

Towards a Theory of American Political Party Transnationalism
Freelancing partisans: ideological warriors, policy objectives by other means, or
simply “the boys gotta eat.”

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Introduction

When discussing transnational political parties, one is discussing one of two things: a single political party with members or representatives in more than one country or a global movement made up of separate political parties in multiple countries. Of the former, examples include the Arab Socialist Ba’ath Party, which was founded in Syria by Michel Aflaq as Pan-Arab nationalist and socialist and maintains branches in Lebanon, Jordan, Yemen and most notably (until it was banned in 2003) Iraq; as well as the Irish nationalist Sinn Féin which runs candidates in both the Northern Ireland constituencies for the British House of Commons and the Republic of Ireland’s Dáil Éireann (House of Representatives) in the Oireachtas (Parliament). The literature on the second form of transnational political parties focuses on five types: Communist, Socialist, Christian Democratic, Liberal internationals/transnationals, and Green Party movements.

Absent from the literature on transnational political party movements is mention of American parties. An absence of literature is not evidence of an absence of activity. The transnational activities of American parties have been documented, albeit in a haphazard way. Like parties traditionally included in the literature on transnational parties, American parties have durable and ongoing relationships with like-minded parties in other countries both bi-laterally and through international political party associations. This paper will concentrate on the international work of American political party activists, typically referred to as political consultants or strategists. This paper will demonstrate that the domestic successes of these consultants lead to demand internationally which, in turn, creates resilient relationships and bonds between American parties and like-minded parties abroad.

American party activists have a long history of working on the election campaigns of parties in other countries. While one might see this as freelance partisans practicing their trade in other countries when there is no election at home, under examination the term “freelance consultant” becomes an oxymoron. Few American political consultants have large enough firms to work with foreign political parties during the heaviest parts of the US electoral cycle; so much of their international activity is in the downtime between domestic campaigns. They typically work for like-minded political parties in countries that are a policy priority to the party in power back in the US. To do otherwise could alienate their main clients at home. These factors would suggest a pattern to their activities. The paper will highlight examples where a president – the closest analog to a

standing leader of political party – allowed members of his White House political staff and party activists to work on an election campaign for an ideologically like-minded opposition party and where he did not because he had a good working relationship with the incumbent. Finally, the paper will examine the activities of today’s activists. The paper will demonstrate that the decisions of partisans to work with parties in other countries is not purely financial or, simply put, “the boys gotta eat.”

Background

From Machiavelli to Rove?

Political consultants trade in one of two things (or a combination thereof) for politicians: research (intelligence, polling) and or strategy (communications, organization, GOTV¹). Every ruler from the earliest primitive tribes to the modern presidency has in some way relied on what we would today collectively refer to as political consultants. Today we talk in terms of political survival, but for the ancient tribal chieftains or early kings it was a matter of practical survival. While political thought in regards to public opinion stretches back to the time of Plato, modern thinking on public opinion originates with Niccolo Machiavelli. Writing in his classic *the Prince*, Machiavelli identifies the importance of public opinion in his arguments on the nature of men and the efficacy of ruling through fear versus love:

For men it may be generally affirmed that they are thankless, fickle, false, studious to avoid danger, greedy of gain, devoted to you while you are able to confer benefits upon them, and ready, as I said before, while danger is distant, to shed their blood, and sacrifice their property, their lives, and their children for you; but in the hour of need they turn against you ... Men are so simple, and governed so absolutely by their present needs, that he who wishes to deceive will never fail to find willing dupes.²

It is interesting to note that despite Machiavelli’s assertion of the nature of man is the implication on the relationship between public opinion and governance. Even in a kingship, favorable public opinion is necessary for political survival. Machiavelli’s concern for public opinion was that it was a political force that could bring harm to the prince, not that there is in any inherent wisdom in public opinion.³ Machiavelli wrote from experience. At the time of his writing, he was formerly a member of the court of Florence living in the countryside in exile from Florence’s new rulers, the Medicis, who had imprisoned and tortured him for his role in supporting the Florentine Republic. He knew all too well that for kings, favorable public opinion is necessary for physical survival, as well. Unpopular presidents lose their re-elections. Unpopular kings lose their lives.

