global, anti-communist order. Containment of communism abroad relied on the containment of individuals in the “domestic,” while also carefully managing a circulating citizenry who were interpolated into the project of the U.S. cold war empire. Containment also took form in the world of ideas and consciousness, as the state attempted to prevent any news contrary to U.S. foreign policy to “infect” its “domestic” space. Restricting the global movement of subjects rendered imperiled and subversive served to both erase U.S. state violence in the region and to reify China as a racialized, existential threat to the U.S. Personal safety and the practice of particular freedoms . Those that violated these restrictions not only violated U.S. laws, but as discussed below, threatened to undermine the expansion of U.S. power abroad.

William Worthy and Subversive Travel

Unlike the invited AP and NBC journalists in August 1956, William Worthy, an international correspondent for the *Baltimore Afro-American*, accepted his invitation and became the first U.S. journalist to enter China since 1949. While Worthy was later joined by two other correspondents, including Edmund Stephens, a white journalist with *Look Magazine*. Whereas Stephens was treated as a genial, sympathetic individual, the State Department and other government agencies fixated on Worthy’s actions, beliefs, and journeys as inherently transgressive. Described repeatedly as “overly race consciousness,” Worthy’s black radicalism represented a global threat when he challenged the U.S. mobility regime and the larger project it purportedly was intended to sustain. The recent creation of Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) in 1955 and the ratcheting up of the U.S. military presence and support in Vietnam was partially contingent on the notion that China represented an existential threat to the region

and the U.S. This too rested in part on the idea that despite U.S. “domestic” racism, only U.S. style liberal capitalism and democracy provided the path towards undoing colonialism. Worthy’s movements not only threatened to undermine the commitment to “containing” China, but his journalism revealing the export and perpetuation of U.S. racism and imperialism threatened to connect “domestic” struggles for racial justice with anticolonial projects “abroad.” His black radicalism represented a challenge to the racial order the U.S. aimed to create and depict itself as fulfilling.

William Worthy was born in 1921 into a family active in Boston’s African American politics. His father, Dr. William Worthy, Sr., was a physician originally from Georgia who advocated for the integration of Boston City Hospital and the nursing profession. His mother, Mabel Posey Worthy of Alabama, was Boston’s first black postal employee, established and led the Massachusetts Colored Women’s Democratic Club, and was a committed member in the Boston NAACP. While a student at Bates College, Worthy became radicalized when became interested in socialism and volunteered for Norman Thomas’ 1942 presidential campaign. During World War II, he declared himself a conscientious objector due to his commitment to pacifism and refused to join a C.O. work camp over its segregation policies. After the war, Worthy worked as an assistant to A. Philip Randolph, and participated in the Journey of Reconciliation which challenged the government to enforce rulings that banned racial segregation on interstate transportation. These political struggles motivated him to pursue a career as a journalist with the *Baltimore Afro-American* and CBS.³¹⁰

Worthy’s pacifism, anti-colonialism, and interest in China developed during his reporting on the Korean War. As historian Kimberley L. Phillips notes, Worthy critiqued the systematic

³¹⁰ Frazier, *The East is Black*, 77.

racialized violence of the U.S. across the globe, and the blind obedience of some civil rights leaders to U.S. foreign policy. He noted that those who advocated for an integrated military in the hope that institutional reform would produce more systemic change remained silent and complicit in U.S. imperial ventures against people of color abroad.³¹¹ These organizations, he argued, “appear to have been mildly tapping the State Department over the wrist in disagreement over nuances of Asian and African policies instead of raising the roof about the white supremacy and imperialistic premises of those policies.”³¹² He not only questioned the connection of civil rights with U.S. imperialism, but revealed the export of “hometown racism” and segregation to East Asia. While reporting on battlefield hospital conditions, he underscored the stark contrasts between the anti-white supremacy propaganda of the Chinese and North Korean militaries, and the segregated hospital units for white, black, and Republic of Korea soldiers.³¹³ Worthy’s Korean War reporting challenged dominant narratives of the war which fully dehumanized Chinese and Korean civilians and soldiers, and placed the war in the context of decolonization rather than the cold war dichotomy of communism and capitalist democracy.³¹⁴

This political development coincided with rising concerns within the security state regarding his travels and political beliefs. After attending the Asian Socialist Conference in Yangon (Rangoon) in January 1953, he began requesting permission from both Chinese and U.S.

³¹¹ Kimberley L. Phillips, *War! What is it Good For? Black Freedom Struggles and the U.S. Military from World War II to Iraq* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 155.

³¹² William Worthy, “Asiatic World Breaking Chains: Korean debacle bound to open eyes of U.S. GIs,” *Baltimore Afro-American*, August 22, 1953.

³¹³ William Worthy, “Color issue shadows Asia,” *Baltimore Afro-American*, August 1, 1953.

³¹⁴ For more on Worthy’s journalism during the Korean War, particularly on POWs, see Frazier, *The East is Black*, 80-94.

officials stationed in Jakarta, Bangkok, and Hong Kong to visit China.³¹⁵ Howard L. Boorman of the U.S. Consulate in Hong Kong was of the impression that “While Mr. Worthy, as a Negro, does apparently feel strongly on the issue of racial discrimination and thus may make some unfortunate remarks in his travels, I am inclined to the tentative appraisal that he may be more naïve than dangerous.”³¹⁶ Another official in Hong Kong differed, believing that “although he may not be an out and out Communist – he’s looking for a ‘problem’ any problem....He may not be ‘dangerous – but I should think that his tendency to find a problem should be restricted to the U.S.”³¹⁷ U.S. officials repeatedly rejected Worthy’s requests on the grounds that the state could not guarantee his personal safety in China. Dulles, when issuing the decision, requested that embassies throughout Asia report on Worthy’s “movements and activities.”³¹⁸

The 1955 Asian-African Conference in Bandung, Indonesia and experiences in the Soviet Union only served to increase Worthy’s anticolonial politics and desire to travel to China. To him, the conference represented a strong rebuke to the cold war binary of U.S. capitalism and Soviet-style communism. Prior to departing the U.S., Worthy obtained a visa from the Soviet Embassy to visit Russia and Eastern Bloc countries as a reporter for *The Crisis* and CBS Radio

³¹⁵ JW Bennett to Mr. Clough, Office Memorandum, “Biographic Data on William Worthy,” January 11, 1957. Folder “030.2A Invitations to American Correspondents to Visit Mainland,” Box 22, Decimal Files, 1954-1957, Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, RG 59, NACP.

³¹⁶ Howard L. Boorman to Confidential, Mr. McKillop, April 23, 1953. Folder “130-Worthy, William Jr. D.O.B. July 7, 1921 File 1 of 3,” Box 21, Passport Files of William Worthy, Classified Passport Applications, 1910-1969, Passport Office, RG 59, NACP.

³¹⁷ Gilda R. Duly to Mr. McKillop, “Conversation with William Worthy, Jr., bearer....,” April 22, 1953, Desp. 2191, 2. Folder “130-Worthy, William Jr. William Jr. D.O.B. July 7, 1921 File 1 of 3,” Box 21, Passport Files of William Worthy, Classified Passport Applications, 1910-1969, Passport Office, RG 59, NACP.

³¹⁸ Dulles to AmConsul, Hong Kong, “URDESP 219, May 1, 1953, William Worthy, Jr.,” June 1, 1953. Folder “130-Worthy, William Jr. D.O.B. July 7, 1921 File 1 of 3,” Box 21, Passport Files of William Worthy, Classified Passport Applications, 1910-1969, Passport Office, RG 59, NACP.

News and successfully applied to the Passport Office for special authorization to traverse the Iron Curtain. From his journalistic “box seat,” Worthy witnessed the political stage that Moscow offered as a “meeting place of nationalistic and color-proud independence movements, especially of Asia but increasingly of Africa as well.” While quick to note that most were not bona fide communist movements, Worthy emphasized their shared commitment to and search for alliances supportive of “getting the West off their backs.” Foreshadowing Worthy’s own passport difficulties, the journalist profiled the South African political activist Moses Kotane who traveled throughout Indonesia, China, and the Soviet Union “without a passport for the simple reason that ‘his’ government doesn’t issue passports to ‘uppity natives.’” Kotane hoped to raise money for and awareness of the anti-apartheid movement, and to establish an autonomous education system to challenge the apartheid state’s white supremacist curriculum. While readers could possibly connect Kotane’s passport plight with that of activist-artist Paul Robeson, Worthy presented readers an alternative, anticolonial political movement of individuals who were not “going to be choosy” in their quest for independence.³¹⁹ Worthy continued to press for permission to report on conditions in China through 1955. He sought the support of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and “in writing under oath, waived the protection of the U.S. government during any time he is present in China.” The ACLU attempted to leverage the cold war civil rights framework in Worthy’s favor, noting that the presence of a black reporter beyond the so-called Bamboo Curtain would be a propaganda boon for the U.S. Safety was not a legitimate argument, the lawyer continued, since it would be “inconceivable for a communist government to attempt

³¹⁹ William Worthy, “Sitting By: A Window in Moscow,” *Baltimore Afro-American*, September 17, 1955. It is interesting to note that Kotane was a member of the South African Communist Party during his visit to the Soviet Union. Worthy either was unaware of his party membership or downplayed Kotane’s politics due to the heightened anticommunist climate of the time, or his own ambivalence towards the Soviet Union.

to take reprisals against a Negro in light of their various demonstrations of the United States allegedly practicing racial discrimination.”³²⁰ Such an argument undermined the chief rationale for the travel ban against U.S. citizens, including journalists, from traveling to China.

Worthy was among the initial journalists invited to visit China in August 1956. However, his impending Nieman Fellowship at Harvard University required a postponement, and he was issued a Chinese visa for a trip beginning before the end of the year. Worthy asked for and was granted a later visa to begin before December 31, 1956. Worthy was fully cognizant of the potential ramifications of his trip and collaborated with the ACLU to develop a plan to both avoid state interference in his efforts to reach China and legally challenge the travel ban. He feared that U.S. officials along his route, which included New York, Seattle, Tokyo, and Hong Kong, would prevent his departure should they become aware of intended final destination. ACLU attorney Rowland Watts advised Worthy that he needed to put a final destination on his documents, but should he include China, he faced the possibility “that your passport will be immediately lifted.” He further advised that Worthy compose “an affidavit of disclaimer of responsibility” which declared that Worthy was cognizant of the potential dangers on his trip and waived the U.S. government of any responsibility for his safety.³²¹ Worthy was also aware of the global reach of the U.S. security state, and its ability to collaborate with other nations to interfere with his freedom of movement. Should he list Hong Kong as his final destination, he worried that “Washington busybodies [would ask] the British authorities” to prevent him “from crossing

³²⁰ Ernest Angel to Herman Phlueger, Letter, February 8, 1956. 911.6293/12-1655, Folder “911.62911-2758,” Box 5162, Central Decimal Files, 1955-1959, RG 59, NACP.

³²¹ Letter from Rowland Watts to William Worthy, Jr., December 18, 1956. Folder “Passports, 4/4,” Box 3.10, Series 3, William Worthy Papers, MS-0524, JHU.

the border.”³²² Luckily, Worthy faced no interference and on December 24, 1956, he crossed the border from Hong Kong, into China, becoming the first American journalist to travel there since 1949. White correspondents from *Look* magazine, journalist Edmund Stevens and photographer, Philip Harrington, soon joined him from the Soviet Union where they were on assignment.³²³ However, pressure from their publisher, Cowles Media, led them to quickly return to the Soviet Union.³²⁴

The State Department quickly denounced Worthy’s trip, noting that it “deplored” the actions that defied U.S. policy purportedly aimed at the return of “all Americans now in Red

³²² Letter to Rowland Watts from William Worthy, December 16, 1956. Folder “Passports, 4/4,” Box 3.10, Series 3, William Worthy Papers, MS-0524, JHU.

³²³ Stevens previously lived in Moscow during the 1930s and returned to Russia in the early 1940s as a war correspondent for the *Christian Science Monitor* and adviser to U.S. military authorities. Citing Russian Comintern and NKVD records opened after the collapse of the Soviet Union, scholars have claimed that Stevens had a close association with the CPUSA and worked with the Comintern in the 1930s. However, these records remain incomplete and largely inaccessible. In addition, historians of the U.S. communist movement have critiqued these and other scholars for oversimplifying the relationship between the Comintern, Moscow, and the CPUSA. Instead, scholars such as Randi Storch and Minkah Makalani, among others, have focused on how participants in the movement adapted, advanced, and utilized political lines and institutions to fit local needs and develop transnational connections. John Earl Haynes, Harvey Klehr, and Fridrikh Igorevich Firsov have argued that Stevens’ 1944 book lavishly praised Stalin and the Soviet Union. However, his reporting became more critical after he left the Soviet Union in 1949. Haynes, Klehr, and Firsov have been critiqued for both overemphasizing the connections between CPUSA members and the Soviet Union, and ignoring the complexities of U.S.-Soviet relations in the 1930s and 1940s. For information on Stevens regarding his purported connections to the Comintern, see Harvey Klehr, John Earl Haynes, and Fridrikh Igorevich Firsov, *The Secret World of American Communism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 299-302.

³²⁴ Dulles spoke directly to the publisher in July 1956 when publishers heard rumors that China would be extending visas to American correspondents. During this conversation, the publisher theoretically agreed with U.S. policy regarding journalists to China, but emphasized to Dulles that the magazine was looking to protect its financial interests and wanted to be the first magazine to offer photos. The trip by Stevens and Harrington seems to be rooted in the financial interests of Cowles Media, rather than the commitment to the freedom of movement and knowledge defended by the *Afro-American* editors. For conversation, see Carl McCardle to Fletcher Knebel, Letter, July 23, 1956. 911.6293/7-2356, Folder “911.6291 1-2758,” Box 5162, Central Decimal Files, 1955-1959, RG 59, NACP.

Chinese jails.”³²⁵ Over a matter of weeks, the State Department, in coordination with other agencies including the FBI, gathered intelligence and considered how best to respond. Ralph N. Clough, the Administrator of the Bureau of Security and Consular Affairs (BSCA), invoked the domino theory when detailing the potential ramification of Worthy’s actions. He feared that “If no punitive action is taken against Worthy, the ban on travel to the China mainland will collapse rapidly, as he will be followed by a stream of other correspondents and probably also by missionaries, scholars and others.” He advocated for a strenuous response, including revoking Worthy’s passport, the freezing of his bank accounts under the Foreign Assets Control Regulations, and exploring possible legal action against Worthy for violating passport laws.³²⁶ The Far East Bureau concurred with most of Clough’s assessments and advised Dulles to proceed with caution since Worthy’s status as a journalist could potentially evoke sympathy amongst the press which was largely opposed to the ban on journalists. Despite these reservations, the Far East Bureau warned that failing to prosecute the three journalists would increase unauthorized travel to China and induce a “general weakening of our passport controls, probably leading eventually to making restrictions against travel in specified areas virtually meaningless.” A core piece of the state’s mobility regime could potentially lose all power. The Department also feared that taking no punitive action would indicate the success of China’s efforts to embarrass the U.S. and alter existing policy.³²⁷

³²⁵ “A U.S. Reporter Enters Red China,” *New York Times*, December 25, 1956.

³²⁶ Ralph N. Clough to Mr. Robertson, Office Memorandum, “Travel of William Worthy to Communist China,” December 26, 1957. Folder “030.2A Invitations to American Correspondents to Visit Mainland,” Box 22, Decimal Files, 1954-1957, Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, RG 59, NACP.

³²⁷ Mr. Robertson to The Secretary, “Travel of American Citizens to Communist China,” December 27, 1957. Folder “030.2A Invitations to American Correspondents to Visit Mainland,” Box 22, Decimal Files, 1954-1957, Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, RG 59, NACP.

Officials fixated on Worthy's mobility and anticolonial journalism out of concerns of the potential internationalization of the black freedom struggle. BSCA and FBI officials developed a six-page biography of Worthy and compiled evidence of his political subversion. Of particular interest to investigators were the publications he worked for (*The Crisis*, *Catholic Worker*, etc.), his past travels in Asia and the Soviet Union, and his participation in left-wing international conferences. To past and present officials, Worthy's journalism represented a threat to U.S. policy due to its global reach and content documenting U.S. racism at home and abroad. "[T]hroughout his world travels," they argued, "he has written stories (some for local publication) and made speeches which harshly criticize the position of the Negro in America, American leaders, foreign and domestic policies, and [the] American political system, [all of] which have apparently been extremely unfavorable to the United States position abroad."³²⁸ FBI informants close to the CPUSA in Boston and New York were unaware of Worthy, but another informant described him "as a non-communist leftist; naïve to the communist danger in America...ever alert to exploitations and injustices..." and as one who "suffers from the intellectuals' lack of understanding concerning the business world."³²⁹ The report also cited a 1955 memo by Acting Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs Robinson McIlvaine who "believe[d] someone should check on the effect of his recent trips abroad." McIlvaine relayed a conversation he had with Edith Sampson, herself the first African American delegate to the U.N. and then an UNESCO employee, who reportedly "had a terrible time repairing the damage he

³²⁸ JW Bennett to Mr. Clough, "Biographic Data on William Worthy," January 11, 1957. Folder "030.2A Invitation to U.S. Correspondents," Box 22, Decimal Files, 1954-1957, Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, RG 59, NACP. This extract was declassified on August 1, 2016, and the entirety of his FBI file is currently under review by FOIA officials. It should also be noted that Worthy's passport was renewed in April 1955 despite this information. The author of the extract was unsure which office renewed the passport.

³²⁹ JW Bennett to Mr. Clough, "Biographic Data," 5.

had created through constant talk about segregation, and other such topics which provided ready-made ammunition for the communists.” Sampson, according to McIlvaine, believed “categorically that he should never be allowed a passport.”³³⁰ Together, the six pages of the Office of Security’s report spoke to the concerns about black Americans traveling abroad to critique the United States.

Worthy’s journalism inside China explained the historical legacies of imperialism and the efforts of U.S. policymakers to maintain global white supremacy through a variety of measures, including travel restrictions. He both praised and critiqued developments within China. At first glance, China appeared as a panacea for African Americans: “Were freedom from color discrimination the only consideration in the pursuit of human happiness China of 1957, which has deported or jailed the white topdogs [sic] of yesterday, could be a mecca for half the population of Mississippi and all of the residents of Harlem.”³³¹ While celebrating many of government’s accomplishments, he was also critical of some policies, particularly the conditions faced by some imprisoned missionaries.³³² These criticisms, however, were couched in a larger critique of Euro-American imperialism and colonialism. Missionaries, many of whom were expelled, “failed to raise their voices against” racial segregation, Chinese exclusion, and the plundering of the country prior to the Revolution. The fact that a revolution would occur was “inevitable” given the context of colonialism, racism, and the corruption of Chiang Kai-shek, but it was a “tragedy” that China lacked, according to Worthy, the equivalent of a Gandhi, Kwame Nkrumah, or Martin Luther King, Jr. The material conditions facing the Chinese

³³⁰ JW Bennett to Mr. Clough, “Biographic Data,” 6.

³³¹ William Worthy, “Racial Arrogance Gave Birth to Red China, Bill Worthy Reports” *Baltimore Afro American*, February 2, 1957.

³³² Frazier, *The East is Black*, 98.

government, such as “the problems of meeting the needs of a population that increases by one million mouths each month,” would present “Authoritarian temptations to cut corners and suppress freedoms” to “any Chinese government.” While these compromises required strident critique, it was necessary to contextualize them within the larger historical trajectory of anticolonialism and continued efforts to reconsolidate Euro-American empires in Asia. U.S. policy towards China, shaped unsurprisingly from “Southerners, who brought their color prejudices to Washington with them,” remained rooted in a desire to elicit “‘Uncle Tom’ reactions and hat-in-hand servility from Nehru, Mao Tse-tung and the rest of the world of color.”³³³ Such journalism threatened to undermine more U.S. policies in the region which were predicated on the claim of China’s danger and intent to control the region. Rather than a racialized, existential enemy, Worthy described a region threatening to unravel contemporary and historical imperial power structures. Travel restrictions, Worthy highlighted, were part of this effort to reimpose these colonial hierarchies.

All three journalists returned to Moscow and faced different treatment from U.S. officials. Journalists Stevens and Harrington conceded to the wishes of their employer Cowles Media and left China early, arriving in Moscow on January 23rd. Stevens’ interactions with the Embassy in Moscow illustrate the racialized dynamics of the security state as embassy and other officials deemed him deserving of sympathy. Indeed, one of the Embassy officials believed Stevens could provide useful intelligence since he was “well-qualified to compare Soviet and

³³³ William Worthy, “Racial Arrogance Gave Birth to Red China, Bill Worthy Reports” *Baltimore Afro American*, February 2, 1957. Worthy’s remaining articles focused on the diverse array of people he met while in China, particularly black Korean War veterans who decided to remain in China. For more see Frazier, *The East is Black*, 94-104; William Worthy, “Inside the Bamboo Curtain: Seven Out, Fourteen to Go!” and “No Campus Romances in Red China Universities,” *Baltimore Afro-American*, March 16, 1957.

Chinese conditions since he has had many years' residence in Moscow and long experience with [the] Soviet Union which has left him with few illusions in regard to Soviet reality." Stevens considered Beijing and Shanghai, the two cities he visited, "much superior in most respects to [the] Soviet Union" including the variety of "consumer goods" such as U.S. manufactured toasters. Stevens utilized the language of totalitarianism in his description of China, noting that they had mastered "total political control with more skill [and] flexibility" than the Soviet state. He also spoke of two prisoners he interviewed. One, a Southern Methodist preacher, was "very successfully brainwashed and seemed to accept many of communist China's theses" while the other a Franciscan monk, "completely resisted any brainwashing" in Stevens' opinion. Stevens, of course, was brainwash free and through his testimony, transformed into a sympathetic family man whose livelihood was at stake. The embassy official advocated on Stevens' behalf, noting the journalist's cooperation and that his passport was not technically used while in China, a fact that could undermine a potential case for fully withdrawing passport facilities. The withdrawal of his passport would, pending appeal, compel him and his family living in Moscow to immediately return to the U.S.³³⁴ Ultimately, such pleas worked. Cowles Media's and the Stevens' cooperation expedited the reapproval of Stevens' passport later that year to visit his son in Italy after a hearing described by one embassy official as a "mere technicality...."³³⁵

Both Stevens and Harrington ultimately retained their passports, whereas Worthy would be subjected to a global dragnet and ultimately lose his passport until the late 1960s.³³⁶ He

³³⁴ Moscow to Secretary of State, Telegram No. 1844, February 1, 1957. 911.6261/2-157, Folder "911.6261 1-957," Box 5159, Central Decimal Files, 1955-1959, RG 59, NACP.

³³⁵ Moscow to Secretary of State, Telegram #522, September 11, 1957. 911.6261/9-1157, Folder "911.6261 1-957," Box 5159, Central Decimal Files, 1955-1959, RG 59, NACP.

³³⁶ William Kunstler, "Applicant's Memorandum of Law and Fact: In the Matter of Passport Renewal Application of William Worthy, Jr.," n.d., 7-8. Folder "130 Worthy, William

arrived in Moscow on February 3rd, and at the U.S. embassy's request, met with U.S. officials two days later. After answering a few questions regarding his intentions of traveling to China dating from 1955, Worthy surreptitiously departed Moscow for Budapest which too was under U.S. travel restrictions. In Hungary, he met stiffer resistance from U.S. consular officials, who were instructed by the State Department to invalidate his passport in order to compel his return to the U.S. Adopting the language of foreign relations, Worthy announced that he was "'breaking off relations' with [the] Legation" and had secured legal representation from the ACLU.³³⁷ Consular authorities threatened Worthy that neighboring countries would be informed that he was traveling without valid documents and "would be picked up as soon as [he] left Hungary." He refused, and continued through Vienna, London, and Boston without any reported interference.³³⁸ Despite the invalidation of his passport, the Passport Office placed him on a lookout list in the event that he tried to depart the United States.³³⁹

Whereas the security state understood Worthy's reporting and mobility as a threat to U.S. policy, *Afro-American* readers celebrated his journey as crucial for advancing civil rights and nurturing the black freedom movement's internationalism. "The struggle for democracy in America," a reader noted, "would be incomplete without the colored press and its truthful and straightforward accounts of colored people in their fight for freedom." Worthy's journey added substantive meaning to civil rights and liberties as it was "another example of the fact that

Jr. File 2 of 3," Box 21, Passport Files of William Worthy, Classified Passport Applications, 1910-1969, Passport Office, RG 59, NACP.

³³⁷ Wailes to Secretary of State, Telegram No. 647, February 8, 1957. Folder "130 Worthy, William Jr. File 2 of 3," Box 21, Passport Files of William Worthy, Classified Passport Applications, 1910-1969, Passport Office, RG 59, NACP.

³³⁸ Senate Committee on the Judiciary, *The Right to Travel*, 27.

³³⁹ Frances G. Knight to J.H. Swing, February 12, 1957. Folder "130 Worthy, William Jr. File 2 of 3," Box 21, Passport Files of William Worthy, Classified Passport Applications, 1910-1969, Passport Office, RG 59, NACP.

colored people are one of the strongest pillars of American democracy and a source of strength to the democratic rights of all Americans.” Another reader protested the state’s control over mobility, arguing that “The State Department has no right to deny a man the right to travel PERIOD.” Readers were aware of the potential for state repression. James W. Ford, a prominent Communist organizer, believed Worthy’s trip signified “a new historic stage of the struggle for liberty” but warned that “the struggle is going to be hard” since “Mr. Worthy is a colored reporter and the gauntlet has been laid down.”³⁴⁰ Attorney and civil rights leader William L. Patterson, whose own passport was revoked in the early 1950s, argued that Worthy’s journey was a significant moment in the black freedom struggle. Patterson argued that the struggle for Worthy’s passport was not simply a fight for the right to travel, but the right to knowledge and a battle against white supremacy. The treatment Worthy faced revealed, Patterson continued, that “it is precisely those who are fighting subversion of our constitutional liberties, not the subversives who are denied the right to travel.” Segregationist and share-cropper Senator James Eastland and members of White Citizens Councils were free to travel abroad, but those, including W.E.B. Du Bois, who challenged white supremacy “abroad and refute these lies concerning the inferiority of colored Americans,” were detained within the nation’s borders.³⁴¹

Mainstream newspapers highlighted Worthy’s case as an affront to press freedoms and, in contrast to *Afro-American* readers, a hindrance to U.S. cold war aims. The *Boston Globe* argued that denying American journalists the ability to travel to China forced newspapers and readers to be reliant on correspondents of different countries who “naturally see things through non-American eyes.” To the *Globe*’s editors, Worthy’s treatment was another sign of the U.S.

³⁴⁰ What *Afro* Readers Say,” *Baltimore Afro-American*, January 12, 1957.

³⁴¹ William L. Patterson, “A Courageous Step,” *Baltimore Afro-American*, April 20, 1957.

government attempting to compel U.S. newspapers “to accept the government’s view of foreign matters without too much questioning....”³⁴² Citing Worthy’s reporting on American prisoners in China, the *Washington Post* argued that “if the State Department wants to arouse more world indignation at the barbaric conduct of the Chinese government, it is missing a beat.”³⁴³ In April 1957 after Worthy’s passport renewal application was denied, the *Post* issued another editorial in which they contended that the action only “[served] to persuade much of the world that the United States is frightened and is afraid to face reality.”³⁴⁴ The *New York Times* did not publish an editorial until 1958 and offered an ambivalent stance concerning Worthy and the question of press freedoms and civil liberties. The editorial staff conceded that significant issues in the present “passport system” existed but noted that reforms would enable the mobility of communists and presumed “subversives.” Instead of supporting Worthy, the *Times* called on U.S. policymakers to avoid any signs of hypocrisy so as to prevent international backlash. Citing the issuance of a “temporary visa to the exiled dictator of Venezuela, Gen. Marcos Pérez Jiménez, ostensibly to visit his family in Florida,” the *Times* concluded that “We cannot help having rash young citizens who want to travel to forbidden places, but there is no reason on earthy why we should make this country a preserve for ex-dictators.”³⁴⁵ Such hypocrisy threatened to undermine U.S. foreign policy.

³⁴² “A Disturbing Policy,” *Boston Globe*, February 9, 1957.

³⁴³ “Report No Evil,” *Washington Post and Times Herald*, February 13, 1957.

³⁴⁴ “Passports for Reporters,” *Washington Post and Times Herald*, April 8, 1957.

³⁴⁵ “The Case of Mr. Worthy,” *New York Times*, March 31, 1958. *New York Times* reporter James Reston was more critical of the State Department’s position on journalists traveling to China, arguing that Dulles’ defense of the ban was nonsensical when journalists were free to travel to other communist countries. For example, see James Reston, “Dulles and China News,” *New York Times*, April 25, 1957.

The fear that Worthy's journey would inspire others to challenge the U.S.'s mobility regime took the form of forty-two young Americans who visited China in August 1957 after participating in the Moscow Youth Festival that July. The group, largely a hodgepodge of red-diaper babies and liberals, traveled throughout China for four weeks. Jake Rosen, himself the son of communist organizers and one of the main organizers of the U.S. delegation to the Youth Festival and the China trip, hoped the journeys would spark the formation of "a new, revolutionary radical youth movement" in the U.S. Rosen believed visiting China was of greatest importance since the country's "unique position...as idealistic revolutionaries" offered young leftists like Rosen an opportunity largely no longer existent in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe: one "could observe how a revolution was being made, [and] could be made." Rosen also believed that that any attempt to forge contact that would legitimize the People's Republic would "strike a blow at the entire superstructure of American imperialism" by undermining the racialized representations of China made by the State Department and right-wing organizations as an uncontrollably violent and expansionist power.³⁴⁶ For Rosen, and other politically minded travelers, travel to China would provide an education in revolution, broadly defined, and create political space in the U.S. for dialogue about the merits of the Chinese Revolution. While the State Department largely handled the forty-two cases on an individual basis through 1959, many would lose their passports for a few years and some would come under strict government surveillance through the late 1960s.

