Mile High Metropole

Denver and the U.S. Empire

By

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For Alison and Ian

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A Note on Terminology

Throughout this dissertation, I follow the wisdom of scholars who have quite rightly recognized that the use of "American" in its adjectival form to mean "of the United States" is problematic at best and perpetuating an act of imperialism at worst. Therefore, I refer to the "U.S." empire rather than an "American" one. However, writing about those who reside within the United States, whether citizen or not, is not as straightforward. A combination of linguistic rules (the affixation of certain suffixes to toponyms) and convention has produced no alternative to "American" as the proper and accepted demonym for those from the United States. While "resident of the United States" may be more accurate, it is stylistically clunky. For this reason, I use "American" as a noun when discussing those who inhabit the United States, but I do not use the term in its adjectival form.

In Chapter Three, I write about Native Americans. Although the history of the use of the term "Indian" to refer to those of indigenous descent in North America is a complicated and fraught one, I defer to those who have claimed and reappropriated the term as a part of their identity. For stylistic reasons and to avoid repetition, I use "American Indian," "Indian," and "Native American" interchangeably, even if the historical subjects covered by the chapter may not have used all three to identify themselves.

Introduction

On May 20, 2013, fifty protesters gathered outside the office of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) in downtown Denver. Several days before, a national story broke claiming that the Treasury Department office, under direction from the Obama administration, applied undue scrutiny to conservative groups when assessing their non-profit status.[1] Randy Corporon, the organizer of the protest and head of the Arapaho County Tea Party, explained he was unsure he would even file for non-profit status for his group because he feared the IRS would delay his application and possibly deny tax-exempt status. Those who turned out to protest alongside Corporon did so because they allied with the Tea Party movement, a loosely organized group of conservatives and libertarians who adopted a name that referenced the Boston Tea Party of 1773 to signal their belief that the federal action, especially under the Obama administration, was the equivalent of tyranny. Those in attendance at the Denver rally could be heard chanting "more freedom; less government."[2] In their minds, nearly all government actions ran counter to the

[1] After several years of lawsuits, in 2017 the Internal Revenue Service eventually admitted in a consent order that it had intensely scrutinized applications for non-profit status from conservative groups. However, a review by the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration showed that the office treated all applications for non-profit status similarly regardless of political affiliation and that the Obama administration had not ordered the action. Jonathan Chait, "The Debunked IRS Targeting Scandal Shows there is no Sane Wing of the GOP," *New York Magazine,* October 5, 2017, available online at <http://nymag.com/daily/intelligencer/2017/10/debunked-irs-scandal-shows-theres-no-sane-wing-of-the-gop.html> (accessed on July 13, 2018); Peter Overby, "IRS Apologizes for Aggressive Scrutiny of Conservative Groups," National Public Radio, October 27, 2017, available online at <https://www.npr.org/2017/10/27/560308997/irs-apologizes-for-aggressive-scrutiny-of-conservative-groups> (accessed July 13, 2018).

[2] "Tea Party Activists Rally at Denver IRS Office," KCNC-TV, May 21, 2013, available online at <http://denver.cbslocal.com/2013/05/21/tea-party-activists-rally-at-denver-irs-office/> (accessed October 24, 2017). Historian Jill Lepore argues that the adoption of the Boston Tea Party to signify patriotism and opposition to the federal government is problematic because it ignores the complex history of the events preceding and following the protest. See Lepore, *The Whites of Their Eyes: The Tea Party's Revolution and the Battle over American History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011).

fundamental values of the United States, but especially federal programs that diminished their bank accounts.

It was not a coincidence that the protesters equated federal revenue raising to a loss of freedom. While the reports of anti-conservative bias within the office certainly sparked some of the anger, the animating issue was a century-old debate about how best to provide economic security in a country organized around capitalism and free-market practices. Since the ratification of the Sixteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1913, which allows the U.S. Congress to levy an income tax, many have questioned the need for the federal government to raise revenue by taxing personal income.[3] At various times, taxes have been decried as an unnecessary handbrake on economic expansion, a harbinger of Soviet-style centralization, and, more perniciously, part of a state-sponsored program of wealth redistribution that only serves to reward those unwilling to enter the labor market, a charge most often leveled at people of color, especially single mothers.[4] These objections to taxation, whether economic, ideological, or race-

[3] Throughout much of the twentieth century, raising revenue, whether at the federal, state, or local level, has been a divisive act. For histories of taxation, see, e.g., David Beito, *Taxpayers in Revolt: Tax Resistance during the Great Depression* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989); Robin L. Einhorn, *American Taxation, American Slavery* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006); Julian E. Zelizer, *Taxing America: Wilber D. Mills, Congress, and the State, 1945-1975* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Cathie J. Martin, *Shifting the Burden: The Struggle over Growth and Corporate Taxation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); Ronald F. King, *Money, Time, and Politics: Investment Tax Subsidies and American Democracy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1993); W. Elliot Brownlee, ed., *Funding the Modern American State, 1941-1995: The Rise and Fall of the Era of Easy Finance* (New York and Washington, DC: Cambridge University Press and Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1996); W. Elliot Brownlee, *Federal Taxation in America: A Short History* (New York and Washington, DC: Cambridge University Press and Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1996).

[4] On the racialized attacks on social welfare recipients, see Martin Gilens, *Why Americans Hate Welfare: Race, Media, and the Politics of Antipoverty Policy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999)*;* Jill Quadagno, *The Color of Welfare: How Racism Undermined the War on Poverty* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994)*;* Sharon Hays, *Flat Broke with Children: Women in the Age of Welfare Reform* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004); Julilly Kohler-Haussmann, "Welfare Crises, Penal Solutions, and the Origins of the 'Welfare Queen,'" *Journal of Urban History* 41, no. 5 (September 2015): 746-71.

based, are rooted in the idea that a market free of governmental intervention—or any other external force—will provide the most equitable distribution of wealth as well as economic security to the U.S. populace. Any involvement by the state, even revenue raising efforts, effectively limits the ability of the market to function and of Americans to achieve material prosperity.

What the protestors in downtown Denver did not recognize, however, is that the metropolitan region's postwar growth was largely funded by the federal government and that Denverites had been integral to defining the role of the state within a market economy. Denver's World War II and Cold War-era story is that of the transformation of a regional entrepôt into a metropolitan region critical to the nation-state. This happened because the federal government directed vast sums of money that created or supported thousands of public- and private-sector jobs, which in turn sustained much of Denver's development. From 1940 to 1970, Denver's population grew by 60 percent while the suburban population in the four adjacent counties of Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, and Jefferson grew 796 percent. Beginning in World War II, Denverites and the federal government constructed a mutually beneficial relationship, one in which public money jumpstarted development and Denverites helped define the contours of state efforts to ensure that Americans enjoyed economic security within capitalism and its markets of exchange.[5] To be sure, this was not an uncontested process and by the end of the Cold War it

[5] For recent scholarship on the history of capitalism that explores what Richard R. John calls the "mutual constitution of the state and the market," see John, "Introduction: Adversarial Relations? Business and Politics in Twentieth-Century America," in *Capital Gains: Business and Politics in Twentieth-Century America,* eds. Richard R. John and Kim Phillips-Fein (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017), pp. 1-24, quoted material on p. 14; Einhorn, *American Taxation, American Slavery;* Kim Phillips-Fein, "The New York City Fiscal Crisis and the Idea of the State," in *American Capitalism: New Histories,* eds. Sven Beckert and Christine Desan (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018), pp. 96-115; Elizabeth Tandy Shermer, *Sunbelt Capitalism: Phoenix and the Transformation of American Politics* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013).

exposed divisions within the metropolitan community, but the relationship between Denverites and the federal government indelibly shaped the region. Denver's twenty-first-century Tea Party protestors, in celebrating their opposition to the federal government, failed to see just how much their forebears in the Mile High City had done in the previous decades to create a more expansive state, not a circumscribed one.[6]

Denverites did not expand the reach of the postwar leviathan for expansion's sake. Instead, they made their home city integral to a project designed to protect and bolster industrial capitalism at home while expanding it abroad.[7] Denver's postwar relationship with the federal government took shape in response to intense public anxieties over economic organization and the role of the state at home and abroad. For one, the Great Depression had opened the door to trenchant criticisms of capitalism and corporations from the left, leading to a defense of the economic system.[8] Second, many Americans worried over the role of the United States in an increasingly internationalizing world. As Wendy L. Wall shows, these years brought to the surface many latent fears about totalitarian governments. The rise of totalitarianism in Europe prompted some Americans, especially those in the business sector, to articulate a form of U.S. nationalism called the "American Way" that would save the U.S. from the horrors of European

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[6] My thinking here is informed by Elizabeth Tandy Shermer, who argues that in Phoenix during the twentieth century, the city's business and political elite utilized the levers of government at the local, state, and federal levels to consolidate their economic and political power. They did so, she shows, by enacting a conservative agenda that furthered their own interests while also reshaping national politics. Although my focus is not on the rise of postwar conservatism, her work is nevertheless instructive because it provides an example of westerners embracing state power to shape political economy. See Shermer, *Sunbelt Capitalism*.