From Machiavelli’s time until the twentieth century, it was conventional for public opinion to be considered in holistic terms regarding the essence of man. The ideas of the relationship between public opinion and governance became more direct with the advent of the social compact theorists, such as Hobbes and Locke, who postulated that public consent was necessary to form society. However, the term “public

¹ Get Out The Vote

² As quoted in Glynn, et al.; 2004; P. 42

³ Glynn et al; 2004, P. 43

opinion” is believed popularized by Jacques Necker, who served as finance minister to Louis XVI of France. Necker had recognized that political discourse had shifted radically in the eighteenth century. For the first time, a bourgeoisie had emerged to gather to discuss politics through interpersonal means and through the press. For this era, public opinion meant middle-class opinion. Like Machiavelli, Necker recognized that even a monarchy required benevolent public opinion to exist. He remarked that foreigners:

... have difficulty in forming a just idea of the authority exercised in France by public opinion; they have difficulty in understanding the nature of an invisible power which, without treasures, without a bodyguard, and without an army gives laws to the city, to the court, and even to the palaces of kings.⁴

As the ideas regarding the relationship between public opinion and governance evolved, the issue of measuring public opinion arose. With the exception of elections and campaigns, polling, as we know it today, was simply not done until the early twentieth century, specifically the election of 1936. Before 1936, what polling was done was referred to as straw polls. They were informal, unscientific, and often doubled as fundraisers for a local political organization (there was often a fee to participate).⁵

As the telephone was a recent invention in the early part of the twentieth century and the telecommunication infrastructure could most generously be described as nascent, public opinion research was reliant on the postal system to distribute questionnaires and return them in time for them to be useful for publication. Magazines with their regular mailings became the ideal vehicles of the early pollsters. A magazine would send out a polling questionnaire with the mail-out of the current issue to millions of citizens based on various lists (phone directories, auto registration records) and publish the results of the questionnaires that the recipients bothered to complete and mail back.

George Gallup laid the flaws of this method bare in the 1936 presidential election. Using the method highlighted above, *Literary Digest* predicted that Republican candidate Alf Landon would beat the incumbent Democrat candidate Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Using a new theory called random sampling theory, George Gallup predicted that Roosevelt would win. According to Gallup’s theory, if the members of the sample, a portion of the respondents chosen to be demographically proportional to the general population, were chosen properly and the response rate was reasonably high, the results would reflect the results of the general election. While Gallup’s results were off by seven percentage points, Roosevelt won the election. *Literary Digest* used their method from 1916 until 1936 but was so embarrassed by Gallup’s results that they issued a public apology and eventually shut down operations.⁶

With Roosevelt, we also have the first president to become obsessed with polling. One of the major issues in Roosevelt’s second term was the gathering storm clouds of war in Europe and would America join the Allies to fight against the fascist Axis powers. On this issue, Roosevelt was notoriously on the opposite side of public opinion. A Roper survey of 5,171 face-to-face interviews published in the December 1938 issue of *Fortune*

⁴ Glynn et al; 2004,, P. 47

⁵ Ibid, P. 66 – 68

⁶ Glynn et al; 2004; P. 69

pegged opposition to joining any war in Europe at 60%.⁷ It was at this time that Roosevelt sought and received the aid of Henry Cantril, the director of the Office of Public Opinion Research at Princeton University. Cantril gave FDR private access to Gallup's national polls, which were in turn used to monitor support for joining the war in Europe and Roosevelt's Lend-Lease program. Cantril polled the effects of Roosevelt's fireside chats to compare the opinions of those that listened to the broadcasts and those that did not and found a six point favourable increase among listeners in supporting Britain, "even at the risk of getting into war."⁸

The 1930s is also acknowledged as the origins of giving strategic political advice as a business. It was in 1933 that the team of Whitaker and Baker became the very first full-time campaign only political consultants, as opposed to a public relations firm for which political consulting was the side business. This team devised a negative campaign to defeat California gubernatorial candidate Upton Sinclair and participated in several other high profile races.⁹

Even with George Gallup successfully developing a scientific method to measure public opinion, the time delay in distributing questionnaires and having them returned by mail was a sufficiently long delay that it was impractical for political parties to conduct them during the traditional campaign period. This was a time, after all, before the current practice of starting unofficial campaigns for the party nomination and the presidency eighteen months before the actual election. Public opinion research, specifically polling, becomes more common in the postwar period. As the middle-class developed and the telephone became a common feature in the household, polling became easier to conduct. Calling potential respondents was cheaper and quicker than mailing questionnaires and waiting for them to be returned.