While these journeys prompted a reevaluation of the U.S. travel ban and the means through which to enforce it, the U.S. commitment to empire in the region ultimately led its retention. In May, a proposal to selectively permit journalists favorable to U.S. foreign policy

³⁴⁶ Jake Rosen, interview with author, March 28, 2016.

was circulated to embassies in the region and within the State Department. Of all the countries polled, all but Australia, Japan, and New Zealand would view the plan negatively. Any concession, the State Department's Far East Bureau argued, would be "interpreted as a softening of our attitude toward Communist China and a portent of future concessions to come." The U.S. embassy in South Korea reported that the shift in policy would not only signal to the South Korean government that the U.S. would soon recognize the Beijing government, but that it would lead to a decline of "firm American support on which most Koreans depend."³⁴⁷ Ultimately, the U.S. government authorized twenty-six journalists to travel to China should they be able to receive visas. China agreed on the condition that both countries enter into a reciprocity agreement that would ensure the travel of Chinese correspondents to the U.S. on an equal basis. Chinese Ambassador Wang Ping-Nan explained to U.S. officials that their invitations to journalists and the festival delegation represented a "first step to promote contacts between the Chinese and American peoples and encourage the United States Government to take corresponding steps."³⁴⁸ In response, U.S. officials refused. Citing restraints in the 1952 Immigration and Naturalization Act that precluded entering such an agreement, the Secretary of State offered only to consider applications from "bona fide" journalists on an individual basis. Some in the State Department echoed the fears expressed by U.S. embassies in Asia, warning that the loosening of restrictions "would be construed as a weakening of our policy toward China by some Asian nations who might wish to change their own policies accordingly, thereby

³⁴⁷ Walter S. Robertson to The Secretary, Letter, "Relaxation of United States Passport Policy Toward Communist China Proposed in Mr. Berding's Memorandum of June 19," June 19, 1957. 911.6293/6-1957, Folder "911.6293 4-457," Box 5162, Central Decimal Files, 1955-1959, RG 59, NACP.

³⁴⁸ "Statement Issued by Chinese Ambassador Wang Ping-Nan," September 16, 1957. Attached to Ralph N. Clough to Mr. Robertson. Folder "220 Passport and Citizenship Matters," Box 23, Decimal Files, 1954-1957, Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, RG 59, NACP.

providing the Communists increased opportunity for propaganda and subversion in the area.”³⁴⁹ As the U.S. increased its support of South Vietnam and bolstered its presence in Asia on the premise that China was an existential threat to the U.S. and the region, Worthy’s and others’ journeys threatened to crack this consensus.³⁵⁰

Worthy v. Herter and the Curtailment of Freedom

Worthy’s attempt to renew his passport in late February 1957 commenced a two-year struggle over the limits of state power. The appeal of Worthy’s passport revocation followed on the heels of challenges to the procedures and powers of the Passport Office. Ultimately, the secretary’s decision to revoke Worthy’s passport privileges was confirmed by the D.C. Circuit Court. The Court’s decision in *Worthy v. Herter* legitimized the use of travel restrictions on the grounds that they were proper tools of U.S. foreign relations and through the language of safety. This language served to dehistoricize U.S. mobility controls and erase U.S. state violence at home and abroad. Country-specific travel restrictions served the same purposes of ideologically based passport denials: to control the flow of ideas and persons deemed “subversive” to U.S. imperial formations.³⁵¹

Officials rationalized Worthy’s confinement to the U.S. through the biopolitical language of personal safety and protection. As early as 1955, Worthy waived the U.S. government of any responsibility for his personal safety while in China. Passport officials Ashley J. Nicholas and

³⁴⁹ Acting Secretary of State to Senator Talmadge, letter, n.d., possibly December 1957 – January 1958. Folder “220.2 Passport Policy for Visits to Communist China, July – December,” Box 23, Decimal Files, 1954-1957, Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, RG 59, NACP.

³⁵⁰ Journalist John Strohm was reportedly the first State Department approved journalist to report from China in Autumn 1958. “Reporting From China,” *Washington Post and Times Herald*, October 15, 1958.

³⁵¹ *Kent v. Dulles*, 357 U.S. 116 (1958); *Aptheker v. Secretary of State*, 378 U.S. 500 (1964). My reading of these court cases has been influenced by the political theorist Hagar Kotef. Kotef, *Movement and the Ordering of Freedom*.

Robert Cartwright argued that such an action was a legal impossibility. An “American citizen,” they argued, “cannot waive the responsibility of his Government to protect him” while abroad.³⁵² Such logic imagined that protection was enjoyed evenly in the body politic and ignored the fact that the state indeed did refuse protection to citizens within the U.S. and abroad. Personal safety, in the U.S. and abroad, was often contingent on whiteness. As earlier noted in Chapter One, State Department lawyers emphasized that protection abroad was contingent on the loyalty of U.S. citizens and foreign policy considerations. Such an emphasis on personal safety displaced responsibility for perceived danger onto, in this case, a racialized enemy rather than analyzing conditions as the outcome of the U.S.’s continued efforts to reconsolidate its empire in the region through any means necessary or the abrogation of its duties to protect citizens at home from state violence.

Racism and political repression were at the heart of his passport denial, according to Worthy. The State Department ultimately denied Worthy’s internal appeal, citing that Worthy repeatedly told the Board of Passport Appeals that he would not recognize the travel restrictions and continue to travel “‘wherever he chooses.’”³⁵³ Worthy and the ACLU again petitioned the State Department to overturn its decision in October, arguing that it amounted to “an interference ‘with the fundamental right to travel, the freedom of the press,’ and a denial of due process. Worthy also contested the government’s understanding of passport restrictions. Citing a 1952 State Department announcement which emphasized that “these restrictions ‘...in no way [forbade] American travel to those areas,’” Worthy argued that the restriction merely applied to

³⁵² Robert Cartwright in U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, *The Right to Travel*, 87.

³⁵³ “U.S. says ‘no’ on Worthy’s passport,” *Baltimore Afro-American*, September 28, 1957.

the document rather than the person.³⁵⁴ In addition, ACLU attorneys and Worthy highlighted the raced qualities of travel, underscoring in his petition that the white correspondents from *Look Magazine*, Edmund Stevens and Phillip Harrington, were neither indicted nor were their passports revoked. The *Afro* editors supported Worthy's claims to a right to travel and highlighted the differential treatment of Worthy and the *Look* journalism: "The other two correspondents were white, working for a white publication. Mr. Worthy is colored and working for the AFRO."³⁵⁵ The denial of Worthy's passport did not simply represent an infringement of his civil rights, but constituted an attack on the black press.

Worthy's case followed several other challenges to the Passport Office's discretionary authority over mobility. The popular outcry over the withholding of Linus Pauling's passport and the case of Anne Bauer forced the Department to adopt the most modest of reforms. Pauling, a world renowned chemist and peace activist, was initially denied a passport to attend a London conference in 1952, but international and Congressional outrage, forced the Passport Office to issue him a limited passport. The intense pushback spurred the State Department to begin informing applicants of the rationale for their application's denial.³⁵⁶ However, the process was designed to limit access to the Office's intelligence and protect its prerogatives. Applicants would only be provided with broad information since most of the Office's intelligence was outdated and could lead to greater public embarrassment if there was "information available to

³⁵⁴ Worthy and his supporters clearly decontextualized the quote from the State Department announcement. While the State Department did note that while all travel was not prohibited, travel to restricted places required specific permission from the State Department. It is unclear whether this decontextualization was intentional, but it can be assumed that it stemmed from Worthy's own belief on the racialized borders constituted by travel restrictions. "Worthy again raps U.S. passport ban," *Baltimore Afro-American*, October 12, 1957.

³⁵⁵ "Our Explanation," *Baltimore Afro-American*, November 9, 1957.

³⁵⁶ Kahn, *Mrs. Shipley's Ghost*, 119.

the applicant which is overwhelmingly favorable to him and instead of furnishing it to us as we hope, he may choose to give to the newspaper along with the specific information” cited by the Office.³⁵⁷ Denied applicants received a letter vaguely outlining the damaging information in their file and requesting that the applicant provide further evidence of their anticommunism should they choose to have their case reevaluated. The case of Anne Bauer prompted the creation of a formal appeals process within the State Department in 1952. Bauer, a naturalized American journalist in France, lost her passport in 1951 due to allegations that she associated with French communists and subsequently challenged the decision as a violation on her First and Fifth Amendment rights. In July 1952, a court deemed the revocation constitutional, but ruled that the State Department had exceeded its authority by not providing Bauer a process through which to challenge the decision.³⁵⁸ As a result, the State Department created a Board of Appeals to hear passport cases. Similar to reforms made after the Pauling case, the creation of the Board was intended to protect the Department’s authority. The Board was not an independent review board and petitioners would not be allowed to see all of the supposedly incriminating evidence used against them by the Passport Office. To the State Department, the Board’s structure promised to insulate the Passport Office from judicial and public oversight.

Two cases in the mid-1950s threatened to breach these barriers. Dr. Walter Briehl and the artist Rockwell Kent were denied passports after refusing to sign affidavits foreswearing any membership in the CPUSA. Their appeals reached the Supreme Court in 1958 which, in a split 5-4 decision, ruled in favor of Kent and Briehl. While cited as a monumental decision marking

³⁵⁷ Mr. Ford to Mr. Scott and Mr. Stewart, “Passport Procedure,” August 22, 1952. Folder “Denials and Appeals Procedure, 1952,” Box 1, Records Relating to Passports, 1944-1953, RG 59, NACP.

³⁵⁸ Edward Alwood, “The Passport Battle of Journalist Anne Bauer, 1950-1954,” *American Journalism* 33, no. 2 (2016): 129-135.

McCarthyism's waning power, the decision was in fact limited. The Court did not consider freedom of movement a right protected by the First Amendment, as Kent and others argued. Rather, it ruled that the freedom of movement was "an important aspect of the citizen's 'liberty,'" which could only be curbed with "due process of law under the Fifth Amendment."³⁵⁹ By locating a constitutional basis for the freedom of movement, the Court rejected the State Department's chief claim that the document's primary role was diplomatic, and thus outside the Court's purview.³⁶⁰ The Court did not evaluate whether the state could impose limits on an individual's freedom of movement for political reasons, but instead limited its investigation into whether Congress had delegated such authority to the Secretary of State. While the State Department argued it had in the past denied passports to those suspected of CPUSA membership or communist sympathies, the Court found that the Department's actions were inconsistent and did not amount to official administrative policy. The only power given to the Secretary of State to deny passports in the 1952 Immigration and Nationality Act was on the basis of "allegiance" and criminal behavior. Although the 1950 Internal Security Act permitted the Secretary of State to deny passports to CPUSA members, its sections governing their mobility had yet to come into effect. Barring the Attorney General's issuance of a final order to register with the Federal Government, Congress had not authorized "in explicit terms" the denial of passports on the basis of "beliefs or associations."³⁶¹ The Court refused to consider whether it was constitutional to deny passports on the basis of political beliefs until 1964 when in *Aptheker v. Secretary of State* it ruled that the Internal Security Act's Section Six "too broadly and indiscriminately restricts the

³⁵⁹ *Kent v. Dulles*, 357 U.S. 116, 125 (1958).

³⁶⁰ *Kahn, Mrs. Shipley's Ghost*, 123.

³⁶¹ *Kent v. Dulles*, 357 U.S. 116, 130 (1958).

right to travel, and thereby abridges the liberty guaranteed by the Fifth Amendment.”³⁶² To what degree Congress could limit the freedom of movement, however, was not evaluated, and whether geographic travel restrictions fell under the same logic remained unconsidered.

Worthy’s challenges to the State Department’s authority threatened another of the State Department’s instruments to control mobility after these public defeats. His appeal rested on four arguments. First, Worthy’s attorneys argued that the right to travel was a constitutionally protected right only to be curbed in moments of grave necessity. Second, the ACLU and Worthy challenged the Secretary of State’s authority to ban travel to specific countries without explicit Congressional authority. Third, even if the passport denial and travel restriction fell under the Executive Branch’s plenary power over foreign affairs, the Secretary’s actions failed to meet constitutional standards. Finally, denying Worthy a passport constituted an attack on the freedom of the press.

The State Department’s rebuttal rested on making explicit the impact of individuals’ international travel on U.S. foreign policy. *Kent* was inapplicable, according to government lawyers, because Worthy’s passport was denied on account of his refusal to abide by geographic travel restrictions, not his political beliefs. The theoretical universality of travel restrictions rendered moot the criticism that the denial was rooted in the state’s objections to Worthy’s politics and thus an infringement of his First Amendment rights.³⁶³ Furthering their objections to Worthy’s constitutional arguments, the State Department cited the modern conception of press freedom. The First Amendment, they held, applied solely to the publication of materials; it did not ensure a “‘right’ to gather information in places or in a manner which intrudes upon, or

³⁶² *Aptheker v. Secretary of State*, 378 U.S. 500, 505 (1964).

³⁶³ Brief for Appellee, *William Worthy, Jr. v. John Foster Dulles*, n.d., 6. Folder “1958-59 Passport Case,” Box 3.10, Series 3, William Worthy Papers, MS-0524, JHU.

violates, a greater national interest.”³⁶⁴ At the heart of the government’s case was the argument that Worthy’s disregard for travel restrictions threatened “the orderly conduct of our foreign relations.”³⁶⁵ Their claim of a “close interrelationship of travel with the conduct of foreign affairs” rested on the 1958 *Perez v. Brownell* decision in which a Mexican American lost his citizenship after relocating to Mexico in the 1940s to evade the draft and subsequently voting in a 1946 Mexican election. Controlling individual mobility was of utmost importance since “Activities of a citizen of one nation when in another country, can easily cause serious embarrassment” and misinterpretation as “[t]he people or government of the foreign country may regard his action to be the action of his government....”³⁶⁶ This essential relationship between travel and foreign policy precluded the Court from evaluating the issuance of geographic travel restrictions. At issue, according to the State Department, was not the “confinement of a citizen to the United States, but of keeping a citizen from interfering with our foreign policy, and which bears *directly* upon our relations with the government of a foreign and hostile country.”³⁶⁷

The U.S. Court of Appeals in Washington, D.C., upheld the State Department’s power to issue geographic travel restrictions as essential to national security and, paradoxically, the preservation of freedom. The freedom to travel, the court argued, was only possible through the regulation and limitation of particular individual freedoms. Geographic travel restrictions were analogous to other restrictions on mobility and transportation. The confinement of contagious persons to their homes preserved public health, traffic regulations ensured the safety of drivers and facilitated the movement of others, and the prohibition of trespassing preserved property

³⁶⁴ Brief for Appellee, *William Worthy, Jr. v. John Foster Dulles*, n.d. 9.

³⁶⁵ Brief for Appellee, *William Worthy, Jr. v. John Foster Dulles*, n.d., 6.

³⁶⁶ Brief for Appellee, *William Worthy, Jr. v. John Foster Dulles*, 6-7.

³⁶⁷ Brief for Appellee, *William Worthy, Jr. v. John Foster Dulles*, 15.

rights. “A man who asserts his own uninhibited freedom to go where he pleases,” they argued, “is a menace and is quickly put in his place.”³⁶⁸ Materially, in a society defined by racial and class segregation, the freedom of property owners and whites was predicated on, following this logic, the demobilization and confinement of racialized populations and the poor. Since liberty was a product of order, restrictions were inherent to their enjoyment. Excessive freedom would create an anarchic vacuum in which “persons so powerful, so ruthless, so bent on autocratic control that no newsman would have any liberty whatever” would take control. This was historical law according to the court: ““The customary prompt transformation of unrestrained liberty into dictatorship is one of the poignant lessons of history.”³⁶⁹ Mobility as a constituent element of freedom could only as exist as a right when mobility was ordered and restricted.

Geographic restrictions were not only analogous to other limits on mobility, but necessary in light of the pace of global interconnectivity and U.S. national security. To the Court, travel to particular regions threatened a careful balance of global order, i.e. U.S. imperial supremacy. “History establishes,” they argued, “that either the behavior or the predicament of an individual citizen in a foreign country can bring into clash, peaceful or violent, the powers of his own government and those of the foreign power.” “A blustering inquisitor,” like Worthy, “avowing his own freedom to go and do as he pleases can throw the whole international neighborhood into turmoil.” Worthy’s actions, which he understood as a fundamental expression of freedom, were in fact the very threat to the freedom of other U.S. citizens since his presence in China or elsewhere could produce a potential conflict. The Court’s analysis and justification through the language of personal safety elided crucial facts. While they cited the continued

³⁶⁸ *Worthy v. Herter*, 270 F.2d 905, 908 (1959).

³⁶⁹ *Worthy v. Herter*, 270 F.2d 905, 909 (1959).

imprisonment of Americans in China as evidence of the potential dangers of traveling there, they failed to mention that some of the most recent imprisoned U.S. citizens were CIA agents shot down after distributing leaflets encouraging armed resistance against the Chinese government. As the state encouraged the mobility of individuals to foment war abroad, it sought to contain those who questioned these actions. The District Court's emphasis on "safety" also ignored the fact that Worthy wrote, and many other African Americans discussed, about how he felt safer abroad, *away* from racialized, often state-sanctioned, violence in the U.S. The comparison of the restriction of travel to the enforcement of social and class boundaries in cities bore the echoes of police enforcement of segregation: "A man who asserts his own uninhibited freedom to go where he pleases is a menace and is quickly put in his place."³⁷⁰ Just as the police handled the spatial boundaries of cities, so too the Secretary police the boundaries of the cold war.

In the context of the civil rights movement and its prior decision in *Kent*, the Court ruled that this particular curtailment of freedom was not discriminatory. Country specific restrictions in fact eliminated any discrimination through universal application, they argued. The Court disagreed with the analogy made by Worthy that the removal of their passports left them in an imprisoned-like state. The restriction on movement, the Court held, did not infringe on a person's beliefs since the issue was the physical location of the body. Worthy could still write about his beliefs and gather news in the world without visiting certain countries since he was free to travel throughout the globe on the condition that he agree to abide by travel restrictions. The restriction was applicable not just to journalists or presumed leftists, but to everyone who held a passport. That Worthy would deem travel to China safe was to assume the authority of the federal government in determining which areas constituted "trouble spots, or danger zones," a

³⁷⁰ *Worthy v. Herter*, 270 F.2d 905, 908 (1959).

judgment which required a thorough review of diplomatic cables, intelligence, and “judgment premised in large part upon foreign policy.” Worthy’s and others’ travels to China constituted a challenge to who held authority over foreign policy in a purportedly democratic society in the context of permanent war: “The authority to determine what would and what would not better our foreign relations is not vested in individual citizens, even though they be newsman.”³⁷¹ The argument that travel restrictions were not an element of “domestic” policing was not only to skirt any notion of ideological travel bans, but also to shelter these restrictions from further judicial scrutiny.

The court’s ruling legitimizing travel restrictions extended the logic of political policing through the curtailment of mobility. Whereas earlier efforts to police left internationalism relied on the refusal to permit those deemed subversive to leave the country, travel restrictions elided questions regarding constitutional infringements of rights. The language of safety cited in *Worthy v. Herter* naturalized travel restrictions and the state’s paternalistic power. Restriction, following this logic, was then an act of protection rather than prohibition. Geographic travel restrictions also naturalized security as an objective condition to be evaluated and largely unquestioned. American efforts to undermine China and revolutions throughout East and Southeast Asia went unquestioned. These policies were responsible for producing a climate of distrust and danger cited as justification for travel controls and surveillance. Ideological restrictions became naturalized through these geographic restrictions since the state would only authorize those it deemed acceptable to travel to these areas.

Undeterred by this setbacks, Worthy announced that he would continue to travel regardless of his passport status. The exemption of the Western Hemisphere from passport

³⁷¹ *Worthy v. Herter*, 270 F.2d 905, 913 (1959).

requirements allowed him to visit Cuba throughout 1960.³⁷² Struggles with the State Department and legal system increasingly radicalized Worthy. Similar to activists such as Amiri Baraka and Robert F. Williams, Worthy had a highly favorable impression of Cuba due to its efforts to combat racism and U.S. imperialism. He also advocated those desiring “an advance peek into the impending racial crisis at home, . . . to learn the high eventual price of breaking the economic and political strangle hold of our determined white majority” to travel to Cuba in order to gain an insight into the processes of decolonization.³⁷³ In the late summer and early fall of 1961, Worthy again traveled to Cuba for eleven weeks and provided U.S. readers the first report of Robert F. Williams’ safe arrival after evading government repression through fraudulent kidnapping charges.³⁷⁴ Worthy understood Williams’ ability to escape the U.S. as a victory for the civil rights movement since the option of safe haven meant that “all varieties of Dixiecrat terror and all the implicit threats of personal economic ruin will henceforth be less awesome to those on the equal rights firing line.”³⁷⁵ Travel and the possibility of expatriation, forced or voluntarily, proved crucial not only for pedagogical purposes, but also for the sustenance of transnational political movements.

Attempts by the U.S. government to construct legal and physical borders threatened to constrain and dilute these necessary political connections. In October, immigration officials

³⁷² For a history of the FPCC, see Van Gosse, *Where the Boys Are: Cuba, Cold War America, and the Making of a New Left* (New York: Verso Press, 1993).

³⁷³ William Worthy, “No Color Bar in Cuba says Writer,” *Baltimore Afro-American*, September 24, 1960.

³⁷⁴ For an excellent biography on Williams and his political philosophy, see Timothy Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

³⁷⁵ William Worthy, “Williams Flees U.S. by New ‘Underground Railroad,’” *Baltimore Afro-American*, October 7, 1961; “Williams Tells: His story of Monroe,” *Baltimore Afro-American* October 14, 1961; “Williams Tells Worthy, ‘I was a Marked man,’” *Baltimore Afro-American*, October 21, 1961.

detained Worthy for a few hours after he did not produce a valid U.S. passport upon his return to Miami. Instead, he provided his birth certificate and vaccination documentation to prove his citizenship. While immigration officials allowed Worthy to leave the airport, in April 1962, he would be indicted for “illegal entry.” He was convicted in a nonjury trial in August that year and faced three months imprisonment for the technical violation of the 1952 Immigration and Naturalization Act. This commenced a two year long battle to regain Worthy’s passport that involved international and domestic audiences. Ultimately the conviction was overturned in early 1964 by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, but he did not regain his passport until 1968. Unfazed, Worthy flew to North Vietnam through Montreal, Paris, and Cambodia.³⁷⁶ His coverage of peace conferences and interviews with Southeastern Asian political leaders provided a critical lens into the oppositional politics of the Third World otherwise obscured by cold war rhetoric.³⁷⁷

Worthy’s case highlights the crucial racialization of security. Not only his politics, but his subject position as a black anti-colonial reporter challenged not only the edifice of the U.S. mobility regime, but also the image of the U.S. as an anti-racist and anti-colonial country. However, Worthy was not the only one who traveled to China that year, nor the sole person put under extensive surveillance when he returned to the U.S. The vigorous response by the state abroad in attempting to contain Worthy demonstrates aspects of the racial logic of the U.S. security state.

³⁷⁶ “Worthy Fights Alone,” *Baltimore Afro-American*, May 23, 1964; “Worthy Reaches Asia to See Reds: Writer Without Passport to Fly to Hanoi Tuesday,” *New York Times*, November 22, 1964.

³⁷⁷ William Worthy, “Inside North Vietnam,” *Baltimore Afro-American*, January 2, 1965; William Worthy, “Inside North Vietnam: Part Two,” January 9, 1965

Despite the affront to U.S. travel policy, travel restrictions were actually reinvigorated by the trips as the District Court, and the Supreme Court by default, legitimized these policies. While the State Department seemingly lost power over its control of mobility in *Kent v. Dulles*, the decision in *Worthy v. Herter* provided it with a new tool to police leftist internationalism without specifying its intention to do so through its supposed universality. However, the ability to criminally prosecute for violations of travel restrictions remained untested and would be in the 1960s through travel to Cuba. The ability of the State Department to police political movements through travel restrictions would face new challenges in the 1960s as Cuba began to occupy a more central place in the developing New Left. It is to those challenges that we now turn.

Chapter 4

“A Passport is a Weapon in the Communist Arsenal, Isn’t It?”: Cuba as an “Internal”

Security Threat and the Student Committee for Travel to Cuba

In January 1964, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover submitted his annual appropriations request to Congress for 1965. Although Hoover dedicated a significant portion of his testimony to detailing the CPUSA’s purported efforts to further Soviet interests “to exploit the militant forces of the Negro civil rights movement,” he also expressed growing concern over Cuba’s influence in the U.S. through solidarity organizations, Cuban officials, and potential spies amongst “the ranks of thousands of refugees entering this country from Cuba.”³⁷⁸ The primary organization of concern to the Bureau was the Student Committee for Travel to Cuba (SCTC) that was organized through the Progressive Labor Movement, “an extremely militant and leftist organization” formed after a split from the CPUSA.³⁷⁹ Attached to his formal testimony was a map demonstrating the routes taken by a group of 59 students to reach Cuba during the past summer. The map (Figure 1) titled “Illegal Travel of U.S. Students to Cuba and Return,” depicted the routes connecting the U.S. and Cuba through a circuitous route involving the U.S., Canada, Ireland, England, the Netherlands, France, Spain, Czechoslovakia, and Bermuda.³⁸⁰ The routes taken by the students were operated by international carriers and thus largely unrestrainable by the U.S. Intended to map the movement of people, the routes also

³⁷⁸ J. Edgar Hoover in U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Appropriations, *Departments of State, Justice, and Commerce, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations for 1965: Hearings before a Subcommittee of the Committee of on Appropriations*, 88th Cong., 2nd sess., 1964, 305, 309, 315.

³⁷⁹ J. Edgar Hoover in *Departments of State, Justice, and Commerce, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations for 1965*, 316.

³⁸⁰ J. Edgar Hoover in *Departments of State, Justice, and Commerce, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations for 1965*, 318.

demonstrated U.S. vulnerability Cuba's influence and potential sabotage. Cuban propaganda and personnel could potentially make use of these routes to gain entry to the United States. The borders of the U.S. were no longer capable of walling off this influence. The map also suggested the failures of the U.S. measures designed to topple the revolutionary Cuban government show through economic and political isolation. The U.S. travel restrictions that had been placed on the island since the end of the Eisenhower administration were not successful. Rather than showing the vectors of American power, it highlighted existing weaknesses.

This conspiratorial geography demonstrating U.S. vulnerability not only mapped out a revolutionary transnational space, but was echoed by conservative and far-right critics of the early 1960s. The trips coincided with the developing anti-Vietnam War movement and growing militancy of the black freedom movement. Critics and some officials attempted to connect the uprisings of several cities in the summer of 1964 such as Harlem to travels to Cuba and those that traveled with the Permanent Student Committee for Travel to Cuba. Both the left and right, however, agreed on the point that Cuba served as a node in a sustained global anticolonial revolutionary movement that connected areas as disparate as Asia, Africa, Latin America, and even the United States.

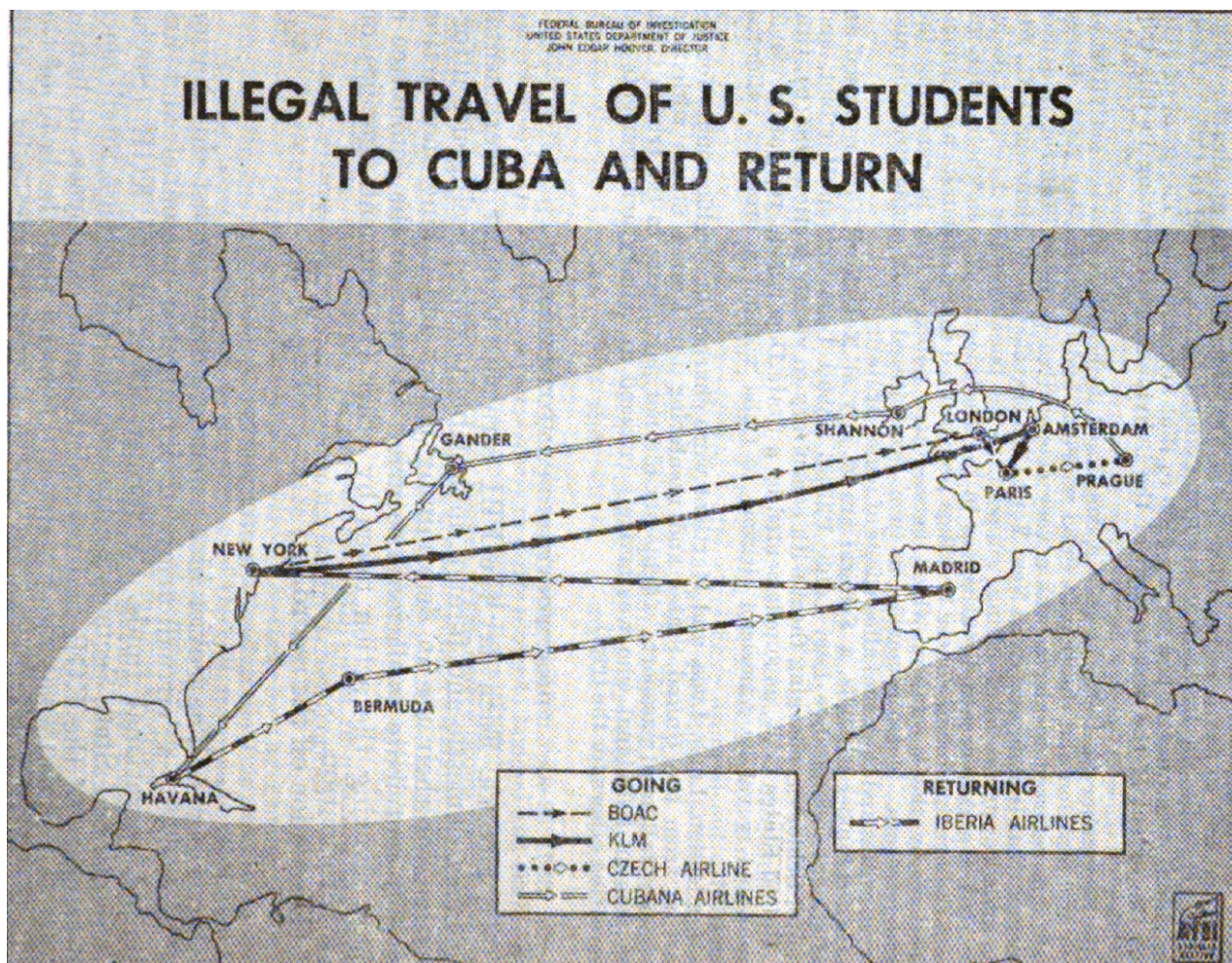


Figure 1

The SCTC’s successful efforts at breaking the travel ban and subsequent changes in U.S. travel control policy rarely enter the existing historical literature on the connections between the U.S. left and the Cuban Revolution. Historians of North Americans’ engagements with the Revolution largely focus on the early or late 1960s and early 1970s, when travel to the island was much more pronounced prior to the travel ban, and as organizations adopted a more radical, anti-imperialist and Third Worldist paradigm. Van Gosse’s *Where the Boys Are* traces the emergence of a “New Left” to the way that the Cuban Revolution spoke to Cold War ideas of masculinity and provided young people an example distinct from the U.S. and Soviet Union. While Gosse

details the rise and fall of the Fair Play movement in the early 1960s, and notes the reemergence of Cuba in the political imagination of the U.S. left in the late 1960s, the SCTC's efforts of sustaining support for the Revolution are ignored.³⁸¹ Those who have studied the SCTC situate its organizing in the development of the Progressive Labor Party, an anti-revisionist communist party, or as an example of an earlier iteration of Third World solidarity politics.³⁸² Numerous other works have explored the continued importance of the Cuban Revolution to radical activism in the late 1960s and 1970s. Cuba, they demonstrate, remained a crucial site for American radicals and social movements, as an example of revolutionary praxis, a gateway to other revolutionary movements, or a haven for those escaping state repression.³⁸³ Indeed, these later projects documented in the historical literature were contingent on the SCTC's efforts which led to the decriminalization of travel to socialist and revolutionary countries. Defanging the state's efforts to criminalize the left enabled more organizations and individuals to travel to these nations in the late 1960s and 1970s. Officials saw in the proliferation of connections between the Third World and the U.S. left a sign of "foreign" control over U.S. social movements furthered

³⁸¹ Gosse, *Where the Boys Are*.

