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From 'cookie-pushers' to the Cold War: U.S. Foreign Service professionalization and a new foreign policy

Michael Rosenbaum

June 2023

This essay has been submitted to partially fulfill the requirements of the author's major in history

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Introduction

Critiques of the study of the professional Foreign Service, written beginning in the 1960s, have focused on attempts to define a specific nature of the Foreign Service. This has been done by giving context to the development of the Service as a whole, and hoping to glean trends from the historical development of the Foreign Service. The consequence of this line of study is that the professional diplomat has been characterized variously as an aristocrat, a capitalist, an opportunist, a reformer, an artist, a scientist, or something in between. And those are characterizations from secondary literature. Characterizations from Foreign Service Officers (FSOs) during the period of professionalization are no less varied, and often quite critical. The term “cookie-pusher” to refer to a member of the pre-professional Foreign Service was coined by Hugh Gibson, an FSO in the 1920s and 1930s during the push to professionalization. These characterizations are in line with a patriotic analysis of the expansion of the Federal Government in the twentieth century. Professionalization is a story told in epic terms, with the modern Service being portrayed as diligent exemplars of the United States and defenders of its increased role on the world stage.

These traits associated with the professional Foreign Service have been used to develop a theory related to the antagonism between the United States and the Soviet Union (USSR) during the Cold War. Most of the literature written on this subject was completed during the Cold War, and the Cold War, more specifically the period of detente, had a significant influence on this subject. Detente was the period where pragmatic diplomacy, rather than ideology or warfare, prevailed. Detente occurred due to a confluence of dovish behavior in both the United States and the USSR. In the United States it also triggered a period of self-reflection in foreign policy,

indicated by the recognition of the People's Republic of China and the Senate using its power of advice in international treaties more often.

The idea that the United States has ever had a perfect enemy is a fallacy. The most recent “perfect enemy” at odds with the United States has been Islamic extremists, especially the Taliban. Recent reporting on the Taliban since the withdrawal of the United States from Afghanistan included complaints by members of the Taliban on the banality of the nine-to-five jobs that they are now forced to work in. This report originated from the Afghanistan Analysis Network, a think tank funded by the foreign services and aid agencies of several European countries as well as the Rockefeller Brothers Fund.¹ Such reporting highlights the lack of civil society, lack of professionalism, and other deficiencies in Taliban rule that European and American governments are assumed to have as structural parts of their governments. While disparaging the Taliban for certain characteristics, certain opposite characteristics are played up, namely the cohesiveness of policy and compliance with international norms. The same process occurred during American antagonism towards the Soviet Union. Periods of antagonism between the two countries saw their differences highlighted rhetorically. During the 1980s, the United States promoted itself as a moral exemplar to contrast itself with Soviet atheism. In the 1940s, the United States promoted itself as the upholder of international norms in the face of subversion by the USSR and the Cominform.

What the literature of the detente period showed however, was that the story of professionalization was highly related to the Cold War. As the Foreign Service professionalized, the network of international organizations that defined American involvement in the international

¹ Shah, “Taliban Members Fed Up With Office Work, Ready to Quiet Quit,” <https://time.com/6263906/taliban-afghanistan-office-work-quiet-quit/>; Samim, “New Lives in the City.” <https://www.afghanistan-analysts.org/en/reports/context-culture/new-lives-in-the-city-how-taliban-have-experienced-life-in-kabul/>

community (i.e. NATO, GATT, Bretton Woods) were negotiated by a professional Service. The outlook of the State Department was increasingly focused on Europe, a consequence of the staffing of the Foreign Service, which saw Europe as the ultimate origin of American values and as a place under threat from Soviet aggression.

The establishment of the Foreign Service as a foil to Soviet expansionism is emblematic of a wider disagreement over the nature of the Foreign Service and the impetus for reform. One school of thought, expounded by Harr and Ilchman is that the Foreign Service practices a distinctly American form of diplomacy. This theory states that whether or not the Foreign Service was inspired by European models is irrelevant, and that the end product of new, open, “American” policy is the result, which distinguishes itself from previous European modes of diplomacy through its rules of morality and transparency. Professionalization could therefore only occur in the aftermath of the collapse of European diplomatic norms in the Great War leaving a vacuum for the American model.

Another theory, promoted by Weil, is that professionalization occurred because of a fascination with the professional civil services of Europe stemming from a wider cultural connection between the United States (especially greater New England) and Europe (especially the United Kingdom.) This theory posits that the seeds for professionalization were planted before the Great War, but rather in the early twentieth century and therefore not influenced by the breakdown of international norms caused by that war but instead influenced by ideas of noblesse oblige, christian charity, and social darwinism. This puts significant emphasis on the development of professionalization before the ratification of the Rogers Act and frames it as an internal process by well-meaning FSOs, instead of being directed from the top-down.

The opposite opinion is presented by De Santis, who argues that professionalization could only begin with an institutional apparatus for promoting the same ideological basis for

FSOs and that the institutional basis was codified in the Rogers Act and the Foreign Service School. For De Santis, the professionalization efforts from before the Rogers Act did not constitute a complete centralization of ideological thought within the FS, and therefore it lacks a level of cohesion over time necessary for organization to become professionalization.

Education is an important aspect of the professionalization for all of the authors on the subject. Especially as it is education that promoted an anti-Soviet policy on the eve of the Cold War. While the existence of an American form of diplomacy can be debated, the promotion of trade and a non-partisan Service as major benefits of the professional Foreign Service are universally accepted. The training of the Foreign Service secured the idea among the members of this new bureaucratic system that liberal democracy should be the leading international philosophy and that Communist authoritarianism was anathema. In short, economic liberalism was the key and democracy was the lock.² While this belief was held by the early generation of reformers, it was articulated, codified, and taught in the Foreign Service School. Should the teaching be a necessary component in adopting the ideological or cultural aspects of the Foreign Service is the crux of the historiographical debate. The outcome of an anti-Soviet policy remains either way, but the question is if the Foreign Service as an institution contributed in a more abstract way than simply the accepted functions of diplomatic effort.

The first chapter of this essay is an account of the status of U.S. diplomacy within a wider international framework. The Foreign Service, defined as it was before 1924 by the prevalence of the spoils system and partisan office holding, stumbled into the truly humiliating situation of the so-called Pact of the Embassy, where the ambassador Henry Lane Wilson boasted of his ability to overthrow the regime of President Francisco Madero in Mexico. The Pact of the Embassy was

² This opinion justified the difference in opinion of FSOs between the authoritarian systems in Germany during the National Socialist period, which was seen as an aberration and the Soviet Union, which was seen as a more permanent and dire deviation from liberal internationalism. De Santis, *The Diplomacy of Silence*, 198-ff.

an indication of a wider problem within the Foreign Service, and while its outcomes represent a singular incident, it was emblematic of wider issues within the Foreign Service, especially the diplomatic service. Lack of professionalism and respect to diplomatic protocol contributed significantly to Ambassador Wilson's antipathy towards the Madero regime and his belief that its removal, in opposition to diplomatic practice, would pacify the Mexican political situation in favor of American (specifically commercial) interests. As almost a direct response to this incident, although antecedents had already been established, President Wilson embarked on a distinct foreign policy program, though it cannot be said to have been professional and was instead equally partisan. Over time, the perception of Wilson's clean foreign policy became a cornerstone of the wider liberal internationalist trend.

To properly cover the development of a professional Foreign Service, efforts from before and after the Rogers Act must be taken into account. With the divergent outcomes from each version of the historiography, this essay will attempt to tell the same history from both sides. The second and third chapters of this essay will therefore each cover the history of professionalization from each of these angles.

The second chapter of this essay will focus on the pre-Rogers Act process of professionalization. Early hopes for professionalization as manifested among the personnel of the service included attempts to make the Foreign Service a more important part of the U.S. government. This entailed what was effectively a drawing together of the interests of the Diplomatic Service (DS) and Consular Service (CS) into a single agency that could raise the station of consular officers to be on par with their European counterparts and promote trade as an active part of the American diplomatic mission. This involved the expansion of the educational basis of the FSO to be more than a capitalist and more than a diplomat, a process that fudged the lines of who might be qualified to fulfill this expanded role. At the same time, Congress was also

being convinced of the merits of a more professional Foreign Service, although the motivations of Congress were more in line with political movements within the broader American political consciousness, include professionalization and civil service reform from a progressive angle and the expansion of the role of the United States on the world stage. To a Congress interested in these ideas, a professional Service became a palatable idea where it had once not been and assent was given to expand the Foreign Service.

The third chapter will focus on the role of institutional structures in cementing a professional service after the Rogers Act. With specific emphasis on the role of the Foreign Service School (FSS) in educating newer generations of FSOs, an anti-Soviet policy was confirmed as the central pillar of the Service's activities through the later part of the 1920s and the 1930s. This generation of FSOs, and increasingly a group of influential State Department officials established the basis of the U.S.'s post-war foreign policy; while it may be too much to call this policy "containment," the activities of the Foreign Service raised alarm bells over the alleged practices of the United Front parties, supposedly sponsored by the Soviet Union.³ But not all of the Service's work was ideological, and Arthur Bliss Lane's work in Nicaragua in this period was primarily involved in restoring American trade and prestige.⁴ In both cases, U.S.-led liberal internationalism was the goal, but the extent antagonism with the Soviet Union was the driver of specific U.S. policies is not uniform across theaters. In Latin America, radicalism presented a supposed threat to U.S. business interests, but the FS may have been too confident to concede that the Soviet Union was involving itself in Latin American affairs. In fact, attempts to align Mexico to the Soviet sphere failed ignobly.⁵ In this period, interest in diplomacy moved from Latin America, where American business interests had been invested, towards Europe,

³ Little, "Antibolshevism and American Foreign Policy, 1919-1939."

⁴ De Santis, *The Diplomacy of Silence*, 45-80.

⁵ Herman, *The Comintern in Mexico*.

which would bring the United States into greater conflict with the USSR, a process that accelerated during the isolationism of the 1930s.

Second introductory comments may be helpful. First, on nomenclature. I have done my best to remain consistent and accurate in referring to various groups. This is perhaps to the detriment of the fluidity of the essay in a few places. For instance, the designation of FSO was implemented by the Rogers Act. Therefore, in chapters one and two, the term Foreign Service personnel is used. I have attempted to remain consistent in the use of the United States to refer to the government, American to refer to the societal endonym of those living in or representing the United States government, and Latin America to refer to hispanophone or lusophone countries in general.

Second, FS professionalization is only one part of a wider and more comprehensive progressive reform of American society and politics. It would be impossible to completely cover the ways by which the formation of progressive government in the U.S. has shaped foreign policy. This essay is focused on the Foreign Service rather than on the more expansive topic of the State Department. Nor are the topics of the Central Intelligence Agency, the U.S. Marine Corps interventions in Latin America, etc., the main focus of this essay, although it would be difficult to treat them as entirely different topics. They may be mentioned, and may follow similar patterns of development, but they are not central to this essay.

Third, the process of professionalization outlined in chapter two and the process of the FSOs in planning containment outlined in chapter three contains a difference that is important, but difficult to articulate in the context of the individual examples. The earlier efforts of members of the FS were often informal and outside the bureaucratic structure of government. This made sense, as the smaller Services were staffed by political appointees liable to be replaced. Therefore, reformers were not necessarily in positions of official influence, and had to

rely on moral influence, like Henry White. But with the professionalization of the FS, those attempting to influence policy had their opinions solicited through formal channels. Their influence became institutional, but this also meant that their individual efforts were subordinate. As an example, the Marshall Plan was not the brainchild of George Kennan and Charles Bohlen alone, but could have only been accomplished with the intervention of Dean Acheson and George Marshall. The professional FS played under the rules of bureaucratic politics, whereas the pre-professional FS was not strictly bound to them.

Fourth, since generations of FSOs have been taught by their predecessors since the first class at the Foreign Service School in 1925, the fundamental tasks of an FSO haven't changed dramatically. Diplomacy, negotiation, reporting, and the protection of American interests were the fundamental tasks of the Services, after their professionalization, they were so fundamental that they never changed. The primary difference is that now FSOs are expected to have a higher level of competency in a larger number of fields: finance, trade, labor relations, geography, administration, science, management. But this competence merely bolsters efficiency, and did not structurally change the tasks that FSOs were supposed to do. That is to say that professionalization is simply professionalization, and did not introduce any of these tasks, nor did it remove other fundamental tasks.⁶

The professionalization of the FS as an educational exercise has had significant impacts on the continued implementation of U.S. Foreign policy. The seeds of each iteration of anti-Soviet policy were developed in this period. While the Soviet Union no longer provides an ideological antagonist to the United States, the methods of diplomacy and use of the FS as an alarm system to detect conflict wherever the United States has diplomatic or commercial interests is still active.

⁶Harr, *The Professional Diplomat*, 11-15; Barnes and Morgan, *The Foreign Service of the United States*, 300-301.

Chapter I

Prior to the expansion, modernization, and professionalization of the United States Foreign Service, Americans possessed an ambivalent attitude towards foreign policy, an ambivalence that extended to any interaction with the wider world. This ambivalence began very early and centered around an aversion to the trappings of European majesty and aristocratic pageantry. Despite early petitions for recognition and aid during the revolutionary period, American interest in cooperation and cultural exchange remained muted.⁷ An example of this are the thoughts of Thomas Shippen, himself deeply affected by the egalitarian aspects of the American Revolution, who was attached to Thomas Jefferson during his ambassadorship in Paris in the 1780s.