The 1960s saw the professionalization of political consulting as an industry. During this era, consultants had become experts in communications and technology, resource allocation, or, simply put, "the art of campaigning".¹⁰ With increasing ease of conducting public opinion, political parties and presidents started to do it for themselves. John F. Kennedy's 1960 campaign was the first to employ its own publicly known pollster and political consultant – Louis Harris.¹¹ Previous campaigns had kept the identities of their pollsters a secret as they could lose their corporate clients if they were identified with a losing candidate. Until Kennedy's successor, Lyndon Johnson, began the practice of employing a pollster in the White House, the same pollsters who did market research as part of advertising firms did political polling. Politicians consulted pollsters regularly, they just did so on an ad hoc basis.¹² Johnson was known as voracious micromanager and wanted to be able to make sure that his aggressive program of social reforms was gaining broad acceptance. He was also preoccupied with the changing direction of public opinion on the Vietnam War.

⁷ Greenberg, 2009; P.401

⁸ Greenberg, 2009; P.401

⁹ Magleby et al.; 2002; P. 103

¹⁰ Magleby et al.; 2002; P. 103

¹¹ Glynn et al; 2004,, P. 392

¹² Holsti; 2004; P. 286

With Johnson, public opinion research became a permanent activity of the White House. Every president beginning with Johnson has employed a pollster either directly by the White House as staff, through their party but working for the president in the White House, or both. Often they work full time as consultants on the presidential staff preparing the poll questionnaires and interpreting the results for the report to the president and outsource the logistics to a polling firm who can get the raw results in a rapid turnaround, preferably overnight. This pattern continued up to and including the Carter administration. With the Reagan administration, a new paradigm would emerge that would inextricably link governance and public opinion research and political strategy.

Ronald Reagan entered the presidency with huge support from the American electorate, but that support did not extend to the congressional wings of the Republican Party as the Democrats still controlled both houses. Given that some states that elected Reagan sent no Republicans to Washington among their Congressional delegations, it is fair to say that many voters who voted for Reagan as president voted for a Democrat to represent them in the House of Representatives and Senate. These voters are often called “Reagan Democrats” as they were attracted by Reagan’s ambitious agenda to revive the economy and confront the Soviet Union, as well as the fact that he simply was not Jimmy Carter. As the saying goes, the opposition is not voted in, the government is voted out.

While divided government is a common phenomenon in American politics, compromises in policy are the typical result. For example, Reagan held an absolutist position on the Soviet Union and the Cold War, America must win. The congressional Democrats, many of whom were veterans of the political battles over the Vietnam War, favored the current policy of détente. They saw the Soviet Union as a permanent opponent, rather than Reagan’s view as enemy who must be defeated. Also on the domestic front, the Democrats also held entrenched positions on the economy and taxes.

In order to counter these interests, Reagan’s administration developed a unique style of governing that Sidney Blumenthal, writing in *Vanity Fair*, would coin “the permanent campaign”.¹³ Professional consultant Dick Morris, whose efforts on behalf of Bill Clinton will be explored later in this paper, defines the permanent campaign as the need to demonstrate a “daily majority”.¹⁴ As Morris argues, the demonstration of a daily majority is necessary to convince Congress – whether divided or unified – to adopt the president’s agenda and to overcome bureaucratic inertia to implement the president’s agenda.¹⁵ Douglas Lathrop argues:

For some political practitioners, a separation between governing and campaigning is an academic conceit, a contrivance that does not exist in reality. In a democracy, electoral consequences are invariably part of the decision makers’ calculus. The permanent campaign theory does not imply that an impermeable barrier has always divided campaigning and governing, but that modern behavior is so different in degree from the past that it has become different in kind. The hallmarks of the permanent campaign, campaign specialists masquerading as policy

¹³ As cited in Lathrop, 2003, p.2

¹⁴ Morris, 1999; p. 1

¹⁵ Ibid; Pp. 3 - 5

advisors, multi million dollar advertising schemes, and ceaseless polling, are not analogous to earlier examples of public outreach.¹⁶

The permanent campaign is a strategy to avoid compromise. In order to demonstrate that daily majority, constant public opinion research is necessary. Some, such as Sen. Paul Simon (D), equate this with pandering to opinion instead of leading it.¹⁷ This view equates standing up to the polls as doing what is “right” as opposed to what is “popular”. Practitioners of the permanent campaign argue that the public expresses what they think is right through opinion polls. Morris argues in *the New Prince* that voters distrust polling because they do not understand it.¹⁸ He argues that:

They think polling is pandering and that disregarding polls is bravery. But this Pickett’s Charge school of politics forces a choice between self-destruction and timidity. Neither option is very good government.¹⁹