[7] Throughout this dissertation, I use "capitalist" to refer to a particular form of production, while I use "market" to discuss a process of exchange. Capitalism is the economic system in which capitalist production creates commodities for the market.

[8] See Kim Phillips-Fein, *Invisible Hands: The Businessmen's Crusade Against the New Deal* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2009).

totalitarianism: religious persecution, ethnocentric racism, and, importantly, centralized and planned state economies. Should totalitarianism take root beyond Europe, these Americans feared, so too might centralized economies, signaling the end of capitalist free enterprise.[9] As the U.S. became further enmeshed in politics abroad, the goal of preserving an international capitalist order in which nation-states eschewed nationalization in favor of softer, Keynesian economic policies became increasingly important. To many Americans, state intervention to protect capitalism was not a contradiction, especially not if that intervention improved their economic livelihoods. Denverites by the thousands worked to expand state powers to safeguard capitalism and ensure their economic security and that of their western neighbors. They also did so to help the U.S. implement its foreign policy prescription of spreading capitalism across the globe during the Cold War.

In this dissertation, I argue that Denver was at the heart of a postwar imperial project. The development of Denver during these years reflected the extension and solidification of a U.S. empire predicated on the international expansion of industrial capitalism. According to Walter LeFeber, in the decades after World War II, the United States focused less on the expansion of democracy and more on the creation of an international capitalist trading system, especially one that opened foreign countries to U.S.-based multi-national corporations.[10] The creation of the

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[9] Wendy L. Wall, *Inventing the "American Way": The Politics of Consensus from the New Deal to the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008). See also Laura A. Belmonte, *Selling the American Way: U.S. Propaganda and the Cold War* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010).

[10] Walter LeFeber, "The Tension Between Democracy and Capitalism during the American Century," *Diplomatic History* 23, no. 2 (April 1999): 263-84. For other scholarship that analyzes U.S. efforts to build an international trading system from an imperial perspective, see Robert J. McMahon, "The Republic as Empire: American Foreign Policy in the 'American Century,'" in *Perspectives on Modern America: Making Sense of the Twentieth Century,* ed. Harvard Sitkoff (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 80-100; Frank Ninkovich, *The United States and Imperialism* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2001); Leo Panitch and Sam Gindin, *The Making of Global Capitalism: The Political Economy of American Empire* (New York: Verso, 2012); John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson, "The

empire hinged on the reproduction of capitalism and its relations at home. Crucial to this was protecting the private accumulation of capital, especially through market exchange, investment in durable goods, and the expansion of wage labor where possible. Denverites were intimately involved in making this happen, working with the state to ensure that capitalism and markets of labor and consumption thrived in the American West and beyond.[11] Beginning with mobilization for World War II, they created an imperial metropole in the Rocky Mountains.

Denverites helped make manifest the postwar U.S. empire in several ways that all reproduced capitalism. First, they built the materiel the U.S. relied upon to exert its power over the international community. In Denver, private corporations created tens of thousands of well-paying manufacturing jobs to execute defense contracts for the federal government. During World War II, Remington Arms operated the U.S. Army's Denver Ordnance Plant, employing as many as 20,000 Denverites to produce .30-caliber ammunition for the war effort. Then, in the

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Imperialism of Free Trade," *Economic History Review*, 2nd ser., 6, no. 1 (1953): 1-15; Geir Lundestad, "Empire by Invitation? The United States and Western Europe, 1945-1952," *Journal of Peace Research* 23, no. 3 (September 1986): 263-77; Richard H. Immerman, *Empire for Liberty: A History of American Imperialism from Benjamin Franklin to Paul Wolfowitz* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press), esp. chap. 5*;* Melvyn Leffler, *Safeguarding Democratic Capitalism: U.S. Foreign Policy and National Security, 1920-2015* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2017), esp. chaps. 4-8. For works that analyze the importance of corporations in U.S. foreign policy, see Panitch and Gindin, *The Making of Global Capitalism,* chap. 5; Greg Grandin, *Fordlandia: The Rise and Fall of Henry Ford's Forgotten Jungle City* (New York: Picador, 2010)*;* Gregg Mitman and Paul Erickson, "Latex and Blood: Science, Markets, and American Empire," *Radical History Review* no. 107 (Spring 2010): 45-73; Jason Scott Smith, "The Great Transformation: The State and the Market in the Postwar World," in *Boundaries of the State in U.S. History,* eds. James T. Sparrow, William J. Novak, and Stephen W. Sawyer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), pp. 127-151; Stephen B. Adams, "Arc of Empire: The Federal Telegraph Company, the U.S. Navy, and the Beginnings of Silicon Valley," *Business History Review* 91, no. 2 (Summer 2017): 329-59.

[11] Historians of the nineteenth-century West have explored the various ways that the region was integral to the development of industrial capitalism in the U.S. See, for example, William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1991); Richard White, *Railroaded: The Transcontinentals and the Making of Modern America* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2010); Noam Maggor, *Brahmin Capitalism: Frontiers of Wealth and Populism in America's First Gilded Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017).

Cold War, those working at the Martin Marietta plant in Jefferson County fabricated intercontinental ballistic missiles for the U.S. Air Force and space launch vehicles for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, while thousands worked at the Rocky Flats Nuclear facility for several different corporations to produce detonators for the nuclear warheads in the U.S. arsenal. But even the fabrication of defense materiel could be tied to protecting capitalism. During the ideological battle with the Soviet Union, the U.S. had to prove to potential allies that free-market capitalism functioned better than planned economies.[12] Therefore, the structure of the defense contracts took on outsized importance because the state's procurement of defense goods could not undermine a market economy. For this reason, the agreements between the federal government and its private contractors protected the private accumulation of capital, especially through the use of wage labor. While the specifics of these contracts differed throughout the postwar years, they all preserved the capitalist mode of production. Denver's military-industrial complex reproduced capitalism through producing defense weapons.

Second, if the U.S. hoped to open foreign countries to its market-based trading system, it had to show that capitalism fostered economic growth. Denverites played a central role in assisting the federal government in its efforts to ensure that the U.S. economy continued its expansion after World War II. With the rise of Keynesian thinking in Washington, DC, the federal government needed an expanded bureaucratic apparatus to implement its policies intended to make market transactions more efficient. In the western U.S., Denver became the primary hub of federal bureaucracy. Federal employment was such a driver of the region's economy that even the Denver Chamber of Commerce proudly proclaimed Denver the "little

[12] On the competition for allies, see Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

capital of the United States."[13] Because the federal government was such an important employer in Denver, residents had first-hand experience of how public spending could increase personal bank accounts and purchasing power.[14] They also believed that the federal government's efforts to manage the economy had the potential to improve the livelihoods of their western neighbors. Thus, they worked as civil servants to enact policies that aimed to make life within capitalism more comfortable. In doing so, they supported U.S. foreign policy even if they were motivated by domestic concerns.

Denverites contributed to the reproduction of capitalism in the service of the U.S. empire in one other crucial way: by attempting to correct market failures that did not equitably allocate wealth and resources. Although capitalism does tend toward uneven development and distribution, the federal government hoped to prevent political unrest at home by protecting the economic security of the poorest Americans.[15] The state's impetus was to show the rest of the world that capitalism not only produced more growth, but was also a more egalitarian economic system than planned economies.[16] Without attending to poverty, the U.S could be subject, as it

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[13] Industrial Development Department, *Industrial Denver* (Denver: Denver Chamber of Commerce, 1947), p.3, Western History and Genealogy Collection, Denver Public Library, Denver, Colorado.