Thomas Shippen, introduced by Thomas Jefferson to the court of Versailles in 1788 wrote home of his experiences in the court, itself the model of numerous Continental fashions and protocols. Writing on February 20 to family at home, Shippen recounted his presentation to the king in Versailles. Shippen notes that he immediately felt out of place in the pomp of Versailles. “The etiquette of Versailles requires that persons who are presented at Court shall have some pretensions to that honor from rank” Shippen writes. When presented as the representative of a republic, office substituted rank and Shippen was introduced as nephew of Arthur Lee. Shippen, while enamored with the gardens and palatial setting of Versailles, was also quite skeptical of the whole ordeal. He was annoyed by the “tedious” exercise of three and a half hours of bowing, dismissive of the King who he found to be unimpressive, and generally repulsed by the adherence to strict hereditary rank. He believes it is an ordeal worth trying once, but no more.

⁷ Tracy Lay classified this period of recognition, which produced many early successes in U.S. foreign policy, as well as many well known political fortunes including those of Ben Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, John Jay, Robert Livingston, and John Quincy Adams among others, as the first of the important periods of U.S. foreign policy. Lay, *The Foreign Service of the United States*, 2-3.

Rather, Shippen is persuaded by his visit to Versailles that “a certain degree of equality is essential to human bliss,” unlikely to be found in such an “oriental” setting. Jefferson, wearing the plainest clothes in the room, was the embodiment of such egalitarian ethics.⁸

The Shippen anecdote is merely a symptom of a wider ambivalence towards the allegedly aristocratic field of foreign relations. In the short-term, it had no significant negative effects in either the United States nor in France, and despite Jefferson’s interactions with French revolutionaries, any revolutionary contagion, if it can be called that, was the product of wider cultural phenomenon and not national interactions through diplomatic channels. Over time however, this lukewarm attitude towards foreign affairs would have deleterious effects on the development of U.S. foreign policy. It was a primary cause contributing to the faulty and generally deficient apparatus of the Foreign Service (FS.) The few people interested in promoting U.S. interests would be, because of the general disinterest of affairs beyond the frontier, people either out to make money or those who for whatever reason, associated themselves with life outside the United States. To this end, the foreign affairs of the United States were commercial and decentralized. This provided a sense of invisibility to actions taken by the U.S. government and allowed for private enterprise to effectively operate its own foreign policies.

Neglect was a well known deficiency of the U.S. Foreign Service system before its reform in 1924. The Foreign Service, composed of the Diplomatic Service (DS), Consular Service (CS), and State Department were targets for reform for more than a quarter-century before their amalgamation. It would be one of the main targets of legislation professionalizing the Service.

⁸ Thomas Jefferson, *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, ed. Julian P. Boyd, vol. 12, 45 vols. (Princeton: University Press, 1950), 502-504.

This chapter focuses on the background to reform and professionalization in three parts. The first section defines the staffing of the Foreign Service and the methodology of U.S. diplomacy in the context of wider diplomatic norms, mostly defined by generations of French diplomats. The second section outlines the particularly negative instance of the so-called Pact of the Embassy, where the partisanship of the American ambassador in Mexico significantly contributed to the fall of the elected Mexican government of the time. Here, while the ambassador was fulfilling their role almost entirely to the letter, their partisan appointment under the spoils system guaranteed that they couldn't fulfill the spirit of diplomatic protocol and recognize that someone they personally didn't like was sitting in the role of president. The third section is about the ideological ground that many reformers found themselves in, including the development of what would eventually become known as Wilsonianism, an amalgamation of two different and often contradictory streams of progressive thought.

Diplomacy Under the Spoils System (and the French Model)

The Service that many reformers aspired to improve was a stagnant and derelict shadow of their European peers. The derelict status of the Foreign Service before its reform can be generally chalked up to neglect. The neglect of the FS and of diplomacy in general from the United States allowed for the service to become dominated by political appointments. While ambassadors today still often don't survive the change in administration, the issue was even more significant at the start of the twentieth century. The tenure of all upper service appointments within the branches of the Foreign Service was nearly three years, less than a full presidential term.⁹ The small size of diplomatic missions (legations could be composed of three

⁹ Ilchman, *Professional Diplomacy in the United States, 1779-1939*, 3.

people) meant that the political turnover in the United States led to repeated restructuring of the U.S.'s diplomacy abroad.

The small size and short tenures of the diplomatic service lent itself to staffing by those who had and could maintain independent forms of wealth. This meant principally that jobs in the Diplomatic and Consular Services were taken by rich, prep-school educated, East Coast elites (or the sons of elites.)¹⁰ This social composition, notable for its nuclear scale and close affinity to European thought, lent itself well to a sense of *noblesse oblige* that would help spur professionalization in the twentieth century. This subject is the focus of the next chapter. Wealthy dilettantes representing the political climate in the United States was not a wholly distinct practice from the aristocratic character of diplomacy undertaken by European countries. The independent wealth of those involved in diplomacy facilitated them to be able to maintain a legation at their own expense, staff it, provide funds to necessary causes, and when the government turned over and the entire diplomatic corps was replaced, to be able to wait for four, eight, or twelve years.

It was these qualities that distinguished several members of the foreign service. Henry White is a notable example, he was an early attempted reformer of the Consular Service in the 1890s. White was independently wealthy (he had an annual income of 35k-50k per annum) and lived mostly outside of the United States, principally in the United Kingdom. White lived in the social circle of a cadre of upcoming British politicians which contributed to a long-lived ability to extract diplomatic information from the British government. Told by his wife to get a job, he joined the diplomatic service in 1879, serving in Vienna, then in London. He survived the

¹⁰ Harr, *The Professional Diplomat*, 171-ff; Weil, *A Pretty Good Club*, 15-ff.

presidency of Grover Cleveland due to political connections, and contributed his thoughts to the small reform movement taking shape.¹¹

Henry White, among others, were eager to practice diplomacy in the mold of the European powers at the time. This meant following what has been dubbed “the French method.” The classification of this method matters little for this paper, however, this mode of diplomacy is in practice meant a shared basis in professionalism, European civilization, respect for protocol and diplomatic norms, private and continuing negotiation, honest reporting, and reciprocal accrediting between nations. This was the generally accepted standard for the time, irrespective of the reformist tendencies of any individual officer. This meant that for U.S. foreign officers, observation of four functions of diplomacy were paramount: representation, negotiation, reporting, and protection of interests.¹²

A specific example of many of these trends may be given specific form in the career of Ambassador Henry Lane Wilson. Wilson’s main achievement in the Foreign Service was his participation in the so-called “Pact of the Embassy,” an agreement between Wilson and two opponents of the political regime of Francisco Madero, who had assumed power following the ousting of the previous president, the autocratic but pro-U.S. Porfirio Diaz. The result of the Pact was a coup by one of the conspirators of the plot, General Victoriano Huerta, the execution of Madero and his Vice-President, and the prolongation of the Mexican Revolution. The Pact of the Embassy was a significant breach of all diplomatic protocol, a clear example of the United States and its agents interfering in the domestic politics of sovereign nations. Notably, the Pact of the Embassy was not the result of a policy directive from the United States State Department, but rather action taken at the discretion of Ambassador Wilson himself, fulfilling well-established

¹¹ Schulzinger, *The Making of the Diplomatic Mind*, 16-19; Ilchman, *Professional Diplomacy in the United States, 1779-1939*, 50-51, 75.

¹² Harr, *The Professional Diplomat*, 12- 13.

diplomatic duties, including the reporting of the status of the Madero government, which Wilson had a negative opinion of, and protecting U.S. interests, which Wilson associated with the conclusion of the Mexican Revolution.

While Wilson's tenure in Mexico represented an exceptional state of affairs, his earlier positions within the Diplomatic Service to Chile and then Belgium offer a guide to the status of U.S. diplomats internationally. It should first be recognized that Wilson did not receive his appointment to Chile for entirely political reasons. This is an admission that Wilson himself makes, and it is clear throughout his memoir (written in 1927 as a partial defense of his actions while a diplomat) that his fortunes were tied to the fortunes of the Republican Party. Upon the election of the McKinley government, Wilson is given an appointment as ambassador in exchange for the services campaigning for the Republican Party in the 1896 election. Wilson had a brother who was a senator and was the intimate of another senator, Cushman Davis, who was from 1897 to 1901 the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Service Committee.¹³ The continuation of Republican backing was extremely important for Wilson, who spilled considerable ink in regard to the backing he received from Theodore Roosevelt and William Taft. He is less kind in his consideration of President Wilson, nor is he particularly flattering of the Democratic senators in charge of his oversight when he is called to testify before them regarding his actions in Mexico.¹⁴

The bar for inclusion in the diplomatic service was quite low. While Wilson received his credentials to work in Chile because of political connections and received his post in Belgium as conciliation in regard to extended service, his work in Mexico cannot be attributed to oversight

¹³ Wilson, *Diplomatic Episodes in Mexico, Belgium and Chile*, 1-6; For a list of the members of the Senate Foreign Relation Committee see, Helms et al., "Committee On Foreign Relations," 78-104.

¹⁴ For the political response of the government to Ambassador Wilson's actions in Mexico, see Wilson, *Diplomatic Episodes in Mexico, Belgium and Chile*, 309-336; Regarding the connection between Ambassador Wilson and the Republican Party, Wilson makes an interesting comment where he states that his diplomatic episodes in Mexico, including his support to overthrow the Madero government, were embellished in the press "to discredit me [Wilson] with Republican leaders." Wilson, *Diplomatic Episodes in Mexico, Belgium and Chile*, 186n.

or jobbing strictly. Rather, the Taft administration, conscious of the potential for domestic troubles in Mexico due to the advanced age of President Diaz, sent who they believed to be a capable member of the diplomatic corps, Wilson. Wilson's resume at this point, aside from political work conducted in the United States, was quite minimal in dealing with crises. He had learned Spanish during his time in Chile, and served all told in Belgium and Chile for twelve years, a significant amount of time. But the only major crisis he had dealt with was a boundary dispute between Chile and Argentina in 1902, which was ultimately resolved through primarily British intervention. And, according to Wilson's account, there seems not to have been significant interactions from Washington to the several embassies, leaving Wilson to stew within his own assumptions and without a real conception of what the administration he served wanted.¹⁵

The composition of the diplomatic offices is also elucidating. Diplomatic offices are small. The U.S. legation in Santiago consisted of a minister (Lane,) a secretary, and a clerk. In Belgium, the legation was composed of the same three roles. In Mexico, where there was a larger American population and business presence, the legation consisted of the minister, two secretaries, and between three to six clerks. With such small numbers within each legation, the group of second echelon officers which the professionalization of the FS would primarily effect was embryonic. Qualitatively, this group was recognized as being less than totally efficient. In Chile, the issue was the clerk, a German-born resident of Santiago. Clerks in all of the legations were hired locally and therefore had no connection necessarily to the United States other than the payroll of the State Department. The fluctuation of the number of clerks in the Mexico City embassy is representative of this fact; when more clerks were needed, they were hired from the local population. Clerks were not the only issue, as secretaries were also prone to their own set of

¹⁵ Wilson, *Diplomatic Episodes in Mexico, Belgium and Chile*, 58-62, 73-77.

issues. Secretaries, like ambassadors, could be selected for political reasons rather than due to their efficiency. If they were inefficient, then their responsibilities would have to be assumed by either the clerk staff or the ambassador themselves. Due to the size of the embassies, the conduct of the secretaries had a large impact on the prestige of the legation in general. Such was the case in Chile, where despite the efficacy of the secretary there, the legation was renowned for the mixed drinks provided to the diplomatic corps by the secretary. Secretaries could also be transferred between posts haphazardly, depriving the legation of critical information gained by continuity.¹⁶

Ceremony and protocol were important to diplomats. The French system of diplomacy, with its emphasis on protocol and its attempts to generally overawe diplomats, was still in effect internationally. It is safe to say that Wilson was overawed by it. His reception by Leopold II of Belgium in 1904 was noticeably grander than the one he received in Chile at the presentation of his credentials there. His presentation to Diaz in Mexico was also quite grand. Despite the importance of protocol, Wilson often remarks that he is pleasantly surprised by the personal touch of Leopold breaking the typical formalities and of a brief exchange with Diaz. These two opinions on the formality and informality of courts ought to be exclusive of one another, but they reveal a simultaneous American fascination and rejection of contemporary diplomacy. Despite pretensions to being a simple and noble executor of U.S. interest, Wilson's diplomacy hinged to a significant extent on his personal interactions with the "court," even in republics which often consisted of flattery and personal audiences. Negative personal interactions, like the one between Wilson and Gustavo Madero, could augur negative relations. In addition to receiving such attention, diplomats were generally expected to expose themselves to local culture. Therefore, it is not so out of place to see among the description of the politics of Belgium, an account by

¹⁶ Wilson, *Diplomatic Episodes in Mexico, Belgium and Chile*, 28-32, 122-125, 174-177.