³⁸² Leigh David Benin, "A Red Thread in Garment: Progressive Labor and New York City's Industrial Heartland in the 1960s and 1970s," (PhD Dissertation, New York University, 1997); Toru Umezaki, "Breaking through the Cane-Curtain: The Cuban Revolution and the Emergence of New York's Radical Youth, 1961-1965," *The Japanese Journal of American Studies* no. 18 (2007): 187-207; Robin D.G. Kelley, *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2002), 73-84.

³⁸³ For queer activism and struggles over the meaning of Cuba, see Ian Lekus, "Queer Harvests: Homosexuality, the U.S. New Left, and the Venceremos Brigades to Cuba," *Radical History Review* 89 (2004): 57-91; for other late 1960s and early 1970s Cuban solidarity projects, see Max Elbaum, *Revolution in the Air: Sixties Radicals Turn to Lenin, Mao, and Che* (New York: Verso, 2002); Teishan Latner, *Cuban Revolution in America: Havana and the Making of a United States Left, 1968-1992* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2018); on the idea of Cuba as a "haven" for political prisoners and fugitives, see Teishan Latner, "Take Me to Havana! Airline Hijacking, U.S.-Cuba Relations, and Political Protest in Late Sixties' America," *Diplomatic History* 39, no. 1 (2015): 16-44.

by travel to revolutionary nations. Without travel restrictions, the security state increasingly turned to widespread surveillance and counterintelligence projects through the CIA's MH/CHAOS program and the FBI's COINTELPRO.³⁸⁴

Building off this existing literature, this chapter situates the development of the SCTC in the context of the security state's efforts to retain imperial control in Latin America and disrupt transnational, radical networks. Different elements of the national security state understood Cuba as an "internal" security threat that utilized the SCTC as a vehicle through which to undermine support for U.S. foreign policy and foment unrest.³⁸⁵ Such a representation reversed historical understandings of Cuba as an incipient possession of the United States. As the esteemed Cuban historian Louis A. Pérez, Jr. argues, possessing Cuba since the nineteenth century was understood as essential for U.S. national security. The Revolution's success dramatically challenged this world view as "[p]roximity now implied peril."³⁸⁶ This transformation of Cuba from a central site of U.S. empire to an open flank legitimized violent measures to overthrow the revolutionary government and return the island to what North Americans deemed it to be its rightful place. Limiting capital, goods, and the mobility of individuals to Cuba was key to this project and required the cooperation of neighboring states. Scholars William LeoGrande and Peter Kornbluh argue that the Johnson Administration's efforts to internationalize the U.S.

³⁸⁴ For COINTELPRO see Churchill and Vander Wall, *The COINTELPRO Papers*; Cunningham, *There's Something Here*, among others. For a book supportive of MH/CHAOS by a CIA agent, see Frank J. Rafalko, *MH/CHAOS: The CIA's Campaign Against the Radical New Left and the Black Panthers* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2011).

³⁸⁵ Teishan Latner makes a similar argument regarding the FBI's investigation of the Venceremos Brigades, a Third World solidarity project encompassing many facets of the North American Left in the late 1960s through the 1970s. This chapter locates this dynamic earlier in the 1960s and suggests that later notions of Cuba's threat were influenced by the investigations documented below. See Latner, *Cuban Revolution in America*, 75-122.

³⁸⁶ Louis A. Pérez, Jr., *Cuba in the American Imagination: Metaphor and the Imperial Ethos* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 253.

embargo ultimately led them to prosecute the SCTC leaders for their violations of the travel ban. This chapter supports their findings, but I argue that the prosecution of the SCTC cannot be fully understood unless one addresses the growing concern in the Johnson Administration about the declining power of travel controls and their perceived inability to sever the connections between “domestic,” left organizations and the revolutionary Third World. The classification of the SCTC and individual members’ FBI cases as “Internal Security – Cuba” suggests that officials understood the organization as a key conduit through which Cuba instantiated itself in the U.S.

This chapter begins with an overview of U.S.-Cuban diplomatic relations after the Cuban Revolution’s success and the development of solidarity organizations in the U.S. Travel restrictions and the October missile showdown led to the conclusion of these earliest social movements. I next document the creation of the SCTC as a response to the declining public support of the Revolution and the organization’s hope that travel to Cuba would spur the growth of a radical student movement. The SCTC was able to circumvent existing travel restrictions through its use of the traveling public and the global infrastructure of commercial aviation. As traveling by jet became cheaper and spread, the power of travel restrictions declined. The chapter then turns to how Cuba, via the SCTC, was rendered an “internal” security threat to the U.S. through informant testimony and investigations into the possible relationship between Cuba, radical black organizations, and urban uprisings. Finally, it concludes with an analysis of how the state’s attempts to control travel through passport revocations and are restrictions were rendered powerless without legislation.

U.S.-Cuba Relations, 1959 – 1964

Shifts in cold war liberalism established the context for the initial warm reception of the Cuban Revolution in the late 1950s. A combination of sympathetic anti-Batista Cubana/os and

journalists were the first to align themselves with the revolution. Herbert L. Matthews' broadcasts from the Sierra Maestra on CBS and his *New York Times* articles were crucial in introducing and endearing *los barbas* to the North American public. Sympathy crossed political lines as even virulent anti-communists, such as Jules Dubois of the *Chicago Tribune*, published positive pieces depicting the Revolution as a struggle between the corrupt Batista and the defender of middle-class norms and virtue, Fidel Castro. This tentative embrace by conservatives was aided by the CPUSA's wavering position on Cuba, which was based on the Cuban Communist Party's assessment that the July 26th Movement was an adventurist, non-vanguard party that would be unsuccessful and further damage the working class. For cold war liberals, the Cuban Revolution embodied the Civil Rights Movement's commitment to justice and the 1956 Hungarian uprising's spirit. Some believed that supporting the nationalist revolution fulfilled U.S. foreign policy objectives of securing a U.S.-led, global anticommunist order.³⁸⁷

This romance between leading anti-communist liberals and the Cuban Revolution quickly flamed out towards late 1960 due to the emerging conflict between the US and Cuba, and the Cuban government's increasing socialist inclinations. Despite some attempts at negotiations over economic relations by the Ambassador Philip W. Bonsal, the Eisenhower administration remained wary if not hostile to the notion of a revolutionary and truly independent Cuba. By July 1959, a mere six months after the July 26th Movement's victory, the CIA began developing plans to oust Fidel Castro and the revolutionary leadership, and the White House adopted an increasingly bellicose posture toward the island nation. Despite State Department advice that the Eisenhower administration seriously consider Cuba's request for financial assistance to fund

³⁸⁷ For the liberal embrace of the Cuban Revolution, see Gosse, *Where the Boys Are*, 35-106.

development programs, Eisenhower and others turned against the Revolution in response to the nationalization of U.S. property and businesses, and Fidel Castro's charges against U.S. interference in the island's politics.³⁸⁸ An economic war ensued through 1960, as Eisenhower eliminated Cuba's sugar quota and ultimately banned all U.S. exports except for medicine and food. In response, the Cuban government further nationalized a significant portion of U.S.-owned properties and industries valued at over \$600 million, pursued a land-reform policy not dissimilar from that advocated by the later President Kennedy, and increased ties with the Soviet Union.³⁸⁹ Finally, on January 2, 1961, the U.S. recalled its embassy staff and formally severed ties with the Cuban government. Two weeks later, on January 16th, a travel ban was announced.

To the dismay of many of the Revolution's supporters, the elections of Kennedy and Johnson did not substantially alter U.S.-Cuba relations. Both administrations increasingly isolated and attacked the island in order to prevent Cuba's example from spreading like contagion throughout the Western Hemisphere. Cuba's expansive campaigns in land reform, literacy and education, and public health threatened the vision of nationalist development outlined by liberal economists and U.S. policymakers. By the early 1960s, leading social scientists and officials understood poverty as both a key strategic obstacle to preventing leftist, nationalist revolutions and an object of global social reform. Abstracted from capitalist, social relations, poverty, or in the liberal lexicon "under-development," was not the result of capitalism, but rather individuals' and nations' exclusion from capitalist markets due primarily to

³⁸⁸ William M. LeoGrande and Peter Kornbluh, *Back Channel to Cuba: The Hidden History of Negotiations Between Washington and Havana* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 18-27. Fidel Castro, in early 1959, met with Richard Nixon and representatives of other government agencies, including the CIA. The meeting with Nixon, it turns out, was a wasted opportunity on both sides to prevent, and to observers, largely blocked by the mutual antipathy between the two statesmen.

³⁸⁹ LeoGrande and Kornbluh, *Back Channel to Cuba*, 34-38.

psychological and social “deficiencies” rooted in older forms of colonialism. Kennedy’s Alliance for Progress and the Peace Corps were designed to implement these visions in order to prevent leftist revolutions. Development or modernization, according to these theorists, was contingent on the creation of a robust national security state, thus necessitating the transfer and circulation of military arms, knowledge, and tactics throughout the hemisphere. Cuba’s attempts at forging an independent path threatened to undermine U.S. imperialism in the region.³⁹⁰

Early Solidarities

Amidst these counterrevolutionary efforts, thousands of Americans mobilized to the Revolution’s defense. Early solidarity projects coalesced around the Fair Play for Cuba Committee (FPCC), whose founders, including journalists and intellectuals such as Robert Taber, Richard Gibson, and Waldo Frank, believed that liberal icons like Kennedy and Schlesinger had betrayed their cause. The FPCC’s mission evolved over the early 1960s and cohered around providing a sympathetic voice for the Revolution and challenging the attacks of newspapers and leading political figures. In addition to its publications and speaking engagements, the FPCC organized trips to Cuba, targeting mostly white college students and African Americans.

These latter constituencies became the most ardent supporters of the Revolution. Significant numbers of black activists, artists, and intellectuals travelled to the island to witness the transformation of a society similarly rooted in settler colonialism and slavery. Many African

³⁹⁰ The literature on modernization and mid-twentieth century social science is vast. For examples, see Alyosha Goldstein, *Poverty in Common: The Politics of Community Action during the American Century* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012); Daniel Immerwahr, *Thinking Small: The United States and the Lure of Community Development* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015); and Michael E. Latham, *Modernization as Ideology: American Social Science and “Nation Building” in the Kennedy Era* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003).

Americans traveled to Cuba under the auspices of FPCC, including Harold Cruse, Robert F. Williams, and LeRoi Jones (later Amiri Baraka). Harold Cruse's journey inspired one of his most famous essays, "Revolutionary Nationalism and the Afro-American," in which he delineated his concept of "internal colonialism" that blacks' position and subjection within the U.S. was not simply analogous to, but imbedded within global networks of colonialism and capitalism. Black liberation, Cruse articulated, would only emerge through connecting freedom struggles at "home" and those emanating out of the Third World vanguard. Journalist William Worthy highlighted the educational import of the Cuban Revolution for African Americans. Travel was essential for those "eager to gain a sense of identity with the 'third world' of Africa, Asia, and Latin America," and for those "reevaluating the mantra of 'moderation and gradualism' in the fight for civil rights." Viewing the transformation of "America's 'last plantation,'" provided travelers, particularly black visitors, "an advance peek into the impending racial crisis at home...to learn the eventual price of breaking the economic and political strangle hold [sic] of our determined white majority."³⁹¹ Cuba not only served as a classroom, but also a haven for activists seeking protection from U.S. government repression. Robert F. Williams, the former president of the North Carolina NAACP and advocate of armed self-defense, sought asylum in Cuba after the U.S. attempted to stop his organizing efforts through trumped-up kidnapping charges in 1961. From Havana, Robert and his wife Mabel published their newspaper *Crusader* and aired their radio show *Radio Free Dixie*, inspiring future black radicals including Huey Newton, Stokely Carmichael, and members of the Revolutionary Action Movement.³⁹²

³⁹¹ William Worthy, "No Color Bar in Cuba says Writer," *Baltimore Afro-American*, September 24, 1960; plantation metaphor in William Worthy, "The case of Cuba against Uncle Sam," *Baltimore Afro-American*, April 29, 1961."

³⁹² The literature on black engagement with and support of the Revolution is vast. For example, see Van Gosse, *Where the Boys Are*; Peniel E. Joseph, *Waiting 'Til the Midnight Hour*:

College students also formed a large base of support for both the FPCC and Cuba. Partially attracted to the revolutionary fighters' romantic masculinity, inspired by the Civil Rights and Free Speech Movements, and informed by C. Wright Mills' *Listen, Yankee*, many college students understood the Revolution as an alternative to both Soviet-style communism and U.S. capitalism. Organizers Saul Landau and Socialist Workers Party member Berta Green not only expanded FPCC's reach across college campuses but also organized a trip of 326 students over the 1960 winter holiday break. These organizing efforts culminated in protests against the failed 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion.³⁹³

Despite the quick rise and large mobilization of support, Fair Play as a national organization and movement faded over a two-to-three-year period after 1961. Not one single event or force led to its slow demise. While the New York and the San Francisco Bay Area branches lasted through late 1963, the national organization lacked funding and the leadership faced government harassment in the form of indictments and surveillance. The failure of the U.S. at Playa Giron assuaged some sympathizers' concerns about the Revolution's vulnerability. Whereas defending Cuba was the cause célèbre of most activists in the early 1960s, many shifted their focus to the struggle against Jim Crow. Personality and organizational conflicts also hampered the FPCC as local chapters and individuals clashed over strategy and goals. External

A Narrative History of Black Power in America (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 2006); Robin D.G. Kelley, *Freedom Dreams*, 60-109; Brenda Gayle Plummer, "Castro in Harlem: A Cold War Watershed," in *Rethinking the Cold War*, ed. Allen Hunter (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998), 133-154; Ruth Reitan, *The Rise and Decline of an Alliance: Cuba and African American Leaders in the 1960s* (East Lansing: Michigan State Press, 1999); Besenia Rodriguez, "'De la Esclavitud Yanqui a la Libertad Cubana': U.S. Black Radicals, the Cuban Revolution, and the Formation of a Tricontinental Ideology," *Radical History Review* no. 92 (2005): 62-87; Cynthia Young, *Soul Power: Culture, Radicalism, and the Making of a U.S. Third World Left* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006): 18-53.

³⁹³ Gosse, *Where the Boys Are*, 203.

factors also played a significant role in the dissolution of the Fair Play organization and movement. Cuba's increasing tilt towards the Soviet Union and the October 1962 missile showdown made many reevaluate their public commitments to the Revolution. FBI harassment and the imposition of the travel ban in January 1961 hastened the conclusion of the organization and movement.

The Politics of the Travel Ban

The SCTC developed in the context of debates within the State Department and elsewhere regarding the implementation, efficacy, and legitimacy of travel restrictions. Two weeks after the official rupture between the two countries, the State Department announced on January 16, 1961 that all travel to Cuba would be banned except for those whose travel would, in the eyes of the State Department, serve U.S. interests. Travel was reserved for those whom the State Department determined to be "bona fide newsmen, businessmen with previously established interests," or those with "compelling personal reasons which require the immediate presence of the person in Cuba."³⁹⁴ While the Passport Office and BSCA generally interpreted the exemptions narrowly, records suggest that the Office modified its policies in the wake of William Worthy's case described in the previous chapter. Journalists including Sally Belfrage and Robert Carl Cohen, who were among the student group which traveled to China in the summer of 1957, were granted passports to report on conditions in Cuba.³⁹⁵ By late October 1963, HUAC's investigators in D.C. estimated that just over 1,600 people obtained a special

³⁹⁴ John W. Sipes to Mr. Dorez, "Cuban Travel Control," March 22, 1961. Emphasis in original. Folder "1/C2.1 Travel Restrictions on American Citizens to Foreign Countries," Box 1, Subject Files, 1961-1962, Bureau of Security and Consular Affairs, Office of the Executive Director, RG 59, NACP.

³⁹⁵ Cohen had a contract with National Education TV to produce a documentary on Cuba, and received authorization from both the U.S. and Cuban governments. Airing the documentary was difficult, however, as a result of possible CIA interference.

passport from the State Department for travel to Cuba in the period between January 1961 and April 1963.³⁹⁶

Political litmus tests, however, remained in use to evaluate who constituted a “legitimate” journalist and met the criteria for exempted status. In July 1961, the Passport Office requested BSCA’s opinion on the application of publisher and FPCC member Lyle Stuart. While Frances Knight believed Stuart’s application should be denied on “political grounds,” a possible appeal hearing would potentially result in the release of classified information. However, declining to recognize his status as a journalist would remove any possibility of a legal challenge.³⁹⁷ Edwin Vallon of the Office of Caribbean and Mexican Affairs (CMA) put the decision bluntly: Stuart’s membership in Fair Play meant that his visit was “for the purpose of receiving further indoctrination and possibly finances and instructions with respect to dissemination of Castro propaganda in this country.” The Inter-American Affairs desk concurred, noting that his presence “would be undesirable and counter to the best interests of this country.”³⁹⁸ Though Stuart was banned on political grounds in the guise of lacking journalist credentials, those more closely aligned with the Passport Office’s right-wing perspective could travel. Theodore Draper’s research assistant Radford E. Burns received an exempted passport since “Mr. Draper’s articles

³⁹⁶ McNamara to Wheeler, “Validations for Travel to Cuba,” October 25, 1963; Wheeler to McNamara, “Validations for Travel to Cuba,” November 30, 1963; William Wheeler, “Validation of U.S. Passports for Travel to Cuba from January 19, 1961 to April 29, 1963,” n.d. Folder “63-68 Validations to Travel to Cuba,” Box 12, William Wheeler’s Los Angeles Office Investigative Case Files, 1953-1969, Records of the House Un-American Activities Committee, 1945-1969, Records of the U.S. House of Representatives, RG 233, National Archives Building, Washington, DC (NAB).

³⁹⁷ Frances G. Knight to Charles P. Torrey, “Passport Matter – Lyle Stuart,” July 19, 1961. Folder “Passports, Cuba 1961,” Box 22, Subject Files, 1960-1963, Bureau of Inter-American Affairs, Office of the Coordinator of Cuban Affairs, RG 59, NACP.

³⁹⁸ Edwin E. Vallon to Frances G. Knight, “Passport Matter – Lyle Stuart,” July 20, 1961. Folder “Passports, Cuba 1961,” Box 22, Subject Files, 1960-1963, Bureau of Inter-American Affairs, Office of the Coordinator of Cuban Affairs, RG 59, NACP.

are extremely helpful to” the government. Burns himself was even encouraged by the CMA desk to apply for an exception “with assurance that the passport will be endorsed for travel to Cuba.”³⁹⁹ Membership in political organizations opposed to official U.S. foreign policy largely precluded one from obtaining a validated passport.

The exemption clause of the travel restrictions framed a battle over bureaucratic authority and knowledge between the Passport Office and its supervisory bureau, the BSCA. This struggle was shaped by the 1961 Supreme Court ruling that the SACB’s order requiring the CPUSA to register with the national government was constitutional. Those officially ordered to register could neither apply nor obtain a passport. Justice Department Attorneys, FBI, BSCA, and Passport Office officials clashed over how to interpret the ruling. Officials in the Passport Office, largely supported by the FBI, chaffed at what they perceived as an unwillingness of Abba Schwartz, the head of BSCA, and some in the Justice Department to enforce the order. At a hearing of the Senate Subcommittee of Internal Security (SSIS), Chief Counsel for the Passport Office Robert Johnson argued that the Office’s powers were nil as Abba Schwartz and the BSCA took over the power of determining exemptions for travel to restricted areas and which CPUSA leaders’ passports could be revoked. The Department’s policy regarding the passports was to deny them only when they would be able to defend that decision with releasable evidence in the event of an appeal. Since a significant portion of the information utilized to deny passports was

³⁹⁹ Mr. Hurwitch to Mr. Hickey, “Request for Passport Endorsement: Radford E. Burns,” August 18, 1961. Folder “Passports, Cuba 1961,” Box 22, Subject Files, 1960-1963, Bureau of Inter-American Affairs, Office of the Coordinator of Cuban Affairs, RG 59, NACP. However, as Abba Schwartz assumed more control over determining who could travel to Cuba, political leanings, as long as one was a journalist, would not impede travel. For example, the later president of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, Vincent Ted (VT) Lee received authorization to travel to Cuba on assignment with the radio station WBAI of New York in late 1962. See Hearings, *Violations of Travel Ban*, 356.

classified, the DOJ and State Department had to consider whether releasing the information would compromise larger cases and reveal the identities of informants. Assistant Secretary of State Frederick G. Dutton addressed the concerns of members of the SSIS that this would allow all CPUSA leaders and members to travel. Dutton defended the action by arguing that basing denials only on evidence that is in the “open record” was in the tradition of “Anglo-American jurisprudence” and strengthened the Internal Security Act, since should the Act be challenged, they would have a stronger case.⁴⁰⁰

Both Robert Johnson and Frances Knight of the Passport Office believed that Abba Schwartz and his allies were compromising the Office’s security obligations: to prevent the travel of those considered subversive to the U.S. Immediately after the 1961 order to register, the BSCA only revoked five passports of the CPUSA’s leadership, including Elizabeth Gurley Flynn and Herbert Aptheker. The revocation of five others’ passports was contingent on any possible legal challenges to these first cases.⁴⁰¹ Knight asserted these new guidelines ensured that “the more treacherous and vicious and destructive the individual may be, the less likely it is that he will be denied a passport.”⁴⁰² Even revoking the passport without physically confiscating the document could not prevent individuals from traveling. While there would be a record of their departure, immigration officials did not inspect passports of American citizens departing the

⁴⁰⁰ Frederic G. Dutton to Thomas J. Dodd, Letter, January 29, 1962, in U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, *State Department Security The New Passport Regulations: Hearings before the Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and other Internal Security Laws of the Committee on the Judiciary*, 87th Cong., 1962, 272-273.

⁴⁰¹ Robert Johnson in U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary *State Department Security - 1963-65 Bureau of Security and Consular Affairs: Hearings before the Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and other Internal Security Laws*, 89th Cong., 2nd sess., 1963, 637.

⁴⁰² Frances G. Knight in U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, *State Department Security: The New Passport Regulations*, 237.

country, and once "abroad... [the traveler] is as free as a bird."⁴⁰³ Although the traveler would have to exhibit their passport to other countries' immigration officers, these officials would not automatically know that the passport was invalid since there was no law requiring the individual to hand over their revoked passport to the government. Passports, revoked or otherwise, were a "weapon in the Communist arsenal" utilized to attack U.S. sovereignty.⁴⁰⁴ Traveling communists and leftists, in this vision, symbolized the waning power of U.S. sovereignty and the expansive power of an ideology and "foreign" that needed to be attacked.

While the Passport Office was concerned over the lack of effective control over a globally mobile U.S. populace, others in the State Department and the CIA expressed greater concern over the number of Latin Americans visiting the island. Cuba's revolutionary internationalism was genuine. The island throughout the 1960s and 1970s offered both military and medical assistance to anticolonial and communist groups in Latin America and Africa. In the early 1960s, Cuba very rarely sent its own troops or officials, but they did offer military training.⁴⁰⁵ To the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, Cuba's very existence as a revolutionary state was a threat as long as it inspired revolutionaries and others throughout the globe to struggle against Euro-American imperialism and colonialism. Agencies kept detailed records on the traffic between Latin America and Cuba, obtaining information from their own sources at the Mexico City airport and the Mexican government. Just for the month of October

⁴⁰³ Johnson in U.S. Congress, Senate, *State Department Security – 1963-1965 Bureau of Security and Consular Affairs*, 643.

⁴⁰⁴ J.G. Sourwine in U.S. Congress, Senate, *State Department Security – 1963-1965 Bureau of Security and Consular Affairs*, 643.

⁴⁰⁵ Piero Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa, 1959-1976* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 20-27.

1963, they believed that anywhere from 1,866 to 2,430 individuals traveled to Cuba.⁴⁰⁶

Brazilians composed the largest number of this estimate, followed by Mexicans and Chileans.

While travel through Mexico City and Brazil to Cuba was in decline, the security state believed existing procedures and regulations throughout Latin America and the Caribbean were insufficient. Bolivia's procedures of placing those who traveled to Cuba on "watch lists" and refusing passports to "Bolivians who declare their intention to travel to Cuba" could easily be evaded through travel via other countries, especially those, like Mexico, which constitutionally protected the freedom of movement through their countries.⁴⁰⁷ For the CIA and the State Department, preventing commercial travel to the island was crucial to the embargo and U.S. efforts to foment internal unrest through economic warfare. The State Department was largely successful in this effort. The only flights to Cuba, beyond Eastern Europe, originated from Mexico City and Madrid, which occurred at a maximum thrice a week in the former and once in the latter. Circumventing this blockade required Cubana Airlines to commission charter flights through Brazil and Mexico. Benjamin Read reported to McGeorge Bundy that both Brazil and Mexico were taking steps to eliminate this routes "after strong approaches by State and CIA through their respective channels...."⁴⁰⁸

⁴⁰⁶ "Known Travel of Latin Americans to and From Cuba During 1963 (Monthly Totals)." Folder "CSM – Communism, Subversion – Travel (Subversive)," Box 33, Subject Files, 1960-1963, Bureau of Inter-American Affairs, Office of the Coordinator of Cuban Affairs, RG 59, NACP.

⁴⁰⁷ No Author, "Travel of Bolivian Students to Cuba Via Arica, Chile on Cuban Aircraft," November 6, 1963. Folder "CSM – Communism, Subversion – Travel (Subversive)," Box 33, Subject Files, 1960-1963, Bureau of Inter-American Affairs, Office of the Coordinator of Cuban Affairs, RG 59, NACP.

⁴⁰⁸ Benjamin H. Read to McGeorge Bundy, "Travel of Latin American Students to Cuba for Subversive Training," October 25, 1963, 2. Folder "CSM – Communism, Subversion – Travel (Subversive)," Box 33, Subject Files, 1960-1963, Bureau of Inter-American Affairs, Office of the Coordinator of Cuban Affairs, RG 59, NACP.

Preventing the circulation of capital, ideas, and people to Cuba became crucial U.S. efforts at overthrowing the Revolution and reasserting U.S. imperial power in the region. For the CIA, State Department, and other agencies, the travel of Latin Americans to Cuba could only demonstrate the islands' and these individuals' desire to subvert and threaten the U.S. They traced and attempted to curtail the movement particularly of young students who they believed were schooled propaganda methods and guerilla warfare, and circulated cash, arms, and ideas throughout the Hemisphere. The concern over the travel of young Latin Americans to Cuba reflected the CIA and State Department's belief that any radical challenge to U.S. hegemony could not be *sui generis* to local conditions, but rather instigated from outside the nation at question. It also revealed a serious contradiction in U.S. policy that assumed the universality of U.S. liberal democracy and capitalism, and its inherent value as the model for development. The Student Committee for Travel to Cuba traveled in this context and represented Cuba's "internal" threat to U.S. security.

The Student Committee for Travel to Cuba (SCTC)

The development and politics of what would evolve into the Permanent Student Committee for Travel to Cuba (SCTC) can only be understood by placing its history in the context of Fair Play's shortcomings, debates within the State Department and intelligence agencies, and the emergence of a new, dissident communist organization, the Progressive Labor Movement. The SCTC differed from Fair Play not only in its open left-wing politics, but also its tactics. Whereas Fair Play operated on the battlefield of public opinion "as simply a band of truth-telling intellectuals," the SCTC emphasized direct action and confronting state power.⁴⁰⁹ Though SCTC shared some of Fair Play's discourse, such as describing participants as students

⁴⁰⁹ Gosse, *Where the Boys Are*, 175.

attempting to witness and evaluate the Revolution on its own terms, the organization's leadership and participants situated their travels as part of the construction of a global, anti-imperialist movement.⁴¹⁰ Finally, while hundreds, potentially thousands, flouted the travel ban by visiting Cuba via Mexico, none did so as publicly as SCTC. The SCTC's visits, networks, and tactics must be understood as a rejection of the CPUSA's secrecy and legalism, and critique of reform-minded civil rights and civil liberties organizations.

While the October 1962 missile showdown tamped much public support of the Cuban Revolution in the U.S., the nascent Progressive Labor Movement (PLM) publicly mobilized in its defense. The PLM, which counted many of the SCTC's leaders and participants as members, formed in early 1962 after a formal break with the CPUSA. While the CPUSA held that PLM's leaders were expelled for undermining of democratic-centralism and opportunism, PLM accused CPUSA of reformism and "revisionism." As their name suggested, PLM branded itself as the standard bearer of working-class radicalism and socialism. The movement's first actions included organizing and supporting striking miners in Kentucky, anti-racist mobilization in the South (particularly in Monroe, North Carolina), the nascent anti-war movement, and the SCTC.⁴¹¹ The plan to organize a student trip to the island developed amidst the October crisis after a PLM protest at the UN in support of Cuba.

⁴¹⁰ As I demonstrate below, this argument regarding the essential requirement for travel to forming global anti-imperialist networks gained strength during the 1964 trip amidst increasing anti-Vietnam War protests.

⁴¹¹ Historian Leigh David Benin notes that Progressive Labor sent cadre to Monroe, North Carolina after Robert F. Williams sought exile in 1961. "As open communists," he writes, "they would advocate armed self-defense, teach black history and fight for jobs and welfare." They hoped that this project would assist in "drawing PLM's contacts in the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) into PLM - - hopefully placing it in the forefront of a radicalized civil rights movement." As we'll see, many of the participants in the SCTC were organizers in Monroe and elsewhere. Leigh David Benin, "A Red Thread in Garment," 330-352.