Morris believes that society is moving from what he calls a “Madisonian”, or representative, democracy to a “Jeffersonian”, or direct participatory, one. In such a democracy, polls are the daily expression of the consent of the governed. Voters want to be heard on an ongoing basis between elections and polls translate their opinions into a language that politicians can understand. Polls do not replace leadership, though. Morris argues that a politician who governs by polls would lose control over events. One who ignored polls, though, would lose his mandate. To Morris, the key is to integrate leading and polling in a dialogue to settle on the right proposal in the best form at the proper time.²⁰ This “polling as public expression of what is right” argument, however, is undermined by the fact that the other part of the permanent campaign entails massive amounts of advertising by the president’s party and allied interests on behalf of the president’s agenda typically to counter the advertising run by interest groups to counter the agenda. In the permanent campaign, polling may be more of a report card on which consultants are winning the argument in the court of public opinion.

As an industry, the growth of political consultants has mirrored the growth of the government. This should be of little surprise as most consultants began their careers as Congressional or White House aides before moving on to the private sector to capitalize on their networks for potential private clients. Only a handful of consultants attended the founding meeting of the America Association of Political Consultants (now the Association of Political and Public Affairs Professionals) in 1969. Today, the association claims more than 1,100 members.²¹ The organization’s membership is still only a small fraction of the 7,000 professional political consultants Dennis Johnson estimated in his 1998 conference paper on the subject.²²

Consultants Step Out

¹⁶ Lathrop 2003, p. 40

¹⁷ Simon 2004

¹⁸ Morris, 1999; P. 88

¹⁹ Ibid

²⁰ Ibid; P. 83

²¹ Association of Political and Public Affairs Professionals “About AAPC – Overview”

<http://www.theaapc.org/about/>

²² Johnson 1998, P. 3

Reagan's Forgotten Front

With an average of over 50,000 elections held in the United States every year, there should be plenty of work for a community of 7,000 plus consultants. American consultants, however, are also in increasingly high demand abroad and are increasingly engaged in foreign elections. This is a relatively recent phenomenon that can be attributed to the Reagan administration.

In his 1982 speech to the British parliament, Ronald Reagan opened another front in his campaign to end the Cold War, the ballot box:

Since 1917 the Soviet Union has given covert political training and assistance to Marxist-Leninists in many countries. Of course, it also has promoted the use of violence and subversion by these same forces. Over the past several decades, West European and other Social Democrats, Christian Democrats, and leaders have offered open assistance to fraternal, political, and social institutions to bring about peaceful and democratic progress. Appropriately, for a vigorous new democracy, the Federal Republic of Germany's political foundations have become a major force in this effort.

We in America now intend to take additional steps, as many of our allies have already done, toward realizing this same goal. The chairmen and other leaders of the national Republican and Democratic Party organizations are initiating a study with the bipartisan American political foundation to determine how the United States can best contribute as a nation to the global campaign for democracy now gathering force. They will have the cooperation of congressional leaders of both parties, along with representatives of business, labor, and other major institutions in our society. I look forward to receiving their recommendations and to working with these institutions and the Congress in the common task of strengthening democracy throughout the world.²³

Reagan's 1982 speech to the British parliament was intended to coax American parties to engage like-minded parties as a counter influence to communism. It was one approach among the many that comprised Reagan's anti-Soviet strategy. When compared with the volumes of literature on the diplomatic, military, counter-intelligence facets, it is, however, largely forgotten.

Despite being overlooked, Reagan's speech has had permanent consequences. Congress created the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), which would serve as an umbrella organization for a series of groups and foundations representing various aspects of American politics, labor and commerce. To this end, within NED, American parties created international institutes based on the German Federal Republic *Stiftungen* model of private foundations aligned with the four major political parties: the National Republican Institute for International Affairs (later renamed the International Republican Institute - IRI) aligned with the Republic Party and the National Democratic Institute (NDI) aligned with the Democratic party.²⁴

²³ Reagan, 1982;

²⁴Lowe <http://www.ned.org/about/nedhistory.html>

American parties and their foundations also joined multilateral party organizations. The NDI became a “cooperating organization” of Liberals International.²⁵ More notably, the Republican Party was instrumental in the founding of the International Democratic Union, an international organization to bring together conservative and Christian Democrat parties. To highlight the importance to the administration, the Reagan administration sent then Vice President George H.W. Bush to speak on behalf of the administration at the founding meeting hosted by the Right Honourable Margaret Thatcher in London on June 24th, 1983.²⁶ Addressing the assembled representatives from 19 political parties, the Vice-President stated:

... let us be mindful of all that our great democracies have given to mankind, and all that, with firmness of purpose, they might yet give . So let us inaugurate the International Democrat Union in the determination, to use Lincoln's words in a manner he would have endorsed, that the world under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, shall not perish from this earth.²⁷

The IRI would also become a separate member in the lower tier of “co-operating organizations”.