[14] For a brief history of Denver's population growth, including some analysis of the region's shifting employment trends, see Lyman Stone, "A Population History of Denver: Or: Acts of God are Usually Benevolent," *In a State of Migration* (blog)*,* August 18, 2016, available online at <https://medium.com/migration-issues/a-population-history-of-denver-8a6804e3dac5> (accessed December 14, 2018).

[15] On capitalism and unevenness, see David Harvey, *The Limits to Capital* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1982); Doreen Massey, *Spatial Divisions of Labor: Social Structures and the Geography of Production,* 2nd ed. (1984; London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1995).

[16] I draw from Melvyn Leffler, who writes that "the West won the Cold War precisely because statesmen realized that national security meant proving the superiority of a way of life; that was done not so much by diplomacy or strategy, but by making democratic capitalism and social democracy serve the needs of their people." See Leffler, *Safeguarding Democratic Capitalism*, p. 20.

occasionally was, to criticism by the Soviet Union that exposed the failings of capitalism, especially how poverty in the U.S. was disproportionately concentrated in communities of color.[17] Anti-poverty efforts in Denver were concentrated in two programs. From the 1950s to the mid-1970s, the Bureau of Indian Affairs operated a program to relocate Native Americans from reservations to urban centers across the U.S., including Denver, which also served as the program's administrative center. And, during the 1960s, Denver's municipal government embraced the Johnson Administration's War on Poverty to try to improve the lives of Denver's poorest residents, who were predominantly from the city's black and Latinx communities. Denverites worked with and for the federal government to move the country's poorest residents into the city's labor market, where they could work for wages and eventually consume their way to a higher standard of living. In the circular logic of Denverites and the federal government, more wage labor held the promise of correcting the very shortcomings capitalism produced.

As Denverites came to recognize their important role in making possible expressions of U.S. hegemony and the spreading of capitalism, divisions arose between those who supported the empire and those who contested its existence. While many did embrace their roles and identities as builders of the empire, others, both those who actively labored on empire's behalf and those

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[17] On the connection between foreign politics and domestic race relations during the Cold War, see Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000); Cindy I-fen Cheng, *Citizens of Asian America: Democracy and Race during the Cold War* (New York: New York University Press, 2013); Brenda Gayle Plummer, *Rising Wind: Black Americans and U.S. Foreign Affairs, 1935-1960* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Thomas Borstlemann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001); Azza Salama Layton, *International Politics and Civil Rights Policies in the United States, 1941-1960* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Jonathan Rosenberg, *How Far the Promised Land?: World Affairs and the American Civil Rights Movement from the First World War to Vietnam* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006); Nikhil Pal Singh, *Black is a Country: Race and the Unfinished Struggle for Democracy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004); Penny M. Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937-1957* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997).

who did not, questioned the costs associated with reproducing capitalism and extending U.S. power globally. Denver's rise as a metropole is not only the story of residents who sustained a U.S.-led capitalist order, but also of those who pushed back against the practices necessary to assert U.S. dominance. The contests between competing interests in Denver cannot be disentangled from the region's imperial ventures.

Tracing Denver's postwar development into an imperial metropole through its relationship with the federal government and infusions of public money fits with the city's longer history of expansion. Since its inception, Denver has grown in fits and starts, cycling through growth and stasis, with the level of outside investment largely determining the direction of the city's economy. In its earliest days as an Anglo-American settlement, founded after the discovery of gold near the confluence of the South Platte River and Cherry Creek in 1858, Denver was, in the words of historian Gunther Barth, an "instant city."[18] In the days of gold seekers and mining outfitters, eastern capital flowed into the region, until the panic of 1878 slowed the westward flow of money. In the final decades of the nineteenth century, Denver grew steadily, if unimpressively. The election of Mayor Robert W. Speer in 1904 began a new era of remarkable growth. Under Speer's leadership, the municipal government committed itself to transforming the built environment according to the ideals of the City Beautiful movement.[19] During his tenure, private construction tried to keep pace with public projects, and the city grew

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[18] Gunther Barth, *Instant Cities: Urbanization and the Rise of San Francisco and Denver* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975). On the gold rush to the Rocky Mountains and the effects on Native Americans, see Elliott West, *The Contested Plains: Indians, Goldseekers, and the Rush to Colorado* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998); Ned Blackhawk, *Violence Over the Land: Indians and Empire in the Early American West* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), chap. 6.

[19] On the City Beautiful movement in Denver, see William H. Wilson, *The City Beautiful Movement* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), chaps. 8, 11; Carol McMichael Reese, "The Politician and the City: Urban Form and City Beautiful Rhetoric in Progressive Era Denver" (PhD diss., University of Texas at Austin, 1992).

from a former mining trading center into a regional metropolis. However, after Speer's passing in 1920, city elites sought to consolidate their economic and political power by limiting outside investment in the city.[20] They did so until World War II.

Denverites welcomed federal spending once they discovered it had the power to reshape their home city's economy, but its arrival in Denver was not a foregone conclusion. During the depths of the Great Depression, conservative Democratic Governor Edwin C. Johnson defiantly resisted New Deal money on the grounds that he could not support any form of deficit spending, even to aid Coloradans.[21] During the Depression, his constituents suffered, especially because Colorado did not have a thriving manufacturing sector. For example, in 1940, only 10.2 percent of Colorado's labor force worked in manufacturing, compared to 23.4 percent nationally.[22] One of the reasons for this was that Denver's distance from other markets, and prohibitive shipping rates on the railroads put its fabrication shops at a disadvantage. Denver did have some success as retailer and wholesaler to the rest of the Intermountain West, but the sparsely populated region, with residents who enjoyed less wealth than many other Americans, did not offer great market demand. Mobilization for World War II changed Denver's fate. Dormant manufacturing firms discovered that signing contracts with the federal government provided a guaranteed purchaser, allowing them to overcome the limits of the Intermountain West's market. Federal contracts, along with the economic boon provided by the influx of thousands of soldiers training

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[20] Steven J. Leonard and Thomas J. Noel, *Denver: From Mining Camp to Metropolis* (Niwot, CO: University Press of Colorado, 1990), pp. 235-50.

[21] Governor John A. Love made his distaste for federal spending in his state during the Great Depression well known. See James F. Wickens, "Tightening the Colorado Purse Strings," *The Colorado Magazine* 46, no. 4 (1969): 271-286, cited material on pp. 283-84.

[22] National Resources Planning Board, *Mountain States Industrial Development* (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1942), pp.18-19.

at Denver's Lowry Field, led Denverites to recognize the benefits of partnering with the state during what James T. Sparrow calls "the age of big government."[23] By the war's end, Denverites embraced the transformative power of federal money.

The connections between Denver's twentieth-century development and U.S. imperialism may not be readily evident, but unearthing them is both possible and necessary for understanding the North American West in the postwar era. Here, I follow the advice of Paul A. Kramer, who argues that historians need to adopt an imperial analytic and develop an imperial historiography for the U.S. One benefit of an imperial approach, he writes, is that it "enables new conceptualizations of space. It may, for example, provide tools for rethinking region."[24] Of course, introducing an imperial analytic to the North American West is not new; many historians have illuminated centuries of imperial competitions involving Indigenous, Spanish, French, British, Russian, and U.S. American powers vying for control of the continent and its resources.[25] But the West was more than a prize to be claimed by the victor; it became central to U.S. imperial efforts after the country incorporated the land and its residents. As many have shown, settler colonialism in the West brought with it a continued imperialism that worked to

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[23] James T. Sparrow, *Warfare State: World War II Americas and the Age of Big Government* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

[24] Paul A. Kramer, "Power and Connection: Imperial Histories of the United States in the World," *American Historical Review* 116, no. 5 (December 2011): 1348-91, quoted material on p. 1354.