Wilson of nearby golf courses, or art museums, or gossip about the royal family. This factored into the expectation of dilettantism among members of the diplomatic corps. Simply put, this type of self-directed pageantry and integration into the local aristocracy was considered a matter of course, although this had the consequence of potentially alienating members of Congress who may be less accepting of the costs of excessive waste, although this would not be so much of an issue with Wilson, but rather with others like Henry White and Joseph Choate.¹⁷

The Pact of the Embassy

One of the keystones of the French method of diplomacy, (and more generally all international diplomacy,) is that ambassadors are to treat solely with the legitimate government of each country. Diplomats are accredited by one country to engage diplomatically with another country.¹⁸ Ambassador Wilson was willing to accept such limitations in Chile and Belgium, but the outbreak of the Revolution in Mexico complicated matters and led Wilson to sympathize with the Diaz regime long before the events of the Pact of the Embassy.¹⁹

The first breach of diplomatic etiquette from Wilson appears to have been a note written by Wilson on behalf of the diplomatic corps. In breach of the norms of international diplomacy, which frowned upon diplomatic overtures to those not associated with the government. The note itself recognizes the official severance of relations, but is a note of thankfulness for the kindness and patriotic service of the Diaz regime. It is a small infraction perhaps, but a negative portent of future relations between the American and Mexican governments. It was more of a portent of

¹⁷ Wilson, *Diplomatic Episodes in Mexico, Belgium and Chile*, 31-32, 117-121, 172-174, 226-229.

¹⁸ Harr, *The Professional Diplomat*, 13.

¹⁹ The introduction of a revolution into the diplomatic affairs of the United States and Mexico would have been a notable disruption to international diplomacy. But according to Wilson's own account, there was a seamless transition from the diplomatic corps' recognition of the Diaz regime to the administration of Francisco León de la Barra (in accordance with the Treaty of Ciudad Juárez.) This is notable for future episodes of U.S. diplomacy: while in some cases it can be argued that U.S. support for immoral regimes is the consequence of legal and normative obligations, the support of the U.S. for movements challenging elected governments cannot be justified in this way.

negative reporting on the Madero regime than one of an overthrow of the Mexican government. Diaz (and the patriotic and pro-business stance he took) was lauded by Wilson, who regarded the Diaz regime *en toto* as being noble, courteous, effective, and acceptably friendly to U.S. interests.²⁰

There is great difficulty in asserting where the move to back a coup against the Madero government came from. It must have either originated in the State Department, headed by Philander Knox, in the White House at the request of Taft, or in Mexico City by Wilson. Sources disagree on the origin, although the intervention of all three in the planning is not disputed. On one hand, there is the view forwarded by Friedrich Katz that argues that Wilson was working at the direction of Knox and Taft and that all three had agreed upon a plan to “upset the Madero administration.” This meant in effect backing groups opposed to Madero (through theoretical rewards) who could better protect U.S. interests and keep the threat of direct military intervention in Mexico active. This was a compromise from an initial position backed by Wilson and Taft, but not Knox, for military intervention. The main objective of the Taft administration in its Mexico policy as asserted by Katz is to prevent the incoming administration of President Wilson from capitulating to the demands of Mexican revolutionaries. Therefore, the Taft government hoped to tie the hands of the incoming government before then President-elect Wilson’s inauguration.²¹ The opposing viewpoint was that Ambassador Wilson was the main progenitor of the overthrow of the Madero regime, an opinion advanced by Gardener. Gardener argues that Wilson's conduct was “increasingly that of a pro-consul in the outskirts of empire.”

This behavior included the ambassador, acting on his own behalf, addressing the Mexican

²⁰ It should also be noted that Wilson’s opinion on the Mexican Army and bureaucracy was not too distinct from the opinion of Porfirian officials held by Francisco Madero. It was Madero’s fatal flaw that he placed too much faith in his former enemies, alienating his former revolutionary coalition in an attempt to ally with (what would turn out to be) unreconstructable members of the former regime. Wilson, *Diplomatic Episodes in Mexico, Belgium and Chile*, 216-217.

²¹ Katz, *The Secret War in Mexico*, 92-96.

Congress on the status of U.S. warships with the intent of undermining President Madero's justification for not resigning. Upon Huerta's assumption of the presidency, it was Wilson who took the extraordinary steps of pressuring the diplomatic corps to legitimize the Huerta government without instructions from their home governments, and continually pushed the U.S. State Department to do the same.²²

If there was a plan that originated in Washington, then Ambassador Wilson's primary responsibility for it may have been in his negative reporting on the Madero government. 33 percent of all correspondence with the State Department originated in Mexico.²³ Wilson was, if nothing else, pessimistic about the chances of the Madero government to successfully establish itself in power. In September 1912, this manifested in a cable from Washington to the U.S. legation, dismissing three potential coup attempts against the Madero regime that Wilson had thought were imminent, as likely fictions. Ironically, of these three alleged coup attempts, two were supposedly to be conducted by Felix Dias (the nephew of the former president) and General Huerta. While Felix Dias and Huerta would each scheme to overthrow Madero, the details presented by Wilson to the State Department are without grounding in reality, and significant details are incorrect.²⁴

More calamitous was information related to the election of Madero as president and the origins of the *Decena Trágica* (Ten Tragic Days,) which would be the background to the Pact of the Embassy. Regarding the election, Wilson contended that it was illegitimate on the grounds of extralegal violence being used by the Madero camp against the supporters of General Bernardo Reyes (another eventual conspirator against Madero) and the further contention that the small

²² Gardner, "Woodrow Wilson and the Mexican Revolution," 8-10; Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, With the Address of the President to Congress December 2, 1913, Mexico, Joseph V. Fuller (Washington: 1920), Document 824.

²³ Gardner, "Woodrow Wilson and the Mexican Revolution," 4-5.

²⁴ Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, With the Address of the President to Congress December 3, 1912, Mexico, Joseph V. Fuller (Washington: 1919), Document 1173.

number of votes cast of the total population was not a sufficient endorsement of Madero to cement his legitimacy.²⁵ Such statements did not go so far as saying that Madero was not the president or overtly recognizing an alternative to Madero, but it was a statement that deliberately asserted that the Mexican government and the Revolution itself was not especially popular. From this, the conclusion could be drawn that the interests of the Mexican population were aligned with the interests of the United States.

Ambassador Wilson blamed Madero as the architect of the *Decena Trágica*. In his dispatches to the State Department as well as the actions he took at his own discretion, Wilson blamed Madero. His common refrain was that if Madero resigned, then peace would be restored to Mexico City and Mexico in general. Beginning on February 11, Wilson asked for permission to threaten both the Madero government and the revolutionaries in Mexico City. It should not be forgotten that this meant threatening the recognized legitimate government of Mexico in an identical fashion to attempted putschists; any resolution that would have come from this would have included the ousting of the Madero government. Therefore, treating both parties on equal terms was tantamount to supporting the putschists. However, the White House did not issue such instructions.²⁶

Ambassador Wilson's partisan reporting cannot solely explain the actions taken by the Taft administration. The position advanced by the U.S. government was that the Mexican government had failed to fulfill its treaty obligations. These concerns, and the demand that they be rectified, was expressed in a note presented by Wilson to Mexican Foreign Secretary Pedro

²⁵ Wilson, *Diplomatic Episodes in Mexico, Belgium and Chile*, 226-228.

²⁶ Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, With the Address of the President to Congress December 2, 1913, Mexico, Joseph V. Fuller (Washington: 1920), Document 799; Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, With the Address of the President to Congress December 2, 1913, Mexico, Joseph V. Fuller (Washington: 1920), Document 804; Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, With the Address of the President to Congress December 2, 1913, Mexico, Joseph V. Fuller (Washington: 1920), Document 808; Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, With the Address of the President to Congress December 2, 1913, Mexico, Joseph V. Fuller (Washington: 1920), Document 811.

Lascuráin on September 15, 1912. The direct subject of the letter was the deaths of three Americans in Mexico. But the larger implications of the letter were that the Mexican government was failing to protect American citizens and business. In the wake of the initial outbreak of Revolution that had established Madero in the presidency, a wave of expropriations against American businesses and attacks against the American community in Mexico had begun. This was followed by policies enacted by the Madero government to satisfy the nationalist basis of the President's coalition. The most onerous of these nationalist policies were discriminatory practices against American employees of the Mexican National Railways, and a tax increase on oil fields in Tampico. The immediacy of these demands was stalled by a visit to Washington from Secretary Lascuráin, which foiled the push towards U.S. direct military intervention.²⁷

The causes of the September 15 note were ultimately not addressed to the complete satisfaction of Taft and Ambassador Wilson. As such, at a point when the required forces came into alignment, the U.S. government was almost certain to turn on Madero. Such an alignment came to be in the outbreak of the *Decena Trágica*. Generals Felix Diaz and Reyes had been imprisoned in Mexico City after each had failed in their individual attempts to overthrow the Madero government. On February 9, 1913, they staged a breakout and attempted to take over the seat of government in Mexico City. Met with initial failure, a battle broke out between the forces loyal to the Madero government and the putschists. The battle then devolved into an artillery duel between the two forces for ten days (prolonged by both the connivance of both sides' commanders.) The military opponent of Felix Diaz and Reyes was General Huerta, a holdover from the previous Diaz regime, and a constant thorn in the side of Madero during his attempt to consolidate power in 1911 and 1912, eventually being removed from command in October 1912.

²⁷ Katz, *The Secret War in Mexico*, 93; Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, With the Address of the President to Congress December 3, 1912, Mexico, Joseph V. Fuller (Washington: 1919), Document 1167.

By February 11, Huerta and Felix Diaz had met in person and agreed that Madero was to be deposed (Reyes had died in the initial fighting.) Certainly by February 16, Wilson had been in contact with both Huerta and Felix Diaz. Further, he had made his intention to pacify Mexico City clear to Secretary Lascuráin, threatening to use troops from U.S. warships in the Gulf of Mexico.

By February 18, and following a cable from Taft to Madero to the effect that intervention was not forthcoming, Wilson, Huerta, and Felix Diaz moved to end the Madero regime. On February 17, Madero and members of his government (including his brother Gustavo Madero) were arrested by Huerta. Joint rule was at this point a foregone conclusion. The following day, Huerta and Felix Diaz met in the U.S. embassy. Both asserted their right to be president, but the matter was eventually resolved so that Huerta would be granted the presidency, but support Felix Diaz in elections to be held shortly.²⁸

Insisting on the legal transition of power, Huerta was placed into the order of presidential succession following Madero, Pino Suarez, and Lascuráin, all three resigning. The resignations of Madero and Pino Suarez were supposedly a guarantee of their safety, and the garentours were supposedly Huerta, Wilson, and the German ambassador, Paul von Hintze. Wilson's role in the resignation and subsequent execution of Madero and Pino Suarez is criticized by Katz. It is Katz's opinion that Wilson's interactions with Huerta as early as a meeting on February 17 enabled the latter to execute the former president. In a cable to Washington on February 19, Wilson wrote, "[Huerta] asked my advice as to whether it was best to send the ex-President out of the country or place him in a lunatic asylum. I replied that he ought to do that which was best

²⁸ Katz, *The Secret War in Mexico*, 95-108; Wilson, *Diplomatic Episodes in Mexico, Belgium and Chile*, 247-282; Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, With the Address of the President to Congress December 2, 1913, Mexico, Joseph V. Fuller (Washington: 1920), Document 836. (<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1913/d836>)

for the peace of the country.”²⁹ The German ambassador, Hintze, agitated to ensure safe passage for Madero and Pino Suarez and received a promise to that effect from Huerta. However, on February 23, Madero and Pino Suarez were taken from their cells and executed. In his memoir, Wilson coldly rejects the importance of Madero’s death, arguing that at the time of his death he had been not a president, but a simple citizen.³⁰

Ambassador Wilson was proud of his compromise. In cables to the State Department he is celebratory, extolling the silence of a city ravaged by ten days of artillery fire. According to Hintze, this celebratory attitude extended to outright bragging. Hintze wrote, “Ambassador Wilson made the Blanquet-Huerta coup; he himself brags about it.”³¹ But U.S. policy in Mexico remained vague, Knox and Taft notably refused to recognize the Huerta government. While Ambassador Wilson was satisfied with the state of the Mexican government, the incoming President Wilson was less so. Colonel Edward House, President Wilson’s close confidant, recommended to the President that the ambassador should be kept in Mexico until Felix Diaz was elected president in accordance with the Pact. When this failed to occur, and after the British government recognized the Huerta government before the U.S. did, President Wilson acted. He withdrew Ambassador Wilson in favor of a Democratic Party favorite, Governor John Lind, and in a fashion distinct from the Republican governments preceding it, continued to collect power in the hands of the President, rather than the Foreign Service.³²

²⁹ Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, With the Address of the President to Congress December 2, 1913, Mexico, Joseph V. Fuller (Washington: 1920), Document 840. (<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1913/d840>)

³⁰ Katz, *The Secret War in Mexico*, 108-112; Wilson, *Diplomatic Episodes in Mexico, Belgium and Chile*, 283-288.

³¹ Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, With the Address of the President to Congress December 2, 1913, Mexico, Joseph V. Fuller (Washington: 1920), Document 839. (<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1913/d839>); Katz, *The Secret War in Mexico*, 108.

³² Gardner, “Woodrow Wilson and the Mexican Revolution,” 12-24.

Wilsonianism and Reformism

Wilsonianism, recognized as the animus of professionalization efforts by Ilchman and Harr among others, has little to do with the personal policies of President Woodrow Wilson.³³ Wilsonianism as an ideological moment represents the common end of the Wilson presidency and the reformist aspects of Foreign Service reformers, liberal internationalism. But these two trends within the ideology represent different origins of the same liberal internationalist conclusion, with the key difference being that professionalizers were based in a theory of what was in effect *realpolitik* and increasing attempts to rationalize the growth of U.S. influence abroad, and Wilson who was grounded in theories of democratic moralism.³⁴

Wilson's democratic moralism was articulated by the President himself. A scholar of political science, Wilson had written several works on the function of the U.S. government. One of those works, "Congressional Government" focuses on the machinery of congressional government as a distinct element from the constituted system of government. It is primarily a study on the extra-constitutional aspects of the U.S. government, with interest paid to committees of congress, the balance of power between the President and his cabinet, and the power of party conventions in choosing the president. Congressional government to Wilson is government by committee, the main negative externality of this system being a lack of accountability within the federal government. This directly would affect the role of the president during Wilson's administration as he took control of aspects of government like foreign policy with a directness that was uncommon for the time.³⁵

³³ The assertion that Wilsonianism is part of the professionalism process is part of the wider assertion that the professionalization of the FS was part of a democratization of American and world diplomacy.