The idea of students visiting the island in direct confrontation with U.S. policy grew out of an earlier attempt by PLM members Fred Jerome and Jake Rosen to establish an English language, pro-Cuba newspaper in Havana. Jerome was the son of V.J. Jerome, a Polish immigrant and editor of the CPUSA's theoretical journal *Political Affairs* who was convicted under the Smith Act and incarcerated for three years.⁴¹² He grew up in the same milieu in Manhattan's Lower East Side as Rosen (discussed in Chapter 3). A Cubana member of the New York City College Marxist reading group, who had returned to Cuba shortly after the July 26th Movement's victory, invited Jerome to the island in 1961. After receiving a contract to write a few articles for the *National Guardian*, Jerome flew to Cuba with the idea of establishing an English-language newspaper in Havana. Through the summer of 1961, while teaching and writing on the island, Jerome developed close contacts with the upper echelons of the Cuban government and its Foreign Ministry. Although he eventually returned to the U.S. on what he later learned was the last flight prior to the Bay of Pigs operation, Jerome's early contacts with the Cuban leadership and its NYC diplomatic offices provided the institutional and personal networks necessary for arranging subsequent trips.⁴¹³

The SCTC's organizers were largely drawn from Columbia University and other NYC colleges, and were a mix of Red Diaper babies, Jewish American students, and others whose family directly experienced state repression during World War II and the Second Red Scare. Levi Laub, one of the main leaders who organized the October meeting, emerged from the same Jewish-left milieu as Rosen and Jerome. Born to Jewish immigrant parents, Laub's early life was

⁴¹² Fred Jerome, interview with the author, April 29, 2016.

⁴¹³ Fred Jerome, interview with author, 2016.

spent abroad in Cyprus and Paris.⁴¹⁴ He formally joined the Progressive Labor Movement while attending Columbia after participating in a picket supporting striking hospital workers.⁴¹⁵ Similar to many young people who would become identified with the New Left, Laub's interest in the Cuban Revolution developed after the landing of the Granma in Oriente Province. Other trip organizers and participants shared his visceral memories of Revolution's victory and their political development was sparked in particular by early experiences with state repression. Victoria "Viki" Ortiz, a Barnard student who assisted in organizing the trip as a non-PLM member, was the daughter of Marxist feminist Bobbye S. Ortiz and a Mexican left-wing journalist and educator. Viki and her mother temporarily left New York to seek refuge in England after close friends were interrogated by HUAC in the early 1950s. After a few years, they were forced to return to the U.S. when the British Home Office declined to extend their visa. Ortiz vividly remembered hearing the news of the Revolution's success as her and her friends excitedly danced in celebration of the victory and the new year.⁴¹⁶ Ellen Shallit, another key organizer and PLM member, shared a similar background. Her parents were members of the Los Angeles CPUSA until 1948, and were forced to relocate to Oakland after the FBI reported their political beliefs to neighbors. Her parent's beliefs, experiences in Oakland, and observation of police brutality against protestors sparked her early identification as a leftist.⁴¹⁷ Wendie

⁴¹⁴ Levi's father worked with the Joint Distribution Committee which oversaw one of the camps on Cyprus housing 50,000-60,000 European Jews who were detained by the British government after attempting to flee Europe for Palestine. His "political consciousness awakened" while at the camp and a kibbutz in Israel formed by the Marxist-Zionist Young Guard, although he would later repudiate Zionism. Levi Laub, interview with author, 2016.

⁴¹⁵ Levi Laub, interview with author, 2016.

⁴¹⁶ Viki Ortiz, interview with author, 2016.

⁴¹⁷ For more on the hearings in SF, see Seth Rosenfeld, *Subversives: The FBI's War on Student Radicals, and Reagan's Rise to Power* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2012), 77-99.

Suzuko Nakashima Rosen, Jacob Rosen's partner, was born in Los Angeles but spent her earliest years along with her family in a concentration camp during World War II due to their Japanese heritage. Prior to traveling to Cuba, she was a PLM organizer in Monroe, North Carolina.⁴¹⁸

This small group, and a few others, were responsible for organizing two trips in 1963 and 1964.

A first attempt over the winter holiday in 1962 failed due to U.S. government interference. Controlling the movement of its citizens could be accomplished through negotiations with third-countries and applying diplomatic pressure when necessary. That November, members of the newly formed Ad Hoc Student Committee for Travel arranged a press conference at the New York Sheraton and announced they were traveling to Cuba via Canada in direct violation of the travel ban.⁴¹⁹ Since Canada recognized the Cuban government, some flights routinely left for the island. This first group, with estimates widely ranging from a few dozen to ninety, learned while awaiting in Buffalo to cross the Canadian border that Canada refused landing rights to the incoming Cuban airliner scheduled to take the students to the island. While organizers claimed the move smacked of U.S. interference, the only evidence for such intervention comes from a declassified CIA intelligence memorandum written on August 13, 1963. Detailing the group's institutional biography, the Agency noted that while "A Cuban aircraft was sent to Canada to pick up the students...the Canadian government, forewarned by US officials, refused permission for the flight."⁴²⁰ The Canadian government's move to deny

⁴¹⁸ Wendie Suzoko Nakashima Rosen in U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Un-American Activities, *Violations of State Department Travel Regulations and Pro-Castro Propaganda Activities in the United States, Part 3: Hearings before the Committee on Un-American Activities*, 88th Cong., 1st sess., 1963, 761.

⁴¹⁹ John V. Conti, "Students Plan Cuba Trip Despite Passport Denial," *Columbia Daily Spectator*, December 12, 1962.

⁴²⁰ CIA, Office of Current Intelligence, "US Students in Cuba," August 13, 1963. CREST, <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP79T00429A001200020005-0.pdf>. Accessed February 25, 2017.

landing rights to the chartered flight only increased the group's resolve to directly challenge the travel ban.

To prevent such direct interference, Laub and other organizers developed contingency plans that required the cooperation of Cuban officials and student groups. Laub traveled independently to Cuba via Mexico City in February 1963 and stayed for a month to make arrangements. Unique within the Organization of American States (OAS), the Mexican government recognized the Cuban government and did not completely bar travel due to the popularity of the Revolution amongst the Mexican left and the political necessity of the PRI to remain, in public, committed to Mexican independence from any form of U.S. influence or pressure. As such, Mexico City gained a reputation as a gateway to the island. Through March, Laub met with representatives of Cuba's Federation of University Students, which agreed to sponsor the group's visit, and government officials. Laub credits Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, the Minister of Agriculture, with developing the circuitous route to Havana through Prague. Flying through the Caribbean, particularly Jamaica, was a possibility, but "the consensus at the end of the day was that you couldn't trust the Jamaican authorities to keep those flights open" should the U.S. apply pressure.⁴²¹ Mexico proved too inconsistent in enforcing their passport laws and at times would not allow flights. In its effort to collect intelligence on Latin American leftists and social movements, the CIA installed security cameras which monitored all Cuba-related traffic.⁴²² Laub's return to New York through Mexico City was compromised when immigration officials there stamped his passport indicating he had landed from Cuba, thus providing evidence that could potentially lead to the seizure and cancellation of his passport. To avoid detection,

⁴²¹ Laub, interview with author, 2016.

⁴²² Renata Keller, *Mexico's Cold War: Cuba, the United States, and the Legacy of the Mexican Revolution* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 71.

Laub flew first to Paris and then to Montreal, from where he hitched a ride to the border which he traversed by foot.⁴²³

The timing of the trip was not accidental, but occurred amidst the tightening of the U.S. embargo against the island and attempts by the U.S. to prevent travel to Latin America. Beginning in February 1963, the Kennedy administration made a more public push through the OAS to cease travel between member states and Cuba. The measures proposed included “a ban on travel to and from Cuba, suppression of Communist propaganda material such as films and publications, and measures at halting the flow of money to Communist groups in the Americas.” Facilitating the cooperation between the hemisphere’s intelligence agencies was key, for Kennedy and Johnson, to isolating Cuba and bolstering U.S. imperial power in the region. Stopping travel was central to their efforts as the OAS 1963 “report mentioned nine schools in Cuba where ‘hundreds’ of Latin Americans had been trained ‘not only in...Marxist-Leninist theory, but also the use of arms and explosives, sabotage, guerrilla warfare and so on.’”⁴²⁴ Central American states, including Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Costa Rica and Panama, agreed to share intelligence with one another, and enact policies to stop travel to Cuba.⁴²⁵ While the U.S. attempted to expand this network and proposed similar policies to the OAS in June 1963, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, and Venezuela raised serious objections about the possible rights violations of a hemispheric travel ban. However, the OAS voted 14-1 to strongly advise member states to adopt “a ban in the hemisphere on travel to Cuba and [work towards]

⁴²³ Laub, interview, 2016. He also believed that the stamp would lead to his passport be cancelled upon his return to the U.S. and that he would receive a subpoena to testify at HUAC, which would prevent him from leaving with the group. At the time, HUAC was investigating travel to Cuba by U.S. citizens as part of an effort to reshape its image after the anti-HUAC protests in San Francisco.

⁴²⁴ “Americas Urged to Map Red Drive,” *New York Times*, February 23, 1963.

⁴²⁵ “Central Americans to Fight Subversion,” *New York Times*, April 4, 1963.

closer cooperation among the states on security.”⁴²⁶ For the SCTC, violating the travel ban would not only increase political support for the Cuban Revolution in the U.S., but strike at one of the key instruments of the U.S. imperial project.

Organizers traveled across the country in Spring 1963 to gather as many students as possible from across the country. Practicality and strategy motivated the group to enlist primarily students. First, as college students themselves, organizers could utilize existing student networks. Second, they believed that college students had both the time and were open-minded enough to discuss socialism in a way that was untenable when entering discussions with older adults and those disaffected by the Left. They also saw in the growing civil rights movement, free speech movement, and anti-HUAC demonstrations a growing disaffection from Kennedy-esque liberalism amongst young adults.

Interested students, after the failed December 1962 attempt, were asked to submit an application and interviewed by either organizers or proxies. The applications asked for standard biographical information, the applicant’s employment if they were not a student, their motivations for joining, what and whom they would like to see and meet, and a “short statement outlining [their] understanding of the possible legal consequences of the trip.” Students were asked to provide \$10 as a deposit and to submit “three passport size photographs for the visa.”⁴²⁷ Not everyone was admitted on the trip. The organization turned down a few people, including a Maryknoll priest in his forties, Felix McGowan. McGowan’s application was denied, according

⁴²⁶ “O.A.S. Study Finds Reds’ Subversion from Cuba Grows,” *New York Times*, June 6, 1963; “O.A.S., 14-1, Urges Cuba Travel Ban to Control Reds,” *New York Times*, July 4, 1963.

⁴²⁷ Permanent Student Committee for Travel to Cuba Application for Summer 1963 Trip in U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Un-American Activities, *Violations of State Department Travel Regulations and Pro-Castro Propaganda Activities in the United States, Part 3*, September 12, 1963, 667.

to Laub, since the trip was largely to be composed of young people and students, and the fact that Laub didn't quite trust him due to his own experience growing up near conservative priests at Fordham University.⁴²⁸ Despite these efforts to carefully screen applicants, the organization was infiltrated and highly surveilled by the state.

While organizers attempted to preempt infiltration through applications and interviews, the organization's mission often facilitated the admittance of informants. The attempt to mobilize a large spectrum of students and openly organize, both of which were central to SCTC's institutional identity, led to the presence of two informants from Boston and San Francisco. Though they were not agent provocateurs and had very little impact in neutralizing the organization, their reports to the FBI, CIA, State Department, and the Department of Justice provided the groundwork for their eventual prosecution and placement on no-fly lists. Available FBI, CIA, and State Department records reveal that policing of the organization began in Boston in December 1962 when local resident Barry Hoffman contacted the Boston FBI office.⁴²⁹ Hoffman was associated with the professional anticommunist Gordon Hall, who enlisted people to attend meetings and gather publications of both the left and far right groups. Hall would later circulate this information to other professional anticommunist organizations, the security state, and politicians. Although Hoffman surveilled some far right organizations, his work primarily centered on attending meetings and collecting intelligence on student "socialist, communist

⁴²⁸ McGowan would prove to be one of their most ardent defenders in the aftermath of their trip.

⁴²⁹ I currently have an outstanding FOIA application for the Headquarters File on the SCTC awaiting FBI processing. As of now, this history relies on Hoffman's reports located in Gordon Hall's FBI file, for whom Hoffman worked for, oral histories, and declassified CIA documents related to its program targeting the New Left and investigations on the Kennedy Assassination. It is possible and likely that the NY office, which along with Boston appears to be the leading office in charge of surveilling the SCTC, scrutinized the actions of New York students earlier.

groups.” He distinguished his work on left and right-wing groups, noting that the former represented, were connected to, or acted as “foreign agents” and were “foreign” to the U.S. political community.⁴³⁰ Together, Hall and Hoffman approached the FBI with to propose the latter infiltrate the organization if it did not interfere with any existing investigations. To avoid any possible prosecution, Hoffman wished “to go on record with the FBI that his inquiries were based only on a desire to aid HALL in the latter’s combatting pro-Castro and other leftist elements and was not because of any interest of his own in the Castro government which he said he unalterably opposed.” The two also planned to “contact CIA locally to determine” if Hoffman’s “trip would be of possible value to them.” Should neither the CIA nor the Passport Office “express any interest in such [an] undertaking” they would not participate.⁴³¹ To the contrary, however, the intelligence agencies were very interested. Hoffman characterized the SCTC as a “foreign” threat, assisted by Cuba and the Soviet Union, despite no evidence of the latter’s involvement. Though advertised as a student trip, Hoffman doubted that the majority were students since many students decided not to travel once the government issued warnings that they may face possible prosecution. To Hoffman, rather than a student group, “a real sort-of American group,” the SCTC was a “foreign” organization composed of ardent leftists.⁴³²

Unbeknownst to him at the time, Barry Hoffman was accompanied by a more experienced FBI informant, Richard Riemann of San Francisco. After a stint in the military, Riemann relocated from New York to San Francisco. Just prior to enrolling in San Francisco State College to pursue a teaching certificate, he “became...a pretty-heavy duty, rock-ribbed

⁴³⁰ Hoffman, interview with author, September 30, 2016.

⁴³¹ SAC, Boston to Director, FBI, Airtel, “Ad hoc Students Committee for Travel to Cuba,” December 19, 1962. FBI File 94-BS-629, 94-629-21.

⁴³² Hoffman interview, 2016.

conservative, a Barry Goldwater type until,” in his opinion, the latter “sold out [and] compromised just like all the rest.”⁴³³ His reading of Ayn Rand and support of Goldwater inspired Riemann to, unsolicited, “contact the FBI...to promote freedom, or what [he] thought was freedom those days.” For a few years, Riemann attended “just every significant radical left, communist, Socialist Workers’ Party meeting that [he] could.” Riemann became aware of the trip when he attended a presentation by Levi Laub on campus. After consulting his FBI handler, Riemann applied and was interviewed by Terrence “K.O.” Hallinan, who he remembers as being “in charge of passing on those people who were here in the West who wished to go on the trip.”⁴³⁴ Andy Anderson, Riemann’s handler, told him that while the FBI could not explicitly tell him to participate, they encouraged it and asked him to take photographs of urban defenses and weapons on the island.⁴³⁵

Circumventing Containment

That the CIA, FBI, and State Department were aware of the trip due to informants, pre-existing intelligence sources, and newspaper reports begs the question as to why the state was unable to prevent the organization’s departure. While some serious attempts were made to prevent the departure of the group in 1964, I argue that the strategic use of the traveling public and the networked nature of international air travel hindered the ability of the state to effectively police and detain the students.

⁴³³ Richard Riemann, interview with author, May 3, 2016.

⁴³⁴ It is unclear whether the Hallinan family, which had deep roots in progressive and left-wing politics in San Francisco, served this function. Records indicate that at least in 1964, many participants in the 1963 trip or members of the Progressive Labor Movement conducted interviews.

⁴³⁵ Riemann interview, 2016.

In part, the state's failure to interdict the students was a consequence of the group's publicity strategy. Laub, Ortiz, and others purchased fifty-nine tickets with cash provided by Cuba's Canadian embassy.⁴³⁶ SCTC organizers announced to newspapers and potential participants that they would most likely depart for Cuba from Montreal or Toronto at the beginning of July. Participants were unaware of the actual details of the trip until they arrived at the airport when they received their tickets and were only instructed to arrive at Ellen Shallit's New York apartment on a certain date. When they arrived, students and other travelers were split into groups of eight and assigned a leader. Organizers, according to informant Barry Hoffman, "told younger members of the group...to dress older, not to give the impression of being part of a student group." All outside communication ceased once they arrived at the apartment since they believed the FBI was surveilling their communications and casing the block. Leaders instructed the group to depart the apartment individually, and groups were told to meet at various times and places to travel to the airport.⁴³⁷ While most participants and the security state expected the group to depart for Canada, they took separate flights to London and Amsterdam, and then to Paris. From Paris, they would depart to Prague, and then to Cuba. Their subterfuge worked, as Laub and others remembered that "the FBI was waiting where the Montreal flights were leaving from."⁴³⁸

To make arrangements in Europe, Arnold Idenbaum and Viki Ortiz departed a few days before the group for Paris and Prague, respectively. The students, flying in two groups from

⁴³⁶ Laub interview, 2016; Ortiz interview, 2016. According to Laub, the embassy provided him with \$40,000.

⁴³⁷ Barry Hoffman in U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Un-American Activities, *Violations of State Department Travel Regulations and Pro-Castro Propaganda Activities in the United States, Part 3*, September 12, 1963, 672-673; Ellen Shallit, interview.

⁴³⁸ Laub interview, 2016.

London and Amsterdam, stayed in Paris for a night and then flew to Prague. While Embassy officials in London and Paris greeted the travelers at the airport with warnings about the possible legal ramifications should they continue to Cuba, the students did not face direct interference with their mobility once in Europe, except for immigration in Amsterdam. Immigration officials, at the request of the U.S. embassy, took some of the individuals' passports and made copies, ostensibly to provide evidence of the travelers' identities, their previous travel, and whether their passport was formally approved for travel to Cuba.⁴³⁹ Czech officials were angry over the publicity of the trip, as they initially believed that they would travel to Prague secretly. Hoffman, one of the FBI's informants, reported upon his return to the U.S. that the Czech government wanted to avoid any conflict with the U.S., and housed the students in the resort town of Carlsbad located nearly four hours away from the capital.

Despite reaching Prague, the group feared that the U.S. government would block their trip. The students anticipated that they would be stopped in another country, particularly Gander, Newfoundland, "in spite of the fact that it would be against international law." The possibility of leaving through Moscow was thought to be unwise since it would automatically place the group under suspicion by the American public. Accordingly, "the group seemed to agree and it was decided if we were given any trouble at Gander we would go back to Prague and go via Moscow" which "would be non-stop."⁴⁴⁰ However, they did not face any interference in Gander and were able to continue to Cuba.

⁴³⁹ Ellen Shallit Israel remembered confronting a "CIA official" at either the Amsterdam or Prague airport for confiscating these passports. Ellen Shallit Israel, interview with Author, November 2, 2016.

⁴⁴⁰ Redacted, FBI Report, ca. summer 1963, 8. FBI File 94-BS-629, 94-BS-629-22.

The CIA's Office of Current Intelligence routinely provided the Kennedy Administration updated information regarding the fifty-nine students in Cuba. Citing intercepted radio reports and Cuban newspapers, the CIA briefed the president that the group was "receiving red-carpet treatment ever since its arrival from Prague." They noted that the group met with high level Cuban government officials, including Fidel and Raul Castro, and "such stalwart Communists as Blas Roca, director of the newspaper *Hoy*, Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, head of the government's agrarian reform office, and Lazaro Pena, secretary general of its labor organization." The CIA framed the trip in terms of the propaganda value for the Cuban government, noting that "For as long as the visit lasts, the Castro regime can be expected to continue publicizing statements attributed to the Americans that are favorable to Cuba and critical of the US."⁴⁴¹

The 1963 trip prompted a significant debate that winter within the Justice and State Departments over the feasibility of policing the travel ban and the potential political costs of amending travel control policy. Some in the Johnson Administration, including Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, promoted rescinding most of the extant travel restrictions. In a lengthy advisory memo, Kennedy informed Secretary of State Dean Rusk that the Justice Department was aware of an imminent trip to Cuba over the Christmas holiday that would potentially precipitate numerous others over the summer of 1964. He advocated removing most of the controls, citing the state's inability to prevent all travel despite its efforts through public announcements and soliciting airliner and Customs' assistance in ensuring that the government became aware of any attempts. Rigorously enforcing the current restrictions could force the Justice Department into unprecedented legal territory. One extreme possibility included

⁴⁴¹ Office of Current Intelligence, Weekly Summary, July 12, 1963, 1. CREST, <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP79-00927A004100050001-3.pdf>. Accessed February 25, 2017.

preemptively revoking the passports of suspected Cuba-bound travelers regardless of their location in the U.S. or abroad. This action rested on questionable legal authority and would be difficult to enforce since a passport was unnecessary to travel to many countries in the Western Hemisphere. Prosecuting every single violation would overwhelm the Justice Department. Finally, legislation explicitly criminalizing travel to China, Cuba, and North Vietnam would be an embarrassment to the U.S., both in terms of its global reputation but also its inability to wield authority over its citizens.⁴⁴² Under the assumption that most travelers were attracted less to the politics of the Revolution than the allure of rebellion, Kennedy advocated for rescinding the restrictions which would nullify this motivation to travel. Faced with plans to test the travel ban over the next year, the inability to prosecute violations and halt the growth of organizations would suggest that a growing segment of the population disapproved of U.S. foreign policy. The travel ban provided useful fodder for anti-U.S. propaganda since it revealed the country's hypocrisy over its critiques of the Berlin Wall and travel controls in communist states. While removing the restrictions would prompt criticisms from regional allies, the U.S. could defend its position on the grounds that controlling travel to Cuba of Latin Americans was "realistically related to revolution, sabotage, etc., a problem which [the U.S.] did not face."⁴⁴³

Despite this advice, domestic anticommunism and the upcoming 1964 presidential election swayed Johnson to retain the ban. Congressional critics of liberalization not only argued that the failure to prevent the SCTC trip amounted to a weakening of the Administration's anticommunist resolve, but challenged the very notion of U.S. sovereignty. BSCA Administrator

⁴⁴² Robert F. Kennedy to Dean Rusk, "Re: Travel to Cuba," December 12, 1963, 1-2. No. 32a., Folder "Cuba, Travel to Cuba by Americans, Volume 2, 12/63 – 7/65 [1 of 2]," Country File, Latin America – Cuba, National Security File (NSF), Box 32, Lyndon Baines Johnson Library (LBJ), Austin, TX.

⁴⁴³ Robert F. Kennedy to Dean Rusk, "Re: Travel to Cuba," 3.

Abba Schwartz argued that the state's inability to ascertain the students' routes out of the United States proved fatal in its efforts to detain them. By the time they learned were traveling through Europe instead of Canada, the group had already departed. Once in Europe, Schwartz did not order ambassadors to attempt to have foreign authorities prevent their departure since they required "direct confirmation" of their travel, the exact names of the travelers, and in his reading of the law, interdicting the passports in Europe would require hearings at the U.S. embassy and necessitate the travel of witnesses to European embassies.⁴⁴⁴ Pennsylvania Senator Hugh Scott believed their travel, and the government's lack of action, was a direct assault on the idea of sovereignty. As a sovereign state, he noted, the U.S. had a right "to control the travel of American citizens by the use of the right to withdraw passports" and by stopping those citizens abroad for the purpose of confiscating those documents. The Senator believed the State Department was not taking the matter seriously, noting that he "would think that you would be a little worried about having the passports in the hands of people who have already defied the sovereignty of the United States." Schwartz defended the policy of not immediately confiscating the documents by noting that none of the travelers "could...leave a major port of entry in the United States where there is an immigration inspector or get on airlines which have a watch list or a lookout list of persons who do not have valid passports." The no-fly list was not enough for Senator Scott, who believed that the documents would "be of some use to Communists, to spies, to agents or even to the original holders."⁴⁴⁵ Scott invoked the fears surrounding American participation in the International Brigades to defend the Spanish Republic, during which

⁴⁴⁴ U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, *State Department Security – 1963-1965 Bureau of Security and Consular Affairs, Part 5: Hearings before the Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and other Internal Security Laws of the Committee on the Judiciary*, 89th Cong., 2nd sess., 1963-1965, 1350-1355.

⁴⁴⁵ Scott and Schwartz in *State Department Security...Part 5*, 1355.

reportedly leaders confiscated U.S. passports and shipped them to Moscow to aid spy efforts. Controlling the document was necessary, in this vision of sovereignty, in order to confirm and police the borders of the U.S. The Johnson Administration agreed with conservatives in Congress and maintained the existing travel restrictions.

Surveillance of the organization intensified, particularly in the weeks after the JFK assassination. As early as November 22, 1963, the CIA again included the SCTC on the President's Weekly Intelligence briefing. Citing *Prensa Latina* reports, the Office of Current Intelligence advised that the SCTC was remobilizing and hoping to recruit "as many as 500 students this time," and that "over 100 are said to have applied so far."⁴⁴⁶ Through 1964, the FBI and CIA, armed with information gleaned from their own investigations and that provided by Hoffman and Riemann, made a greater effort to prevent further trips. Often, information on the SCTC was gleaned through investigations of other organizations, including the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and their youth affiliate, the Young Socialist Alliance (YSA). In February 1964, a highly important FBI informant, NY 3748 – S, provided minutes of a West Coast SCTC meeting he stole from the offices of the SWP and YSA in New York. The document detailed the creation of a new executive board and discussions on how to avoid many of the pitfalls of earlier organizing. The need to maintain contact with Cuba gave more power to those on the East Coast, but the West Coast organization complained about the lack of communication. The document also revealed SCTC procedures for handling applications and confidential information in order to prevent the FBI from intercepting documents. They agreed that parent organizations would not

⁴⁴⁶ CIA, "The President's Intelligence Checklist - - 22 November 1963," November 22, 1963, 3. CREST, https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/DOC_0005996678.pdf. Accessed February 25, 207.

maintain application files within “organizational files” so as to avoid theft by the government.⁴⁴⁷ Through March, the CIA continued to keep the Johnson Administration abreast of the organizing efforts in the U.S. They noted, in the Presidential Intelligence Checklist, that the organization was “again active, claiming to have lined up some 40 students in the San Francisco area for another tour of Cuba.”⁴⁴⁸

The FBI also grew alarmed at the SCTC’s growing reach and that the SCTC would expand its efforts to break travel bans to other countries. Surveillance of the SCTC was expansive, tracing the activities and movements of organizers from the West Coast to Puerto Rico. Informants provided crucial information, including the organization of the San Francisco leadership, noting that it consisted of Christian Raisner, Clinton Jencks, Jr., and Fred Hayden, the former two being previous trip participants. Informants in Puerto Rico alerted the New York office of the effort by the SCTC to heavily recruit from the island. Albert Maher, a PLM member and a participant on the 1963 trip, traveled to Puerto Rico and attended “the March 12, 1964 meeting of the Movimiento pro Independencia de Puerto Rico (Puerto Rican Independence Movement) (MPIPR),” and “was attempting to organize a group of MPIPR and Federacion de Universitarios Pro-Independencia (Federation of University Students for Independence) (FUPI) members to travel to Cuba during the summer of 1964.”⁴⁴⁹ An informant from San Francisco

⁴⁴⁷ SAC, New York to SAC, Detroit, “Young Socialist Alliance, IS-SWP,” March 17, 1964. <http://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=121045&search=cuba#relPageId=2&tab=page>. Accessed February 25, 2017.

⁴⁴⁸ CIA, “The President’s Intelligence Checklist,” March 24, 1964. CREST https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/DOC_0005996909.pdf. Accessed February 25, 2017.

⁴⁴⁹ FBI Report, “Student Committee for Travel to Cuba,” May 18, 1964, 22. No. 75, Folder “Cuba, Travel to Cuba by Americans, Volume 1 12/63-9/64,” Country File, Latin America – Cuba, NSF, Box 32, LBJ.

advised that the SCTC planned to organize contingents for travel to challenge area restrictions that blocked U.S. citizens from Albania, China, North Korea, and North Vietnam.⁴⁵⁰ Available FBI records revealed not only the SCTC's reach, but the growing anxiety within the security state of the threat posed by Cuba and the SCTC.

The heightened surveillance coincided with the Johnson administration's efforts to expel Cuba from the OAS and foment instability on the island. The upcoming presidential election in 1964 motivated Johnson to further internationalize the embargo and reject any overtures by the Cuban government to organize talks. Through the summer of 1964, the Cuban government used backchannels to express their desire to organize formal discussions in order to decrease the tension between the two countries. Cuba's offer was sweeping. In exchange for a halt to U.S. assistance to counterrevolutionary exiles, Cuba agreed to cease its support to Latin American revolutionary groups; "release political prisoners; and eventually indemnify U.S. corporations for expropriated properties – if an accommodation could be reached."⁴⁵¹ The U.S. refused these overtures and continued its efforts to internationalize the embargo, which culminated in the July 1964 OAS vote to expel Cuba from the organization.⁴⁵²

Though FBI surveillance of the SCTC included soliciting information from commercial airliners, organizers effectively confused investigators by using false reservations. In April and May 1964, managers from the British Overseas Airline Corporation (BOAC) informed FBI agent John W. Robinson that a SCTC organizer, "made tentative reservations for 30 individuals to fly on BOAC Flight 425 on July 1, 1964, from New York City to Port of Spain, Trinidad." The manager believed they would then depart the following day for British Guiana and then

⁴⁵⁰ FBI Report, "Student Committee for Travel to Cuba," May 18, 1964, 23-24.

⁴⁵¹ LeoGrande and Kornbluh, *Back Channel to Cuba*, 97.