[25] See, e.g., Richard White, *Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815,* Twentieth Anniversary edition (1991; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Brian DeLay, *War of a Thousand Deserts: Indian Raids and the U.S.-Mexican War* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008); Pekka Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 20080; Kathleen DuVal, *The Native Ground: Indians and Colonists in the Heart of the Continent* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006); Blackhawk, *Violence Over the Land*; Janne Lahti, *Wars for Empire: Apaches, the United States, and the Southwest Borderlands* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2017); Eugene P. Moehring, *Urbanism and Empire in the Far West, 1840-1890* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2004).

subjugate Indigenous Peoples as well as other residents of color.[26] Historians who look beyond the continental U.S. have long seen imperial structures emanating across the Pacific Ocean. Much of this scholarship has explored the ways in which these connections between the U.S. and other places along the Pacific Rim have racialized those of non-European descent into inferior others.[27] Together, these strands of scholarship highlight the usefulness of analyzing the West as both the product of imperial competition and a staging ground for imperial ventures.[28]

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[26] John R. Gram, *Education at the Edge of Empire: Negotiating Pueblo Identity in New Mexico's Indian Boarding Schools* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2015); Margaret Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race: Settler Colonialism, Maternalism, and the Removal of Indigenous Children in the American West and Australia, 1880-1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011); Jeffrey Ostler, *The Plains Sioux and U.S. Colonialism from Lewis and Clark to Wounded Knee* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Kelly Lytle Hernandez, *City of Inmates: Conquest, Rebellion, and the Rise of Human Caging in Los Angeles, 1771-1965* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017); Blackhawk, *Violence over the Land;* Gray H. Whaley, *Oregon and the Collapse of Illahee: U.S. Empire and The Transformation of an Indigenous World, 1792-1859* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010); Frederick E. Hoxie, "Retrieving the Red Continent: Settler Colonialism and the History of American Indians in the U.S.," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 31, no. 6 (August 2008): 1154-67. Brian DeLay, rather than focusing on settler colonialism, makes the argument that historians of U.S foreign relations should do more to consider American Indians as historical agents who wrestled with U.S. imperialism in "Indian Polities, Empire, and the History of American Foreign Relations," *Diplomatic History* 39, no. 5 (November 2015): 927-42.

[27] On U.S. imperialism in the Pacific World, see, e.g., Bruce Cummings, *Dominion from Sea to Sea: Pacific Ascendency and American Power* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009); Anne L. Foster, *Projections of Power: The United States and Europe in Colonial Southeast Asia* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010); Alfred W. McCoy, *Policing America's Empire: The United States, the Philippines, and the Rise of the Surveillance State* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009). On imperialism and racialization, see Etsuko Taketani, *The Black Pacific Narrative: Geographic Imaginings of Race and Empire between the World Wars* (Hanover, NH: Dartmouth University Press, 2014); SooJin Pate, *From Orphan to Adoptee: U.S. Empire and Genealogies of Korean Adoption* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014); Dorothy Fujita-Rony, *American Workers, Colonial Power: Philippine Seattle and the Transpacific West, 1919-1941* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Takashi Fujitani, *Race for Empire: Koreans as Japanese and Japanese as Americans during World War II* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011); Erika Lee, *At America's Gates: Chinese Immigration during the Exclusion Era, 1882-1943* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); Eiichiro Azuma, *Between Two Empires: Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); Nyan Shah, *Contagious Divides: Epidemics and Race in San Francisco's Chinatown* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

[28] For scholarship on the West as a staging ground for expanding nineteenth-century U.S. imperialism, see William S. Kiser, *Coast-to-Coast Empire: Manifest Destiny and the New Mexico Borderlands* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2018); Verity McInnis, *Women of Empire: Nineteenth-Century Army Officers' Wives in India and the U.S. West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma

Understanding Denver as both a producer and product of imperialism is necessary to make sense of the connections between city building and empire building. Historians of European empires and cities have long known that imperialism is reciprocal; just as the metropole makes the colonies, so too do the colonies shape the metropole and its residents.[29] In the U.S. context, cultural studies scholars were the first to apply this insight, but they have tended to focus on turn-of-the-twentieth-century U.S. imperialism when U.S. territorial expansion reached its zenith. This scholarship has been most fertile in addressing the circulation and consumption of cultural forms that depicted Americans as liberators and guarantors of freedom to non-white peoples in places far-removed from the North American continent.[30] While

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Press, 2017). For similar scholarship on the twentieth century, see Paul Sabin, "Home and Abroad: The Two 'Wests' of Twentieth-Century United States History," *Pacific Historical Review* 66, no. 3 (August 1997): 305-35.

[29] This body of literature is voluminous. For recent examples, see Antoinette Burton, *Burdens of History: British Feminists, Indian Women, and Imperial Culture, 1865-1915* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), and *At the Heart of the Empire: Indians and the Colonial Encounter in Late Victorian Britain* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); Tony Ballantyne, *Between Colonialism and Diaspora: Sikh Cultural Formations in an Imperial World* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006); Tony Ballantyne and Antoinette Burton, *Empires and the Reach of the Global, 1870-1945* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2014); Catherine Hall, *Civilizing Subjects: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination, 1830-1867* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002); Mrinalini Sinha, *Specters of Mother India: The Global Restructuring of an Empire* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006); Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000); Frederick Cooper, *Africa in the World: Capitalism, Empire, Nation-State* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014); Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler, eds., *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); Ann Laura Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Felix Driver and David Gilbert, eds., *Imperial Cities: Landscape, Display and Identity* (Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 1999); Jonathan Schneer, *London 1900: The Imperial Metropolis* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999).

[30] Amy Kaplan, *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002). See also the collection of essays in Donald E. Pease and Amy Kaplan, eds., *Cultures of United States Imperialism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1994); Mary A. Renda, *Taking Haiti: Military Occupation and the Culture of U.S. Imperialism, 1915-1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002); Laura Wexler, *Tender Violence: Domestic Visions in an Age of U.S. Imperialism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Matthew Fry Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917*

I draw from their insights, I am less concerned with the consumption of cultural forms than with the reproduction of capitalism for the good of the empire. U.S. efforts to expand a market-oriented economy across the globe had a direct bearing on Denver's postwar development. How did Denverites enable and advance this project? How were their economic livelihoods enmeshed in the relations of capitalism? How did they marry local interests with national, imperial interests?

To answer these questions, I analyze Denverites' interactions with the federal government. Although "empire" and "state" are not necessarily synonyms, for Denverites the state apparatus and its constituent parts were the sites where they confronted U.S. imperial aspirations, either helping to strengthen the U.S. state or contesting the use of state power for imperial ventures.[31] But, Denverites did not encounter the federal government only in the bureaucratic offices in their city; they also did so within private spaces of employment. This is because, as William J. Novak has pointed out, one of the ways that the U.S. state exercises its power is through public-private partnerships to deliver social services.[32] In Denver, the federal

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(New York: Hill and Wang, 2001); Gretchen Murphey, *Shadowing the White Man's Burden: U.S. Imperialism and the Problems of the Color Line* (New York: New York University Press, 2010); Christina Klein, *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945-1961* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Shelley Streeby, *American Sensations: Class, Empire, and the Production of Popular Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Oliver Charbonneau, "Visiting the Metropole: Muslim Colonial Subjects in the United States, 1904-1927," *Diplomatic History* 42, no. 2 (April 2018): 204-27.

[31] For works that explore the connections between U.S. imperialism and the U.S. state, see the collection of essays in Alfred W. McCoy and Francisco Scarano, eds., *Colonial Crucible: Empire in the Making of the Modern American State* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009), esp. McCoy, Scarano, and Courtney Johnson, "On the Tropic of Cancer: Transitions and Transformations in the U.S. Imperial State," pp. 3-33; Panitch and Gindin, *The Making of Global Capitalism.*

[32] William J. Novak, "The Myth of the 'Weak' American State," *American Historical Review* 113, no. 3 (June 2008): 752-72, cited material on pp. 769-71. Novak further explores how the state utilizes power in Novak, Stephen W. Sawyer, and James T. Sparrow, "Beyond Stateless Democracy," *The Tocqueville Review/La Revue Tocqueville* 36, no. 1 (2015): 21-41. On public-private partnerships, see Brian Balogh, *The Associational State: American Governance in the Twentieth Century* (Philadelphia:

government was less concerned with the delivery of services than it was with protecting a market economy, and it utilized contractual relationships with private entities to further the reproduction of capitalism.