³⁴ Schulzinger, *The Making of the Diplomatic Mind*, 9-10.

³⁵ Gregory, "To Do Good in the World: Woodrow Wilson and America's Mission," 359-383; It is worth noting that Wilson's appraisal of the congressional system was highly specific to a period of time in the 1880s, well before his presidency. It is a study of American politics during the period of hegemony of the Republican Party following the Civil War, and its lessons on the role of the executive and congress are marked by impressions of that period. By Wilson's own admission in the preface to the fifteenth edition (1900) much of the content of the books is

Another externality of Wilson's study of government was the importance of advocacy (with the widest possible definition) in government. Wilson's 1912 presidential campaign was "almost entirely concerned with domestic problems," and lacked a comprehensive foreign policy planck.³⁶ He was, however, concerned with the proliferation of special interests as a domestic issue which was part of his campaign. Shortly after his inauguration, he was confronted with the crisis of the overthrow of the Mexican government and the self congratulatory messages for facilitating this overthrow by the U.S. embassy in Mexico. The event was thought to be related to American business interests in Mexico, with the alleged threat to American lives and property being a common refrain from the Diplomatic and Consular Services in Mexico. Events in Mexico expanded the special interest planck previously espoused as part of Wilson's domestic campaigning and concertized in the belief that revolutionary activity in Latin America was the result of friction between nation interests of the Latin American nations and European colonial powers. The coup in Mexico, despite originating in American interests, was seen as a potential foothold for European ambitions due to the prevalence of anti-American sentiment in the area; the American origins of the coup were known, but seen as an outgrowth of a "small group of Americans with vested interests in Mexico." Wilson's policy towards Mexico would therefore be one of hesitation, hoping that given space, Mexico would revert to a democratic state on its own terms. To rush the process through intervention would increase anti-American sentiment and enable European influence which would destabilize the region over time. This is a contradictory policy, and reveals an optimism in U.S. business and government interests to either act distinctly from their European counterparts, or for the power of the executive to be able to restrain them.

anachronistic. The presidencies of Theodore Roosevelt and Howard Taft would make it more so. But to exclude this work from this essay would be a disservice, mostly because it is a direct, written indication that Wilson's assumption of responsibilities was an ideological intention, and not the reaction to a war in Europe or similar circumstances. Wilson, *Congressional Government*.

³⁶ Gregory, "To Do Good in the World: Woodrow Wilson and America's Mission," 363

Wilson relied on a number of special agents to give him direct diplomatic information on the progress of the Mexican Revolution, a fact which epitomized his political philosophy. The State Department had shown itself to be beholden to special interests. But to counter such influence, the executive had to be able to take firm command.³⁷

In short, Wilson believed that since he was reformist, his government was by nature reformist. And because his government was reformist, the United States was by nature reformist. Policies adopted by the United States could therefore be executed without committing the sins of European imperialism. European imperialism was an autocratic process, contrary to the democratic principles of free trade and self-determination. So, to establish democracy, the United States had to promote institutions that developed free trade and self-determination.³⁸

The other strain of Wilsonianism was nearly the antithesis of the former. The European-oriented attempts at emulation of existing customs in anticipation of the United States taking a greater role in world affairs. This group primarily took their lead from the presidency of Theodore Roosevelt. The model of these reformers was the British educational system and foreign service. Members believed that they were part of a self-appointed elite who possessed unique skills that made them uniquely suitable for service abroad. They were educated in the premier preparatory academies of the age, like Groton. They attended the highest prestige colleges. Their learning was partially inspired by a darwinist passion to outdo competition on the national and international stage. This forced them into opposition to political appointments through opposition to the seemingly arbitrary appointments made by presidents. This had been the milieu that created Roosevelt, and it would continue to produce a breed of high-powered, aristocratic Yankees.

³⁷ Gardner, "Woodrow Wilson and the Mexican Revolution," 14-17.

³⁸ Gregory, "To Do Good in the World: Woodrow Wilson and America's Mission."; De Santis, *The Diplomacy of Silence*, 16-17.

They were also attracted to the prospects of liberal internationalism. It was, for many of the early reformers, the source of their personal wealth. They were the scions of mercantile and industrial families. Many lived in Europe (at least for part of the year.) The aloofness of the United States to the military conflicts of Europe was not a reason to ignore Europe, but rather a safeguard against the destructive impulses of European warfare coming to the United States. Instead, the progressive ideas of democracy, christianity, and profit united both sides of the Atlantic. These dandies that composed the Foreign Service were not unified on the nature of service. Rather, reform was approached tentatively and haphazardly with many within the Service taking little or no part in the professionalization.³⁹ More will be said on these efforts in later chapters.

These two strains, Wilson's personal beliefs and the European-oriented dandies should, by all accounts, have remained separate. But with time, all differences were sanded down. Over time, it was the determination to preserve liberal internationalism that prevailed. The specific elements of each of the strains, especially non-interventionism, darwinism, and *noblesse oblige* were discarded as professionalism and an ideological enemy became two of the primary contributing factors in what was becoming Wilsonian thought.

Two final notes may be made on the subject of Wilsonianism. First, despite the increase of power under the executive that would occur under the Wilson administration was not the same as the strengthening of the executive departments. In theory, the lack of an executive within the legislative branch was a positive outcome of the congressional system. The closest to an executive function within Congress was the Rules Committee, which retained power entirely separate from the executive branch, preventing British or French systems of government. Wilson further believed that the ability to establish extra-constitutional amendments to the structure of

³⁹ Weil, *A Pretty Good Club*, 15-23; Ilchman, *Professional Diplomacy in the United States, 1779-1939*, 56-59.

government was historically tied to the executive branch, and that Congress through the committee system (constitutionally created) had no need to expand its functions beyond those already ascribed to it. Therefore, changes to the civil service would occur due to action within the executive branch. But upon the inauguration of Wilson, he embodied the increased functions of the executive, stalling the expansion of the Foreign Service, although his prediction would ultimately prove fruitful, just not in his presidency.⁴⁰

Second, Wilson's love of democratic internationalism and anathematization of diplomacy were not original ideas. The general trend towards fixing the flaws in democracy through reform of government institutions to remove special influence were common in that era and the principles of fusion politics among others. Wilson's distaste for European politics was also not original, as the Shippen anecdote indicates, Americans had failed to join the melee of European powers in the nineteenth century, opting instead to remain focused on commercial relations with mostly Latin American nations. It was as a consequence of the Great War that the United States began to turn towards European diplomacy, and moreover to attempts by Wilson to regulate European diplomacy. Under Wilson himself, the interests of the Foreign Service remained parochial, and while there were advances during his presidency (discussed in the next chapter,) they were not the result of Wilson or his administrative style, but rather the policies and preferences of the Secretary of State.

⁴⁰ Wilson, *Congressional Government*.

Chapter II

The professionalization of the Foreign Service culminating in the Rogers Act (1924) was only possible due to a confluence of desire to modernize the FS from congressional leaders and members of the FS itself. There are generally five motivations attributed to these groups, each of which this chapter will endeavor to explain. However, all five of these motivations ultimately spring forth from the same origin: a sense of greater purpose. This sense of purpose, specifically as it relates to the expansion of the role of the United States is reflected in an interesting way in literature on the subject. The growth of the Foreign Service is accompanied by the growth of a so-called “American diplomacy,” an allegedly clean break from the existing modes of diplomacy which emphasized openness, parity between nations, and relations between nations as well as permanent supranational bodies. The extent to which “American diplomacy” exists as a real shift in international diplomatic thought rather than a shift in solely American thought on the path to American exceptionalism is dubious.⁴¹ And while that is not the subject of the essay, such facts that support that conclusion will reveal themselves in the course of this chapter and this essay. Rather, this chapter intends to show the specific motives for professionalization of the FS with the ultimate goal of creating a service along the lines of that of a European country. The greater purpose that American diplomats were seeking was parity with European contemporaries, not some exceptional niche.

The five motives for greater professionalization can be attributed to two loose sources. First, the Foreign Service, itself divided between its consular and diplomatic personnel, aspired to increase its role in the formation of U.S. policy, appropriate compensation, and appropriate prestige. On the congressional side, the impetus for reform was based on the establishment of the career principle in government and the expansion of the United States onto the world stage. Over

⁴¹ Harr, *The Professional Diplomat*.

time, these efforts would combine in the Rogers Act, but this was not the first push for professionalization. Rather, efforts were diffused and resulted in different projects that together contributed to the trend of a professional service.

That reform efforts would originate in the personnel of the Foreign Service and in Congress is quite surprising. The cadre of Foreign Service personnel, later officers (FSOs,) were regarded as dilettantes, no different from the preceding generations of do-nothing members.⁴² Similarly, there was no way to distinguish this generation of congressional representatives from their predecessors, who had left the FS to languish as part of the policy of isolationism. There were relatively few articulate technical experts that could justify a rationale to why the United States needed a better Service. One exception to this was Henry White, the sometimes member of the FS whose thoughts on professionalization were a “great moral support” to the reform movement.⁴³ The reason for the segregation of these efforts was the short tenures of members of the Foreign Service. This was the same reason that reform failed to ultimately originate in the executive branch: with the spoils system intact, each consecutive reform initiative had a defined shelf life of three years after which it would fall into decay. Initiatives begun under one administration would fail upon the inauguration of the next. Perhaps the most curious example of his pattern were the administrations of Grover Cleveland, the first of which (1885-1889) was progressive in terms of professionalization, but his second term (1893-1897) was not. Henry White represented the American legation in the United Kingdom during the first Cleveland administration, as well as the following Harrison administration, but lost his job during Cleveland’s second administration, as did most of the small group of careerists that had grown

⁴² Weil, *A Pretty Good Club*, 18-ff.

⁴³ Schulzinger, *The Making of the Diplomatic Mind*, 16.

under eight years of calm.⁴⁴ The reassertion of this type of calm in contravention to the turmoil of political appointments was the end goal of the merit system.

Noblesse oblige

The professionalization of the FS was inextricably linked to the integration of education into government service. Those who participated in the efforts of professionalization were keenly aware of their educational prowess and keen to utilize it to and to spread it. Careerists saw themselves as possessing a certain set of skills that provided them with unique advantages in the world of diplomatic relations. The drive to education was inculcated in this group by their own education, and imposed upon them a sense of their own intellectual superiority for the tasks that they set out to do. Many believed, simply put, they possessed superior merit to those who obtained positions through jobbing. This fact was not in contrast with the fact that many of them had obtained their jobs through jobbing and were subject to the political whims of the administrations that they served. The early efforts to base promotion on merit originated in this group because the two aspects were not contradictory. In addition to championing the merit promotion system, this group also attempted to align the mission of the Foreign Service with empirical methods and to foster an *esprit de corps* among the membership of the FS based on nothing less than their existing privileged connections in their civilian lives.

The shared connection between many FS members began in their education. Groton, the New England preparatory school, was the educational basis of many of the progressive and civically oriented careerists who joined the FS in the twentieth century. The alumni list of Groton contains no shortage of FS members. Joseph Grew, who would be one of the preeminent voices in the transformation of the Service into a professional body (and later Secretary of State) was

⁴⁴ Ilchman, *Professional Diplomacy in the United States, 1779-1939*, 79-81.

joined by Dean Acheson, Sumner Welles, and W. Averell Harriman, as well as other eminent American diplomats (or those involved in American diplomacy) including, Hiram Bingham IV, C. Douglas Dillon, Tracy Barnes, F. Trubee Davison, Kermit Roosevelt, Adrian S. Fisher, Walter Russell Mead, James Graham Parsons, and George Herbert Walker III. The tradition of civic participation from Groton alumni continues up until the present day, with David Thorne and Christopher Landau serving under President Barack Obama in Italy and President Donald Trump in Mexico respectively.⁴⁵

From Groton and similar prep schools, men specifically interested in joining the Diplomatic Service, (and their New England fellow-travelers) went to prestigious universities. These higher institutions were equally swept up in a sense of civic nationalism and liberal internationalism. Of 30 FSOs within the study conducted by Hugh De Santis, only two did not attend college. This rate is representative of the Diplomatic Service before the passage of the Rogers Act and the entire FS after the passage of the Act. It is also the best indication of the elitism that distinguished those entering the Diplomatic Service, from the larger Consular Service. In 1910, according to U.S. census data, roughly three percent of Americans completed a college education. The superior education of the future group of diplomats distinguished them from the wider professional class and their consular colleges, and was also a determining factor in the importance placed on education in the post-Rogers Service.⁴⁶

The basic profile of a prospective FS member was exceptional in their international outlook. Languages like French could be taught in schools. But a fascination with international diplomacy could only come from an internal pull to travel. It is probably this unquantifiable factor that has led the early efforts of this group of reformers to be told in epic terms. What could

⁴⁵ Weil, *A Pretty Good Club*, 16-18.