⁴⁵² LeoGrande and Kornbluh, *Back Channel to Cuba*, 99.

presumably to Cuba. These reservations, it appears, were intended to draw investigators' attention elsewhere. The names under which the reservation were held did not match any of those eighty-four who would depart that summer. One, Barbara Tomlinson, was a SCTC organizer on the West Coast who did not depart for Cuba. Robert Kafke, another individual listed, was a member of the 1963 contingent and had his passport, like the rest, cancelled.⁴⁵³

The SCTC's strategies to evade the security state, extant air travel regulations, and the international cooperation necessary to enforce travel restrictions were insurmountable obstacles to efforts to prevent the group's departure. Justice official Francis X. Worthington requested the FBI attempt to create a "no-fly list" by instructing "all air lines [sic] servicing Europe from New York City" to deny service to "the names of the 46 individuals who held reservations on British Overseas Airways Corporation flights on June 27, 1964 and July 1, 1964" through the Caribbean. The New York FBI office informed Director Hoover that such a request was impossible to fulfill. Anyone wishing to travel to Cuba from New York through Europe or Latin America had fifty-two flights to choose from, excluding all charter and non-scheduled flights. They also could not assume that the group intended to depart from New York City, and the request would require policing all East Coast international airports. It was doubtful that FBI and immigration officials could process and inspect the "6,000 and 9,000 individuals [who] leave the New York City area on an average day..." Preventing their departure also required the cooperation of airliners and their employees, but the structure of airline travel and business practices prevented the state from halting travelers' mobility. Airliners were often unaware of passengers' identities until they checked in if they purchased tickets through "a commercial

⁴⁵³ FBI Report, "Student Committee for Travel to Cuba," May 18, 1964, 37.

travel agency....” There were too many ports of exit to effectively police the travelers without hindering all airline traffic.⁴⁵⁴

The State Department hoped to preempt the SCTC by eliminating potential routes. Just prior to the second group’s departure, Secretary Rusk telegraphed the U.S. embassy in Mexico City and instructed them to request that the Mexican government to prevent the departure of any U.S. students traveling through Mexico City destined for Cuba. In May 1963, the Mexican government complied with an earlier request. The U.S. embassy believed they could secure Mexico’s cooperation due to past practice. However, they would need to provide a list of names to Mexican officials since they did not believe Mexico would prohibit all travel to the island due to the Cuban Revolution’s popularity in Mexico and the desire of the PRI government to appear independent of the U.S.⁴⁵⁵

The State Department’s uncertainty regarding the identities of the travelers compounded the issues caused by the structure of commercial air travel and bilateral negotiations. Twenty-five SCTC members departed the U.S. for Europe on June 11th, and they were quickly joined by fifty-nine others. Without their identities, the State Department could not with certainty determine which routes were taken and request airliners to deny them service.⁴⁵⁶ Foreign service officers were successful in lobbying airliners departing London to deny service to these students on the basis that they no longer possessed valid passports, but could not block their passage to France

⁴⁵⁴ Director, FBI to J. Walter Yeagley, Assistant Attorney General, “Student Committee for Travel to Cuba,” June 30, 1964, 1-2. No. 16, Folder “Cuba, Travel to Cuba by Americans, Volume 1 12/63-9/64,” Country File, Latin America – Cuba, NSF, Box 32, LB

⁴⁵⁵ Amembassy Mexico to SecState, Telegram, June 10, 1964. No. 72, Folder “Cuba, Travel to Cuba by Americans, Volume 1 12/63-9/64,” Country File, Latin America – Cuba, NSF, Box 32, LBJ.

⁴⁵⁶ SecState to Amembassy Paris and Amembassy Prague, Telegram, June 11, 1964. No. 71, Folder “Cuba, Travel to Cuba by Americans, Volume 1 12/63-9/64,” Country File, Latin America – Cuba, NSF, Box 32, LBJ.

via train. France refused U.S. entreaties to deny students entry and exit rights.⁴⁵⁷ If they could not prevent travelers from departing the U.S., they could attempt to intercept them in Europe. This too, was contingent on the cooperation of commercial airliners. Should they travel on Western European air carriers, the State Department believed they could rely on the airlines to deny transportation to those named by the Department. However, if they traveled via a Czech airliner from London or Paris to Prague, the airline most likely would not comply with the Department's request.⁴⁵⁸

The SCTC successfully reached Cuba in the summer of 1964 due to the constraints posed by the networked nature of air travel and the strategies deployed by the young activists. Their efforts coincided with a growing concern about the possibility of "foreign" influence in developing social movements in the U.S. Officials and some in the public understood SCTC as embodying a "foreign" threat emanating from Cuba.

Cuba as an "Internal" Threat

The Johnson Administration's decision to prosecute the SCTC leaders, despite liberals' reservations, must be understood within the context of the growing social unrest facing the United States over poverty, police violence, and the Vietnam War. Johnson himself increasingly believed that there were growing connections between the radical left and urban uprisings. Cuba, in their estimation, was a threat to the internal security of the U.S. Officials saw in the SCTC a vehicle through which Cuba infiltrated the United States.

⁴⁵⁷ Abba P. Schwartz to The Secretary, "Student Travel to Cuba in Violation of Travel Restrictions," July 1, 1964. No. 20a, Folder "Cuba, Travel to Cuba by Americans, Volume 1 12/63-9/64," Country File, Latin America – Cuba, NSF, Box 32, LBJ.

⁴⁵⁸ Abba Schwartz, "Student Travel to Cuba," June 11, 1964. No. 28a, Folder "Cuba, Travel to Cuba by Americans, Volume 1 12/63-9/64," Country File, Latin America – Cuba, NSF, Box 32, LBJ.

Barry Hoffman's FBI testimony was one of the primary methods through which the SCTC was transformed into a "foreign" threat and Cuba an "internal" one. Throughout the 1963 trip, Hoffman took detailed notes of the organization and the individuals they met. His early testimony constructed Cuba as a conduit through which North Americans came into contact with the socialist and Third World. Students, he reported, met not only with Cuban dignitaries including Fidel Castro, but also Robert F. Williams, and representatives of Algeria, China, East Germany, North Korea, and Yugoslavia at their respective embassies. The Chinese officials reportedly discussed the possibility of organizing a trip to China and provided them with publications.⁴⁵⁹ On the eve of the July 26th celebration in Havana, the students attended a lecture and screening of a film by the South Vietnamese Liberation Front. During the film, students cheered when Vietnamese forces successfully "shot down" a U.S. jet and a poster or photograph of Mao appeared on the screen.⁴⁶⁰ Students were also informed that the Cuban government would facilitate the shipment of "any books or other propaganda" to the U.S. in order to avoid their confiscation when the students returned.⁴⁶¹ Recordings of their meetings with foreign dignitaries and the press were to be shipped to the Cuban Embassy in Canada where a SCTC representative would pick it up with the intent to use them in future lectures and meetings.⁴⁶² The potential spread of these films and photographs threatened to demonstrate not only the futility of the U.S. embargo to world audiences but also diminish support for U.S. foreign policy in Cuba and Vietnam. Hoffman's testimony suggested that the trips could facilitate the spread of

⁴⁵⁹ Barry Hoffman interview with [Redacted] and Darrel B. Currie, n.d. ca. August 1963, 11. FBI File Gordon Hall, 100-BS-35192.

⁴⁶⁰ Barry Hoffman interview with [Redacted] and Darrel B. Currie, 12.

⁴⁶¹ Barry Hoffman interview with [Redacted] and Darrel B. Currie, 13.

⁴⁶² SAC, Boston to Director, FBI, "Permanent Student Committee for Travel to Cuba," Transcript of Interview, August 30, 1963, 5. FBI File Gordon Hall, 100-BS-35192.

revolution throughout the hemisphere. One member identified by Hoffman as a black nationalist suggested that the group participate in the upcoming March on Washington, during which “the Venezuelan F.A.L.N. planned to blow up a few things in Venezuela” in solidarity.⁴⁶³

The FBI also understood the development of black revolutionary organizations in the U.S. as partially an outgrowth of Cuba’s influence and the SCTC trips. Eleven members of the 1964 SCTC contingent organized themselves under the banner of the Black Liberation Front (BLF). While in Cuba, they met with Robert F. Williams and Max Stanford of the Revolutionary Action Movement (RAM) who was visiting the island independent of the organization. Upon their return to Detroit, SCTC members General Baker, Charles “Mao” Johnson, Charles Simmons, and Luke Tripp organized a RAM chapter. RAM’s commitment to Marxism and armed struggle was an outgrowth of the organization’s intellectual influences and their own experiences with police brutality, poverty, and racism in the U.S. The organization’s thesis that African Americans constituted a colonized nation and had “a right for self-determination” aligned the organization with struggles throughout the Third World.⁴⁶⁴ General Baker came under particular scrutiny upon his return to the U.S. and the FBI’s investigation of him was initially classified as “IS-Cuba,” or Internal Security – Cuba. J. Edgar Hoover instructed the Detroit FBI office to closely monitor the activities of the three Detroit RAM members given their “defiance of State Department restrictions re travel to Cuba and their membership in Uhuru,” a student group whose Swahili name meant “freedom.”⁴⁶⁵ An informant closely followed the actions of the Detroit RAM chapter. At the organization’s first conference in Nashville, Baker

⁴⁶³ Barry Hoffman interview with [Redacted] and Darrel B. Currie, n.d. ca. August 1963, 15. FBI File Gordon Hall, 100-BS-35192.

⁴⁶⁴ Kelley, *Freedom Dreams*, 81.

⁴⁶⁵ Director, FBI to SAC, Detroit, October 14, 1964. FBI File, General Gordon Baker, Jr., 157-DE-3751.

and another RAM member allegedly reported on their experiences in Cuba and showed photographs of “the civilian militia in Cuba, girls in battle fatigue-type uniforms carrying rifles and submachine guns, as well as...members of the revolutionary forces now engaged in Venezuela.” Despite discussions of militant struggle, there was no agreement on a “timetable for the introduction of revolutionary activities or guerilla type warfare in the United States” and there was no evidence of any significant planning for such action.⁴⁶⁶ Baker, Tripp, and others would remain under close FBI surveillance through the early 1970s as leaders of the Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement (DRUM).

The representation of the SCTC as a conduit through which revolutionary violence potentially could spread throughout the U.S. developed in the context of growing urban unrest in the summer of 1964. The Harlem Rebellion that summer was immediately precipitated by the police killing of a young black teenager, James Powell, but the rebellion grew out of long standing issues of poor housing, inequality, and police violence. Initial protests were peaceful, but the rebellion grew as antagonisms between the police and Harlem residents boiled after Powell’s funeral the evening of July 18th. The unrest would last until July 21st and spread to Brooklyn.⁴⁶⁷ NYPD Commissioner Michael Murphy informed Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy that he was convinced that the Progressive Labor Party (PLP) was most responsible for the violence after the eighteenth and prolonging the rebellion. Lyndon Johnson came to believe that communists were responsible and instructed Hoover to investigate.⁴⁶⁸ A significantly

⁴⁶⁶ SAC, Chicago to Director, FBI “Revolutionary Action Movement IS – Miscellaneous CC: Philadelphia,” November 4, 1964, 18. FBI File, General Gordon Baker, Jr., 157-DE-3751. The personal classification of General Baker’s case oscillated between “IS – C,” “IS – Cuba,” and “IS - RM

⁴⁶⁷ Michael W. Flamm, *In the Heat of the Summer: The New York Riots of 1964 and the War on Crime* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), 79.

⁴⁶⁸ Flamm, *In the Heat of the Summer*, 147.

redacted memo suggested that some FBI officials believed SCTC members were involved in the uprising. Hoover instructed agents in New York and Washington D.C. to investigate an individual, whose name was redacted in the declassified file, tied to the SCTC. An informant attending a SCTC meeting in Washington, D.C., where participants were subpoenaed by HUAC, explained that the individual in question was praised for “a good job of organizing in connection with the recent riots in the New York City area.” Hoover reminded his agents that “all available information relative to possible subversive influences in the New York City riots cannot be overemphasized.”⁴⁶⁹

Members of the far right echoed the connections of the SCTC and Cuba to insurgencies in the U.S. and Vietnam. Virginia Prewett of the *N.Y. Journal-American* warned that the Cuban government was transforming the island into “a training ground where battle-toughened Vietnamese teach guerrilla skills” to Cubans and visitors alike. She warned that these connections were not simply isolated to Latin America, but percolated into the inner core of U.S. cities. “Cuba,” she wrote, “is also providing a link between the Vietnamese guerrillas and the U.S. Communist group identified as partly responsible for the recent New York race riots.” The Progressive Labor Movement, who was the chief sponsor of the SCTC, she warned, had forged these links through travel, as the 75 students on the island at the time of the writing had met with Vietnamese officials on the island. Citing radio broadcasts, Prewett noted that they had spoken with these officials and were watching films of the Vietnamese resisting the U.S. Prewett constructed a conspiratorial geography that connected the island of Cuba with the inner-cities of

⁴⁶⁹ Director, FBI to SACs, New York and Washington Field Office, CIRM, September 11, 1964. FOIA, Communist Influence Racial Matters-NY-3, *The Internet Archive*, https://archive.org/details/foia_Communist_Influence_Racial_Matters-NYC-3/page/n205?q=%22subversive+influences+in+the+New+York+City%22. Accessed March 3, 2019.

the U.S., the Latin American continent, and the National Liberation Front of Vietnam. Citing this extensive internationalist imaginary and networks of exchange, Prewett and others constructed the U.S. simultaneously confronting internal and external insurgencies, that its borders no longer provided the stark divide between zones of war and peace. That Prewett and others, particularly congressional officials in the South, focused on race is of no surprise.⁴⁷⁰ To them, these imaginary and real networks that exceeded the nation-state threatened white supremacy and the capitalist order. Senators, particularly Strom Thurmond, utilized the moment of travel to promote a far-right nationalist politics, including editorials that urged the State Department to not only revoke passports of those traveling to Cuba, but to bar them from reentering the country.⁴⁷¹ Representative Albert Watson of South Carolina utilized the civil rights victories of the Supreme Court as a justification for this harsh sentence: “If citizens, even public officials, of a sovereign state can be threatened with jail for alleged defiance of a Supreme Court decision, then certainly we shall not allow anyone to reenter our country who has advocated ‘the destruction of our Government.’” The country risked another assassination of elected officials, he warned, since the travel coincided with the weakening of anti-communist measures through the Supreme Court decisions in the early 1960s.⁴⁷²

Whereas members of the far right and the security state argued that the SCTC represented a sign of Cuba’s internal threat to the U.S., members of the organization celebrated the journeys as constitutive of a global anti-imperialist movement. Just prior to their September 1964

⁴⁷⁰ Virginia Prewett, “Viet Guerrillas in Cuba Training Latin Invaders,” July 30, 1964, *N.Y. Journal-American* clipping. CREST, <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP73-00475R000102540014-1.pdf>. Accessed March 10, 2017.

⁴⁷¹ Senator Thurmond, speaking on Visit of U.S. Citizens to Communist Cuba, on July 19, 1964, 88th Cong., 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* 110, Part 11: 14517.

⁴⁷² Representative Willis, speaking on Unauthorized Trips to Castro’s Cuba, on April 11, 1963, 88th Cong., 1st sess., *Congressional Record* 109, Part 5: 6358.

interrogation in front of HUAC, the SCTC organized meetings, particularly amongst African Americans, in Washington, D.C. In addition to emphasizing that their HUAC interrogators represented the “bitterest enemies of the Negro people” who “oppose home rule for the nation’s capital” out of “fear [of] the Black Majority,” they emphasized that the group’s harassment was, in their assessment, “BECAUSE CUBA HAS SMASHED RACISM!” Highlighting the mobilization of the Freedom Now Party, a short-lived black political party founded by Conrad Lynn, William Worthy, and others, the SCTC argued that efforts at stifling their dissent was a result of HUAC’s wish ““to keep the Black people of America in fear and misery by never letting them learn how FREEDOM NOW was achieved in Socialist Cuba!”⁴⁷³

The SCTC also connected the trips to Cuba with the nascent anti-war struggle. In a flier (Figure 2), three photos were arranged to narrate the development of a radical student movement. At the top was a photograph of a group of young people welcoming home those returning from Cuba at the New York airport. Beneath were photos of antiwar demonstrations with a poster identifying one group as the May 2nd Movement. The May 2nd Movement (M2M) was affiliated with the Progressive Labor Party and counted amongst its organizers participants of SCTC. On August 15, 1964, one day after the return of the last SCTC contingent and in the wake of the Gulf of Tonkin resolution, M2M organized a protest in Manhattan. The protest was violently suppressed by police who had imposed a ban on street demonstrations in the midtown region.⁴⁷⁴ The flier depicted the SCTC and antiwar protests as part of a larger militant student movement

⁴⁷³ Flier for SCTC Open Meeting, September 3, Odd Fellows Hall. Emphasis in the original. Folder “Org./Student Com. for Travel to Cuba (Including Ad Hoc Student Com. for Travel to Cuba and Permanent Student Com. “”),” RG 233, Box 713, Organization Files, Records of the House Un-American Activities Committee, 1945-1969, Records of the U.S. House of Representatives, RG 233, NAB.

⁴⁷⁴ “40 Leftists Held in 47th St. March,” *New York Times*, August 16, 1964, .

“demanding an end to the aggressive policies of the U.S. government, in Vietnam, Cuba, Congo and elsewhere.”⁴⁷⁵ The police violence at the demonstrations and at the 1963 HUAC hearings were depicted as connected efforts of state repression. In one flier (Figure 3) titled “Students Attacked!” a young woman is in the chokehold a police officer and her hands are restrained by another. Young people were violently suppressed in New York and D.C. because of their defense of civil liberties and opposition to U.S. foreign policy. The effort to suppress the SCTC and M2M were part of a larger state project attempting to narrow the political horizons and claims of a burgeoning radical student movement.⁴⁷⁶

⁴⁷⁵ “Friends Welcome Cuba Travelers at New York Airport, Students Demonstrate Against U.S. Intervention in Vietnam,” n.d. Folder “Org./Student Com. for Travel to Cuba (Including Ad Hoc Student Com. for Travel to Cuba and Permanent Student Com. “”),” RG 233, Box 713, Organization Files, Records of the House Un-American Activities Committee, 1945-1969, Records of the U.S. House of Representatives, RG 233, NAB.

⁴⁷⁶ “Students Attacked!,” flier, September 3, 1964. Folder “Org./Student Com. for Travel to Cuba (Including Ad Hoc Student Com. for Travel to Cuba and Permanent Student Com. “”),” RG 233, Box 713, Organization Files, Records of the House Un-American Activities Committee, 1945-1969, Records of the U.S. House of Representatives, RG 233, NAB.



FRIENDS WELCOME CUBA TRAVELERS AT NEW YORK'S AIRPORT



STUDENTS DEMONSTRATE AGAINST U.S. INTERVENTION IN VIETNAM

Radical students are organizing, demonstrating and marching in many areas. The students who went to Cuba this summer, did so in spite of the federal indictments against four of last years visitors. And there will be more trips, ban or no ban. The demonstrations in Times Square and other parts of the country will spread to many campuses this fall. Students will soon be heard from again, this time with a louder voice, demanding an end to the aggressive policies of the U.S. government, in Vietnam, Cuba, Congo and elsewhere.

Our fighting spirit counts. And we have just begun.

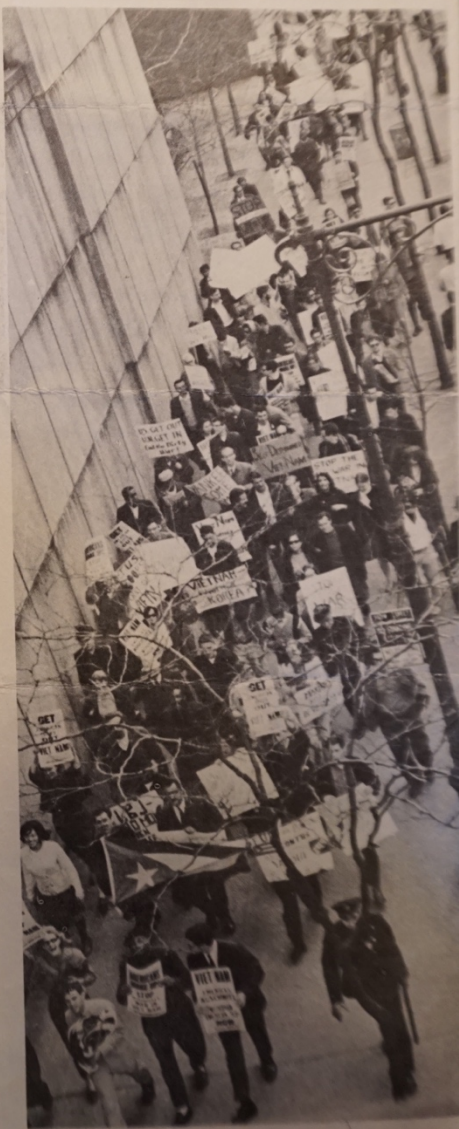


Figure 2

cdx **STUDENTS ATTACKED!** *Travel to Cuba* *Sept. 3, [1964]*



Four students, leaders of a group of eighty-four who visited Cuba this summer, have been subpoenaed by the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC). Why? Because, by going to Cuba:

- * They defended the right to travel.
- * They defended the right to oppose government policy.
- * They defended the Cuban Revolution and the right to support socialism in our hemisphere.

On two successive Saturdays, New York City Police broke up peaceful student demonstrations, arresting sixty-two persons, beating scores, and injuring many. Why? Because these students were:

- * Protesting United States intervention in South Vietnam.
- * Demanding free speech in Times Square.

HUAC HEARINGS WASH. D.C. SEPTEMBER 3

X Gov't / State Dept. - Passport - Travel to Cuba

Figure 3

Responding to some critiques on the left that the trips were disconnected from contemporary workers' struggles, Philip Abbot Luce emphasized that travel "to revolutionary socialist countries was indeed a form of revolutionary activity" and essential to PLP's larger project. Travel to Cuba and other banned countries was "useful in the development of revolutionary ideology in the United States" since it allowed individuals to witness revolutionary processes and develop a less abstract understanding of revolution. The journeys also confronted the U.S. government's greatest fear, according to Luce, since it "is terrified that American young people, especially young black people, will see in Cuba and China the way to the future." Such fear was the true "reason for the ban and it is also the reason that we have conducted yearly trips to Cuba and hopefully soon to China." Cuba served not only as a classroom for these young people, but was a gateway to connect with global anticolonial and socialist struggles. They interacted with "communists from Venezuela, Brazil, Indonesia, Algeria, China" and others, which provided distinct examples of revolution and struggle. The trips also bore fruit for the organization and the movement since these discussions, their direct confrontation with state power, and witnessing Cuba "brought most of these middle-class young people into the beginning of revolutionary activities here in the United States upon our return to this country."⁴⁷⁷

U.S. v. Laub and the Declining Power of Travel Restrictions

Despite the conviction among some Johnson administration officials that there were too many restrictions on Americans' travel abroad, the concern over optics in Latin America and domestic anticommunism prompted them to ultimately prosecute the SCTC organizers. In late

⁴⁷⁷ Phillip Abbot Luce, "No Travel Ban on Truth," *Progressive Labor*, December 1964, clipping. Folder "Org./Student Com. for Travel to Cuba (Including Ad Hoc Student Com. for Travel to Cuba and Permanent Student Com. "")," RG 233, Box 713, Organization Files, Records of the House Un-American Activities Committee, 1945-1969, Records of the U.S. House of Representatives, RG 233, NAB.

1963, some, including Abba Schwartz and Abram Chayes, advocated for significant reforms of travel restrictions on the basis of their potential violations of civil liberties and the difficulty to prosecute offenders. Reforming travel control policies would also politically outmaneuver the SCTC and other organizations. This did not necessarily mean that all who applied for exemption would be approved, but significantly widened the possible classes capable of traveling to these barred countries. Only those “persons believed to be participating in subversive activities directed against the United States or other countries” would be denied.⁴⁷⁸ However, determining who fit into this category was the responsibility of individual government bureaucrats. In early 1964, Dean Rusk supported removing all restrictions with the exception of Cuba since the travel, in his estimation, to “Communist-controlled areas of China, Korea, and Viet-Nam” could benefit the U.S. since those Americans able to receive a visa from those respective countries could provide useful information. Removal of the restrictions on other countries would also potentially “minimize the public reaction against” the prosecution of the SCTC leadership.⁴⁷⁹ Ultimately, Rusk would reverse his position in an effort to convince France to not normalize relations with China.⁴⁸⁰ Liberalizing travel potentially undermined the foundation of U.S. efforts to “rollback” communism and military operations throughout Asia and Latin America.

⁴⁷⁸ Abba P. Schwartz and Abram Chayes to the Acting Secretary, “Travel Regulations,” December 13, 1963. No. 32c, Folder “Cuba, Travel to Cuba by Americans, Volume 2 12/63 – 7/65 [1 of 2],” Country File, Latin America – Cuba, NSF, Box 32, LBJ.

⁴⁷⁹ Dean Rusk, “Memorandum for the President: Removal of Restrictions on Travel Abroad by United States Citizens,” January 8, 1964. No. 26d, Folder “Cuba, Travel to Cuba by Americans, Volume 2 12/63 – 7/65 [1 of 2],” Country File, Latin America – Cuba, NSF, Box 32, LBJ.

⁴⁸⁰ Gordon Chase to Mr. Bundy, “Travel Restrictions,” December 23, 1964. No. 26e, Folder “Cuba, Travel to Cuba by Americans, Volume 2 12/63 – 7/65 [1 of 2],” Country File, Latin America – Cuba, NSF, Box 32, LBJ.

This small window into the possible liberalization of travel was shut when the Supreme Court agreed to hear challenges to the State Department's ability to prevent travel to Cuba. In 1964, the Supreme Court ruled that Section 6 of the Internal Security Act, which criminalized the use of a passport by a member of a communist organization, was unconstitutional.⁴⁸¹ Louis Zemel, whose 1962 application to travel to Cuba was denied, challenged the State Department's authority to deny passports for travel to proscribed countries. The impending court case prompted Rusk to request that officials in all countries in the Caribbean and Latin America brief the State Department on extant controls against travel to Cuba in the region. As of spring 1965, Jamaica did not prohibit travel to Cuba, but did confiscate the passports of those considered "security subjects" who did reach the island without authorization. This policy was not publicly announced due to fear that it would provide fodder for the government's political opposition.⁴⁸² Most governments inquired did not have any system in place to prevent the travel of their citizens to Cuba through a third country. The exception appeared to be Venezuela, which had "an informal informational control system with Mexico" in which Mexico relayed the identities of Venezuelans departing for Cuba, and an ineffective agreement with Spain.⁴⁸³ While the Supreme Court confirmed the Secretary of State's authority to issue area restrictions and refuse passports valid for such areas, the news that the U.S.'s efforts to internationalize its embargo could be faltering was not what the administration wanted to hear.

⁴⁸¹ *Aptheker v. Secretary of State*, 378 U.S. 500 (1964).

⁴⁸² Kingston to SecState, Telegram, "Controls on travel to Cuba," March 2, 1965. No. 24, Folder "Cuba, Travel to Cuba by Americans, Volume 2 12/63 – 7/65 [1 of 2]," Country File, Latin America – Cuba, NSF, Box 32, LBJ.

⁴⁸³ Amembassy Caracas to SecState, Telegram, March 3, 1965. No. 17, Folder "Cuba, Travel to Cuba by Americans, Volume 2 12/63 – 7/65 [1 of 2]," Country File, Latin America – Cuba, NSF, Box 32, LBJ.

Although the Administration won in 1965, its efforts to criminalize travel to restricted areas was undermined in the 1967 case *United States v. Laub, et. al.* Nine SCTC members were indicted with conspiracy to violate the 1952 Immigration and Naturalization Act. The Supreme Court confirmed a lower court's ruling that the defendants could not be prosecuted for violating the Act since they possessed valid passports at the time of their departure from the U.S. The U.S. District Court of the Eastern District of New York noted that the State Department could have prosecuted the individuals for providing false statements on passport applications, using passports on the basis of false information, and the failure of Laub and others to register as a foreign agent under the Logan Act. Rather than these charges, the State Department pursued criminal charges for violating Section 215 of the 1952 McCarran-Walter Act. At question was not the power of the State Department to issue travel restrictions and refuse to issue passports valid for those areas, but whether Congress intended travel to restricted regions otherwise with a valid passport could be criminalized under the cited section. One of the key weaknesses of the Department's argument was that they inconsistently pursued charges against those who traveled to restricted areas. Of the estimated 600 American citizens who they were aware of violating restrictions, only a select few had been prosecuted.⁴⁸⁴ Procedures utilized to regulate departure also undermined the administration's case. The passports of American citizens were not inspected by government authorities but rather airline employees prior to their departure from the U.S. Enforcing Section 215 did not mean inspecting the passport for the final destination, only that the passport was valid: "There is nothing in the Attorney General's said regulations which equates departure from the United States with entry into an area proscribed by the Secretary."⁴⁸⁵

⁴⁸⁴ *United States v. Lee Levi Laub, et. al.*, 253 F. Supp. 433, 443 (E.D.N.Y. 1966).

⁴⁸⁵ *United States v. Lee Levi Laub, et. al.*, 253 F. Supp. 433, 453. (E.D.N.Y. 1966).

The Court ruled that there was no legislative or historical basis for the argument that Section 1185 was more than a “border control [statute] regulating departure from and entry into the United States.”⁴⁸⁶ While the legislative histories authorized the president to make exceptions as to who would be subject to the restrictions under war, there was no sign “that Congress intended to grant the executive branch of the Government the power to subject to criminal penalties a United States citizen who departs from or enters the United States bearing an unexpired passport issued by the Secretary, even though he travels to an area proscribed by the Secretary.”⁴⁸⁷

In a unanimous decision, the Supreme Court concurred with the lower court’s ruling. Fortas’ decision was not necessarily a sweeping defense of constitutional liberties or natural rights. Instead, it was deciding whether Congress had intended to use Section 215 as a criminal statute and had delegated that authority to the Secretary of State. The Johnson Administration asked for a broad reading of the law in order to allow for the prosecution. Traveling without a passport to Cuba, Fortas noted, would violate Section 215(b). Entering Cuba without a passport amended to allow for such travel was not included in the scope of the section: “Violation of the ‘area restriction’ – ‘invalidating’ passports for travel to Cuba and requiring specific validation of passports if they are to be valid for travel to or in Cuba – is quite a different matter from violation of the requirement of § 215(b) and the regulations thereunder that a citizen bear a ‘valid passport’ for departure from or entry into the United States.”⁴⁸⁸ Department testimony in 1957 conceded that traveling to restricted regions could not necessarily be considered a criminal act. Traveling to a restricted area did mean that the citizen could not necessarily depend on the protection of the state, but it “ ‘does not necessarily mean that, if the bearer travels to country X,

⁴⁸⁶ *United States v. Lee Levi Laub, et. al.*, 253 F. Supp. 433, 457 (E.D.N.Y. 1966).

⁴⁸⁷ *United States v. Lee Levi Laub, et. al.*, 253 F. Supp. 433, 458 (E.D.N.Y. 1966).

⁴⁸⁸ *United States v. Laub*, 385 U.S. 475, 481-482 (1967).

he will be violating the criminal law.”⁴⁸⁹ The Court did not consider whether it would be constitutional to criminalize such travel, potentially opening the gateway to laws that although pursued, were never acted upon.