The work Denverites performed for the federal government was part of the state's postwar focus on national security, which meant protection from both foreign threats and economic anxiety.[33] U.S. foreign policy, which considered political and economic stability to be two sides of the same coin, focused on building a durable international community in which trade across borders would forestall the nationalization of economies. Domestically, the federal government sought economic security through Keynesian efforts to manage the growth of the market economy. The New Deal order, which emerged in response to the Great Depression and coalesced during World War II, favored a demand-side macroeconomic approach which held that government action could boost employment, thereby protecting the consumption power of American workers. To be sure, Keynesianism was not a move towards the industrial democracy for which organized labor agitated, but rather a belief that consumption was the primary driver of economic growth—and that economic growth was a fundamental good for the country. The more

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University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015). For examples of scholarship that explore the private delivery of public goods, see Jennifer Klein, *For All these Rights: Business, Labor, and the Shaping of America's Public-Private Welfare State* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006); Christy Ford Chapin, *Ensuring America's Health: The Public Creation of the Corporate Health Care System* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Jacob S. Hacker, *The Divided Welfare State: The Battle over Public and Private Social Benefits in the United States* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Suzanne Mettler, *The Submerged State: How Invisible Government Policies Undermine American Democracy* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2012)*;* Brent Cebul, "Creative Competition: Georgia Power, the Tennessee Valley Authority, and the Creation of a Consumer Rural Economy, 1934-1955," *Journal of American History* 105, no. 1 (June 2018): 45-70.

[33] On the expansion of the state to provide national security, see Gary Gerstle, *Liberty and Coercion: The Paradox of American Government from the Founding to the Present* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015), esp. chaps. 8-9; Julian E. Zelizer, *Arsenal of Democracy: The Politics of National Security—From World War II to the War on Terrorism* (New York: Basic Books, 2009); Melvyn Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992).

purchasing power Americans held, the thinking went, the more producers had to invest in technological innovation, capital improvements, and labor to meet that demand.[34] The political implications of the policy could not be missed: better wages could preempt some of labor's more radical demands while also placating corporations without returning to Gilded-Age laissez-faire policies. In fact, some corporations eventually came to accept state activism when it could be harnessed for their own ends.[35] In Denver, residents provided their own security, both political and economic, by working in the service of the empire.

Examining Denver through an imperial lens makes possible new assessments of postwar urban history. Urban scholarship tells one of two regional narratives: a declining and deindustrializing North or an expanding, post-industrial Sunbelt and West.[36] While Denver's rise

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[34] For histories of the implementation of Keynesian policies in the U.S. beginning with the New Deal, see Alan Brinkley's *The End of Reform: New Deal Liberalism in Recession and War* (New York: Vintage, 1995); Jefferson Cowie, *The Great Exception: The New Deal and the Limits of American Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016); Jason Scott Smith, *Building New Deal Liberalism: The Political Economy of Public Works* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* (New York: Vintage, 2003); Meg Jacobs, *Pocketbook Politics: Economic Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), chaps. 5-6.

[35] For studies of the business community's resistance to state intervention, see Phillips-Fein, *Invisible Hands*; Elizabeth A. Fones-Wolf, *Selling Free Enterprise: The Business Assault on Labor and Liberalism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994). For works that explore how corporations have sought to forge beneficial relationships with political institutions, see, e.g., Richard R. John and Kim Phillips-Fein, eds., *Capital Gains: Business and Politics in Twentieth-Century America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016); Kim Phillips-Fein and Julian E. Zelizer, eds., *What's Good for Business: Business and American Politics since World War II* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); Benjamin C. Waterhouse, *Lobbying America: The Politics of Business from Nixon to NAFTA* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015); Shermer, *Sunbelt Capitalism.*

[36] The declension argument is made most forcefully in Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (1996; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005). See Robert A. Beauregard, *Voices of Decline: The Postwar Fate of U.S. Cities,* 2nd ed. (1993; New York: Routledge, 2003) for an intellectual history of the dominance of the declension narrative in urban studies. On the Sunbelt, see, e.g., Michelle Nickerson and Darren Dochuk, eds., *Sunbelt Rising: The Politics of Space, Place, and Region* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011); Darren Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt: Plain-folk Religion, Grassroots Politics, and the Rise of Evangelical Conservatism* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2011); Bradford Luckingham, *Phoenix: The History of a Southern Metropolis* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1989); Shermer, *Sunbelt Capitalism*; Jon Hunner, *Inventing Los*

resembles that of other sunbelt cities, especially its multi-nodal metropolitan development that has produced an urban form that differs markedly from the core-centric urban North, the region's expansion was not as predicated on a postindustrial economy as the standard Sunbelt narrative suggests. In fact, Denver's growth was as much a product of federal support for certain industrial areas as it was the explosion of its service sector. Imperialism provides a framework to make sense of the industrial basis of the metropolitan region's postwar expansion.

Analyzing Denver's development as a product of a conscious effort by the state to shape the domestic and international economy adds nuance to the Cold War history of the West. Although westerners were deeply involved in the military-industrial complex, historians have produced a mapping of the defense industry that is overwhelmingly rural or concentrated in places like Los Alamos, New Mexico, and Richland, Washington, cities that developed expressly to advance the nuclear project.[37] The scholarship that does highlight the Cold War in urban places focuses on the San Francisco Bay Area, especially Silicon Valley, and Southern California's defense industries.[38] By stressing Denver's importance to the military-industrial

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Alamos: The Growth of an Atomic Community (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004). On suburbanization in the West, see Eric Avila, *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight: Fear and Fantasy in Suburban Los Angeles* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004); Becky Nicolaides, *My Blue Heaven: Life and Politics in the Working Class Suburbs of Los Angeles, 1920-1965* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002); Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Robert O. Self, *American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003).

[37] See, e.g., Bruce Hevly and John M. Findley, eds., *The Atomic West* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1998); Kevin J. Fernlund, ed., *The Cold War American West* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1998); Kate Brown, *Plutopia: Nuclear Families, Atomic Cities, and the Great Soviet and American Plutonium Disasters* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); Jon Hunner, *Inventing Los Alamos: The Growth of an Atomic Community* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004); Michael A. Amundson, *Yellowcake Towns: Uranium Mining Communities in the American West* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2002); Gretchen Heefner, *The Missile Next Door: The Minuteman in the American Heartland* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012): David W. Mills, *Cold War in a Cold Land: Fighting Communism on the Northern Plains* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2015).

complex, this dissertation complicates the mapping of the Cold War West while highlighting the importance of the defense industry to Denver's expansion.

At the same time, Denver's imperial history also challenges the dominant paradigm of suburbanization as the driver of metropolitan growth and politics. Because the West is the most urbanized region of the country, metropolitan politics have an outsized importance. Much of the scholarship tells a complex story of federal policies that stimulated individual homeownership in the suburbs, often for the benefit of white Americans. Out of this homogenous milieu grew a conservative discourse of individual rights, privatization, and small government that produced a strong current of anti-federal sentiment, especially during the Cold War when many westerners equated a strong central state with Soviet-style communism. [39] In Denver, suburbanization did not lead to a similar politics animated primarily by efforts to limit the reach of the state. Although the region's residents at times expressed displeasure with certain federal policies, Denverites knew the importance of federal money to their economy and they worked to strengthen an active federal government. Denver's postwar story is one of its residents ultimately increasing the reach of the state, especially for economic gain.

In arguing that Denver has been both a producer and product of U.S. imperialism, this dissertation makes clear that the metropolitan region was an imperial space tied to efforts to

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[38] O'Mara, *Cities of Knowledge;* Thomas Heinrich, "Cold War Armory: Military Contracting in Silicon Valley," *Enterprise & Society* 3, no. 2 (June 2002): 247-84; Anne Markusen, et. al., *The Rise of the Gunbelt: The Military Remapping of Industrial America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), esp. chaps. 5,7.

[39] See Avila, *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight;* Nicolaides, *My Blue Heaven*; McGirr, *Suburban Warriors*; Self, *American Babylon.* On suburbanization more broadly, see Kevin M. Kruse and Thomas J. Sugrue, eds., *The New Suburban History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006). For considerations of anti-federalism in the region, see Aaron L. Friedberg, "American Antistatism and the Founding of the Cold War State," in *Shaped by War and Trade: International Influences on American Political Development,* eds. Ira Katznelson and Martin Shefter (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), pp. 239-66; McGirr, *Suburban Warriors;* Avila, *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight,* chap. 1.

assert U.S. hegemony.[40] Denver, where the impetus for growth came about largely through war efforts, both hot and cold, needs an imperial history. While other western metropolises were integral to the military-industrial complex, Denver's story, too, is also one of expanding state power.[41] Paul A. Kramer explains that cities are "hubs of imperial systems, centers of rule-making, consumption, and productive power."[42] Because Denver was a hub of several imperial systems—the military-industrial complex, the bureaucratic apparatus, labor and consumption markets—I argue that it truly was it an imperial space within the boundaries of the nation-state.