⁴⁶ De Santis, *The Diplomacy of Silence*, 13.

have inspired this group to leave the comfort of their homes to attempt careers in parochial and insignificant parts of the government, and also to attempt to increase their personal burdens through advocating for professionalization and expansion? The answer is unclear, and without a simple motive, positive characteristics have been attached to these endeavors; a sense of adventure or personally stifling circumstances at home are probable rationales. But such reasons cannot fully explain why someone (Joseph Grew, graduate of Groton and Harvard) would spend time during his first job in the Cairo Consulate indexing the historical records of his office.⁴⁷

Foreign commerce becomes to duty of the Foreign Service

The Foreign Service had been before the period of reform a heavily commercial enterprise. The Consular Service had been the more expansive service both in terms of number of personnel and in number of offices. At the time of the Rogers Act, there were 511 Consular officers to only 122 Diplomatic Officers. This was indicative of the balance of importance on a day to day basis between the two. This was a recognized detriment to the professionalization of the FS: those who were involved in the diplomatic part of foreign relations knew that their cause was harder to advocate for if they didn't have something tangible to give the government. To that end, they promoted the Diplomatic Service as a way to capture and enhance the benefits of the existing Service, and in the long term to make those benefits more empirical.

The doctrine of the State Department was that diplomacy could be carried out under either a ministerial or an institutional basis. This meant that treaties were highly valued and ministers were placed internationally to guarantee international treaties were observed. This was a factor partially responsible for the small workload of the diplomatic staff. What influence members of the Diplomatic Service had was primarily informal.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Weil, *A Pretty Good Club*, 18-20.

⁴⁸ Harr, *The Professional Diplomat*, 17-18.

Members of the Foreign Service were keenly aware of this imbalance, and viewed it from two perspectives. From the perspective of the Diplomatic Service, reforms within the Consular Service looked to be extremely promising. The Consular Service had been more successful in pursuing reform, not only in the early twentieth century, but also historically. Even before the grade of Ambassador had been established, the Consular Service was undergoing its own first reform. In a law of August 18, 1856, the basic consular system that had existed without precise definitions or tasks, first implemented in 1792, was overhauled; three grades of consuls were established, some were allowed salaries and others the ability to engage in private commerce. Additionally, a system for “consular pupils,” appointed by the President for the purpose of educating them in the methods of consuls was established. While this law did also include provisions for the Diplomatic Service, they were intentionally less specific. The 1856 law was based on the earlier recommendation of Robert Livingston in 1832, where he made the case that the U.S. was a nation of commerce, and therefore the establishment, expansion, and protection of trade was the business of government.

Fifty years later, consular grades were revised in a law of April 5, 1906. The 1906 law established seven salaried grades for consuls general and nine grades salaried grades for consuls.⁴⁹ This law had been passed after the endorsement of the U.S. business community, seeking to expand commercial relations abroad, as well as the endorsement of President Roosevelt’s so-called “tennis cabinet.” When the Great War broke out, this law would also come

⁴⁹ According to Barnes and Morgan, this act contained five main provisions: 1) establishment of salaries for consuls and consuls general and abolishing the grade of “commercial agent”; 2) the establishment of a consular inspection corps and provisions for regular inspections up to every two years; 3) mandated that all consular secretaries earning a salary greater than \$1,000 must be American citizens; 4) forbade salaried consular officials from engaging in private business; 5) restricted the spending of consular agents. Barnes and Morgan, *The Foreign Service of the United States*, 164-165.

to be seen as insufficient, and the call for a more efficient consular system, one more capable of protecting American lives abroad, would persist.⁵⁰

Members of the Diplomatic Service were keenly aware of these developments, and of the limitations on them. Livingston's assessment of the foreign relations of the United States as an extension of the nation's commerce had persisted through generations of legislation. The person most responsible for the reform efforts of the twentieth century was Wilbur Carr. In addition to his official positions, notably Director of the Consular Service (1909-1924) and Chairman of the Board of Foreign Service Personnel (1924-1937), he exerted significant informal and moral influence. Notably he served under 17 Secretaries of State, for 45 years. Many of the initiatives in favor of the professionalization of the FS were advocated by him, and he was a constant advocate for the FS in front of Congress. One notable episode of advocacy surrounded the act of February 5, 1915, which made a number of extremely important changes: 1) it changed the appointment system of FS members to be solely on the basis of grade instead of location allowing the State Department to delegate members at will; 2) it allowed the State Department to make use of FS members domestically in the State Department apparatus (setting the stage for the tenures of many FSOs in Foggy Bottom and the education system at the Foreign Service School); 3) enshrined the merit system through a formal system of proposals originating within the State Department; 4) establishment of rank, formal responsibilities, and salary for interim officials, like *charge d'affaires* and vice counsels.⁵¹

⁵⁰ The Great War was also a boon to the Consular Service, as it was given jurisdiction over the safety of Americans abroad, a task that it had been responsible for since 1792. Lay, *The Foreign Service of the United States*, 11-17.

⁵¹ With the passage of the Rogers Act, the Foreign Service Personnel Board became an extremely powerful institutional tool. It was responsible for recommending every promotion, merit, demerit, transfer, or disciplinary action in the FS, and subject only to the President and Secretary of State. For the career of Carr, see Barnes and Morgan, *The Foreign Service of the United States*, 230-231; For Carr's advocacy of 1915 act, see Lay, *The Foreign Service of the United States*, 168-173.

The members of the Diplomatic Service were not antagonistic to the Consular Service. Rather, it was to their benefit that the Consular Service succeeded. Competition from other cabinet offices was threatening to undermine jurisdiction of the Diplomatic and Consular Services. In 1903, in response to petitions from business leaders the Roosevelt administration signed into law a bill to create the Department of Commerce and Labor. The purpose of such a department was to split away from the Treasury certain functions more related to commerce than fiscal policy. This included the small Bureau of Foreign Commerce, which was responsible for publishing consular reports. The 1903 law also created the Bureau of Trade Relations, which was a liaison office between the consuls and Commerce. The law establishing the Commerce Department was vague, leading to a bureaucratic conflict with several Bureaus attempting to facilitate connections between American businesses and foreign purchasers.

Carr joined this scuffle, competing with the Bureau of Manufactures and the Bureau of Trade Relations, both subordinate to Commerce. Thus a rivalry developed between the Departments of State and Commerce, with the main opposing bureaus being Consular Affairs for Manufactures respectively. The two main points of contention were the use of consular agents promoting trade outside their jurisdictions in a manner where the left hand fought the right, and the second issue was the publication of consular reports by Commerce. The question was whether the consuls role was economic or diplomatic; Carr and the State Department, including several Diplomatic officers, insisted it was the latter. The elimination of the role of commercial agent in 1906 only made Commerce adamant on the point of being able to contact consuls directly. The Commerce Department had the upper hand, and the State Department was accused of duplication of government functions by Congress in May 1908, and the Bureau of Manufactures was expanded to the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce in 1912.

But in 1912 also, the State Department reclaimed the right to print consular reports. In 1913, the Wilson administration came into office, which distanced itself from government intervention in international business. Furthermore, Wilson's unique administrative style benefitted the State Department, which was effectively lying low. The Great War then enabled the State Department to undergo its first considerable reorganization in 1915. The main measure was to replace the geographical basis of appointments with a grade-based system to allow for flexibility in the allocation of resources, including the liquidation of the Cologne consulate.

In 1924, Carr fended off an attempt by the Commerce Department to establish its own foreign service, arguing that the State Department had the capability to engage foreign policy on both a commercial and national security basis, thus making Commerce's prospective service an unnecessary duplication. The same year, the Rogers Act passed, enshrining in law a Foreign Service with "low" commerce and "high" strategic policy under its umbrella. The jurisdictions of the Departments of State and Commerce never stopped overlapping, but this conflict generated two lessons for reformers. First, the State Department could maintain its place by embracing its distinct function of diplomacy and second, trade was worth fighting over in the bureaucracy and worth significant appropriations in Congress.⁵²

The means to represent the United States abroad

With the resources available to the Consular Service, it was difficult to adequately represent the interests of the United States. This came down to two main deficits: money and prestige. It was the former that could garner the latter. On a basic level, State Department staff had to be housed and fed. In order to make the jobs competitive and attract talent, the jobs had to pay well. Then there were the subsequent effects. If the United States was to remain competitive

⁵² Werking, *The Master Architects*, 171-250; Schulzinger, *The Making of the Diplomatic Mind*, 135-138.

in business or diplomatic circles, how could it fail to compete with other nations in pomp or presentation? In the days of the dilettante FS, this was an occasional issue, but not catastrophic. However, as time went on, the necessity of independent wealth to hold a job in the FS was a hindering factor in the establishment of a merit system.

There are many examples of FS members, who by personal means, were allowed to begin their government careers. Great personal independent wealth was a fundamental factor in turning those interested in civil-minded progressivism into working careers abroad. In addition to Joseph Grew, mentioned earlier in this chapter, who paid his way to Cairo, other members of the FS did the same thing. William Phillips (another Undersecretary of State) began his career as an unpaid secretary to Joseph Choate, another influential reformer, who served as the U.S. Ambassador to Britain. The relationship between Choate and Phillips was, if not typical, then unexceptional in the close world of the Foreign Service. Phillips had been attending law school after being discouraged from joining the FS. Choate, a family friend, invited him to be his personal secretary in London, an unpaid position. Phillips would pay his own way through. Phillips learned on the job, serving in embassies in London and China (1903-1907,) then returning to Washington (1907,) before returning to China as chief of the Division of Far Eastern Affairs, a novel idea proposed by Phillips to collate information in the field and deliver recommendations based on that information to the State Department (1907-1909.) Phillips in this time also became a member of Roosevelt's "tennis cabinet," allowing him to gain access to the circle of internationalists that surrounded the president.⁵³

The most expensive part of a foreign mission was its accommodations. In 1895, President Cleveland said in a statement to Congress, "The usefulness of a nation's diplomatic representative undeniably depends much on the appropriateness of his surroundings, and a

⁵³ Schulzinger, *The Making of the Diplomatic Mind*, 55-59.

country like ours, while avoiding unnecessary glitter and show, should be certain that it does not suffer in its relations with foreign nations through parsimony and shabbiness in its diplomatic outfit.” No move on this front was made until 1911, when the Lowden Act was passed, enabling the Secretary of State to purchase and maintain legation sites for diplomatic and consular purposes. It also established an authorization for \$500,000 a year for this purpose. The U.S. government before the passage owned nine legations abroad (four in national capitals, five not.) Between 1911 and 1924, purchases under the Lowden Act were slow, the State Department only acquired ten more buildings in this period. Notably, six of these buildings were in the Americas: Mexico City, Havana, San José, San Salvador, Santiago de Chile, and Rio de Janeiro.⁵⁴

The implementation of a grade system for diplomatic and consular officers, mentioned before, was an additional bonus to the compensation of members of the FS. While this did not guarantee that salaries would increase, it did establish a system where merit could be rewarded with a salary increase without having to move locations or seek out a potentially more lucrative job. Pay scales therefore severed the connection between FS members and the political job market. It was also a cushion to consular officers, who owing to restrictions placed upon their private enterprise or business could no longer enrich, or even maintain themselves through their career.⁵⁵

The expanded role of the United States on the world stage

The expansion of the U.S. onto the world stage presented a transcendental question about the nature of the Foreign Service. If the Foreign Service is the eyes, ears, and mouth of the State Department and hence the national executive, then should the FS further be responsible for all of

⁵⁴ Barnes and Morgan, *The Foreign Service of the United States*, 173-177.

⁵⁵ Barnes and Morgan, *The Foreign Service of the United States*, 165.

the tasks of the head, especially the tasks of the brain?⁵⁶ The Consular Service was responsible for the promotion of trade internationally. The Diplomatic Service was responsible for the collection of diplomatic intelligence and maintaining U.S. relations. In addition to the tasks of the services independently, there was an increased push for professionalism and merit from within Congress. One of the main proponents for professionalism within the Services was Representative John Rogers of Massachusetts. Rogers had inserted the amendment in the 1915 act allowing placement to the State Department without loss of grade, and was an adamant watchdog of the Services after 1915, attempting to prevent partisanship from reentering the promotion system.

As the number of placements in the State Department became larger in concert with the expanded role of the U.S. on the world stage, internationalist members of Congress became more invested in maintaining a system of merit within the Foreign Services. This was for two reasons: first, the previous principle of treaties as the basic foundation of U.S. diplomacy had been blown apart by the Great War and second, professional diplomats were seen as more authoritative and capable of influencing opinion abroad more effectively. A convert to the latter point was Secretary of State Robert Lansing, who was Wilson's second in that position after William Jennings Bryan.⁵⁷

The cause for these shifts was undoubtedly the Great War. The War was incredibly destabilizing to the whole fabric of international relations. And once the dominoes began to fall, diplomatic pacts like the Entente Cordiale, the Treaty of London (1839,) Stresa Front, the Treaty of Riga (1921,) or League of Nations proved incapable of stopping the dissolution of European diplomacy. The treaty system was blamed for the outbreak of the Great War, as well as the

⁵⁶ Lay, *The Foreign Service of the United States*.

⁵⁷ Ilchman, *Professional Diplomacy in the United States, 1779-1939*, 130-136.

deficiencies in its conclusion. The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk and then the Treaties of Versailles and Trianon were never viewed as successful reestablishment of the international order. Versailles and Trianon were each seen as overly onerous on their respective victims. Trianon was blamed for effectively removing Eastern Europe from the domain of international relations. The onerous nature of Versailles was blamed for perpetuation and justifying German militarism. And as part of the Treaty of Versailles, the subsequent French occupation of the Ruhr was also a severe shock to the system of European diplomacy.