Consultants come out to play

Through both these international organizations and individually through their aligned political foundations, American parties have been instrumental in aiding countries in Latin America, Africa and post-Soviet Europe develop their own party systems and developing democracies. While many of these democracy-building activities will be the subject of a subsequent paper, two are germane to the subject at hand. First, as Joshua Green noted in his 2005 article “Off-Season Adventures”, American political consulting firms have been increasingly using IRI and NDI sponsored programs to send their young stars abroad to work in foreign elections. This allows them to develop valuable campaign skills in the field that they can bring back to domestic elections.²⁸ If they do well, they are rising stars with valuable skills and insights. If they do not, no one has to know the firm hired a loser.

Second, the IRI and NDI have become vehicles to connect foreign parties with experienced American consultants. The same programs that firms use to send junior employees to foreign elections to gain experience also send senior consultants. Through one of these sponsored programs is how, in 1993, Stanley Greenberg recounts being first brought into contact with Nelson Mandela to work for the African National Conference (ANC) in South Africa’s first post-Apartheid era election. The rules for NDI, however, mandated that they could only sponsor a bipartisan team of consultants and four round trip economy tickets during the campaign, the same benefits that were being provided to the other parties in the election. Since the ANC did not want to work with Republicans, Greenberg informed party representative Ketso Gordhan that he would work pro bono if the party would cover business class travel and survey costs. Gordhan agreed.²⁹

²⁵ Liberal International “Cooperating Organizations” http://www.liberal-international.org/editorialIndex.asp?ia_id=525

²⁶ <http://idu.org/founder.aspx>

²⁷ International Democratic Union, 1983, P. 9

²⁸ Green; 2005

²⁹ Greenberg; 2009; Pp. 114 - 115

Not all international connections are made through these organizations. The most successful American political consultants are highly sought after. While Greenberg originally thought it his history of academic work on South Africa was the reason he and Greer were even asked to go on the NDI sponsored trip to South Africa, the truth he found out was early in 1993 as the party was planning its election, ANC organizers Popo Molefe and Terror Lekota brought a copy of *Newsweek's* special issue on Bill Clinton's successful 1992 US presidential campaign and the whiz kids that brought him to victory to a meeting Pat Keefer, NDI's contact in South Africa, and said, "We would like to work with these people."³⁰ While not the total of his work abroad, in the remainder of the cases in *Dispatches* Greenberg recounts being recruited directly to the campaigns of Tony Blair, Ehud Barak, and Gonzalo "Goni" Sánchez de Lozada by domestic consultants or activists of the respective party. Given the ultimate result of the meeting as described in the aforementioned paragraph, NDI unwittingly subsidized a meeting that may have otherwise taken place in Greenberg's offices in Washington, San Francisco or London.

Another Clinton strategist who has worked American political strategist with international experience is Robert Shrum. His recent book, *No Excuses: Concessions of a Serial Campaigner*, contains several references to working with the British Labour Party. In an interview for this paper, Shrum explained that Philip Gould, Labour's polling advisor, first approached him to work with the party in late 1988 or early 1989.³¹ Gould would go on to be an observer in the Clinton "War Room" in Little Rock and would later recruit Stanley Greenberg, James Carville, and others to help Labour's leader, Tony Blair, re-brand the party as "New" Labour (campaigning for the revocation of Clause IV – commitment to the nationalization of major industry – in the party constitution) and eventually defeat John Major's Tories.

The Republican and British Conservative party also have a working relationship. It was the Tories' media advisors collaborating with the Republicans on their negative advertisements in the 1992 presidential election portraying the Democratic candidate, Bill Clinton, as a tax and spend liberal. When Clinton won the election, Tory leader and British Prime Minister John Major apologized for the advertisements in their first meeting as leaders of their respective nations.³²

Major's apparent need or desire to apologize to President Clinton for his party's cooperation with the Republicans as part of maintaining the Anglo-American friendship highlights another motivation potential motivation for American political consultants: conducting the administration's foreign policy by other means. Instead of building links between parties in the Reagan mold, they are just working to achieve their administration's policies. In many of the elections that the high profile consultants work – the Greenbergs, Shrums, Carvilles, Finkelsteins, Morrisises, Luntzs, etc. – there is a strong fit between the respective foreign policy goals of the administrations of the day and the countries these consultants have worked.