But Denver was more than an imperial space; it was a metropole. I use the term to signal the importance of Denver in shaping the federal government and the execution of imperial

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[40] Daniel Immerwahr stresses the need to rethink the spatiality of the U.S. in light of its imperial ventures in "The Greater United States: Territory and Empire in U.S. History," *Diplomatic History* 40, no. 3 (June 2016): 373-391. For scholarship that locates imperial spaces outside the territorial boundaries of the nation state, see, e.g., Laura Briggs, *Reproducing Empire: Race, Sex, Science, and U.S. Imperialism in Puerto Rico* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Warwick Anderson, *Colonial Pathologies: American Tropical Medicine, Race, and Hygiene in the Philippines* (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2006); Julian Go, *American Empire and the Politics of Meaning: Elite Political Cultures in the Philippines and Puerto Rico during U.S. Colonialism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008); Paul A. Kramer, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States, and the Philippines* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006); Julie Greene, *The Canal Builders: Making America's Empire at the Panama Canal* (New York: Penguin Books, 2009); Mark L. Gillem, *American Town: Building the Outposts of Empire* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007); Ruth Oldenziel, "Islands: The United States as a Networked Empire," in Gabrielle Hecht, ed., *Entangled Geographies: Empires and Technopolitics in the Global Cold War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), pp. 13-42. However, Paul A. Kramer observes that using "empire" to refer exclusively to overseas possessions is to "mistake a part for a whole." Kramer, "Power and Connection," p. 1378. For a postwar study that locates an imperial space within the continental U.S., see Andrew Friedman, *Covert Capital: Landscapes of Denial and the Making of U.S. Empire in the Suburbs of Northern Virginia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013).

[41] For examples, see Roger W. Lotchin, *Fortress California, 1910-1960: From Warfare to Welfare* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), and *The Bad City in the Good War: San Francisco, Los Angeles, Oakland, and San Diego* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003); Marylinn S. Johnson, *The Second Goldrush: Oakland and the East Bay in World War II* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); Margaret Pugh O'Mara, *Cities of Knowledge: Cold War Science and the Search for the Next Silicon Valley* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), chap. 3; Roger W. Lotchin and Martin Schiesl, eds., "Fortress California at War: San Francisco, Los Angeles, Oakland, and San Diego, 1941-1945," special issue, *Pacific Historical Review* 63, no. 3 (August 1994): 277-420.

[42] Kramer, "Power and Connection," p. 1355.

designs. Historians Maureen Mahoney and Brian Foster note that "metropoles play a part" in "the process of acquiring and exerting influence" over "the boundaries and authority of states."[43] Because of Denver's importance to the growth of the U.S. state and the implementation of its economic policies, the city fits Mahoney's and Foster's definition of a metropole. Furthermore, as Andrew Heath points out, examining the relationship between U.S. urbanism and imperialism requires moving beyond identifying a single metropole for the empire. In the case of the U.S., the neat center-periphery binary with a single urban locus of power does not fully capture the way multiple cities were producers and products of imperialism.[44] Denver, in addition to Washington, DC, and New York City, was a metropole of U.S. imperialism.

Despite Denver's growth in recent decades, scholarship on the city pales in comparison to the volume of work on other western metropolises like Chicago, Los Angeles, and the San Francisco Bay Area. The histories that do exist tend to track the changes in Denver's economy as the extractive industries of the nineteenth century gave way to a service-sector-oriented economy in the twentieth century. The nineteenth-century histories follow the city-hinterland model, highlighting the importance of the Rocky Mountains to Denver's economy. Historians Gunther Barth, Lyle Dorsett, and Elliott West all focus on the relationship between Denver and the mining industry in the region.[45] In this work, Denver's growth arises from its role as a regional

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[43] Maureen Mahoney and Brian Foster, "Building Empire? The Nation-State, Empire, and Transnationalism in U.S. Urban Historiography," *NeoAmericanist* 5, no. 1 (Winter 2010): 1-5, quoted material on p. 3.

[44] Andrew Heath, "Hidden Metaphors of Empire," *NeoAmericanist* 5, no. 1 (Winter 2010): 8-12. For examples of works that use an imperial analytic to examine U.S. cities, see Brechin, *Imperial San Francisco;* David M. Scobey, *Empire City: The Making and Meaning of the New York City Landscape* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2002).

[45] Barth, *Instant Cities*; Lyle W. Dorsett, *The Queen City: A History of Denver* (Boulder: Pruett Publishing Co., 1977); West, *The Contested Plains*. For examples of the city-hinterlands model for nineteenth-century cities, see, Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis*; Laurence H. Larsen, *The Urban West at the*

entrepôt, importing goods from the East and distributing them to the mining camps in the Rockies. In Barth's words, Denver was an "instant city"—that is, it grew almost overnight because of the nearby gold discoveries. While Denver's nineteenth-century history has been told as a story of "mining camp to metropolis," to borrow from the title of Stephen Leonard and Thomas Noel's book, scholars of the city's twentieth-century history have focused on the shift from an extractive economy to a service-sector economy.[46] William Philpott explores the development of the infrastructure necessary for a vast tourist network that encompassed the "Colorado High Country" as well as the cultural processes that transformed Denver into an important vacation site in the minds of Americans.[47] While historians have traced the city's economic trajectory from extractive to service activities, this broad narrative elides much of the activity that continued in Denver to support and expand the nation's defense industry. This dissertation contributes to existing scholarship on Denver's growth and development by examining how Denverites earned a living by laboring in capitalist spaces under federal contracts or for the state to bolster capitalism.

Historians have examined some aspects of Denver's postwar history that this dissertation addresses. For example, Azusa Ono studies the Bureau of Indian Affairs' urban relocation

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End of the Frontier (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1978); Richard C. Wade, *The Urban Frontier: The Rise of Western Cities, 1790-1830* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1959); Timothy R. Mahoney, *River Towns in the Great West: The Structure of Provincial Urbanization in the American Midwest, 1820-1870* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Gary Brechin, *Imperial San Francisco: Urban Power, Earthly Ruin* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999). David Brundage, in his study of labor organizations in Denver, provides a different account of the city's late-nineteenth century. According to Brundage, Denver workers and trade unions at the end of the century were important to the emergence of labor radicalism in the early decades of the twentieth century. See Brundage, *The Making of Western Labor Radicalism: Denver's Organized Workers, 1878-1905* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994).

[46] Leonard and Noel, *Denver: From Mining Camp to Metropolis*.

[47] William Philpott, *Vacationland: Tourism and Environment in the Colorado High Country* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2014).

program and the indigenous community that developed in Denver in the years after World War II. Her ethnographic history explores the transition from reservation to city, and how displaced and relocated American Indians forged a community in a new physical environment. Given her focus, Ono only hints at the relationships among Denver's postwar development, the federal government, and the process of molding market subjects as indigenous people encountered new forms of work, daily practices, and material structures.[48] Similarly, Bret A. Weber explores Denver's Model Cities Program, a federally developed yet locally implemented policy program designed to mitigate urban poverty during the 1960s and 1970s.[49] Several scholars have tackled Denver's tumultuous history of school integration, focusing on how the "tri-ethnic" metropolitan environment of Denver different substantially from the "bi-racial" cities of the urban North and South. In this work, conflicts over civil and human rights in Denver had profound effects upon the distribution and allocation of resources and capital within the city, as well as shaping education policy and law.[50] While this body of scholarship highlights important aspects of Denver's history, these works underscore the need for writing a more comprehensive historical analysis of Denver during World War II and the decades that followed.

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[48] Azusa Ono, "Crossroads of Indian Country: Native American Community in Denver, 1950-2005" (PhD diss., Arizona State University, 2008).

[49] Bret A. Weber, "Denver's Model Cities Program" (PhD diss., University of Utah, 2007).