The collapse of Continental diplomacy was seen in the U.S. as failure of the whole European diplomatic model, and its failure to reconstitute in the 1920s was further confirmation of this fact. As a way to resolve this, a “new,” “American,” or “democratic” diplomacy was asserted to be the next innovation in the world diplomatic order by proponents of professionalization, conveniently including the U.S. as a guarantor of good faith negotiations and a larger staff to help promote this premise internationally. It was then rather fitting that during the occupation of the Ruhr by France, the Rogers Act was passed in the United States.

In the wake of the Great War, Schulzinger argues that the Consular Service was facing a significant decrease in prestige, while the Diplomatic Service angled at the same time for stable tenures and better pay.⁵⁸ These assertions are partially, but not entirely true, especially as far as the Consular Service was concerned. Consular prestige was maintained by the Service’s active role during the Great War in protection of Americans. Such efficacious work was rewarded with further responsibilities. The volume of commercial work undertaken by consuls increased in the first part of the 1920s, including the certification of invoices and the promotion of trade through direct inquiries. Certification of quarantine protocols for ships for traveling to the U.S. also became more numerous. In addition to expansions of existing services, consuls were made

⁵⁸ Schulzinger, *The Making of the Diplomatic Mind*, 59.

responsible for new elements of the foreign bureaucracy. Consuls were granted the responsibility of financing the foreign expenditures of the United States Shipping Board in 1917. In 1915, when passports for entry into the United States became standard as a consequence of the War, responsibility for this service was devolved to the consular offices. In 1921 alone, consuls certified 657,968 visas for travel to the United State. These are not responsibilities that would have been given to a government agency in disfavor.⁵⁹

The reality of perceptions of the Service was that “cookie pushers” and “pin-stripe boys” were common stereotypes across both Services, and reformers seeking to eliminate those stereotypes were fortunate to be allied with elements within the Foreign Services who themselves sought reform. The chief architects of the Rogers Act were Representative Rogers and Secretary Lansing. The latter thought that the changes in the international system merited a reorganization of the “machinery of government,” and he wrote to Rogers, who was a member of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, to this effect. Rogers attempted to pass reform bills in 1919 and 1921, both failed to gain traction.

However Rogers and Lansing had a significant group of luminaries backing their reorganization plans. The new Secretary of State, Charles Evans Hughes appeared in person in both the 67th and 68th Congresses to advocate for the bill, behind him stood many of the professionalizers of the domestic government services including the Civil Service Reform League. Wilbur Carr and Tracy Lay also advocated directly to Congress and were responsible for creating feasible proposals within the proposed reorganization. To advocate for the business elements of the bill Grew, Phillips, and a number of other Diplomatic Service careerists lobbied their business contacts. The Minister to Poland High Gibson directly appealed to Congress on this ground. Against them stood no organized group. The bill passed the House of

⁵⁹ Barnes and Morgan, *The Foreign Service of the United States*, 197-201.

Representatives by a vote of 134 to 27, and passed the Senate unanimously. It came into effect on July 1, 1924.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ Barnes and Morgan, *The Foreign Service of the United States*, 200-205; Schulzinger, *The Making of the Diplomatic Mind*, 59-78; Ilchman, *Professional Diplomacy in the United States, 1779-1939*, 139-146.

Chapter III

From the passage of the Rogers Act (1924) until the end of World War Two, the members of the pre-professional Foreign Service instituted the anti-Soviet liberal internationalist ideology that would come to define U.S. diplomacy. This was accomplished through the generational transfer of information, accomplished through provisions in the Rogers Act, especially the Foreign Service School (FSS.) The liberal internationalism that had been developed at Groton and similar schools was now turned like a weapon on supposed exceptions to the liberal internationalist order, especially the Soviet Union. It was through this process that U.S. foreign policy would develop into the Cold War.

The professionalization would have profound impacts for U.S. policy. The impact of these efforts would peak in 1948 with the establishment of the European Recovery Program (Marshall Plan.) The accomplishment of Secretary of State George Marshall and the rest of the Truman administration was tied to the first cadre of fully professional and ideologically committed FSOs. These FSOs and their counterparts in the State Department were able to fundamentally reshape U.S. foreign policy by linking the United States in institutional financial bonds to Europe, ensuring that isolationism would not resurface in the wake of World War 2. The ideological commitment of the FSOs to liberal internationalism would be a propelling force in that change.⁶¹

Of the major proponents of the Marshall Plan in the Truman administration, the so-called Wise Men,⁶² two were diplomats (George Kennan and Charles Bohlen.) The source of their eponymous wisdom was their education, both theoretical and practical in the FSS and in areas under threat from Soviet expansion respectively. It is not an exaggeration to say that Kennan and

⁶¹ Nuestadt, presidential powers, 37-40.

⁶² This designation is from the work by Walter Isaacson and Evan Thomas.

Bohlen were both the chief reporters of the potential Soviet threat, but also the chief proponents of holistic ideological responses that became U.S. policy. Rather than simply transmitting their hopes or apprehensions, this cadre of FSOs possessed the good fortune to put their theories into practice. This policy shift was by no means inevitable, and instead heavily contingent on the experiences of FSOs related to the Soviet Union.

Kennan and Bohlen were not the only proponents of liberal internationalism that fit into this trend. Also influential in his assessment of the threat of possible Soviet contamination was Arthur Bliss Lane, who served as second secretary to Poland during the period of the Soviet-Polish War and later as minister to Nicaragua, where he was accused of complicity in the assassination of Augusto César Sandino. Lane was a product of both the non-professional and professional Foreign Service. His career was literally split in half by a brief tenure with the State Department in Washington, first serving primarily in Europe, later in Latin America. In both places, especially in Poland and Nicaragua, Lane's experiences were notable for their opposition to radicalism.

This chapter will cover the activities of these three FSOs, the ways in which they were influenced by the professionalization of the Foreign Service, and the way that they propagated their ideology of liberal internationalism to the next generation of FSOs. In addition to the FSOs who benefited from the increasingly anti-Soviet bent of the Foreign Service, there were significant losers. This includes those who, despite continuing to work in the Foreign Service, found their more conciliatory attitudes towards the Soviet Union out of style, including Kennan and Bohlen's boss in the U.S. embassy in Moscow, Ambassador William Bullitt. The rapprochement that some FSOs offered to Moscow ultimately always failed, either due to dissatisfaction with the Soviet government or more commonly because the appetite for rapprochement with the Soviet Union was rare or non-existent within the State Department.

The Foreign Service School and the propagation of liberal internationalism

The Foreign Service School, the precursor to today's Foreign Service Institute, was the principle institution responsible for converting the attitudes of the pre-professional diplomatic and consular officers into the ideology of the new corps of FSOs. The responsibility for this process is in two parts: the structural FSS, which here means the general precepts on which the education was founded, and second the actual diplomats or technical professionals who served as teachers and could impart their specific ideological brand onto the student body.

The basis of the curriculum and philosophy of the FSS was based on three principles. First, the decision was made from an early point that the new FSOs would be trained by diplomats within the confines of the State Department rather than be subject to the influence of private corporations. This was not surprising, given that a non-participation in family business had been a hallmark of those entering the diplomatic service. It also served to keep FSOs within the strictures of the Foreign Service's ideology, which was social darwinist, liberal, and internationalist. Non-darwinist academics in the style of the international peace movement at the time were excluded from the FSS curriculum for being utopian.⁶³ Also excluded from ideological participation in the FSS was the wider civil service reformers, whose progressivism was in line with the efforts of the FSOs, but who supposedly lacked the specific technical qualifications that the State Department insisted were required for consular or diplomatic work. This most immediate consequence of this latter qualification was that it maintained for a generation (until the end of World War Two,) the elitist character of the FS, as the hiring pool would be more

⁶³ The explicitly non-utopian bent of the FSS is quite curious given the general *zeitgeist* of international relations. A notable exception from those who would teach at the FSS was James Shotwell, who was foundational in establishing connections between the U.S. and intergovernmental NGOs. The general outlook was also in contrast to the shifting mood of both the British and French foreign services, which reeling from the effects of the Great War was focused on pacifism as a key part of liberal internationalism. The British Labor Party, newly developing a coherent foreign policy, adopted the approach of Liberal Party technocrats, the ultimate aim of which was the renunciation of the right of war. DeBenedetti, "Peace Was His Profession: James T. Shotwell and American Internationalism;" Ashworth, "Rethinking a Socialist Foreign Policy."

selective, requiring both the characteristics of the gentleman reformer as well as the technical specialist.⁶⁴

Second, commercial interests were promoted as the business of the Foreign Service. This too was a consequence of the professionalization process. Those who had lobbied Congress on behalf of professionalization had done so under the logic that a unified Foreign Service was the best way to promote trade. Now, they were yoked to that position. For the FSS, this meant that students were to be trained in the skills of commercial diplomacy. The School's first headmaster, William Dawson Jr., a careerist and consular officer across Europe and Latin America, epitomized this approach to diplomacy. The approach that Dawson took during his three year tenure expounded on a theory of economic determinism that attempted to frame the role of the United States as a mediator between European colonial powers and as its own force in the world. Tracy Lay, author of the "The Foreign Service of the United States" (1928) and therefore the proclaimer of American maturity, spoke on that issue to a great extent, as will be covered in further detail later.

Third, increasing morale, especially a morale that connected FSOs to a positive outlook on America, was the ultimate tenet of the FSS. Such a program was not original to the FSS. Prior to 1925, the FS had essentially been responsible for creating its own *esprit de corps*. With increasing institutionalization came the possibility of enhancing such programs. The most physical way of doing this was through the publication of the *Foreign Service Journal* beginning in 1924 (previously the *American Consular Bulletin*.) The Journal was not an academic endeavor, but rather an attempt to create a feeling of closeness between FSOs. As Hugh DeSantis writes, the purpose of the Journal was to provide, "Commentary on the comings and goings of Foreign Service officers — notices of births, deaths, transfers, and promotions — [this]

⁶⁴ Schulzinger, *The Making of the Diplomatic Mind*, 81-84; De Santis, *The Diplomacy of Silence*, 11-20.

symbolically lessened the physical distances which separated colleagues, and reinforced organizational cohesion.”⁶⁵ In addition to the Journal, there was a Foreign Service Association and a Department of State Club, both of which were non-official but served the same purpose as the FSS curriculum. They aimed to connect FSOs to one another and to connect them to the United States. This was the motivation to create the promotion of a “family” model among FSOs, which was the intentional attempt by Grew and others to maintain the close-knit community that had existed in the early 1920s. Such a model failed to survive the first generation of FSOs. In addition to the failure to maintain the previous close-knittedness of the FS community, there were also other changes that professionalization mandated. For example, in order to keep FSOs invested in the U.S., a 1931 law prohibited marrying foreign nationals abroad.

Of the list of lecturers and teachers that taught the first generation of FSOs, it would be easier to list those who were not members of the pre-professional Foreign Service. There was a significant overlap between those pre-professional members, State Department chiefs, and the Foreign Service Personnel Board, which determined assignments for prospective FSOs. This list includes Joseph Grew, Joshua Butler Wright, Wilbur Carr, and Tracy Lay among others. Some, of course, were more influential than others. Direct faculty intervention could have a significant impact on the prospective FSOs, and this first generation proved to be susceptible to anti-Soviet and pro-liberal thought from two broad sources, each with its own exemplar.⁶⁶

Robert Kelley was one of the State Department’s foremost Soviet experts. A “Cold Warrior” before the Cold War, Kelley was a fierce anti-communist. Unlike other FSOs, Kelley did not serve officially in a foreign posting, although he did study in Paris. He therefore had little

⁶⁵ De Santis, *The Diplomacy of Silence*, 18.

⁶⁶ Schulzinger, *The Making of the Diplomatic Mind*, 81-91.

contact with representatives of the Soviet Union. This was not an obstacle to Kelley's dislike of the Soviet Union; where there was no direct evidence of Soviet influence, there was a possibility for conspiracy and sabotage. Kelley believed that Jews in the United States were collaborating with Soviet authorities to undermine U.S. diplomacy. Leveraging his position in the State Department as Chief of Eastern European Affairs (a position that combined the previously separate Russian and Eastern European divisions,) Kelley attempted to prevent Soviet contamination through restriction of immigration from Eastern Europe (in cooperation with other State Department members.)⁶⁷

The other side of the coin to Kelley's anti-communism was the pull of economic determinism, espoused by Tracy Lay. Lay offered a key lesson to FSOs in training: the most valuable way to understand the rise of the United States in world affairs was to understand the commercial growth of the nation. Lay understood commerce, and more generally national economic advantage, to be the driving force in international relations. According to his theories, colonial competition was the basis for the Great War and all national self-interest. This necessarily meant that religious or national chauvinism was a lesser factor in international conflict, a key ideological stepping stone to the adoption of liberal internationalism in FS circles to the detriment of differences in national or cultural character as well as an effective *casus belli* on alien economic systems like communism. Lay literally wrote the book on the Foreign Service, its development, and its purposes, and due to this work, his thoughts and motivations are quite clear. It should not be surprising that most of the history in Lay's work is a history of consular affairs, nor should it be surprising that American so-called maturity is defined as when national

⁶⁷ Little, "Antibolshevism and American Foreign Policy, 1919-1939;" Schulzinger, *The Making of the Diplomatic Mind*, 131.