While travel restrictions were consequently rendered largely unenforceable through criminal prosecution, individual travelers, such as Stokely Carmichael, going to restricted areas still lost their passports immediately upon their arrival. While on a world tour in 1967 that took him through Cuba, Europe, North Vietnam, China, Algeria, and elsewhere, the State Department attempted to remove Carmichael’s passport despite the recent *Laub* decision. Officials attempted to physically confiscate his passport in Madrid while en route to Vietnam. However, the plane returned to Havana when the Cuban government received intelligence that U.S. officials were waiting at the airport to confiscate his passport.⁴⁹⁰ Officials continued in vain to confiscate his cancelled passport, which was revoked in August, while he was in Guinea.⁴⁹¹ Ultimately, Carmichael would surrender his passport when he arrived at New York’s Kennedy Airport to great fanfare. While the Johnson Administration considered charging Carmichael for violating the Logan Act on the basis of his speeches in Cuba and North Vietnam, Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach advised that they not charge Carmichael for passport violations or the Logan Act.⁴⁹² The Johnson Administration also attempted to introduce legislation that would criminalize travel to restricted areas, punishable “up to one year in prison and a \$1,000 fine....”⁴⁹³ However, no legislation would make it through Congress that would explicitly

⁴⁸⁹ *United States v. Laub*, 385 U.S. 475, 484-485 (1967).

⁴⁹⁰ Peniel E. Joseph, *Stokely: A Life* (New York: Basic Civitas Books, 2014), 205-211.

⁴⁹¹ Joseph, *Stokely*, 220.

⁴⁹² Joseph, *Stokely*, 234. See also, Nicholas Katzenbach, “Possible Criminal Prosecution of Stokely Carmichael,” December 20, 1967. No. 1, Folder “Civil Rights & Antiwar Personalities, Carmichael, Spock, Ranking, Brown, etc,” Subject File, NSF, Box 5, LBJ.

⁴⁹³ “President Seeks Travel-Curb Law,” *New York Times*, December 12, 1967.

criminalize such movement. The Administration noted that they were aware of thirty-two U.S. citizens who had traveled to restricted areas subsequent to the *Laub* decision. In contrast to past efforts which privileged the language of safety, the Johnson bill emphasized national security. Using travel to North Vietnam as an example, Katzenbach argued that travel to that particular country “provides assistance and support in derogation of the military effort to which the nation has turned its energies.”⁴⁹⁴

The revocation of passports for traveling to socialist and revolutionary countries would stop in 1968. That March, the State Department announced that it no longer would revoke the passports of those who traveled to restricted areas. The decision developed after consecutive losses in the courts. In the case of Staughton Lynd, an antiwar intellectual whose passport was revoked for traveling to North Vietnam and subsequently denied on the basis that he refused to swear that he would refrain from traveling to restricted countries, the State Department’s measures were overturned by an appeals court. While the Secretary of State could control the document, they could not control the movement of the individual. Lynd did agree to not bring his passport into a restricted country. If an applicant made such a promise, the court held, they were entitled to a passport. Those individuals who previously had their passports revoked for travel to restricted areas could regain their passports if they signed “an affidavit swearing they will not use them ‘to travel into or through a country or area for which it has been declared invalid.’”⁴⁹⁵

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⁴⁹⁴ “President Seeks Travel-Curb Law.”

⁴⁹⁵ “U.S. Will Give Up Passport Penalty,” *New York Times*, March 28, 1968.

Although travel controls in the form of passport renewal and travel restrictions were no longer acceptable forms of political policing, the conviction that “domestic” antiwar and radical groups were controlled by “foreign” powers grew in the Johnson Administration. In 1967 and 1968, Johnson commissioned the CIA to investigate potential connections between outside nations and the growing anti-war movement. Throughout its reports regarding the international activities of activists, the CIA did not conclude that the New Left was a front for foreign governments. However, the CIA along with other parts of the national security state continued through the Nixon Administration to closely surveil contact between North American activists and representatives of other nations, particularly while U.S. citizens were abroad.⁴⁹⁶ The inability of the Johnson and Nixon Administrations to pass legislation criminalizing travel to Cuba, North Vietnam, and elsewhere led to a growth in the numbers of individuals traveling to these locations. These organizations’, such as the international representatives of the Black Panther Party and the Venceremos Brigades, ability to traverse cold war barriers was partially made possible through the actions of the SCTC. As documented in the next chapter, this fear of the growing connections between “domestic” and “foreign” radical organizations shaped the development of the first airport security program.

⁴⁹⁶ For more on Project MH/CHAOS, Project MERRIMAC, and Project RESISTANCE, see John Prados, *The Family Jewels: The CIA, Secrecy, and Presidential Power* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2013); Rafalko, *MH/CHAOS*.

Chapter 5

Race, State Security, and the Insurgent Population at the Airport Border, 1968-1973

Prior to his graduation from the University of Washington in June 1972, Nguyen Thai Binh was active in the anti-Vietnam War movement. Born in a suburb of then-named Saigon, Binh received a scholarship in 1968 from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to study in the U.S. Binh's anti-imperialist politics developed while in Seattle as he read of atrocities against Vietnamese civilians and witnessing the conditions in South Vietnam during a summer visit to see his parents. In February 1972, he along with nine other Vietnamese international students were arrested in New York City for occupying the South Vietnamese consulate to demand the resignation of U.S.-supported President Nguyen Van Thieu, the "release of political prisoners and an end to American aid" that propped up Thieu's government and enabled its "terror and repression."⁴⁹⁷ Binh's activism made him the target of U.S. and South Vietnamese state surveillance and harassment. As part of a national crackdown against international student activists, Binh and others received threatening letters informing them of the cancellation of their scholarships and their imminent deportation in response to a request by the Thieu government. Denied asylum, Binh understood the stakes should he be forced to return home after his graduation: either he would be drafted, or, more likely, executed.⁴⁹⁸

⁴⁹⁷ "10 Vietnamese Here Arrested at Sit-In," *New York Times*, February 11, 1972.

⁴⁹⁸ Though Binh received the notice of his scholarship's cancellation in early June, INS and USAID authorities allowed him to stay through the end of June so he could graduate. Julie Emery, "Anti-war strike approved as 2,000 attend U.W. rally," *Seattle Times*, April 20, 1972; "Anti-war movement losing steam at U.W.," *Seattle Times*, April 26, 1972; "Vietnamese student here faces questions," *Seattle Times*, April 21, 1972; Benjamin Welles, "7 South Vietnamese Students in U.S. Fearful, Refuse to Go Home," *New York Times*, June 23, 1972.

Faced with these chilling possibilities, Binh was determined to find refuge in North Vietnam by any means necessary. Similar to other activists who fled to Cuba to avoid state repression, Binh decided to hijack and redirect his South Vietnam-bound flight to Hanoi on July 2, 1972. The previous day, he addressed a letter to President Nixon and anti-war organizations explaining his motivations:

To stand in the line of the Vietnamese people in the struggle of national salvation, to take part in the resistance against United States aggression, to confirm the justness of our cause, to dedicate to the freedom fighters of Vietnam, living and dead, to strengthen the confidence in the...(inevitable) victory of our people, I direct Pan Am 841 to Hanoi. [I] [p]romise myself I shall not hurt any innocent person.

Silenced by war and deportation, Binh transformed a weapon of empire into his desperate tool for escape: “I know my voice cannot be heard, cannot defeat, the roared sound of [the] B-52, of the United States bombings unless I take this dramatic action.”⁴⁹⁹ He never reached Hanoi, however. Pretending to refuel in Saigon, Captain Gene Vaughn confronted Binh, whom Vaughn suspected of having a bomb, which was later discovered to be a bag of lemons.⁵⁰⁰ A former Richmond, California police officer traveling to Vietnam for a contract security job who, prior to the flight, deposited his pistol with the Captain, raced to the rear of the plane. Vaughn immediately yelled for the passenger to “Kill the son of a bitch.” The security contractor shot Binh five times, and the pilot heaved Binh’s body onto the tarmac.⁵⁰¹

⁴⁹⁹ Nguyen Thai Binh quoted in “Hijacker wanted to be heard,” *Seattle Times*, July 4, 1972.

⁵⁰⁰ Brendan I. Koerner, “Nguyen Thai Binh picked the wrong plane to hijack,” *Slate*, last modified June 18, 2013, <https://slate.com/human-interest/2013/06/nguyen-thai-binh-picked-the-wrong-plane-to-hijack.html>.

⁵⁰¹ Gene Vaughn quoted in “Passenger slays skyjacker of Pan Am 747 at Saigon airport,” *The Seattle Times*, July 3, 1972; Brendan I. Koerner, *The Skies Belong to Us: Love and Terror in the Golden Age of Hijacking* (New York: Crown Publishing, 2013), 183-185. One passenger believed it was “completely unnecessary” to kill Binh since the latter “was on the floor and subdued when the pilot told the passenger to shoot him.” The Captain allegedly yelled at the

Binh's allies understood the hijacking as a direct result of continued U.S. imperial violence in Southeast Asia, and American and South Vietnamese government harassment and surveillance of anti-war activists. The Seattle chapter of Vietnam Veterans Against the War proposed a memorial as a reminder that "all Americans share in the responsibility for Binh's death and all other deaths which have occurred as a result of the war in Southeast Asia."⁵⁰² The University of Washington's Black Student Union and student allies such as Nguyen Huu An, whom the INS also ordered to leave the U.S., spoke out against the INS-led "nation-wide campaign against Vietnamese who speak out in this country against the war and the Saigon government."⁵⁰³ Some Seattle residents also framed the hijacking as a response to the horrors of the Vietnam War. *Seattle Times* reader Phyllis Simmerer insisted that "The real blame for this tragedy lies with the administration that continues our murderous policies in Indochina...and with the military personnel who carry them out, but above all with the American people who, unmoved by the terror and agony of brown people in a far-off land, drove Thai-binh [sic] to his last desperate act."⁵⁰⁴ Supporters and sympathizers emphasized that Binh's actions were the result of a larger structure of state surveillance, imperial violence, and forced displacement.

Others expressed outrage at the hijacking and articulated a support for law and order politics by linking "domestic" anti-war movements with "foreign" anti-imperial struggles. One University of Washington alumnus condemned any effort to memorialize Binh, arguing that rather than a "man of peace," Binh's writings, which the author disregarded as "mere translations of Hanoi propaganda," and actions were "an act of war, intended to help his side in

security contractor to repeatedly shoot Binh after the first shot. Anonymous passenger quoted in "Hijacker wanted to be heard."

⁵⁰² "Rally for slain hijacker," *Seattle Times*, July 13, 1972.

⁵⁰³ "U. memorial to slain hijacker is proposed," *Seattle Times*, July 12, 1972.

⁵⁰⁴ "*Times* readers have their say: A man of peace," *Seattle Times*, July 23, 1972.

the Vietnam war [sic].” Another resident accused the anti-war movement of hypocrisy, noting that “It is getting increasingly difficult for me to comprehend the movement by people in this country who are crying for world peace in one breath and in the next making heroes of those who commit acts of violence.”⁵⁰⁵ One Seattleite not only supported the killing of Binh as a warning against potential hijackers, but suggested that the incident underscored the need for tighter immigration restrictions: “Speaking of this particular man, who is the responsible party for being in this country in the first place, we have enough native-born fifth-columnists speaking the lines of Hanoi in...Congress and on the campuses of our universities without any more.”⁵⁰⁶ Vaughn himself returned to his home airport in Arizona to rapturous applause, and the Seattle Police Department awarded the pilot a medal that August.⁵⁰⁷ Vaughn was celebrated as a hero whose actions resonated with those supportive of both continuing the Vietnam War and strong law and order policies to defeat both hijacking and “domestic” radicalism. To these writers, Binh’s death represented a victory in a battle whose frontlines spanned the globe, from Vietnam to American cities.

Nguyen Thai Binh’s story, the public’s reactions to hijackings, and the perceptions of security officials in charge of designing the first airport security program reveal an alternative origins story of airport surveillance. I argue that the development of airport security was an extension of the state repression of social movements in the 1960s and 1970s. Race was central to the first airport security program. Rather than just a reaction to external events shaping geopolitics in the Middle East, Southeast Asia, Central America, and the Caribbean, designers of

⁵⁰⁵ “*Times* readers have their say: A man of peace,” *Seattle Times*, July 23, 1972.

⁵⁰⁶ “*Times* readers have their say: Hijacker no ‘man of peace,’” *Seattle Times*, July 18, 1972.

⁵⁰⁷ “*Times* readers have their say,” *Seattle Times*, July 9, 1972.

airport security between 1969 and 1973 responded to what they understood as a racialized radicalism that transcended national borders. Hijacking, they argued, was a material manifestation of growing insurgencies that threatened the U.S. from within and abroad. Psychologists, bureaucrats, and politicians feared that hijackings would reverberate in urban communities, particularly black neighborhoods, and that individuals and members in organizations such as the Black Panther Party and Weather Underground would join and/or mimic the tactics used by groups such as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). In what follows, I demonstrate that surveillance techniques and technologies, specifically the metal detector and passenger profiling, emerged in the 1960s and 1970s when different arms of the national security state came to see airports as critical sites of counterinsurgency campaigns in U.S. cities and areas of the Global South. The airport surveillance program aimed to differentiate between a normative, traveling public and a racialized, subversive, and deviant population subject to search and incarceration.

Airport surveillance extended and replicated the logic of policing embodied in the passport system and geographic restrictions. The program shared with earlier modes of travel control a commitment to challenging the global Left and impeding the mobility of those deemed threatening to national security. In addition, airport surveillance rendered the entire traveling public as a potential insurgent force. Airport security also helped to resolve one of the major weaknesses of the state's prior travel control measures: the failure to prevent departure. Whereas decisions over the denial of passports or issuance of travel restrictions were made in Washington, D.C. offices, airport security was more immediate and involved the devolution of authority. Rather than bureaucrats, airport policing was conducted by airline employees, police, and government contractors.

Early Hijackings

Prior to 1969, airport security beyond Immigration and Customs inspections was minimal. In the 1950s and 1960s, when international travel symbolized internationalism and urbane cosmopolitanism, passengers purchased speed and convenience along with their tickets and faced no security procedures prior to boarding their flights. The rarity of hijackings through the mid-1960s did not necessitate extra airport security measures. A 1954 hijacking, the only occurrence in the U.S. that decade, received such little media attention that hijacking would not be made a federal crime until the 1958 Federal Aviation Act.⁵⁰⁸ In 1961, a series of five hijacking attempts, of which two were successful, mostly directed to Cuba prompted Congressional hearings and temporary measures. The Kennedy administration deployed Border Patrol officers on Caribbean and Latin America-bound flights originating from the American South and Southwest. Legislators assumed that hijackings were either encouraged, and potentially plotted, by the revolutionary Cuban government or committed by individuals suffering from mental illness. Officials considered several measures, including arming pilots, locking the cockpit door, developing secret codes to facilitate communication between flight attendants and pilots, and metal detectors for pre-boarding inspections. The FAA, however, criticized these plans, particularly the installation of metal detectors. Since the devices failed to distinguish weapons from ordinary metallic objects, all passengers would have to hand-searched by either law enforcement or airline employees. These searches would not only increase labor costs, but would cause profit-draining delays by disrupting the quick circulation of passengers. While useful in weapons and defense factories, and federal prisons, devices for labor discipline

⁵⁰⁸ Koerner, *The Skies Belong to Us*, 36-37.

and penal institutions would be an imposition for the urbane “jet setter” who purchased airline tickets for speed, convenience, and luxury.⁵⁰⁹

Najeeb Halaby, Chief Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), believed the hijackings exemplified key threats to the country: a growing population, decolonization, and global social movements. The U.S. state, according to Halaby, had the global responsibility to “manage progress and safety and conflict and changes well.” These concerns not only framed the U.S.’s global position, but also the FAA’s mission to manage population movement and ensure aircraft safety. In Halaby’s view, aircraft were susceptible to three possible threats: intoxicated passengers, those suffering mental illness, and “the airborne subversive, the spy in the sky who may have, on his own or through the initiative of a foreign government, decided that one way to humiliate the United States is to steal an airplane.”⁵¹⁰ Halaby and others depicted hijackers as a “foreign” threat, which was understood as not only a threat emanating from an entity abroad but also from one inside the United States. Opposition to the U.S. could explain hijackings, but such a belief placed the hijacker outside the national community. Halaby conceded that some proposals, including the locking of cockpit doors, should be enacted, but stopped short of calling for armed guards on flights or pre-boarding inspections. Instead, the FAA encouraged airport and airline managers to instruct supervisors to surveil passengers, and search those deemed suspicious for weapons.

While hijacking threatened to compromise the vision of the U.S. as a steward to orderly “progress” and airline profits, the airline industry justified its resistance to government

⁵⁰⁹ U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Commerce, *Crimes Aboard Aircraft in Air Commerce: Hearings before the Aviation Subcommittee of the Committee on Commerce*, 87th Cong., 1st sess., 1961, 11, 30.

⁵¹⁰ U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Commerce, *Crimes Aboard Aircraft in Commerce*, 9, 11-12.

recommendations for tighter security measures at airports on the rarity of hijackings. Only seven hijacking attempts occurred between 1961 and 1968. Halaby himself became a lobbyist for Pan Am, and utilized his Capitol Hill connections to shape legislation impacting the industry's profits.⁵¹¹ Airline companies succeeded in avoiding the implementation of an airport surveillance program which, they argued, would significantly delay flights and necessitate the costly training of staff in surveillance techniques. The price of inspections was too high when weighed against the amount of money, \$20,000, it took to recover planes from Cuba. Policing the airport remained a low priority until 1968 when the hijacking rates climbed to unprecedented highs.

The Task Force on Deterrence of Air Piracy

Between 1968 and 1973, a global upturn in hijacking attempts challenged the belief in the act's rarity and brought renewed efforts to interrupt and prevent further incidents. In 1968, there were eighteen successful hijackings of U.S. aircraft committed by twenty-five individuals, and the number would reach its peak at forty in 1969. While there were fewer hijackings in 1970, the attempts climbed to thirty-one in 1972, the year prior to mandatory security screening. In 1973, when pre-boarding inspections were made mandatory, the number of hijackings plunged to two.⁵¹² Cuba remained the most popular destination for hijackers attempting to escape political repression in the U.S. Other hijackers had other motivations, including extortion and robbery. Designers of the first airport security program understood these incidents as extensions and outcomes of revolutions in the Global South and uprisings during the 1960s and early 1970s in U.S. cities.

⁵¹¹ Koerner, *The Skies Belong to Us*, 47.

⁵¹² Federal Aviation Administration "Chronology of Hijackings of U.S. Registered Aircraft and Legal Status of Hijackers, Updated: January 1, 1981," (Washington, D.C.: Federal Aviation Administration, Civil Aviation Security Service, 1981-1982).

Hijackers came from diverse backgrounds and often had very little ties to the political Left despite their claims to the contrary. In 1972 three men, Charles Tuller, his sons Bryce and Jonathan Tuller, and teenager William White Graham, attempted to rob a Virginia bank to fund a revolutionary cause. The botched robbery resulted in the deaths of a bank employee and security guard. As the “Tuller gang” escaped to Houston, they killed one more individual prior to hijacking a flight to Cuba. Charles, the self-described “white middle class revolutionary,” was a former Commerce Department employee who allegedly had become committed to revolutionary causes, particularly Maoism. His son and son’s friend, William, were purportedly active in student politics at their local high school. However, it is unclear whether any of the three had serious ties with the revolutionary Left in the U.S. or the claim was a guise to gain sympathy from the larger public. The Tullers would eventually become disillusioned with Cuban socialism and returned to face criminal charges three years later. William, however, remained in Cuba as of 1975, enrolled in university, and remained committed to the Cuban cause.⁵¹³

Other hijackers were involved in an array of political causes, including the Puerto Rican independence and Black Power. For example, on November 24, 1968, Miguel Castro, Luis Armando Pena Soltren, Jose Rafael Rios Cruz, and Cruz’s wife and child boarded and hijacked a flight in New York intended to land in San Juan, Puerto Rico. After the successful hijacking to Cuba, Alejandro Figueroa and David Gonzalez, who remained in New York, were arrested and charged with conspiracy to assist in the hijacking. J. Edgar Hoover alleged that Figueroa and the

⁵¹³ Teishan Latner, *Cuban Revolution in America*, 132-133; Nancy Scannell and Charles A. Krause, “3 Va. Men Charged in Hijack,” *The Washington Post*, October 30, 1972; Alfred E. Lewis and Jay Matthews, “Father, Son Give Up in ’72 Killings,” *The Washington Post*, July 8, 1975.

hijackers were involved in the Puerto Rican independence movement.⁵¹⁴ In 1969, Black Panther member William Lee Brent was indicted after a shootout with the San Francisco Police Department. Brent, who was purportedly under the influence of some narcotics at the time, was expelled from the Party after the incident. In order to avoid the trial and potential prison sentence, Brent hijacked a flight from Oakland in June 1969 and landed in Havana. To his surprise, he was imprisoned Cuban authorities for nearly two years due to the government's fear that he was a spy.⁵¹⁵ Others sought to escape false prosecution, including Lorenzo Komboa Ervin. Ervin became active in the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Black Panther Party in 1967-1968. Ervin was forced to flee his home in Chattanooga, Tennessee after the local grand jury began investigating the role of SNCC and Black Power organizations in mobilizing protests in the city after the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. The FBI attempted to arrest Ervin for allegedly “bombing Klan offices and smuggling guns to be used during a civil disturbance.”⁵¹⁶ As a result, Ervin hijacked a flight from St. Louis, Missouri and rerouted the flight to Cuba. Eventually, Ervin would be convicted and sentenced to life for hijacking, the first life sentence given to a hijacker.⁵¹⁷

Hijacking was a global phenomenon, and the most spectacular hijackings were completed in the late-1960s and early-1970s by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP).

⁵¹⁴ “2 Arrested Here in Jet Hijacking: Conspiracy Charge is Filed Against 3 Still in Cuba,” *New York Times*, December 6, 1968. Alejandro Figueroa would be acquitted by a judge in 1969. Eventually, Jose Rafael Rios Cruz and Miguel Castro would return to the U.S. in the 1970s, and Luis Armando Pena Soltren would return in 2009. Colin Moynihan, “Hearing for '68 Hijacking Suspect Recalls Bygone Age,” *New York Times*, October 14, 2009.

⁵¹⁵ Teishan Latner, *Cuban Revolution in America*, 134-135.

⁵¹⁶ Joy James, ed. *Imprisoned Intellectuals: America's Political Prisoners Write on Life, Liberation, and Rebellion* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003), 165-166.

⁵¹⁷ James, ed. *Imprisoned Intellectuals*, 166. A global movement to secure his release was successful in the early 1980s.

The PFLP's turn to hijackings as a strategy to help "spark a people's war of liberation" developed amidst the organization's disagreement with the Palestinian Liberation Organization's (PLO) focus on developing a guerilla force capable of waging a distinct, Palestinian resistance movement from the larger Arab nationalist framework.⁵¹⁸ According to historian Paul T. Chamberlain, PFLP's successful hijacking of an El Al flight in July 1968 marked a "new direction in the armed struggle" in which the terrain of battle expanded from the region to the global. PFLP leaders justified the hijackings on the premise that El Al flights were utilized by Israel during war and were thus a legitimate "military target."⁵¹⁹ One of the most famous of the PFLP hijackers was Leila Khaled, who had fled her family home to Lebanon in 1948. Khaled was inspired by Vietnamese and Algerian resistance fighters who succeeded in waging asymmetrical wars. Khaled was inspired to join PFLP after learning of Che Guevara's assassination in Bolivia, and rooted her hijacking in opposition not simply to Israeli occupation, but the U.S. empire. She would be involved in two hijackings in 1969 and 1970.⁵²⁰

Despite the global nature of hijacking, security officials initially focused on "domestic" incidents. In 1969, the FAA and Department of Transportation formed the Task Force on Deterrence of Air Piracy to develop a security system that would prevent potential hijackers from boarding aircraft while minimizing interference in the circulation of passengers. Led by FAA physician Dr. H.L. Reighard and psychologist John T. Dailey, the Task Force included behavioral scientists, commercial aviation representatives, engineers, lawyers, political scientists,

⁵¹⁸ Paul T. Chamberlain, *The Global Offensive: The United States, the Palestine Liberation Organization, and the Making of the Post-Cold War Order* (Oxford, UK; New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 70.

⁵¹⁹ Attacks on civilians were justified as reprisals to Israeli attacks on Palestinian civilians and as a strategy that did not involve the significant losses entailed in waging a war against the Israeli military. Chamberlain, *The Global Offensive*, 72.

⁵²⁰ Koerner, *The Skies Belong to Us*, 74-75.

psychologists, and sociologists.⁵²¹ Through early 1970, the Task Force assembled a security program that included signs posted in both English and Spanish warning of legal penalties, metal detectors, and a behavioral profile based on criminal and psychological investigations. Because of the limitations of contemporary metal detectors that were deemed too invasive of some passengers' privacy, the Task Force emphasized the development of a strong security profile for individual travelers.

Creating protocols to categorize the “hijacker” as an identifiable and policeable subject was rooted in the contemporary fear of leftist politics and revolutionary states. The FAA Task Force utilized hijackings to Cuba in 1968-1969 as paradigmatic in their epidemiological model of prevention. This model rendered the entire traveling population as simultaneously imperiled and potentially threatening to the nation. Task Force members placed hijackers originating in the U.S. into four categories: Cubans attempting to return to the socialist republic; “anti-establishment whites” who often held “leftist philosophies” and aspired to live in Cuba; “[m]isguided guerilla-oriented Cubans” who viewed hijacking as an act on behalf of the revolutionary government; and “Black power fanatics expressing hostility to the U.S.”⁵²² The While the group identified six hijackers as “highly disturbed,” only one was successful in hijacking a noncommercial flight. Task Force also identified “Political Demonstration” as the primary motivation for hijackings between 1967 and 1969, followed by those “[s]eeking safe

⁵²¹ The Task Force's interdisciplinarity reflected a long tradition beginning in World War II of the state's use of social science to manage social issues such as racism and crime. See Ellen Herman, *The Romance of American Psychology: Political Culture in the Age of Experts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).

⁵²² Department of Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration Office of Aviation Medicine, *Task Force on Deterrence of Air Piracy - - Final Report*, by H.L. Reighard and John T. Dailey (Washington, D.C., 1978), 41.

haven in Utopia,” fulfilling a “private mission in Cuba,” and, avoiding arrest.⁵²³ While the Task Force identified a strong correlation between hijackings and leftist politics, they did not identify any organizational connections between individual incidents.

Psychologists and social scientists surveilled airports and interviewed airline crew involved in prior hijackings to construct “the hijacker” as a singular, behavioral type. Surveys were distributed to airport those interviewing airplane personnel involved in hijackings during the year to find identifiable patterns along the basis of age, sex, “ethnic group,” citizenship, “political affiliations and group memberships,” criminal pasts, health status, and others. In addition, they sought to determine any prior relationships with Cuba, the types of flights targeted, signs of wavering commitment during the hijacking, and how they purchased tickets.⁵²⁴ The profile consisted of “25 to 30 characteristics,” parts of which were distributed to airport and airline in order to surveil the traveling public and maintain the secrecy of the profile, details of which remain classified to this day.⁵²⁵ Airport and airline personnel were functionally deputized as agents of this new system by surveilling the traveling public for any appearance or behavior they deemed suspicious or matched a part of the distributed profile. Through 1973, ticket agents were instructed to mark tickets they sold at the counter, indicating to gate personnel that the passenger required further screening.

⁵²³ Department of Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration Office of Aviation Medicine, *Task Force on Deterrence of Air Piracy*, 43.

⁵²⁴ Department of Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration Office of Aviation Medicine, *Task Force on Deterrence of Air Piracy*, 51-53.

⁵²⁵ Department of Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration Office of Aviation Medicine, *Task Force on Deterrence of Air Piracy*, 57.

Imagining the prototypical “hijacker” required security experts to agree upon who was a “normal” or legitimate passenger in need of protection.⁵²⁶ Engineers from the Naval Ordnance Laboratory working with the Task Force video recorded passengers as they boarded and passed through metal detectors. They recorded the machines’ measurements of disruptions in the magnetic field by metallic, especially ferrous, objects carried by and on “ordinary passengers.” Researchers also measured for “objects likely to be weapons,” and established a “ ‘normal range’ ” with which to set the metal detector threshold so as to prevent unnecessary searches for those passengers with coins, keys, and pacemakers.⁵²⁷ Those who met the profile’s criteria were to pass through the metal detector to determine whether the passenger possessed a weapon. Determining what constituted a weapon, however, was a different question. Engineers at the Sperry Rand Research Center, which contracted with the federal government to develop surveillance technologies, noted that answering that question depended on the individual subject. Researchers built their detectors on the assumption that most hijackers utilized guns, but noted that non-lethal tools designed for other purposes could just as easily be transformed into weapons. Knives were particularly problematic due to their varying sizes and their ubiquity. Sperry researchers concluded that distinguishing a tool from a weapon was contingent on the

⁵²⁶ In his 1974-1975 lectures at the Collège de France, Michel Foucault examined how psychiatry and other medical fields came to be utilized by the state. Policing social conduct was contradictory to medicine, but through the nineteenth century, both psychiatry and the juridical apparatus became bound together in a penal regime that attempted to diagnose and rehabilitate the criminal mind. The state’s turn towards medicine arose in the context of attempting to explain crime that was otherwise inexplicable. The psychiatric “notion of instinct” enabled the “scientific transformation of the absence of a motive for an act into a positive pathological mechanism.” This could also be utilized to anticipate potential acts based on conduct that strayed from a particular “norm.” Michel Foucault, *Abnormal: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1974-1975* trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Picador Books, 2003), 138.

⁵²⁷ Department of Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration Office of Aviation Medicine, *Task Force on Deterrence of Air Piracy*, 59-60.

individual person.⁵²⁸ Security officials constructed their expertise in the notion that they're profiling system purely reflected observable trends. Although the profile appeared to reflect an innately criminal subject, Task Force officials and commercial researchers were, in the words of photographer and cultural critic Alan Sekula, "instrumental in creating the very archive" of criminality "they claimed to interpret."⁵²⁹

Race, gender, and the imagined threat of a radical urban insurgency were at the core of the security system's design and development. In 1968 and 1969, security experts focused on the motivations of hijackers, whom they identified as primarily "Latins" and "black and white American citizens with Communist inclinations or desire to escape punishment for previous crimes. Reviving the discourse of settler colonialism, the Task Force argued they faced an "'Indian coup' problem in combatting hijackings. They argued that perpetrators' actions grew out of feelings of inadequacy and the desire to find "gratification in demonstrating masculine prowess in the manner of Indian braves proving manhood through the performance of dangerous acts."⁵³⁰ Psychologist John T. Dailey described the hijacker as an "Indian scalp hunter," who relished public validation.⁵³¹ Hijackings, Dailey and other Task Force members claimed, were atavisms of the colonial West and hijackers the last impediment to "progress." The Task Force understood scalping not as an element of a complex web of alliances, honor, and diplomacy, but,

⁵²⁸ C. Leonard Bennet, et. al., "A Cost Effective Concealed Weapons Detector," *Proceedings of the Carnahan Conference on Electronic Crime Measures* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky, 1972), 85-86.