[50] Tom I. Romero, II, "¿La Raza Latina?: Multiracial Ambivalence, Color Denial, and the Emergence of a Tri-Ethnic Jurisprudence at the End of the Twentieth Century," *New Mexico Law Review* 37, no. 2 (Spring 2007): 245-306, "'Our Selma is Here': The Political and Legal Struggle for Educational Equality in Denver, Colorado, and Multiracial Conundrums in American Jurisprudence," *Seattle Journal for Social Justice* 3 (Fall/Winter 2004): 73-142, and "Of Race and Rights: Legal Culture, Social Change, and the Making of a Multiracial Metropolis, Denver 1940-1975" (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 2004); Danielle R. Olden, "Becoming Minority: Mexican Americans, Race, and the Legal Struggle for Educational Equality in Denver, Colorado," *Western Historical Quarterly* 48, no. 1 (Spring 2017): 43-66, and "Whiteness in the Middle: Mexican Americans, School Desegregation, and the Making of Race in Modern America" (PhD diss., Ohio State University, 2013).

Situating Denver's World War II and Cold War story within the expansion of U.S. empire corrects the shortcomings of the literature on the city's twentieth-century history. But using the term "empire" to make sense of the various ways Denverites connected their labor to U.S. foreign policy and the global community is an analytical choice. Denverites neither used the word nor explicitly described the expansion of capitalism as an imperial act. This does not mean that their lives were not enmeshed in an imperial project; indeed, the idea of American exceptionalism is rooted in a denial of U.S. imperial history.[51] Even though Denverites did not use the language of empire, many believed in expanding the "American Way" beyond the territorial borders of the U.S. As Wendy L. Wall persuasively argues, this political construct united liberal democracy with free enterprise, yoking the U.S. state and capitalism together in opposition to totalitarianism and planned economies.[52] As the U.S. became entangled in its ideological struggle with the Soviet Union, Denverites adopted terms like "liberty," "democracy" and "the free world" as shorthand for the United States, its political institutions, and economic organization—and to describe the beneficial exports of U.S. foreign policy.

Although I adopt an imperial frame work to tell Denver's story, I am cautious about attributing too much power to empire itself. In some of the relevant literature, there is a tendency to endow empires with a totalizing, dominant, top-down form of power that completely structures the practices and activities of imperial subjects. In these studies, human agency, where

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[51] On American exceptionalism as a denial of the U.S. empire, see Godfrey Hodgson, *The Myth of American Exceptionalism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009); Ian Tyrell, "American Exceptionalism in an Age of International History," *American Historical Review* 96, no. 4 (October 1991): 1031-55. For an analysis of American exceptionalism after the Cold War, see Donald A. Pease, *The New American Exceptionalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009).

[52] Wall, *Inventing the "American Way*." William Appleman Williams has noted that in U.S. foreign policy, efforts to expand "freedom" were synonymous with efforts to expand "the marketplace." See Williams, *America Confronts a Revolutionary World, 1776-1976* (New York: Morrow, 1976), p. 42.

it exists, becomes conflated with resistance, so much so that the only forms of agency are those that actively resist the structures of empire.[53] While this dissertation does tell stories of protest and resistance, it also considers the agency of everyday Denverites who collaborated to make the U.S. empire possible and legitimate. This means that on occasion I focus on—to refashion Meg Jacobs's term—empire building from the bottom up.[54] In arguing that Denver's imperial character came about through both collaboration and resistance, and occasionally through the tension between the two, I highlight the U.S. empire's construction by non-state actors as much as by agents of the state.

Because Denverites were complex actors, their reasons for participating in this economic and political project were multifaceted and not always about imperial expansion. Some did so for their own financial gain; others willingly worked for the state because they believed in national security and protecting the nation-state. Regardless of their motivations for participating in the institutions that expanded the U.S. empire, their actions advanced foreign policy prescriptions that focused on reproducing and extending capitalism. However, not all in Denver furthered imperialism. Many actively mobilized against the expressions of U.S. imperialism taking place in their hometown. Other residents were targets of domestic policies to strengthen capitalism and fight poverty. Although Denverites engaged with the federal government and efforts to

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[53] See, e.g., Noenoe K. Silva, *Aloha Betrayed: Native Hawaiian Resistance to American Colonialism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004); J. Kehaulani Kauanui, *Hawaiian Blood: Colonialism and the Politics of Sovereignty and Indigeneity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008); Alfred W. McCoy, *Policing America's Empire: The United States, the Philippines, and the Rise of the Surveillance State* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009).

[54] Meg Jacobs, "'How About Some Meat?': The Office of Price Administration, Consumption Politics, and State Building from the Bottom Up, 1941-1946," *Journal of American History* 84, no. 3 (December 1997): 910-41.

reproduce capitalism for a variety of reasons, the outcome of their engagement was an imperial metropole in Colorado.

This dissertation treats capitalism as both an economic system organized around the production of commodities for markets of exchange for profit and as an ideology, a set of material practices that produce social relations.[55] Using a broad definition of capitalism is necessary because, according to historian Tom Cutterham, "looking at how capitalism has actually worked lets us see how encompassing, how far beyond the merely economic, its effects have been. In fact, it should make us question the whole notion of an 'economic system' that is not also political, social, cultural, and all the rest."[56] In exploring not only how Denverites experienced capitalism in the postwar years, but also how they, in working for and with institutions of the state, reproduced capitalism, this dissertation de-naturalizes the economic system, even in the twentieth century. Historian Seth Rockman writes that capitalism's dominance, while appearing inevitable, has been anything but predetermined. Instead, he observes, productive scholarship in the field explores "a matrix of social relations, cultural practices, and institutional arrangements operating under specific, yet always contingent, historical circumstances."[57] Thus, I analyze the growth of Denver as more than an expansion of

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[55] My definition of an ideology as a set of material practices is drawn from the Marxist-structuralist philosopher Louis Althusser, who argues that ideologies only exist in sets of practices. See Althusser, *On the Reproduction of Capitalism: Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses* (London: Verso, 2014), esp. pp. 171-207.

[56] Tom Cutterham, "Is the History of Capitalism the History of Everything?," *The Junto* (blog), September 2, 2014, <https://earlyamericanists.com/2014/09/02/is-the-history-of-capitalism-the-history-of-everything/> (accessed January 17, 2019).

[57] Seth Rockman, "What Makes the History of Capitalism Newsworthy?," *Journal of the Early Republic* 34, no. 3 (Fall 2014): 439-66, quoted material on p. 447. For examples of recent scholarship that explore the constructed nature of capitalism and markets, see Richard R. John, *Network Nation: Inventing American Telecommunications* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010); Calvin Schermerhorn, *The Business of Slavery and the Rise of American Capitalism, 1815-1860* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015); Jonathan Levy, *Freaks of Fortune: The Emerging World of*

its regional economy. Rather, I explore its development as a process in which Denver and its residents shaped and were shaped by the state and its various institutions, institutions that the federal government relied upon to reproduce all aspects of capitalism, economic and otherwise. And, as I argue, Denver's postwar growth, and the expansion of the powers of the federal government, cannot be disentangled from the Cold War and the national project of asserting capitalism's dominance.

In order to illuminate the connections between capitalism and imperialism in Denver, I utilize a variety of sources. The Western History and Genealogy Department at the Denver Public Library and the National Archives and Records Administration—Rocky Mountain Region in Broomfield, Colorado, have wide-ranging holdings related to Denver and the city's relationship with the federal government. Newspapers are indispensable sources for this dissertation. Throughout the postwar era, Denverites had access to two large-circulation dailies, with the *Rocky Mountain News* providing a more conservative assessment of Denver politics than the *Denver Post.* Other newspapers, especially those produced for the workforces at the Denver Ordnance Plant and Martin Marietta provide an insight into the lives of those who worked at these plants. The *Denver Ordnance Bulletin* and the Martin Marietta publication, although certainly shaped by their editors, are as much products of their audience as of their authors. Much of their content, especially in the *Denver Ordinance Bulletin,* was produced by

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Capitalism and Risk in America (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012); Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014); Sven Beckert and Seth Rockman, eds., *Slavery's Capitalism: A New History of American Economic Development* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016); Michael Zakim and Gary J. Kornblith, eds., *Capitalism Takes Command: The Social Transformation of Nineteenth-Century America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017); Brian Phillips Murphy, *Building the Empire State: Political Economy in the Early Republic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015); Leon Fink, *The Long Gilded Age: American Capitalism and the Lessons of a New World Order* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015); Shermer, *Sunbelt Capitalism.*

the men and women who worked at the plants. The newspapers were essential to the formation of community at these plants. Finally, interviews conducted for the Maria Rogers Oral History Program at the Carnegie Library for Local History in Boulder offer a window into the complicated worlds of those whose lives were affected by Rocky Flats, whether as employees, protestors, politicians, or nearby residents. Together, these sources offer insight into the centrality of Denver to the expanding U.S. empire, as well as the myriad ways Denverites reproduced the relations of capitalism.