³⁰ Greenberg, 2009; P. 116

³¹ Shrum; 2009

³² Greenberg; 2009; P. 182

The United Kingdom and Israel are always, for different reasons, important countries to American foreign policy. When Bill Clinton became president, the UK was lead by the aforementioned Tory Prime Minister John Major, whose own political consultants worked for the rival Republicans. Israel was lead by Labor Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and, later, Shimon Peres (also Labor), who both enjoyed good working relationships with the administration. Peres' successor, Likud's Benjamin Netanyahu, did not. In a Haaertz column just prior to the most recent Israeli election, Akiva Eldar recounted the differences between the Clinton administration and Netanyahu during his tenure as prime minister, quoting then White House Press Secretary Joe Lockhart:

...one of the most obnoxious individuals you're going to come into - just a liar and a cheat. He could open his mouth and you could have no confidence that anything that came out of it was the truth.³³

In the case of the United Kingdom, while Labour consultant Philip Gould had been liaising with American consultants like Bob Shrum and Stanley Greenberg for years prior to Clinton's election, after Clinton was elected Greenberg and Gould explicitly sought and received permission from the White House and the Democratic National Committee to create what Greenberg calls a "foreign exchange program": Gould traveled to Los Angeles to observe focus groups in the wake of the Democrats congressional defeat in 1994 and Greenberg would reciprocate by observing groups in the UK.³⁴

For Ehud Barak, whose inexperienced political team had just won the leadership of Israeli Labor Party in a narrow and was preparing for election in 1999, it was about finding winners. Greenberg, Shrum, and Carville had gotten moderate centre-leftists Bill Clinton and Tony Blair elected and would get him elected.³⁵ While there has been much written about the political and strategic motivations about their involvement, Mr. Shrum told this author that "the stuff out there about us being there at Clinton's behest is untrue."³⁶ He also noted that Greenberg had at that point not been part of the administration since 1995.³⁷

While these are two modern examples, they follow a potential trend begun by John F. Kennedy and his reported feud with Canadian Prime Minister John Diefenbaker. Journalist Knowlton Nash detailed this feud in his book *Kennedy and Diefenbaker: Fear and Loathing Across the Undefended Border*.³⁸ Nash argues that the generational and policy differences (the UK's entry in the European Common Market, Cuba, nuclear warheads on the Bomarc missiles Canada purchased from the US, to name a few.), coupled with Diefenbaker's anti-Americanism lead to Diefenbaker becoming, in Robert Kennedy's words, one of only two world leaders that President Kennedy hated.³⁹ President Kennedy even admitted to Benjamin C. Bradlee, "I thought he was a prick."⁴⁰

³³ Eldar; 2009

³⁴ Greenberg; 2009; P. 188

³⁵ Ibid P. 270

³⁶ Shrum 2009

³⁷ ibid

³⁸ re-titled in paperback: *Kennedy and Diefenbaker: the Feud that Helped Topple the Government*

³⁹ Nash, 1991; P. 11; N.B. - Indonesia's Sukarno had the distinction of being the other.

⁴⁰ Bradlee, 1984, P. 183

Kennedy favored the Liberal leader, Lester B. Pearson, as Canada's Prime Minister. He was acquainted with Pearson from his time as Canada's ambassador to the United Nations, a post where he was credited with coming up with the United Nations Emergency Force to serve as peacekeepers to diffuse the Suez crisis that earned him the 1957 Nobel Peace Prize. Kennedy did not do much to hide this, either. During his state visit to Canada, he was reported to have spent an excessive amount of time speaking to Pearson, seated next to Diefenbaker, at the dinner at the US ambassador's residence. Basil Robinson, a senior Canadian diplomat, noted, "Even the U.S. guests were embarrassed."⁴¹

The Canadian Liberals, meanwhile, asked Kennedy's campaign pollster, Lou Harris, to join their election campaign for the 1962 election. Harris had previously approached Kennedy about working for Harold Wilson's Labour Party in the UK and was told, "I don't trust Harold Wilson, and I'd hate to see you would do anything that would harm my friend Macmillan."⁴² Based on the conversation, Harris turned Wilson down. When he approached Kennedy about working for Pearson, Kennedy told him, "You do what you want."⁴³ Harris would later tell Nash, "It certainly wasn't at Kennedy's specific request, but rather with his acquiescence. Kennedy never stood in the way as he did with Wilson."⁴⁴