⁵²⁹ Alan Sekula, "The Body and the Archive," *October* 39, no. 1 (1986): 17.

⁵³⁰ Department of Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration Office of Aviation Medicine, *Task Force on Deterrence of Air Piracy*, 41-42.

⁵³¹ John T. Dailey quoted in Robert Buckhorn, "Airplane hijackers, why do they do it?" *Baltimore Afro-American*, February 8, 1969.

like hijackings, as signs of depraved, and ultimately impotent, violence.⁵³² These descriptions also highlighted how hijackers were understood as “foreign” to the national community and destined to become subjugated within it. Task Force members simultaneously underscored the correlation of left-wing political commitments with hijackings while rooting the hijackers’ motivations in a discourse of masculine inferiority that effectively depoliticized and decontextualized the hijackings.

Government officials also deployed settler colonial themes by constructing hijacking as a captivity narrative. They imagined scenarios of female flight attendants threatened by armed, male hijackers. Ensuring that passengers could not enter the cockpit to interfere with the captain did not address the scenario of a hijacker holding a flight attendant hostage. Some expressed concern that should a security officer on the flight try to disarm the hijacker that the helpless female flight attendant would be killed. The armed guard could not prevent the hijacker from redirecting the flight lest the female flight attendant become collateral damage. As knights of presumably white womanhood (the majority of flight attendants were white women at the time), air marshals and the nation would be impotent to stop the flight from reaching the hijacker’s intended destination, in most cases, Cuba.⁵³³ Racialized gender was both an impediment to efficiently preventing the diversion of aircraft, and its sole motivation.

⁵³² Scholars debate whether scalping originated as a European practice that was then transferred to North America to commercialize the killing of Indians in the colonial period, or if scalping occurred on both the European and American continents prior to first contact. For the former argument, see John Grenier, *The First Way of War: American War Making on the Frontier, 1607-1884* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). For the latter, see Alan Taylor, *American Colonies: The Settling of North America* (New York: Viking Press, 2001).

⁵³³ U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, *Aviation Safety and Aircraft Piracy: Hearings before the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce and the Subcommittee on Transportation and Aeronautics*, 91st Cong., 1st and 2nd sess., 1969-1970, 110. For demographics of flight attendants in the 1960s and 1970s, see Kathleen Barry,

Fears of internationalizing a “domestic” urban insurgency also shaped the Task Force’s security program. Spurred by police violence, unemployment, segregated and poor housing, and capital flight, urban rebellions rocked cities across the country from Harlem in 1964 to Washington, D.C. in 1968. The state responded to black and Latinx city residents’ dissatisfaction with the limits of liberal solutions to racism and poverty with counterinsurgent violence that targeted entire communities and radical political organizations.⁵³⁴ Task Force members evaluated hijacking in this context. Their investigations in designing deterrents involved interviews with adolescent “ghetto Sunday school students.” These researchers were shocked to learn that that their interviewees believed “that hijackers should not be punished very much because ‘they had not hurt anybody.’”⁵³⁵ To security designers, radical movements for self-determination and urban militancy would produce future hijackers. This estimation was heavily racialized. Whereas white hijackers were identified as potentially “unstable or criminal,” black hijackers were labeled as “militant[s]” or “fanatics.”⁵³⁶ Airport security was reflective of a punitive shift in U.S. social policy. Poverty, urban rebellion, and hijackings, officials in the Johnson and Nixon administrations argued, were best combatted through incarceration, policing, surveillance.

Although Task Force’s profile remains classified to this day, officers and airport

Femininity in Flight: A History of Flight Attendants (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 118-119.

⁵³⁴ For more on the rebellions and the security state’s response, see Dan Berger, *Captive Nation: Black Prison Organizing in the Civil Rights Era* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 61-90; Jordan Camp, *Incarcerating the Crisis: Freedom Struggles and the Rise of the Neoliberal State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2016), 1-67; Elizabeth Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime: The Making of Mass Incarceration in America* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 2016).

⁵³⁵ Department of Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration Office of Aviation Medicine, *Task Force on Deterrence of Air Piracy*, 49.

⁵³⁶ Department of Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration Office of Aviation Medicine, *Task Force on Deterrence of Air Piracy*, 86.

personnel engaged in racial profiling. A *Popular Mechanics* reporter conducted his own assessment of the security program at New York's JFK airport by packing his suitcases with enough metal to trigger the metal detector's alarm. Despite the alarm, the U.S. Air Marshall allowed the author, who was white, to board without searching his bags or person. Writing in 1972 after the infamous D.B. Cooper case, in which an unknown man hijacked a flight and leapt out of a plane over the Pacific Northwest with over \$300,000 in cash, the author was not stopped, according to the Marshall, because he did not appear suspicious. Though the Task Force profile was kept secret, the author argued that it was widely "known to rely heavily on ethnic traits and was devised primarily to single out possible Cuban hijackers." "If you have a dark-skinned, swarthy appearance," he continued, "are shabbily dressed, wear long hair, act nervous, or otherwise look suspicious you may be questioned." However, should you be "the average well-scrubbed, neatly dressed tourist or businessman, the chances are that you won't."⁵³⁷ Concurring with researchers at Sperry, the journalist's account further demonstrates that racialized notions of criminality and security governed the program's operation.

The program did not just involve the prevention of hijackings, but became enmeshed in policing narcotics and immigration at U.S. airports. Between June and October 1971, over thirty million passengers were screened, of which over four hundred thousand faced secondary screening due to meeting the profile. Of this number, just over one thousand-four hundred were denied access to their flights, and over nine hundred were arrested. The vast majority of these arrests were for non-hijacking offenses: over three hundred were arrested for narcotics possession; over three hundred for immigration violations; and over two hundred for other

⁵³⁷ Mort Schultz, "Terror in the Skies...can we stop it?" *Popular Mechanics*, September 1972, 138, 192.

crimes. Just fifty-nine individuals were arrested for hijacking related offenses.⁵³⁸ While these stops were made as a result of individuals making the criteria for being a potential hijacker, the ease with which an anti-hijacking program could dovetail with the nascent War on Drugs and the longstanding project of immigration policing, suggests the multiple ways in which racial imaginaries were fundamental to the systems operation.

Imperial Circuits

U.S. imperial violence in the 1960s and government funding made possible advancements in metal detection technologies, which had been in existence since the late nineteenth century. C.N. Clark filed the first patent for a device capable of reading disturbances within the Earth's naturally occurring magnetic field in 1895. Others developed machines that could reasonably identify the type of metal or magnetized object by measuring the degree of disturbance in the magnetic field. In the 1930s, inventors designed a doorway or "portal" device to detect concealed weapons. However, the machine's inability to discriminate between everyday objects and weapons confined its use to areas where containment was the primary goal, such as prisons, rather than in areas with heavy pedestrian traffic. During WWII and the early cold war, metal detectors were installed in defense industry plants to prevent workers from taking potentially classified materials.⁵³⁹ Devices developed for carceral and labor discipline unsuitable for areas such as airports through the early 1960s.

The U.S. invasion and occupation of the Dominican Republic facilitated the

⁵³⁸ William J. Dailey in Department of Transportation, *Civil Aviation Security Seminar: Report*, December 1971 (Washington, D.C. 1972), 43. Folder 13, Box 47, Benjamin O. Davis, Jr. Collection, Acc. 1992.0023, National Air and Space Museum Archives (NASM), Smithsonian Institution, Chantilly, VA.

⁵³⁹ James Henry, "Theory and Application of Magnetic Weapons Detection," *Protection of Public Figures: Symposium Proceedings, May 16-18, 1972* (Fort Belvoir, VA: U.S. Army Mobility Equipment Research and Development Center, 1972), 13-14.

advancement of metal detectors. Juan Bosch won the presidency of the Dominican Republic on a social reformist platform after the end of the Trujillo dictatorship in 1961. The Dominican military and elite quickly turned against Bosch, and overthrew him in 1963. A corrupt military junta assumed power, and Washington, more interested in preventing another Cuban Revolution, supported the creation of a reliably anti-communist government. Officers sympathetic to Bosch and his political party, the Partido Revolucionario Dominicano (PRD), attempted to restore the elected government and took control of part of Santo Domingo for four days in August 1965. President Lyndon Johnson, determined to show his anticommunist credentials, sent the Marines and Army to oust the PRD in the name of “security” and “peacekeeping.” While the rebellion was organized by moderate political sectors of the Dominican Republic, U.S. occupation forces quickly engaged in a counterinsurgency campaign against Dominicans deemed threatening to the social order: “leftists, unionists, and armed neighborhood leaders.”⁵⁴⁰

Amidst this counterinsurgency campaign, the U.S. Army’s mobility Equipment Research and Development Center (USAMERDC) began investigating the use of metal detectors in areas of Santo Domingo with heavy pedestrian traffic. In the city, USAMERDC confronted a dense urban resistance and field-tested devices at the entrances to high-security buildings, particularly after uprisings by Bosch-supportive forces in Santo Domingo in 1966. While these devices were useful inside buildings, they could not be placed outside of the entrances due to interference from

⁵⁴⁰ Jesse Hoffnung-Garskoff, *A Tale of Two Cities: Santo Domingo and New York after 1950* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 35. For more on the events leading up to the intervention, see Hoffnung-Garskoff, *A Tale of Two Cities* and Ivan Musicant, *The Banana Wars: A History of United States Military Intervention in Latin America from the Spanish-American War to the Invasion of Panama* (New York: Macmillan, 1990).

surrounding traffic.⁵⁴¹ Further military testing and collaboration with the FAA and companies such as Westinghouse and Sperry eventually led to the development of metal detectors for airports.

Engineers built two types of machines, active and passive detectors. A passive metal detector did not produce its own magnetic field but instead sensed disturbances in the earth's own magnetic field. These detectors only detected ferrous or previously magnetized metals which disrupted the frequency measured between two coils.⁵⁴² This type of metal detector had its limitations, however. Since it depended on a previously magnetized object to pass through the detector, it limited the scope of which weapons could be detected. In contrast, active detectors produced their own magnetic field and could measure the presence of all metals regardless of their magnetization. These devices enabled operators to establish particular thresholds for different security situations. A metallic object that passed through the machine without meeting its threshold setting could not trigger the alarm, thereby preventing significant delays in screening and boarding passengers.⁵⁴³ Determining what metallic reading would mark a subject as threatening or possessing a weapon became a key question to the design of these devices.

While active detectors offered some flexibility and were capable of measuring numerous objects, they could backfire on their operators. These devices at times were too sensitive and mistook everyday metallic objects such as "foil wrappers of cigarettes, tobacco and candy" and

⁵⁴¹ Nicholas Morgan, "Portal Detector Development," *Protection of Public Figures: Symposium Proceedings, May 16-18, 1972* (Fort Belvoir: U.S. Army Mobility Equipment Research and Development Center, 1972), 18-19.

⁵⁴² U.S. Department of Transportation, Transportation Systems Center, *FY71 Engineering Report on Surveillance Techniques for Civil Aviation Security*, by A.E. Barrington, L. Frenkel, J.E. Cline, A. Landman, DOT-TSC-OST-71-20 (Cambridge, MA, 1971), 3.

⁵⁴³ U.S. Department of Transportation, Transportation Systems Center, *FY71 Engineering Report on Surveillance Techniques for Civil Aviation Security*, 8.

shoe arch supports for potential weapons. In addition, an individual's movement could disrupt a machine's measurement. During testing in 1971, the Department of Transportation's researchers discovered that a device's ability to measure magnetic field disruptions was "dependent on the velocity of travel of the metal object." Armed passengers that slowly moved through the detector could "escape detection."⁵⁴⁴ The correct functioning of the detector required the training of passengers to walk through the device at a particular pace. Active detectors also had to produce a "uniform" magnetic field since they were sensitive to the placement of metallic objects on the body.⁵⁴⁵

Names of these weapons detection devices spoke to the complex political ramifications of their use. One device, called a "Friskem" reflected the fact that the device mechanically frisked individuals. Another, named "Squealer" referred to both the sound it made and suggested a connection between security inspection and informing.⁵⁴⁶ The machine assumed a relationship of confidence and trust, yet violated that trust through its alarm. Even with the improvement of metal detectors, profiling remained a crucial aspect of the early anti-hijacking system through 1973.

Similar to surveillance technologies, the circulation of airport security officials highlighted the intimate connections forged between "domestic" and "foreign" counterinsurgencies. In charge of implementing this security program was General Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., who was most famous for leading the Tuskegee Airmen in World War II. After stints

⁵⁴⁴ U.S. Department of Transportation, Transportation Systems Center, *FY71 Engineering Report on Surveillance Techniques for Civil Aviation Security*, 10.

⁵⁴⁵ U.S. Department of Transportation, Transportation Systems Center, *FY71 Engineering Report on Surveillance Techniques for Civil Aviation Security*, 8.

⁵⁴⁶ U.S. Department of Transportation, Transportation Systems Center, *FY71 Engineering Report on Surveillance Techniques for Civil Aviation Security*, 2.

commanding Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines and serving as Deputy Commander in Chief of the U.S. Strike Command, Davis pursued his own interests in urban policing and politics as Cleveland's Director of Public Safety in 1970. Carl B. Stokes, the first black mayor of a major American city, appointed Davis to the position after the retirement of the previous Director. As Director of Public Safety, Davis oversaw the fire and police departments in a city reeling from environmental racism and two rebellions in 1966 and 1968 precipitated by police violence. While Davis believed black Clevelanders had legitimate political demands and grievances against systemic racism and police violence, he emphasized respectability politics, dialogue between the police department and black communities, and further policing radical black social movements in Cleveland during his brief stint as Director of Public Safety. Davis ultimately resigned due to resistance to his modest reforms in the police department and his feeling that Stokes appeased the local Black Panther Party, which was ironic given Stokes' decision to appoint white veteran police officers to lead the police department was unpopular in black working-class communities. He dismissed community critiques that he ordered the Cleveland Police to solely focus on neighborhoods as "typical antipolice" sentiment from "self-declared racists and enemies of law enforcement."⁵⁴⁷

Davis extended his interest in policing, urban unrest, and halting radical social movements as a member of Nixon's Campus Unrest Committee in 1970 and as the first head of Civil Aviation Security in the Department of Transportation, a position he would hold for five

⁵⁴⁷ Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., *Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., American: An Autobiography* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991), 346; "Transcript of Press Conference July 27, 1970: Resignation of Safety Director Benjamin O. Davis, Jr.," July 27, 1970. Folder 9, Box 39, Benjamin O. Davis, Jr. Collection, Acc. 1992.0023, NASM, Smithsonian Institution. For more on the Stokes administration and larger trends in urban black politics, see Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2016), 82-88.

years. In numerous speeches and interviews, Davis highlighted the perceived threat urban insurgencies posed to airports. Speaking to airport executives at their annual convention in 1971, he responded attendees of the need for continued vigilance against “individuals and groups intent on destroying the ‘Establishment’” who had “rioted and looted cities, taken over campus offices, and bombed Government buildings, subways, banks and...defense industries.” As a central node in the “day-to-day functioning of our Nation,” airports needed to be heavily secured from the imagined mobs.⁵⁴⁸

Through 1971, the FAA and FBI identified freedom movements of political radicals, many of them people of color who made common cause with revolutionary movements outside the U.S., as the primary threats to aviation security. Carl F. Maisch, head of the Sky Marshal program, wrote to Davis warning that while the Middle East continued to be the primary region of concern, there was intelligence that hijackings would also continue within the Western Hemisphere. He cited evidence that “terrorist groups” were likely to hijack U.S. flights in the future. These “terrorist groups” included the Front de libération du Québec (Quebec liberation Front, FLQ); organizations in Latin America such as the Movimiento de Liberación Nacional-Tupamaros (Tupamaros National Liberation Movement, MLN-T); the “Puerto Rican Militant group, and the U.S. Mexican-Indian group Chicano.” Beyond misidentifying Puerto Rican and Chicano political formations, Maisch noted that “[t]he ultimate danger is a concerted effort by the Urban Guerrilla movement to cause a complete disruption of civil air transportation.”⁵⁴⁹

⁵⁴⁸ “Remarks by Lt. General Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., Director of Civil Aviation Security at the 44th Annual American Association of Airport Executives, Daytona Beach,” May 25, 1971. Folder 1, Box 43, Benjamin O. Davis, Jr. Collection, Acc. 1992.0023, NASM, Smithsonian Institution.

⁵⁴⁹ Carl F. Maisch to Director of Civil Aviation Security, March 3, 1971 in “Report to the President: Status of Civil Aviation Security March 1971,” 28-29. Folder 10, Box 42, Benjamin O. Davis, Jr. Collection, Acc. 1992.0023, NASM, Smithsonian Institution.

Although Maisch's reference to the "Urban Guerrilla movement" was unspecified, he identified racialized social movements as the primary threats to U.S. civil aviation, and spoke to the connections officials' made between "domestic" rebellions and "foreign" anticolonial and anti-imperial struggles. Maisch did not foresee a significant drop in threat-levels in the immediate future, and noted that until a political solution in Palestine was reached and "order" restored in the United States, the U.S. security state needed to extend its surveillance beyond and within the U.S.⁵⁵⁰

FBI Director Hoover shared these sentiments, and reinforced the image of the hijacker as an individual who embodied both "domestic" and "foreign" threats. At an appropriations hearing in 1970, Hoover described the spread of what the Bureau identified as increasing militancy on campuses and in cities. He noted that in 1968, there were "Nearly 1,800 student demonstrations...resulting in over 7,500 arrests, 462 injuries (some two-thirds to police) and 8 deaths." "Racial disorders" also spread to public primary schools, purportedly spurred by black radical organizations which he accused of perpetuating "anti-police violence." The Panthers' internationalism and expansion in membership in the 1960s occupied the majority of Hoover's testimony. He highlighted that the Panthers had "substantial connections with hostile foreign elements, notably the communist regime in North Korea and Arab terrorists in Algeria." The international wing of the Party, Hoover offered, was clear evidence that "terrorists" were financing the Black Panther Party in the U.S., and that "Increasing ties between Arab terrorists and Panthers raise the ominous possibility that militants may seek to ape Arab tactics, including airplane hijackings, to gain release of jailed Panther members such as Seale." To substantiate

⁵⁵⁰ Carl F. Maisch to Director of Civil Aviation Security, March 3, 1971 in "Report to the President: Status of Civil Aviation Security March 1971," 29.

these claims, Hoover cited intelligence that “two former Panther members returned to the United States in early September after a tour of Al Fatah training camps.” The FBI had declared the Panthers the primary enemy of the state, and their popularity with “blacks, Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, homosexuals, white radicals, ‘street people,’ women’s liberation groups and student groups” meant that these individuals, particularly “black extremists and New Left dissidents may resort to aircraft hijackings as part of their strategy to get our Government to meet their demands.”⁵⁵¹ This concern over the Party’s internationalism and its supposed threat to airports occurred just as the FBI ratcheted up its efforts to disrupt the black freedom movement, and the Black Panther Party in particular, through COINTELPRO.⁵⁵²

Hoover’s concerns reflected the creation of an international branch of the Black Panther Party in Algiers in 1969. Eldridge and Kathleen Cleaver were instrumental in the branch’s creation and operation. The branch was established in the wake of the former’s arrival after a short time in Cuba, where Eldridge had initially fled to after a shootout with the San Francisco Police Department. He left Cuba due to frustration over the Cuban government’s apathy for organizing a black liberation military unit on the island and Cuban racial policy, along with the revelation of his location by an American journalist. He was quickly joined in Algiers by Kathleen Cleaver, his wife, and the two were introduced to representatives of the Vietnamese National Liberation Front and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. The two branches,

⁵⁵¹ J. Edgar Hoover in U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Appropriations, *Supplemental Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1971: Hearings before the Committee on Appropriations*, 91st Cong., 2nd sess., 1970, 1097, 1099, 1107, 1108-1109.

⁵⁵² For more on COINTELPRO and the Black Panthers, see Joshua Bloom and Waldo E. Martin, Jr., *Black Against Empire: The History and Politics of the Black Panther Party* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013), 200-203; Ward Churchill and Jim Vander Wall, *Agents of Repression: The FBI’s Secret Wars Against the Black Panther Party and the American Indian Movement* (Cambridge: South End Press, 2002).

Oakland and Algiers, diverged over strategy: the former focused on city politics and community programs and the latter continued to be committed to organizing a force capable of waging revolution. Eldridge Cleaver, in particular, “embraced the example set by Palestinian Black September guerrillas and their strategy of transnational anticolonial violence.”⁵⁵³ This split was also aided by the national security state through forged letters authored by FBI agents which were sent to both Newton and Cleaver to fuel personal rivalries and misinformation.⁵⁵⁴ The Oakland branch ultimately expelled those who advocated or organized guerrilla warfare units in 1970 and 1971, including those stationed in Algiers.⁵⁵⁵

In 1971, Eldridge and Kathleen Cleaver established the Revolutionary People’s Communication Network (RPCN) through which they gained more international alliances and found support in the radical West German Left. This marked a shift in international work, however, as the international office focused on cultivating relationships with movements rather than revolutionary states. With China now open to rapprochement with the U.S., the DPRK focused on local and regional issues, and tensions between the international section and the Algerian government, the exiles “began to look beyond alliances rooted in Cold War internationalism” with revolutionary governments and instead “to explore transnational strategies for black liberation in the age of neoliberal hegemony.”⁵⁵⁶ According to historian Sean O’Malloy, Cleaver was particularly impressed by Black September, a Palestinian militant organization committed to engaging in spectacular acts of violence against Israel and Arab states that did not support their movement. O’Malloy writes that Cleaver “was particularly impressed

⁵⁵³ Sean L. O’Malloy, *Out of Oakland: Black Panther Party Internationalism during the Cold War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2017), 186.

⁵⁵⁴ O’Malloy, *Out of Oakland*, 181-182.

⁵⁵⁵ O’Malloy, *Out of Oakland*, 183.

⁵⁵⁶ O’Malloy, *Out of Oakland*, 192-193.

with Munich and with Black September's hijacking operations, which illustrated the vulnerability of advanced Western capitalist states to small groups of dedicated guerrillas operating across national frontiers."⁵⁵⁷ In June 1972, Vietnam War veteran William Roger Holder and Catherine Marie Kerkow hijacked a flight from Los Angeles. Although Holder had no existing or previous relationship with the Black Panther Party or other organizations, the two demanded the release of Angela Davis, \$500,000, and safe passage to North Vietnam. After learning that the plane lacked the fuel necessary to reach Hanoi, the two took the ransom and ordered the pilot to go to Algeria. While Cleaver was not anticipating the hijacking, he embraced them as comrades and an example of the success of his strategy. That August, another flight, this one from Detroit, was redirected to Algeria. The hijackers, who included five adults and two children, had lived in a commune and had no prior relationship with the BPP prior to the hijacking. These hijackings inflamed existing tensions between the Algerian government and the international section. As a result, the Algerian government expelled the international section in order not to compromise its natural gas exports to the U.S.⁵⁵⁸

The initiatives created and promoted by the FAA were initially optional, but the Nixon administration made universal screening of passengers emplaning U.S. registered aircraft mandatory beginning in February 1973. According to the Under Secretary of the Department of Transportation Egil Krogh, Jr., violent hijackings in the fall of 1972 at the airports in Birmingham, Alabama and Houston, Texas that resulted in multiple casualties demonstrated that reliance on the hijacker profile alone was insufficient. Krogh believed that the state was confronting a "new breed of hijackers – armed groups of fleeing felons willing to resort to

⁵⁵⁷ O'Malley, *Out of Oakland*, 201.

⁵⁵⁸ O'Malley, *Out of Oakland*, 203-207.

violence.”⁵⁵⁹ As a result of new security measures, reporting that hijackers in Cuba were often imprisoned, and the signing of a U.S.-Cuba bilateral agreement to prosecute hijackers and consider extraditing them, lowered the number of U.S.-origin hijackings and hijackings to the island.⁵⁶⁰

While earlier methods of policing via the profile minimized interference in the flow of passenger traffic, screening the entirety of the traveling public was now considered necessary to prevent violent episodes onboard aircraft. Universal screening, like profiling, rendered the entire traveling public a potential threat that required clearance. To justify these measures, the courts turned to legal reasoning and policing procedures that originated in inner cities and the territorial borders of the nation state. As a consequence, these court cases brought the border inside U.S. airports.

The Invisible Hands of the Police

While race was foundational in the initial airport security program, court decisions effectively obscured the centrality of racial profiling from its origins. The decisions emerged at a moment when federal courts and immigration officials expanded border policing powers beyond the territorial boundary line. While individuals within the U.S. enjoyed protections against unwarranted searches and seizures through the Fourth Amendment, such protections were winnowed at the border in the name of national security. By the mid-1970s, border policing could occur “anywhere that the racialized, criminalized border crosser went.”⁵⁶¹ Immigration

⁵⁵⁹ U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, *Anti-Hijacking Act of 1973: Hearings before the Subcommittee on Transportation and Aeronautics of the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce*, 93rd Cong., 1st sess., 1973, 219.

⁵⁶⁰ Latner, *Cuban Revolution in America*, 148-150; LeoGrande and Kornbluh, *Back Channel to Cuba*, 123-126.

⁵⁶¹ Hannah Gurman, “A Collapsing Division: Border and Interior Enforcement in the US Deportation System,” *American Quarterly* 69, no. 2 (2017): 381.

scholars refer to this process as the “deterritorialization” of the border in which the border is not confined to a geographic area but exists wherever immigration policing occurs. While the Supreme Court never ruled on the constitutionality of the airport security system, lower courts’ decisions simultaneously deterritorialized and reterritorialized the border in the airport.⁵⁶² The courts argued that Fourth Amendment protections were limited at the airport, and that since the metal detector was a neutral machine, justified the searches as distinct from hand-searches and the racialized judgment of police officers. In reality, however, the effects of such policing was indebted to and expanded the racialized power of the police.

The 1968 Supreme Court decision in *Terry v. Ohio* guided the courts’ interpretations of airport security. The case came to the Court in 1967 from Ohio after two African American men, John Terry and Richard Chilton, were observed by Martin McFadden, a white Cleveland plain clothes detective, repeatedly walking past a store, peering in, and then conferring with one another at a street corner. They were joined by a third man who soon departed from McFadden’s field of vision. Eventually, both Terry and Chilton departed the area in the same direction as the third individual. Both events, the pacing in front of the store and the conference at the corner, were in themselves not illegal actions. However, McFadden, a thirty-nine year veteran of the Cleveland police force, became suspicious because he was unacquainted with the three and he had a “gut” feeling that they were about to commit an armed robbery. After tracking the men down the street, McFadden searched them and discovered a revolver in John Terry’s pocket and another weapon on Richard Chilton’s person.⁵⁶³ Lower courts admitted into evidence the

⁵⁶² For more information on “deterritorialization” see Gurman, “A Collapsing Division,” and Julia A. Dowling and Johnathan Xavier Inda, “Policing the Interior,” in *Governing Immigration Through Crime: A Reader*, eds. Julia A. Dowling and Jonathan Xavier Inda (Palo Alto: Stanford University, 2014), 145-147.

⁵⁶³ *Terry v. Ohio*, 392 U.S. 1, 5-7 (1968).

weapons on the basis of McFadden's fear for personal and public safety. In order to determine if a crime was going to occur in the near future or had previously been committed, and to ensure an officer's personal safety, police could "reasonably" frisk an individual based merely on suspicious behavior.

The Supreme Court affirmed the conviction of Terry and Chilton (who died prior to the Court's decision) and enabled police officers to widely engage in warrantless searches through frisks. Key to its decision was its reading of the Fourth Amendment and definitions of "personal security." While earlier decisions established that the Fourth Amendment did extend outside of the domicile, the Court argued that requiring a search warrant would hinder police officers responding to "rapidly unfolding and often dangerous situations on city streets." Police officers, the Court ruled, required "an escalating set of flexible responses, graduated in relation to the amount of information they possess."⁵⁶⁴ To justify a search, an officer had to suspect that the individual was engaged in, had plotted, or was "connected with criminal activity." A second criterion, independent of the first, was that the officer had to believe that their own or the public's safety was at risk. Meeting either requirements would enable an officer to conduct a cursory search of the subject's outerwear. The Court's decision constructed a "reasonable," largely neutral, subject who could correctly measure danger and "was unaffected by considerations of race and who could be trusted even in...race-laden case[s]." This "police officer as 'expert' narrative," in the words of legal scholar Anthony C. Thompson, gave officers wide latitude to frisk those deemed threatening to public order.⁵⁶⁵ While the Court explicitly

⁵⁶⁴ *Terry v. Ohio*, 392 U.S. 1, 10 (1968).

⁵⁶⁵ Anthony C. Thompson, "Stopping the Usual Suspects: Race and the Fourth Amendment," *New York University Law Review* 74, no. 4 (1999): 971. See also Jared Sexton, "Racial Profiling and the Societies of Control," in *Warfare in the American Heartland: Policing and Prison in a Penal Democracy*, ed. Joy James (Durham: Duke University, 2007), 197-218.

cited urban unrest as a primary motivation for its decision, police officers were constructed as race-neutral subjects who did not assess danger and security through a racialized prism despite the racial foundations of urban policing practices.

While the Supreme Court did not rule on the constitutionality of metal detectors and airport searches, several appellate courts in the early 1970s applied the logic of the *Terry* decision in their evaluation of airport security programs. A majority of these court cases ultimately expanded the parameters of the *Terry* decision and asserted the legitimacy of convictions for crimes unrelated to hijacking facilitated by the discovery of evidence during preboarding inspections at airports.