“social, economic, and political interests have overlapped their domestic boundaries and assumed a world importance.”⁶⁸

The FSS had one final and profound effect on FSOs: it made them competent bureaucrats. During their schooling, FSOs split their time between lectures and job training in the State Department. Each member of the first class was assigned a region in which they were to become an expert.⁶⁹ In addition to a large number of well-established faculty, there were a large number of now well-renowned students. George Kennan, Charles Bohlen, and Loy Henderson, all of whom would become preeminent Soviet policy planners. They imbibed the anti-Soviet lessons of their instructors and used their knowledge in diplomacy to a greater effect than any other cadre of FS members.

Arthur Bliss Lane practices anti-Communism

It's unclear if Lane actually assented to the most sensational act of Lane's diplomatic career: the assassination of Augusto Cesar Sandino by the Nicaraguan *Guardia Nacional*. Certainly that was the belief of many at the time, as a wave of anti-American sentiment at the end of February 1934 shows. Instances of anti American protest in Mexico and El Salvador indicate the popular dissatisfaction engendered by the death of Sandino, a dissatisfaction that was very easy to point at the United States. Lane remains villainized for this as part of an alleged wider trend of U.S. interference in Nicaraguan, Central American, and Latin American politics. U.S. policy in Nicaragua made them likely collaborators in the assassination of Sandino.

Lane himself possessed unique reasons to be pilloried; he was the plenary representative of the U.S., physically present at the peace talks that preceded the assassination of Sandino, and an ardent opponent of the Soviet Union, whose revolution had been an inspiration to Sandino and

⁶⁸ Lay, *The Foreign Service of the United States*, 2.

⁶⁹ Barnes and Morgan, *The Foreign Service of the United States*, 210-211.

his revolutionary army. However, the veracity of these three points did not make the conclusion that Lane oversaw Sandino's assassination true.

In all, Lane's appointment to Nicaragua as ambassador ought to have been a personal triumph and a boon to the United States. Personally, Lane was the youngest FSO to gain the rank of ambassador at the age of 39. His comparatively young age did not mean inexperience however, as he had been involved in diplomatic affairs since the age of 22, after graduating from Yale. His long tenure had already made him one of the Foreign Service's more senior members, and he straddled the line between the pre-professional Service, with its dilettante attitudes and the professional Service, where he was able to use his previous experience to gain appointments in Mexico, then Nicaragua.⁷⁰

This straddling of the Rogers Act effectively represents a control group of an experiment. While Kennan and Bohlen were trained in the Foreign Service School, Lane by contrast learned on the job, serving in subordinate roles during periods of crisis in the field. Despite this difference in training, the ideological basis of their work was remarkably similar.

Compared to the methods of Bohlen and Kennan, discussed in greater depth later, the style of Lane's diplomacy depended on U.S. policy being grounded in the existing Treaty of Peace and Amity (1923) that governed relations between Central American countries. This diplomatic style was more in concert with the *modus operandi* of the pre-professional era, leaving diplomacy by ministers to fill in the gaps where treaties were insufficient. Such a reliance on treaties was a severe handicap to Lane in Nicaragua, where the political situation was highly fluid and would devolve to violence. Lane's messages to the State Department from February and March 1934, dedicated to getting the State Department to issue a written declaration that U.S. policy was within the limits of existing treaties, seems *sisyphean* and almost

⁷⁰ Crawley, *Somoza and Roosevelt*, 41-44.

pointless. But there were obvious benefits to using treaties to form the basis of interactions between the U.S. and Nicaragua: first, it would gain the U.S. credibility among leftists in its claims of non-intervention as the Treaty had been the justification of the State Department in not recognizing the Martinez regime in El Salvador in the wake of its suppression of that country's communist party⁷¹; second, it limited U.S. involvement in the region and would have prevented the rise of any authority that may have attempted to subvert the government of President Juan Sacasa either from Sandinista revolutionaries with whom the government had been in negotiations with, or from the other forces that might have wanted to overthrow the Sacasa government.

The situation in Nicaragua did not lend itself to slow and considered action. The assassination of Sandino was the penultimate act in a showdown between Sandino (who has surrendered but was still an active, if not disadvantaged participant in peace talks,) President Sacasa and General of the *Guaria Nacional*, Anastasio Somoza García. Somoza's later triumph in Nicaraguan politics was due in significant part to U.S. aid; the *Guardia* had been trained and equipped by U.S. Marine forces to act as a stabilizing force once the U.S. officially withdrew. The general appointed to the head of the *Guardia*, Somoza, was considered to be a creation of the U.S. despite the actual intentions of the State Department. Rather, it was U.S. passivity that enabled Somoza to come to power through a military coup. However, to the credit of Lane, this was only possible once the Treaty of Amity was effectively dissolved.⁷²

Lane himself was distrustful of the role that Somoza had played in the assassination of Sandino. Lane reported to Washington that Somoza had expressed dissatisfaction about the peace

⁷¹ Schulzinger, *The Making of the Diplomatic Mind*, 97.

⁷² The Treaty of Amity was an agreement to not recognize as legitimate governments that had come to power through unelected means in Central America. The United States was not officially a party to the treaty, but they were present in its negotiation. Only three states, including Nicaragua ratified the Treaty, making it a situation that could have uniquely benefitted from the Treaty's application. Crawley, *Somoza and Roosevelt*. 38-ff.

process (and the alleged move to disarm the *Guardia*) personally to him, which served as the basis for Wasdington's understanding of the conflict. Lane made no specific recommendations to reduce Somoza's influence in government, which he correctly estimated to be an existential threat to Sarcasa, and nothing came down the wire from Washington, other than recognition of the Treaty of Amity, which was balked at.⁷³

Lane's lack of personal involvement was not a statement of confidence in Sandinista diplomacy, Lane was himself a committed anti-communist, an ideology learned from communist creep in his postings. Lane's second post in the Foreign Service had been to Poland in 1919. Here, his previous background in what passes for aristocratic circles in the United States facilitated a seamless transition to the gala circuit he was expected to be a part of. His experience with the Soviet Union was therefore processed through the light of the Polish aristocracy, opposed to Russian Bolshevism on economic and cultural groups. He was also directly responsible for assisting in the procurement of visas for fleeing Poles and Jews during the Polish-Soviet War, which put him into contact with anti-communist Poles, connections that would influence his decision making in Poland after World War Two. His subsequent postings to Mexico in the wake of the country's revolution and then Nicaragua confirmed his anti-radical bias. And while Mexican radicalism rejected Soviet influences, this was less so for Nicaragua, where Sandino promoted himself as part of a wider Marxist revolution.⁷⁴

Lane's anti-communist ethos combined with his belief in his duty to cement the Sacasa government in power, despite its weakness. He therefore chose a middle path, neither supporting Sandino or Somoza. Somoza's actions against the Sandinistas in the wake of the assassination were effective enough that Lane was no longer able to advise the government owing to the

⁷³ Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers, 1934, The American Republics, Volume V, eds. Victor J. Farrar and Richard P. McCornack, (Washington: 1952), Document 517.

⁷⁴ Weil, 24-31; Schulzinger, *The Making of the Diplomatic Mind*,. 63; Macaulay, *The Sandino Affair*, 122-124.

increased position of Somoza, who was an antagonist of Lane. Finally, with the ascension of the Somoza government, he was recalled.

The Riga circle and the road to the Marshall Plan

Before U.S. recognition of the Soviet Union in 1933, the primary source of information that the United States could glean from the Soviet Union came through Riga. The group of FSOs that looked eastward fulfilled a unique niche in State Department and FS history, somewhere in the middle of the typical professional diplomat who observed and reported, and the lobbyist diplomat epitomized by Henry White who attempted to formulate policy in Washington. This group, composed of George Kennan, Charles Bohlen, Harold Shantz, and Loy Henderson were in many ways closer to a think-tank than to a diplomatic group, even to their fellow FSOs. If diplomacy had been their sole intent, then this group failed significantly, turning a non-confrontational and perhaps even dovish relationship as of 1934 into the Cold War hardly a decade later.

Henderson had been the first of the group to arrive in Riga, serving temporarily as a member of the Red Cross in the Baltics from 1919 to 1920, where he gained an early sympathy for the independence struggles of Estonia and Latvia. In 1922, he joined the FS and therefore was not enrolled in the FSS, but was nonetheless selected for service in Eastern Europe due to his previous experience there. By contrast, Bohlen and Kennan were students of Robert Kelley and learned from him the culture and history of Russia and the Soviet Union. In addition to their instruction under Kelley, both Bohlen and Kennan had language learning experience in Paris and Berlin respectively, where each came under the influence of veterans of the White movement of Russia, who had lost to Soviets during that civil war.

Both Bohlen and Kennan fit well into the expectations set out for them in the State Department. They were gentlemanly, dedicated, and smart. Kennan in particular possessed a self-confident sense of elitism. Kennan also possessed an independent interest in Russian culture, especially silver-age novelists, whereas Bohlen had entered the FSS without an area of specialty in mind and was later brought under the wing of Kelley. Such factors produced for Kennan a sense of nostalgia for Tsarist Russia, despite the fact that Kennan had no experience in pre-revolutionary Russia, and his ire at its passing subsequently turned towards the Soviet system. Kennan, in part due to the idiosyncrasies in his character and in part due to his eventual impact on U.S. foreign policy, has had much ink spilled regarding his diplomatic career. He certainly did not lack intellect, and was regarded universally as an astute and capable bureaucrat.⁷⁵ Bohlen by contrast was sharp, but had no parasocial relation with the White regime. Bohlen did however study languages in Paris, where White general and vicious anti-semitic Anton Denikin lived and gave lectures.

Kennan, Bohlen, and Henderson were assigned to Riga as part of the Eastern European Division. Before the establishment of formal relations in 1933, the main task of the Riga embassy was to survey the Soviet political situation. This meant an examination of Soviet political culture from afar, in a city full of White emigres. It was from this vantage that this group saw Soviet collectivization, Russian attempts at autarky, attempts to spread communism outwards, and other activities that were in direct opposition to the FSOs' beliefs in liberal

⁷⁵ George Kennan has become something of a Cassandra figure since 2014, owing to his assertion in the wake of the Cold War that NATO expansion Eastward would invoke a Russian response and would therefore have negative consequences for Western collective security. This opinion seems strange at first glance for the most hawkish of the FSOs and an original "Cold Warrior;" one may reasonably have expected Kennan to have taken a similarly aggressive approach to post-Soviet Russia. However, Kennan's approach to Russia was always based on the threat of communist contagion, anathema to displays of national pride, which Russia did not lack from the Yeltsin years onward. The use of Kennan's "prophecies" should therefore take into account that Kennan's bias towards Tsarist Russia means that he could be easily duped by a nationalist government and should not be relied upon for current affairs.

internationalism. This diplomacy at a distance meant that the Riga staff were more political agents than formal representatives, and their mission was inherently going to be one of reaction to events, their influence on Soviet affairs diminished by a lack of proximity or access. Such a perspective gained them a pessimistic view of Soviet affairs.

In 1933, with U.S. recognition of the Soviet Union, this group moved to Moscow. For a period of two years, there was relative calm, and Kennan and Bohlen were conscious of attempts by the Soviet government to professionalize itself and reverse its Russian past, mostly through the promotion of cultural activities and a broader acceptance of the Orthodox Church. Placed above the triumvirate of Bohlen, Henderson, and Kennan was the Ambassador William Bullitt, who was a foil to their anti-Soviet attitudes. Bullitt had been the diplomat from the U.S. delegation at Versailles most insistent on Soviet participation in the treaty process. His appointment was perhaps the most dovish act possible for the FDR administration. However, his tenure would be short. In 1935, Soviet foreign policy underwent one of its many shifts, attempting to combat international fascism through the use of united front governments. The branding of elements of the U.S. government as fascist was perceived by the Moscow embassy and Bullitt in particular as an attempt to interfere in U.S. domestic affairs, and Bullitt resigned his post.⁷⁶

After Bullitt's departure, the political workshop aspect of the embassy continued. Henderson, now *charge d'affaires*, would actively collaborate with Ray Murphy, a member of the State Department (also under Kelley) whose task it was to keep tabs on communists in the United States and work with the Federal Bureau of Investigation to surveil their political activities. What Murphy did in the United States, Henderson did abroad, keeping a keen eye on suspected American socialists and communists visiting the Soviet Union. He continued to direct

⁷⁶ For shifts in Soviet foreign policy and a description of the so-called fourth stage of that policy, see Herman, *The Comintern in Mexico*, 19-23.

such work until the end of his tenure in 1938, when he returned to a subordinate position in the embassy. 1938 was also remarkable as the year that the Great Purge in the Soviet Union rapidly grew in scope. The purges seemed to confirm the work suspicions of the FSOs: the Soviet Union was not in fact open to liberalization. This was combined with a paranoia in Russia that bodily threatened embassy staff and left a significant impression on those present. Several members of the embassy attended show trials of Stalin's enemies. The most pessimistic views of Russians given to FSOs by White emigres were seemingly confirmed; Russia showed itself to be dictatorial, backwards, and unwilling to change.⁷⁷

Henderson's assessment of the Soviet government has a second conclusion, that Russia was likely to align itself with Nazi Germany, which it did in 1939. This assessment was founded on existing industrial and military cooperation between Russia and Germany both before and after January 1933 as well as their mutual authoritarianism. While in retrospect, this was simply another shift in a perpetually shifting Soviet foreign policy, it severely cooled U.S - Soviet relations. First, the Soviet Union displayed itself to be an unreliable actor in international relations, a thought process that matured into an everyday skepticism of Soviet policy during World War Two and damaged trust in the process of forming the Allied coalition. Second, with Henderson's warnings beginning in 1934, when his interpretations were vindicated, it lent credence to the idea his specialization in Soviet policy was worth listening to.