Diefenbaker was reduced to a minority government in that election. Perpetually teetering on collapse, Diefenbaker decided to put the issue of equipping US-purchased Bomarc-B missiles, something Diefenbaker was against, to a debate in the House of Commons. This prompted the State Department, with White House permission, to release on January 30, 1963, a press release titled "United States and Canadian Negotiations Regarding Nuclear Weapons". In the release, the department accused Diefenbaker of being disingenuous: "The Bomarc-B was not designed to carry any conventional warhead."⁴⁵ The release enraged Diefenbaker who accused Kennedy of interference.

The debate and the press release also exposed the divisions within Diefenbaker's own caucus. Minister of National Defence Douglas Harkness opposed Diefenbaker's view and resigned on February 4th. The government lost a pair of confidence measures shortly thereafter and an election was called. Harris would go back to secretly working for the Liberals. Given the open feud that had erupted between Diefenbaker and Kennedy and how Diefenbaker was attempting to use it to play on Canadians anti-Americanism, Harris instructed Kennedy to "keep quiet about Pearson no matter what you're feeling."⁴⁶ On April 8th, 1963, Lester Pearson was elected to a minority government and was promptly invited to meet with Kennedy at Hyannis Port. Pearson thought it more politically palpable to the public that he visit the British Prime Minister, Harold MacMillan, first.

⁴¹ Nash, 1991; P. 128

⁴² Ibid P. 166

⁴³ Ibid. P. 167

⁴⁴ Ibid

⁴⁵ Nash, 1991; P. 243 - 247

⁴⁶ Ibid Pp 276 - 279

While the Kennedy-Diefenbaker affair might be the most blatant example of a US President using his party consultants to influence the electoral outcome, there are few that rise to this level to sufficiently posit a pattern. The aforementioned Clinton-Blair relationship is another example where consultants sought permission from the White House, but there is no indication in Greenberg's *Dispatches* or this author's interview with Robert Shrum that they sought administration approval to work for Ehud Barak. The same holds for Greenberg's clients, save Blair, mentioned in *Dispatches*.

While the bulk of examples of American political consultants skews towards the Democrats during the Clinton administration, it should not be construed that Republican consultants were not active abroad during Bush administration. This skew in the narrative is due in large part to recent publications by Democratic strategists on this topic and Mr. Shrum's agreeing to sit for an interview. Republican consultants were contacted for interviews, however as of this writing, none of those requests were granted.

A notable example of a Republican participating in an election abroad is the aforementioned Dick Morris. Of particular interest for this paper would Morris' participation in the 2004-2005 presidential election campaign of Viktor Yushchenko of Ukraine. Yushchenko was considered the more western-oriented candidate in the race with a platform open to expanded ties with (and eventual membership in) the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The outgoing president, Leonid Kuchma, was considered an ally of Russia and its then-President (now Prime Minister) Vladimir Putin and Viktor Yanukovich was running in his place. Morris argues that his insistence on the use of exit polls is what allowed the Yushchenko campaign to detect vote tampering when the official results skewed towards Yanukovich, who Morris describes as "the Putin candidate backed by a coalition of the Russian Mafia, oil barons, former KGB officials and communists".⁴⁷ The exit polls, he says, projected a 10-point Yushchenko victory but the results the government announced were a narrow victory for Yanukovich.⁴⁸ After several days of protests in the capital of Kiev, which would become known as the "Orange Revolution", Yanukovich agreed to a new vote which with international monitors and conceded defeat after losing. A Yanukovich victory would have been seen as empowering the Russian President Putin and his agenda for the former Soviet republics in the Caucasus region whereas the Yushchenko victory would the Bush administration an ally in the region.