One of the earliest cases challenging the constitutionality of the government anti-hijacking program was *United States v. Lopez* (1971). Frank Lorenzi Lopez was convicted for narcotics trafficking after attempting to board a Pan Am flight at JFK bound for Puerto Rico. Lopez, along with his partner Ernesto Perez Gonzalez, was identified by the ticket agent using the profile as a potential hijacker. U.S. Marshals stopped the two and requested that they pass through a metal detector with and without their luggage. Gonzalez and Lopez triggered the alarm both times, and after one Marshal discovered that Gonzalez's name on his identification card did not match that on listed on his ticket, the two were escorted to a private area where they were frisked by officers for weapons. Instead of a weapon, however, the Marshalls discovered a few containers of heroin. Lopez challenged his conviction on the grounds that it constituted an illegal search.⁵⁶⁶

The court extended the logic of *Terry* decision by analogizing the airport to the territorial boundary of the nation-state. The District Court argued that an airport search was similar to “an

⁵⁶⁶ *United States v. Lopez*, 328 F. Supp. 1077, 1082-1083 (E.D.N.Y. 1971).

exit border search” which was legitimate when the intention was to “merely...stop the flow of contraband out of the country.”⁵⁶⁷ Warrants were not required to conduct searches at the border, and while exit searches at land borders may necessitated a high probability of success, the threshold at airports was lower due to concerns over public safety. The District Court argued that the use of the metal detector was justified because of the probable cause created through the use of the profile which identified Gonzalez and Lopez as potential hijackers. While they legitimized the use of the metal detector with the profile, they did not “decide whether, in the absence of some prior indication of danger, the government may validly require any citizen to pass through an electronic device which probes beneath his clothing and effects to reveal what he carries with him.”⁵⁶⁸ The legitimacy of the metal detector’s use was contingent on the fact that those screened were already considered dangerous through the use of the profile. While the court endorsed the airport security program, they overturned Lopez’s initial conviction. Gonzalez and Lopez were identified by the Pan Am employee using an updated profile that was not endorsed by the U.S. Marshal Service or Pan Am’s security division. This updated profile contained what the court termed “an ethnic element” that threatened to “destroy the essential neutrality and objectivity of the approved profile.”⁵⁶⁹ Absent the contamination, the heroin would have been admissible and the conviction upheld. The Court, however, did not considered the racialized origins of the entirety of the airport security program. Airport security designers and administrators were, in fact, overwhelmingly concerned about the rise of urban rebellions and radical social movements involving mostly African Americans, Puerto Ricans, and Latinx peoples. In addition, by considering the airport a functional equivalent to a landed border, the threshold for justifying a

⁵⁶⁷ *United States v. Lopez*, 328 F. Supp. 1077, 1095 (E.D.N.Y. 1971).

⁵⁶⁸ *United States v. Lopez*, 328 F. Supp. 1077, 1100 (E.D.N.Y. 1971).

⁵⁶⁹ *United States v. Lopez*, 328 F. Supp. 1077, 1101 (E.D.N.Y. 1971).

search *inside* the nation-state was much lower. As such, it gave the state greater leeway to conduct surveillance in airports with less consideration for civil liberties.

While *Lopez* reterritorialized the border within the airport, the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals in *United States v. Epperson* justified metal detector searches on national security grounds. Cecil Kenton Epperson attempted to board a Washington D.C. flight to New York City in November 1970. All passengers were frisked via a metal detector and Epperson triggered the device. The U.S. Marshal requested Epperson remove all metallic objects he was carrying and that he walk through the detector once again. Epperson triggered the device one more and was searched by the Marshal who discovered a pistol in his jacket. Convicted of carrying a concealed weapon, Epperson challenged his conviction on the grounds that the discovery of the pistol was the result of an illegitimate search that violated his Fourth Amendment rights.⁵⁷⁰

The Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals agreed that the metal detector constituted a search despite not being physically touched by the officer, but ruled in favor of the state. The Court noted that “the very purpose and function of a magnetometer [is] to search for metal and disclose its presence in areas where there is a normal expectation of privacy.”⁵⁷¹ The automation of frisking disturbed the public/private binary that the *Terry* decision attempted to uphold in their decision to legitimate frisking in U.S. cities. The context was also distinct since in *Terry* there was a confined and identifiable reason for suspending the warrant requirement. However, it was difficult to assess the magnitude of the danger posed by hijacking due to the program’s secrecy. Despite the inability to measure the state’s interests against those of the individual with the probability of hijacking, the court justified the searches because of the obvious peril of hijacking,

⁵⁷⁰ *United States v. Epperson*, 454 F. 2d 769 (4th Cir. 1972).

⁵⁷¹ *United States v. Epperson*, 454 F. 2d 769 (4th Cir. 1972).

national security, and the fact any judge would issue a warrant, especially given the minimal infringement of individual privacy. Requiring a warrant for airport searches was even more incompatible since it would require expensive delays and detentions.⁵⁷²

In addition to justifying the searches due to efficiency, the Court also differentiated searches conducted with magnetometers from frisking based on the individual's subjective experience. The device of the metal detector, they argued, could not be considered “an annoying, frightening, and perhaps humiliating experience,” reasons stipulated in *Terry* for limiting the frisking powers of police officers, since passengers were largely unaware of their inspection.⁵⁷³ Unaware of being investigated, the individual had no reason to be concerned lest they were already guilty or suspicious. This suspicion became measured through the abnormal amount of metal contained on a person. According to the court, the search via a metal detector was a better alternative to individual officers since the device removed the humiliation, fear, and annoyance experienced while being “frisked” by an individual. Rather than the physical hands of the state, electromagnetic fields permeated the body, scanning it for signs of abnormality unbeknownst to the individual. This invisibility of state power not only abstracted the body to a sign equating the amount of metal with potential criminality, but also rendered the policing program as natural and objective. The use of the detector also removed the calculation of the individual police officer. As such, the ruling erased the continued importance of race to the program's construction and implementation.⁵⁷⁴

Conclusion

⁵⁷² *United States v. Epperson*, 454 F. 2d 769 (4th Cir. 1972).

⁵⁷³ *United States v. Epperson*, 454 F. 2d 769 (4th Cir. 1972).

⁵⁷⁴ *United States v. Epperson*, 454 F. 2d 769 (4th Cir. 1972).

Prior to the late 1960s, airports were imagined as spaces emblematic of the apogee of U.S. consumer capitalism and global power. Airports and airline companies successfully rebuffed efforts to police airport lobbies until 1969 since hijackings were rare and surveillance technologies too costly. By the late 1960s, however, activities within these built environments appeared to threaten the image they once evoked. Hijackings to Cuba and other locations appeared to augur for U.S. officials and others the decline of U.S. power due to the combined efforts of anticolonial Third World and U.S. radical social movements. Not only did experts connect these two political formations, but they also relied on tactics and devices developed in counterinsurgency campaigns at home and abroad to police the airport. Their security designs operated on the level of the population, dividing it between a normative traveling public and a deviant, subversive, and often racialized public subject to incarceration.

The airport security program extended the policing power once preserved in the Passport Office. What changed, however, was the speed and the immediacy of its policing. Whereas the passport sought to sift through the traveling public potential subversives through bureaucratic means and geographic restrictions sought to cordon off areas from American eyes, the profile and metal detector of the airport security program brought the border inside the airport. While the state slowly adopted a language of “unrest” and “terrorism,” largely apolitical terms on their face, to justify its continued surveillance powers, its policing of the traveling public remained wedded to the policing of radical social movements globally. Many of the legal precedents established justifying the use of the airport security program constructed the airport as a legal border *within* the U.S. nation-state, thus lowering constitutional thresholds for the legitimate exercise of state power. While the airport security program was rooted in the histories of race and empire, court decisions effectively erased these histories through the unproblematic

language of safety and their understanding of the metal detector. The fact that naturally occurring electromagnetic waves surveyed individual travelers for potential weapons rather than an individual police officer legitimated this extension of state power. Indeed, it was the absence of the state's representative in the person of the police officer that made the metal detector legitimate. The metal detector, in the words of philosopher Walter Benjamin, constituted a "ghostly presence" of the police, a seemingly nonviolent and neutral mechanism that simultaneously produced the conditions of possibility for both mobility and incarceration.⁵⁷⁵

⁵⁷⁵ Walter Benjamin, "Critique of Violence," trans. Edmund Jephcott, in *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings*, ed. Peter Demetz (New York: Schocken Books, 1978), 287.

Epilogue

Nothing seemed out of the ordinary to Naqib Ali Ghaleb as he prepared to say goodbye to his wife and children in Yemen to return to Oakland, California in February 2010. However, once he arrived at the airport in Yemen, airline employees informed him he could not board any flights that day. FBI agents later interrogated Ghaleb in Yemen and notified him of his placement on the United States government's No-Fly List. The agents offered to remove his name in exchange for derogatory information on what they called "bad guys" in the San Francisco Bay Area, his local mosque, and in Yemen. Ghaleb refused, and although he was ultimately able to return to the U.S., he lost his right to leave the country and ability to visit family abroad.⁵⁷⁶ Ghaleb was not alone that year. When Mohammed Sheikh Abdirahman Kariye attempted to travel to Amsterdam from Portland, Oregon, officials surrounded him at the airport and airline employees informed him of his inclusion on the No-Fly List.⁵⁷⁷ Ultimately, thirteen U.S. citizens filed suit against Attorney General Eric Holder, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and other federal agencies for their inclusion on the No-Fly List. As a result of their lawsuit, the national security state implemented modest reforms in 2014, such as the notification of citizens of their inclusion on the list and, in theory, the evidence utilized to justify their placement.⁵⁷⁸ However, as of this writing, six of the thirteen and thousands of others have only received

⁵⁷⁶ *Latif v. Holder*, 28 F. Supp. 3d 1134, 1145 (District Court for District of Oregon, 2014).

⁵⁷⁷ *Latif v. Holder*, 28 F. Supp. 3d 1134, 1144.

⁵⁷⁸ "Why the no-fly list was declared unconstitutional," *The Washington Post*, June 25, 2014.

opaque summaries of the evidence utilized to justify their exclusion from air travel and are unable to challenge the national security state's determination.⁵⁷⁹

These procedural reforms neither undermined the state's ability to detain individuals, regardless of citizenship, within the U.S. or the traveler's country of origin on the basis of national security concerns. The experiences of Dr. Khushnood Ali Baz reveal these limitations. In 2016, Dr. Baz obtained a U.S. visa and left his home in Pakistan to attend a medical conference in Orlando, Florida. His journey was disrupted when airline employees refused him access to his connecting flight in Toronto. The surgeon availed himself to the DHS' redress process, but has to this date been unable to determine whether his name has been placed on the No-Fly List, much less challenge the national security state's assessment.⁵⁸⁰ Even those successful at removing their names, such as the Malaysian architecture scholar Dr. Rahinan Ibrahim, continue to face obstacles in obtaining visas and traveling abroad.⁵⁸¹

The so-called War on Terror combined with new computing technologies led to an exponential growth of the national security state that built on developments during the cold war. However, the seeds of the no-Fly List confronted by Dr. Baz developed in the 1980s. The hijacking of TWA 847 in 1985 prompted the creation of the FAA's Intelligence Division, which was tasked with issuing Security Bulletins concerning purported threats to commercial airliners. Airlines, however, were not legally obligated to deny passage to an individual or package

⁵⁷⁹ "Kariye, et. al. v. Sessions, et. al. – ACLU Challenge to Government No Fly List," *ACLU* online, Last Updated March 13, 2018, <https://www.aclu.org/cases/kariye-et-al-v-sessions-et-al-aclu-challenge-government-no-fly-list>.

⁵⁸⁰ Martin de Bourmont, "Who Can Challenge the No-Fly List?," *Foreign Policy* online, last modified May 1, 2018, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/05/01/who-can-challenge-the-no-fly-list/>.

⁵⁸¹ "Appeals court rebukes federal government in 'no-fly' case, ruling it owes millions in legal fees," *The Los Angeles Times*, January 2, 2019.

described in the Security Bulletin until 1988. Through the nineties, surveillance programs and advisory lists proliferated across various government agencies, including the State Department, which revitalized its Lookout List. The Consular Lookout and Support Systems database grew to an estimated ten million records detailing individuals who had been denied visas, come under law enforcement investigation, or been deemed suspicious by the national security state.⁵⁸² In the wake of September 11, 2001, the FAA's security operations were transferred to the newly created DHS and Transportation Security Administration (TSA). In 2003, various lists and intelligence databases were consolidated into a new Terrorist Screening Center (TSC) operated by the FBI.⁵⁸³ The construction of "terrorism" as a distinct category of illegitimate violence and an existential threat to the U.S. facilitated the racialization of Arab, Muslim, and South Asian communities as dangerous terrorists subjected to state surveillance and violence, that in turn has legitimated unending and boundless warfare.⁵⁸⁴

This sprawling security state was not inevitable, but rather the result of struggles documented in this dissertation. Radical social movements in the United States understood travel as crucial to the development of oppositional movements against U.S. empire and global capitalism. To organizations such as the American Committee to Survey Labor Conditions in Europe (ACSLCE) and the Student Committee for Travel to Cuba (SCTC), and journalists like William Worthy, personally witnessing experiments to create new societies was important to understand seemingly "domestic" political questions. Travel to China, Cuba, and the Soviet

⁵⁸² Kahn, *Mrs. Shipley's Ghost*, 134-135.

⁵⁸³ Kelly Gates, *Our Biometric Future: Facial Recognition Technology and the Culture of Surveillance* (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 119.

⁵⁸⁴ For example, see Jasbir K. Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007); Junaid Rana, *Terrifying Muslims: Race and Labor in the South Asian Diaspora* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011).

Union was essential in order to assess these development outside the mediation of the U.S. government and mainstream press. Security officials also connected “foreign” radical, often socialist and communist, states and causes with “domestic,” and often racialized, social movements. The Passport Office, FBI, FAA, and other officials attempted to devise techniques through which to govern a highly mobile traveling public. The ability for some to travel abroad was contingent on state surveillance and the demobilization of those considered subversive and dangerous to the U.S. empire. Officials simultaneously sought to reconsolidate the boundaries of the “foreign” and “domestic” while transcending these very boundaries to expand U.S. power

Travel control mechanisms worked to legitimate the national security state and reproduced global racial hierarchies. Passport denial, geographic travel restrictions, and airport security constructed the traveling public into two groups: one whose mobility was to be encouraged and celebrated, and the other whose mobility threatened the security of the U.S. These security threats (communists, feminists, socialists, radical labor activists, and others) became legitimate targets of surveillance and state violence. These mechanisms did not just have an impact in the U.S. The policing of those traveling to non-capitalist states and attempts to prohibit their mobility constructed those states as objectively dangerous and legitimated the U.S. national security state and its deployment of violence abroad, particularly in the decolonizing world. These measures occluded historic and contemporary U.S. imperial violence across the globe. Travel restrictions helped to reproduce the image of the U.S. as a protector of virtue and freedom against racialized threats who were, then, legitimate targets of violence. The expansion of state power and surveillance helped to undergird a postwar racially liberal project. At the same time that the U.S. sought to depict itself as a racially inclusive nation it demobilized, surveilled, and prosecuted those who threatened to reveal the limits of this inclusion. Officials understood

the containment of individuals deemed dangerous by the state as complementary to immigration exclusion. Indeed, in the name of “freedom of movement,” the passport was seen as a crucial instrument through which the state could ensure its deportation powers. These struggles over mobility were generative of both new forms of state power *and* new social movement strategies that sought to evade these techniques. For nonwhite travelers, the inclusion into the nation was always partial and contingent on unwavering obedience to the state.

Although this dissertation concludes in the early 1970s, the surveillance of dissidents and political policing through mobility controls continued through the 1970s and 1980s despite efforts to end the security state’s most egregious programs. Army Instructor Christopher Pyle’s revelations in 1971 of CIA and military surveillance of antiwar groups commenced a five-year effort to curtail the abuses of power enabled by state of emergency declarations dating to the 1930s. His revelations, opposition to Vietnam, and Watergate prompted the creation of the Church Committee in 1975. Their investigations revealed some of the national security state’s repressive activities across the globe, including the effort to assassinate political leaders such as Patrice Lumumba and Fidel Castro to the efforts to infiltrate U.S. dissident groups. These programs were often enabled through the use of emergency powers delegated to the presidency. The Passport Office’s authority rested on the continuing state of emergency and it amassed through emergency powers a confidential “lookout list” of 243,135 Americans whose intended travel would be of interest to the FBI, CIA, and other police entities.⁵⁸⁵ As a result of the Church Committee’s investigations, Congress passed the National Emergencies Act of 1976 to prevent future abuses of power. However, while the Act ended existing emergencies and subjected presidential declarations of emergency to Congressional review, the Ford Administration

⁵⁸⁵ “Passport Office Has Secret File,” *The New York Times*, February 11, 1971.

successfully lobbied for an exception to the Trading with the Enemy Act (TWEA) and a two year delay to pass new passport legislation. State Department officials warned that the expiration of the passport system would create significant delays in determining citizenship and possibly facilitate the migration of undocumented immigrants.⁵⁸⁶ Legislation in 1978 simultaneously normalized emergency powers over movement in the name of liberalizing travel. A provision of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Year 1979 stipulated that the State Department could only issue travel restrictions against countries with which the U.S. was at war, experiencing armed conflict, “or where there is imminent danger to the public health or the physical safety of United States travelers.”⁵⁸⁷ In addition, the Act amended the Immigration and Nationality Act to require passports to depart the U.S. at all times⁵⁸⁸ A provision intended to limit infringements on the right to depart the U.S. normalized the emergency in which the passports laws and procedures were created.

The Helsinki Accords briefly augured the lowering of barriers to the freedom of movement globally. Similar to the 1940s, thirty-five countries met in Helsinki to discuss methods, including the lowering of barriers to the global flow of information and people, to ostensibly improve relations between the US and Western Europe and the Soviet Union. The language of the Final Act signed in 1975 regarding the freedom of movement was vague. Signatory states pledged to not impede the travel of citizens and professionals; to slowly reform

⁵⁸⁶ Robert J. McCloskey to Abraham Ribicoff, September 11, 1975 in U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Government Operations and the Special Committee on National Emergencies and Delegated Emergency Powers, *The National Emergencies Act (Public Law 94-412) Source Book: Legislative History, Texts, and Other Documents* (Washington, D.C., 1976), 320-321.

⁵⁸⁷ Public Law 95-426, October 7, 1978, Section 124.

⁵⁸⁸ Exceptions were allowed for those countries with which the U.S. had treaties allowing movement without a passport, or for those countries in the Western Hemisphere, such as Canada and Mexico, that would accept other forms of government identification for entry.

regulations governing entry and exit; and to lower restrictions on the mobility of visitors, subject to national security concerns. States were not legally bound to the document, and the debate over the enactment of these measures was influenced by the cold war. European and U.S. officials assailed Soviet restrictions on travel and information flows. While European representatives cited the restrictions as an impediment to European integration, some U.S. officials sought to lower Soviet barriers in order fuel dissent within the Warsaw Pact countries through the exposure of their citizens to Euro-American media, ideas, and visitors.⁵⁸⁹ The Soviet Union, in turn, highlighted the U.S.'s hypocrisy in demanding Soviet reform while maintaining its own barriers on movement, particularly the price of travel and accommodations.⁵⁹⁰ To parry these criticisms and more closely align U.S. policy with the Helsinki Accords, the Carter administration normalized relations with Cuba and removed restrictions on travel to Cambodia, North Korea, and Cambodia in 1977. While this reform was congruent with President Carter's human rights pivot, it was also influenced by realpolitik: the U.S. hoped to renew their bilateral antihijacking agreement with Cuba and learn the status of U.S. soldiers listed as MIA in Vietnam.⁵⁹¹

The Carter administration's efforts to liberalize travel regulations in the spirit of the Helsinki Accords were short-lived as a result of deteriorating relations with Iran and the limits of Congressional reform. The admission of the Shah to the U.S. for cancer treatment and the subsequent occupation of the U.S. embassy in Tehran prompted Carter to use economic emergency powers to bar travel to Iran. Executive Order 11211 made some exceptions for journalists, but they were required to inform the Treasury Department of their planned visit

⁵⁸⁹ Sarah Snyder, *Human Rights Activism and the End of the Cold War: A Transnational History of the Helsinki Network* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 29.

⁵⁹⁰ "Soviet Belittles Right to Travel," *New York Times*, June 26, 1975.

⁵⁹¹ "Last Travel Curbs Removed by Carter," *New York Times*, March 10, 1977.

within five days. Violating the restriction, one official indicated, could result in a ten year prison sentence and/or a fifty thousand dollar fine.⁵⁹² Despite these threats, it does not appear that the Carter administration prosecuted any violators, including William Worthy, representatives of the Committee for American-Iranian Crisis Resolution, and families of embassy personnel.⁵⁹³

While the few travelers going to Iran during the Carter administration did not face legal repercussions, the loopholes and institutionalization of emergency powers through Congressional reform empowered the Reagan administration to deploy travel controls in an effort to consolidate U.S. empire in Central America. President Reagan's inauguration ushered in a coterie of neoconservative intellectuals and activists bent on reasserting U.S. power in the wake of the Vietnam War. These formulations were concurrent with revolutions in Central America that sought to challenge U.S.-supported autocratic regimes and the legacies of colonial hierarchies determining access to land and power.⁵⁹⁴ The successful overthrow of the Somoza regime in Nicaragua, which had been economically and militarily supported by the U.S. since 1934, by the Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional (FSLN) served as the catalyst for the redeployment of counterinsurgent violence, the covert funding of mercenaries in the region, and the remilitarization of the cold war. The FSLN government, or Sandinistas as they were named in

⁵⁹² "Executive Order 12211 of April 17, 1980, Further prohibitions on transactions with Iran," title 3 (1980): 253; "U.S. Issues Details on Iran Bans; Some News Groups Assail Rule," *New York Times*, April 22, 1980.

⁵⁹³ "Hostages' Kin Seek Support in Europe," *New York Times*, April 23, 1980.

⁵⁹⁴ Each of the revolutionary efforts had their own dynamics and genealogy. For the purposes of this dissertation, I focus on Nicaragua and the specter of Cuba. For background on the revolutionary movements and U.S. foreign policy in Guatemala and El Salvador, see Maria Cristina Garcia, *Seeking Refuge: Central American Migration to Mexico, the United States, and Canada* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 13-43; Greg Grandin, *The Last Colonial Massacre: Latin America in the Cold War* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004); Grandin, *Empires Workshop: Latin America, the United States, and the Rise of the New Imperialism* (New York: Holt, 2007).

honor of the early twentieth century revolutionary Augusto César Sandino, initiated an expansive and largely socialist program of land redistribution, health and education campaigns, and workers' and women's empowerment. Local counterrevolutionary forces, aided by the U.S., sought to reinstate the old regime through a campaign of terror. A broad-based peace movement consisting of Central American exiles and the secular and religious left, coalesced in the United States in opposition to the contras and Reagan's foreign policy as a result.⁵⁹⁵

Reagan's use of travel control measures was one tool in its campaign against the Sandinistas and solidarity movements. In November 1981, the State Department attempted to deter travel to Nicaragua by announcing that U.S. travelers faced " 'arbitrary arrest, frequently on the broad charge of 'lack of respect for authorities.'"⁵⁹⁶ Similar to the justifications for travel restrictions against China and Cuba, the warning decontextualized events in Central America and erased U.S. efforts to violently overthrow the Sandinistas and suppress anti-authoritarian movements in the region as a whole. Two years later, the Reagan administration closed all six Nicaraguan consulates in the U.S., thus impeding the acquisition of visas to visit Nicaragua. Reagan's declaration of a state of emergency in May 1985 denied landing rights for Nicaraguan aircraft and ships.⁵⁹⁷ U.S. travelers to Central America faced growing government harassment,

⁵⁹⁵ Emily K. Hobson, *Lavender and Red: Liberation and Solidarity in the Gay and Lesbian Left* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2016), 97-119; Héctor Perla, Jr., "Si Nicaragua Venció, El Salvador Vencerá: Central American Agency in the Creation of the U.S.-Central American Peace and Solidarity Movement," *Latin American Research Review*, 43, no. 2 (2008): 136-158; Christian Smith, *Resisting Reagan: The U.S. Central America Peace Movement* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996); Clare Weber, *Visions of Solidarity: U.S. Peace Activists in Nicaragua from War to Women's Activism and Globalization* (Boston: Lexington Books, 2006).

⁵⁹⁶ "A State Department Advisory on Nicaragua," *The Washington Post*, November 22, 1981.

⁵⁹⁷ "Aggressive Activities By Managua Alleged," *The Washington Post*, May 2, 1985; "Nicaragua Sanctions Seen As Symbolic," *The Washington Post*, May 2, 1985.

repression, and surveillance upon their return to the U.S. Through early 1985, over one hundred solidarity activists were interrogated by FBI agents at U.S. airports, and had their luggage thoroughly searched and personal documents photocopied. Executive Order 12333 broadened the security state's power to conduct surveillance and infiltrate "domestic" organizations in order to counter unproven allegations of Nicaraguan subversion in the U.S. Across the country, solidarity activists and organizations reported the theft of official and personal papers, surprise tax audits, and intimidation from FBI officials.⁵⁹⁸

The Supreme Court also legitimated the use of travel controls to police dissent and transnational social movements in the 1980s, and extended the logic of decisions reached in the 1950s. The first decision in *Haig v. Agee* concerned the revocation of Philip Agee's passport. In 1975, Agee, an ex-CIA officer, had published *Inside the Company*, a tell-all memoir detailing his career in Latin America and CIA operations globally. The book's appendix listed the identities of all CIA operatives and agents he could remember.⁵⁹⁹ Through the late 1970s, Agee continued to publish and speak about his experiences in the CIA and knowledge of ongoing operations. In 1979, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance revoked Agee's passport while the latter was residing in West Germany. In his notice to Agee, Vance argued that Agee's journeys in Europe and Latin America gravely undermined U.S. national security and foreign policy.⁶⁰⁰ The State Department's argument rested on a 1966 regulation empowering the Passport Office to deny a

⁵⁹⁸ Frank Donner, "The F.B.I. is Watching: Travelers' Warning For Nicaragua," *The Nation*, July 6-13, 1985, 13-17; Smith, *Resisting Reagan*, 281-324.

⁵⁹⁹ Kathryn S. Olmsted, *Challenging the Secret Government: The Post-Watergate Investigations of the CIA and FBI* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 151.

⁶⁰⁰ Vance cited a 1966 regulation empowering the Passport Office to deny a passport when an individual's conduct abroad threatened or interfered with U.S. national security or foreign policy. Farber, "National Security, the Right to Travel, and the Court," 270.

passport when an individual's conduct abroad threatened or interfered with U.S. national security or foreign policy. Seven justices agreed with the State Department's arguments. The 1978 amendment to the Immigration and Nationality Act requiring passports for international travel at all times suggested that Congress acceded to the Department's regulation. In addition, the Court rejected Agee's argument that the revocation violated his First Amendment rights since, in their estimate, Agee's speech had "the declared purpose of obstructing intelligence operations and the recruiting of intelligence personnel" to rebel against U.S. foreign policy, actions which threatened U.S. national security.⁶⁰¹ This ruling reaffirmed the conclusion reached in *Worthy v. Herter*, where the Court ruled that the denial to renew Worthy's passport was not a result of his journalism but his conduct abroad (traveling to China). Both cases reconsolidated the state's ability to police politics through travel controls.

The second case, *Regan v. Wald*, authorized the use of Treasury regulations to prevent travel to Cuba. Convinced that Cuba was providing material assistance to the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN) and aspiring to destabilize the Cuban government, the Reagan Administration reimposed travel restrictions, strengthened the trade embargo, and labeled Cuba as a state sponsor of terrorism. Although in 1977 Congress amended the Trading with the Enemy Act (TWEA) to only apply during a declared war, Congress exempted sanctions imposed prior to the legislation. In addition, many of the emergency powers stricken from the TWEA were reinforced through the 1977 IEEPA, which could be invoked during peacetime.⁶⁰² Citing the 1966 *Zemel* decision, the Court ruled that travelers' travel rights were not violated by the restrictions since the ban did not apply to a particular class and was a tool of foreign policy,

⁶⁰¹ *Haig v. Agee* 453 U.S. 280 (1981), 309.

⁶⁰² Benjamin A. Coates, "The Secret Life of Statutes: A Century of the Trading with the Enemy Act," *Modern American History* 1, no. 2 (2018), 169-170.

which was beyond the Court's jurisdiction.⁶⁰³ Rather than understanding the historical imbrication of foreign policy and political policing, the Court severed these facets of travel control in an effort to bolster Executive power.

Efforts to challenge the security state's power have continued to the present, particularly after Edward Snowden's revelations of NSA spying and, most recently, the Trump Administration's Executive Order 13769. Titled "'Protecting The Nation From Foreign Terrorist Entry Into the United States,'" the Order reaffirmed a long history of constructing the U.S. as an imperiled, virtuous community. In the wake of its signing, tens of thousands of protesters occupied the nation's international airports and streets to denounce and resist the Trump Administration's ban on travel from seven Muslim-majority countries. U.S. border and security agents not only prevented the mobility of refugees, U.S. citizens, and those with dual citizenship in one of the seven banned countries, but detained and interrogated travelers about their political and religious beliefs.

Whereas the 2017 protests rightfully focused on the exclusion of immigrants and refugees, other critiques of the national security state have emphasized the violation of privacy and constitutional rights. Famed journalist Glenn Greenwald argues that the warrantless searches and extensive National Security Agency (NSA) internet surveillance programs have eroded individuals' privacy rights in an attempt to create an obedient public. Privacy, he suggests, is fundamental to the operation of a democracy in which political behavior is, in theory, independent. In turn, government transparency is essential in order for individuals to hold their officials accountable.⁶⁰⁴ Jeffrey Kahn argues that the successful rollback of the Passport Office's

⁶⁰³ *Regan v. Wald*, 468 U.S. 222 (1984), 241.

⁶⁰⁴ Glenn Greenwald, *No Place to Hide: Edward Snowden, the NSA, and the U.S. Surveillance State* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2014), 208-209.

powers via the Supreme Court and legislative reform provides a model for challenging the contemporary national security state.⁶⁰⁵

The history detailed in “Traveling Dissent” suggests that we must complicate and expand our opposition. Historically, travelers avoided framing their claims as a defense of privacy and instead emphasized their right to knowledge of the world and the impact of U.S. foreign policy. Privacy is not an impediment to state power but rather legitimates particular projects of surveillance and state violence.⁶⁰⁶ While challenges to travel regulations were often couched in legal and constitutional terms, organizers and sojourners understood their movement, both literal and as a political formation, as part of projects to construct an alternative world to overcome U.S. empire. Visa denials, passport revocations, and deportations were understood not as discrete abuses of state power, but as instruments utilized to construct an imagined community of global capitalism and U.S. imperial hegemony. In an age of caging migrants, no-fly lists, global surveillance, and borderless war, it may be time to reconsider and advance this critique.

⁶⁰⁵ Kahn, *Mrs. Shipley's Ghost*, 232-242.

⁶⁰⁶ Aaron Henry, “The Perpetual Object of Regulation: Privacy as Pacification,” *Socialist Studies*, 9, no. 2 (2013): 94-109.

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