Kelley, who had left the State Department in the wake of the recognition of the Soviet Union, had now been succeeded by his proteges. All of the aspects that would facilitate the Marshall Plan were in place at this point. First, hawkish attitudes prevailed in both the U.S. and Soviet Union. The tenure of Bullitt had benefited from coinciding dovish attitudes in both the U.S. and the Soviet Union. But Bullitt's alienation had ended that period of grace, and now

⁷⁷ Weil, *A Pretty Good Club*, 53-57; De Santis, *The Diplomacy of Silence*, 31-38.

hawks in the form of Henderson, Kennan, and Bohlen ran the show. Their physical sustained presence in the Moscow embassy lent weight to their words. Many other FSOs came and went from the Soviet Union, but this group stayed the longest and were rewarded not with official titles (Kennan only became Ambassador in 1952, Bohlen shortly thereafter) but with the prestige that gained them trust in Washington. So, when they advocated policies, people listened.

Second, that same process of trusting experience spread across the society that the State Department had created. Internationalism became accepted because it was shown that it could work under the system established by the Rogers Act. So, when technical experience was required to combat a supposedly hawkish Soviet government in the aftermath of World War Two, the theories of this group were consulted first, and the lessons that they learned in the FSS became U.S. policy. Bohlen was present at the Potsdam declaration, and Kennan was present in the lobbying effort for the Marshall Plan.

The FSO response to totalitarianism

The reaction of the Foreign Service to the Soviet Union between 1941 and 1944 is a curious case study in the limits of U.S. cooperation with authoritarian regimes. While previous and future relations with the Soviet Union were antagonistic, the period of 1941 to 1944 offered hope to the group of Soviet experts. Diplomats, especially George Kennan saw the renewed reverence for Russian cultural history reflected in Soviet propaganda as a source of good news. Additional indicators of good news included the legalization of the Russian Orthodox Church and early attempts at democratization. Previous theories on communism, with their interest in containment, had focused on the internationalism of communist movements, which were allegedly deleterious to the national character. This russification of Soviet culture was part of the thaw in relations during World War Two, and was a tangible way for the State Department to

judge the supposed intentions of Stalin. The thaw during the War was quickly reversed by increased Soviet confidence following the Battle of Stalingrad and the Soviet march west. The return to a policy of antagonism between FSOs stationed in Moscow and the Soviet Union was due in part to Soviet attempts at consolidating their hold over Eastern Europe, especially in Bulgaria and Romania.⁷⁸ This was certainly an issue for Arthur Bliss Lane, who remained a staunch advocate for Polish independence.

Soviet creep into Eastern Europe was seen in parallel terms to appeasement in the 1930s, especially when it came to Czechoslovakia. Kennan had been present in Prague on the day the Munich agreement was signed, and carried that memory with him.⁷⁹ A general consensus formed that the same process would not happen again. This of course creates questions as to why appeasement was possible in the 1930s, and why the response to two different totalitarian governments was so different. If it had been as simple as a competition between free market capitalism and closed-market economies, as would have been doctrine under the lessons of the FSS, then surely German attempts at autarky would have caused similar levels of consternation as Soviet attempts. But Soviet attempts at economic expansion were quickly recognized as threats.

De Santis, using writings and interviews from Henderson, Elbridge Durbrow, Foy Kohler, Kennan and Schoenfeld, has come to the conclusion that Nazi Germany was perceived as a lesser enemy than the Soviet Union. Whereas communism represented an existential threat to world order and was in conflict with liberal internationalism, Nazi Germany was seen as embodying the ideals of order and efficiency that were widely believed to have characterized the German war effort. For Kohler, the extermination of European Jewry had been the single institution that

⁷⁸ The basis for antagonism in these particular countries were differences between agreements reached in Yalta and at the Fourth Moscow Conference.

⁷⁹ De Santis, *The Diplomacy of Silence*, 69-70.

Nazi Germany had destroyed, appropriating all others. Soviet policy by contrast threatened to do away with the whole firmament of European diplomacy. For Henderson, Germany's warmongering had been self-controlled while Soviet expansionism was not. In short, Soviet Russia was anathema to the world order in which the FSOs lived, Nazi Germany had not been. Germany had even been a promoter of Eastern European countries into the world of international politics.⁸⁰

The claims promoted by these FSO are entirely insane.⁸¹ Not taking into account the casual acceptance of genocide or the erasure of the rule of law, the basic premise that the FSOs were operating under was deeply flawed. The Soviet Union proved itself to be willing to engage diplomatically with the West. Studies of American professional diplomacy only occurred at milestones in the professionalization process; the set of studies regarding the FS published in the 1960s onward were a marker of the successful normalization of relations between East and West as a result of the period of detente.

The other potential cause of this form of foreign policy is cultural antisemitism. The theory of Judeo-Bolshevism had significant traction internationally. When a State Department memo of March 1926 stated, "There has been no change in the essential fact of the existence of organizations in the United States created by and completely subservient to the Bolshevik regime, seeking the overthrow of the existing social and political order of this country," there was no real question that these supposed organizations were Jewish. The memo originated in

⁸⁰ De Santis, *The Diplomacy of Silence*, 198-204.

⁸¹ The axiom that FSOs based their interpretation of Soviet policy on was that Soviet hawkish and dovish attitude existed as a binary, and that the methods of the united front parties were an extension of this binary. "Socialism in One Country" was perceived as dovish as it reduced agitation that was supposedly expansionist in nature. This binary as it related to Soviet-U.S. policy was seen as hawkish (Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact) then dovish (World War Two,) but the aftermath of the war would supposedly see the return to a hawkish policy. The work of Adam Ulum has done much to disprove this binary, which is highly positional, only making sense if perceived from an American perspective. By contrast, from the perspective of Germany, the examples of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and World War Two are dovish and hawkish respectively.

Robert Kelley's department.⁸² The State Department remained hostile to Jewish immigration from Eastern Europe; the issuing of visas was a responsibility the FS had gained as a result of its early victories over the Commerce and Labor Departments in the 1920s to regulate foreign travel more completely. The exclusion of Jews as potential anarchists or communists using this power was an intentional act, once based in primitive fear.

Besides Kelly, the Riga group saw members educated in Berlin, Paris and the Baltic countries. Each of these locations had numerous White emigre communities, including those of a more antisemitic bent. The previously mentioned White general Anton Denikin published propaganda during the Russian Civil War including the original, Jewish-sounding names of several Soviet politicians, insinuating that the entire Soviet rebellion was a Jewish plot. There was also a more casual antisemitism, an artifact of the elitist New England attitudes of the early 1900s. Bliss and the rest of the staff in Warsaw detested supposed Jewish interference in the activities of the embassy.⁸³ But ultimately, while this may have had a profound effect on policy in the abstract, it's unclear if or where antisemitism affects policy directly. Jews were granted visas out of Eastern Europe in the 1920s, but not in the 1930s and 1940s, when such an action was more pressing.

The existence of antisemitism seems a contradiction from the lessons of the FSS espoused by Lay. Here, instead of focusing on markets as the basis of conflict, racial and religious chauvinism resurfaced. Such were the consequences of teaching FSOs in-house and the subsequent perpetuation of the dilettantism of the early Foreign Service.

⁸² De Santis, *The Diplomacy of Silence*, 28.

⁸³ Weil, *A Pretty Good Club*, 4–45.

Conclusion

It's difficult to imagine the United States without a foreign policy influenced by the institutional mechanisms of the Foreign Service (FS.) As of writing this, the Rogers Act (1924) is less than one hundred years old. Since then, the importance of this institution has become unquestionably indispensable. Despite his attacks on the State Department and on Mexico itself, when picking an ambassador to Mexico during his presidency, President Donald Trump selected Christopher Landau, educated at Groton and Harvard, and whose father was a respected Foreign Service Officer (FSO) in several hispanophone countries. Landau, despite lacking formal diplomatic training, was tapped to be ambassador to Mexico in 2019 after the departure of his predecessor Roberta Jacobson, a State Department careerist who seemingly folded under the heightened antagonisms of Washington and Mexico City. Landau lacked the experience of three appointments for his post under President Barack Obama, but Landau's appointment is notable for one other reason: he is the perfect archetype of the early FSO. His education, his political connections, his organic competency in Spanish, even the fact that his career in diplomacy was literally generationally transmitted from his father is all evocative of the earliest days of the professional Foreign Service.

That's not to say that Landau is the 'cookie pusher' of Hugh Gibson's venom. But it does bring up the question, in roughly 30 years of professionalizing effort and 100 years of Foreign Service professionalism, what has actually changed? The example of Landau may provide a few examples of the ways in which this change has occurred. Structurally, the staff of the U.S. embassy and consulates in Mexico provide context and skills that the minister may not have. As opposed to Ambassador Henry Lane Wilson operating a legation with a staff of five to eight people and receiving information from a few dozen Consular Officers, Landau oversaw a small

bureaucratic kingdom, likely a few hundred personnel, including a number of U.S. agencies attached to the mission. A significant number of the staff have qualifications beyond those of the minister; far from being a flaw, this allows the mission staff to operate without an official accredited ambassador.

This is representative of a further doctrinal change. Existing treaties and mutual commerce are insufficient to facilitate a connection between the United States and Mexico. There was a hiatus between the resignation of Jacobson and the appointment of Landau, but when U.S. - Mexican relations soured after the election of Donald Trump, an ambassador was recognized as essential for the maintenance of relations. Thus, despite the hostility to the State Department under Trump, the importance of personal and open negotiation was recognized as a cornerstone of U.S. foreign policy.⁸⁴

These changes should not be understated. They represent the successful shift in practice to make the Foreign Service both competent in terms of technical ability and necessary in terms of managing the foreign relations of the United States. With that said, in other ways, the FS has remained quite similar over time. The four functions of the FS: representation, negotiation, reporting, and protection of interests, have not significantly changed. There are differences in the way that such tasks are performed, but fundamentally, the basic tasks are still there. Of course, they have expanded as the footprint of the United States expanded across the world stage, but American sailors still rely on the services of U.S. consulates.

This similarity among others should not be evidence of an underwhelming transition from a pre-professional to professional Foreign Service. The transformation of the FS was an iterative process, relying on changes that took place as one rule or standard was abolished in favor of

⁸⁴ Tamkin and Tillman, Emily, "A Lawyer With Conservative Ties And No Diplomatic Experience Is Being Vetted For US Ambassador To Mexico."

another. The changing number of grades in the Consular Service is on its own an entirely irrelevant fact, that the system of consular pupils established at the same time was a precursor to the Foreign Service School lends it historical significance and shows that small iterations on existing systems could have significant effects in the long-term.

Omission of this process is the fundamental flaw that much of the secondary literature on FS professionalization falls into, that the Rogers Act is given significant weight as either the end point of professionalization (as per Weil, Werking, or Lay,) or the genesis of something new (De Santis, Ilchman, Harr.) The hope of this paper was to combine these two historiographic trends and in doing so, to show that the consequence of the genesis of professionalization is not stagnation, but further professionalization and attempts to come to terms with the shifting status of the Service.

This form of incrementalism was necessary to persuade members of the government in both Congress and the executive branch to support professionalization. Extreme circumstances such as the Great War were required to make the grade system the basis of consular appointments over geographical distribution. It then took years of agitation by the most competent of the diplomatic and consular officers to convince Congress of the benefits of amalgamating the Services. But once enough groups lined up behind reform, the actual reforms proposed were close to proposed reforms from earlier times. There was, for instance, no desire to remove the commercial or immigration functions from the FS. It's difficult to even imagine what a substantively different Service would have looked like.

The passage of the Marshall Plan and the anti-Soviet plank of the 1952 presidential election are good indicators that expertise in Soviet affairs by supposed specialists was never in doubt. Extreme faith was put into the hands of so-called experts. But it is worth remembering that these experts were trained in the United States, and the product of a bureaucratic system

founded by the government. To a certain extent, the adoption of FSO's proposals by Congress and the executive branch was therefore the endorsement of a program that Congress had first enabled. To not listen to the experts that they had funded the education of would have been tantamount to admitting decades of wasted spending. FSOs could therefore have their ideas justified by the system they were to be held to account by. Weil summed up the effects of such a process, "The phrase "national interest" in the mouth of a diplomat at times has the same quality as the phrase "military necessity" when uttered by a soldier. It is an ideological shibboleth employed to justify basing foreign policy decisions on the preferences of career officials rather than those of the public or its elected representatives."⁸⁵

This essay has only covered a small fraction of the possible cases studies or FSOs present in the professionalization process. The attempt to structure this essay with both of the historiographies mentioned above, there has been no place to examine the reactions of various actors to each stage of the professionalization process. There is nowhere in this essay a response by Congress to the still exclusive and aristocratic Foreign Service in the wake of professionalization. Nor is there a comparison of austerity measures between the FS and other departments, undertaken by the government during the Great Depression. There is, of course, always more room for examples of the application of U.S. foreign policy abroad by FSOs. There is also room for more research on the formation of specific norms within the State Department and Foreign Service based on the transmission of information from one generation to another. For instance, how did appeals to international NGOs become accepted after WWII when the introduction of such ideas were rejected as utopian during the Interwar period. To answer such a question, as with many others, requires a great deal more research and information. However, the

⁸⁵ Weil, *A Pretty Good Club*, 62.

inclusion of more examples and information would show the same generational process of professionalization and education on the Foreign Service.

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