In May 2006, Canada's opposition parties accused Prime Minister Stephen Harper of spending more time listening to Republican pollsters than Canadians. The pollster in question, Frank Luntz, met with the Prime Minister the day prior to his presentation to an influential group of Conservatives called the Civitas Society. Luntz urged them to keep digging up dirt on the opposition Liberals and spoke on how choosing the right words can shape public opinion. He also recommended the party focus on such things as accountability and tax reduction and tap into national symbols like hockey.⁴⁹ This was hardly revolutionary advice. After being portrayed by the Liberals in the 2004 election for being insufficiently Canadian (by the Liberal definition), Harper and his campaign team decided to stake out the patriotic ground early before the Liberals had the chance to

⁴⁷ Morris 2004

⁴⁸ Ibid

⁴⁹ Canwest News Service; 2006

define them. Harper's campaign manager, Tom Flanagan, noted in *Harper's Team* that in early 2005:

Perry [Miele]'s team also came up the English campaign slogan, "Stand Up for Canada." Around the world, Conservative parties rarely win elections unless they become identified as the party of patriotism; certainly that has been true of the Republicans in the United States and the Conservatives in Great Britain. But we would have to work to reclaim that ground of Canadian patriotism that the Liberals had managed to appropriate for themselves. "Stand Up for Canada" would be a first step in that direction.⁵⁰

A strict "foreign policy by other means" explanation also ignores the fact that in the aforementioned examples of Democratic political consultants contributing to elections abroad post-1992 Republican-aligned consultants were also working in the same for the opposing side. This would have been at a time when out of the executive branch they would have had no foreign policy goals to achieve. Using elections abroad to embarrass the president at home is likewise an insufficient explanation because, as Holsti and others have noted, Americans in peacetime pay little if any attention to foreign affairs, in general, and foreign elections, in particular. A Republican-backed candidate could have defeated a Democratic-backed candidate and the American electorate is unlikely to have known or cared.

Money alone is not a sufficient cause, either. As the title suggests, "the boys gotta eat." Expenses need to be paid. Conducting polls, airline tickets, etc, cost money. Many of the parties American political consultants work with have the resources to pay these expenses and their hefty consultancy fees (usually based on a percentage of the advertising buy). One of the first political consulting firms to actively recruit clients internationally, the Sawyer Miller Group, were notorious for working for whoever could pay them. While in domestic politics they would work exclusively for Democratic candidates/clients, they were, as James Harding reports, "more promiscuous" in choosing their international clientele working *pro bono* for the Dalai Lama while being paid in cash by Nigeria. They worked on separate occasions against and then for Carlos Andrés Pérez in Venezuela in the 1970s as well as for and then against Manuel Noriega in Panama.⁵¹

A flush bank account alone, however, is not enough to convince a political consultant to work for a foreign political party. During the course of our interview, Robert Shrum mentioned that the only client he ever turned down was Sani Abacha, the dictator of Nigeria who had a long record of human rights abuses. He said that in doing so he turned down a lot of money, but he will not work for a candidate who does not share his values.⁵² There are few examples of American consultants who work for both major political parties in domestic elections, either. During the heyday of the Sawyer Miller Group from the late 1970s until co-founder Scott Miller's retirement in early 1990s, their main domestic clients, the Democrats, were out of power more than they were in and therefore had no overarching political interests to appease back home and had the freedom to work with whoever they wanted.

⁵⁰ Flanagan, 2007; P. 209

⁵¹ Harding; 2008, Pp. 3 – 5

⁵² Shrum 2009

In the end, what ultimately brings American political consultants with foreign contemporaries in a way that creates enduring bonds are the ideological linkages. Ideologies are, by definition, normative and with its unique republican system, American parties are fewer in number and broader in ideology. An American liberal may be considered radical within his Democratic party at home but overly moderate in Europe. As Shrum told this author, "... just because I'm progressive doesn't mean I favor the most radical candidate."⁵³ Regardless of what partisans call themselves in their respective countries, common content of ideas leads to common bonds. In an interview conducted for related paper on this topic, Morton Blackwell, the President of the Leadership Institute – an organization that trains conservative activists – told this author that when taking students from nominal conservative parties abroad, they use as a guide the values of Ronald Reagan of limited government, strong national defense, free enterprise, and traditional family values.⁵⁴

Conclusion

Political consulting has moved from the courts of emperors and kings to the towns and parishes of the American heartland. American political consulting is now a business of international scope. Unlike traditional businesses that offer a product or, in this case, service, political consulting firms do not travel the world looking for any old client with sufficiently deep pockets. For the most part, their successes at home bring international clients to the their doorstep. The consultants, in turn, choose their clients according to their own set of values. This value-connection creates a direct emotional investment in the client in a way that a normal client-consultant relationship would not. This in turn leads to a durable relationship between American partisan activists and their contemporaries abroad after the service has been rendered for a particular election campaign and, in turn, facilitates ongoing, cooperative relationships between parties.

⁵³ Shrum 2009

⁵⁴ Blackwell 2009

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