This dissertation is divided into five chapters. Chapter One situates Denver's World War II mobilization within efforts to delineate the acceptable limits of state intervention to preserve free enterprise and democracy, the "American Way." During the war, Denverites quickly learned the economic and financial benefits of private firms producing material goods for the federal government under wartime contracts. For many, these contracts, which were let on the open market and negotiated on a cost-plus-fixed-fee basis, worked to preserve free enterprise by preventing the federal government from nationalizing industries for war production.

Chapters two and three consider the relationship between Denver, the federal bureaucracy, and efforts to provide economic security for the U.S. West. The second chapter examines the implementation of Keynesian policies crafted in Washington, DC, but carried out by Denverites in civil service. Whether efforts to protect wages during World War II and reconversion, the bureaucratic apparatus that took shape at the Denver Federal Center after the war, or the local government's embrace of the federal War on Poverty, Denverites worked to use federal policy and money in ways that provided economic security through expanding wage labor. Chapter Three considers Denver's role within the Bureau of Indian Affairs' relocation program from the 1950s to the 1970s. It argues that BIA officials believed that moving

reservation-dwelling Indians to cities with strong labor and consumer markets would combat poverty. The architects of the policy and the BIA agents who implemented it used relocation to mold Indians into market actors capable of supporting themselves through wage labor. This program was designed to stanch the flow of public money going to reservations and shift the burden for indigenous welfare to the labor market.

The next two chapters explore how Denverites operated within the Cold War nuclear assemblage and the military-industrial complex. Chapter Four sees the work of Denverites building intercontinental ballistic missiles and space launch vehicles at the Martin Marietta plant in suburban Jefferson County as a project to preserve industrial capitalism at home while building the materiel the Department of Defense needed to enact a foreign policy of bending the international community to U.S. will. Much like the relationship between private producers and the state during World War II, the contracts Martin Marietta forged with the Department of Defense and the National Aeronautical Space Administration reproduced capitalism as Denverites produced the material weapons used to preserve capitalism in the ideological struggle with the Soviet Union. The final chapter considers how the Rocky Flats Nuclear Facility cemented Denver's status as an imperial metropole. The thousands of Denverites who worked at the publicly-funded, privately-run plant relished their jobs in part because they believed them fundamental to national security. At the plant, the state and its contractors hailed these Denverites as imperial subjects. At the same time, Denver's metropole status also generated an anti-imperialist politics organized around protesting the production of nuclear weapons at Rocky Flats. Ultimately, Denverites, both those who supported Rocky Flats and those who strove to end its existence, created an imperial metropole, albeit a contested one, at the foot of the Rocky Mountains.

This dissertation primarily focuses on the years from World War II mobilization to the mid-1970s, although the last chapter carries the narrative forward through the end of the Cold War. This periodization accords with the height of postwar industrial capitalism, when the federal government and U.S. Americans alike privileged the acquisition of capital through the production of durable goods and their sale in markets. As a number of historians have pointed out, the 1970s marked a turn in the primary form of capital accumulation, one in which the FIRE (finance, insurance, and real estate) sector became the primary driver of the economy. The reasons for the shift are myriad, including the economic crisis and stagflation under the Ford and Carter administrations, the oil embargo and energy shortage, and the decline of the labor movement and working-class politics, but the outcome was that the primary activity of capital accumulation, financial investment, worked to the benefit of those who did not produce durable goods.[58] The final chapter, which focuses on the Rocky Flats Nuclear Facility, tells a story that extends into the 1990s because the plant continued in an industrial capitalist mode even as the U.S. economy was shifting. Furthermore, Rocky Flats played host to the most visible contests over Denver's contributions to U.S. imperialism and those contests began in the late 1960s and continued through the plant's closure at the end of the Cold War. For these reasons, I consider

[58] For scholarship on the transformations in the 1970s, especially the move away from industrial capitalism and the reverberating effects, see Judith Stein, *Pivotal Decade: How the United States Traded Factories for Finance in the Seventies* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010); Jefferson Cowie, *Stayin' Alive: The 1970s and the Last Days of the Working Class* (New York: New Press, 2010); Bethany Moreton, *To Serve God and Wal-Mart: The Making of Christian Free Enterprise* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009); Greta R. Krippner, *Capitalizing on Crisis: The Political Origins of the Rise of Finance* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011); Daniel J. Sargent, *A Superpower Transformed: The Remaking of American Foreign Relations in the 1970s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015). For scholarship on the 1970s in a global context, see Niall Ferguson, Charles S. Maier, Erez Manela, and Daniel J. Sargent, eds., *The Shock of the Global: The 1970s in Perspective* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010).

Rocky Flats integral to Denver's enduring story of reproducing capitalism in support of U.S. empire.

Although Denver is at a great remove from Washington, DC, the work of its residents was no less crucial to the exercise of U.S. imperialism. From mobilization for World War II through the Cold War, Denverites transformed their home city into a metropole. To tell the story of Denver's development, this dissertation draws connections between the expansion of the U.S. state and the efforts to extend U.S. hegemony globally. Moreover, in identifying the protection of market economies as the key linkage between the domestic and the foreign, it also casts into relief the efforts made both intentionally and unintentionally to reproduce the relations of capitalism and safeguard capitalism in the postwar era. How Denverites made all this possible is the focus of this dissertation.

Chapter One

Soldiers of Production:
War Work, the Federal Government, and the Logic of the Market

If residents of Colorado's largest city had any faith in the federal government as a bulwark against the vicissitudes of a market economy after the recession of 1937-38, they did not find it bolstered by their newly elected governor. Republican Ralph L. Carr took residence in the Governor's Mansion in January 1939 after running a campaign built around limiting the perceived encroachment of the federal government. To further drive home his distaste for New Deal liberalism, Carr laid out his plan for balancing Colorado's budget within an hour of his inauguration. Eventually he presided over the balancing of the budget, but not until 1941, after winning reelection the previous year.[1] Democrats had controlled Colorado's highest state office since the 1928 election, but those governors had never fully endorsed New Deal liberalism and deficit spending at the federal level.[2] The election of Carr appeared to signal Coloradan's full repudiation of the federal government's economic policies.

Despite Carr's rhetoric about the rights of the individual states to control their own economies, Denverites who were not opposed to federal spending saw the benefits of public money in the place where it mattered most: their own pocketbooks. Money landed there in a

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[1] In contemporary usage after more than three decades of neoliberal policies, the term "balanced budget" most often implies austerity measures used to drastically limit spending by the government. Governor Carr, rather than limit governmental spending, redirected funds collected via the Colorado State Income Tax from the education budget to the general operating budget. In essence, his "balanced budget" was more an accountancy change than a structural overhaul of spending and taxation. Colorado State Archives, "Colorado Governors: Ralph L. Carr," n.d., https://www.colorado.gov/pacific /sites/default/files/Carr.pdf (accessed on March 18, 2016); James F. Wickens, "Tightening the Colorado Purse Strings," *The Colorado Magazine* 46, no. 4 (1969): 271-86, cited material on pp. 283-84. On the history of austerity as an ideological answer to economic questions that classifies debt as problematic, see Mark Blyth, *Austerity: The History of a Dangerous Idea* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

[2] Stephen Leonard and Thomas J. Noel, *Denver: Mining Camp to Metropolis* (Niwot: University Press of Colorado, 1990), pp. 203-18.

variety of ways. In 1941, for example, as federally subsidized war work on the West Coast took off, the Denver Union Stock Yard began shipping fattened livestock in that direction for the first time in decades, with one thousand railcars worth over 1.25 million dollars traveling west in 1941 alone.[3] At the same time, higher incomes meant an increase in living costs, and the U.S. Labor Department found that during the period October 15 to November 15, 1941, the cost of living in Denver rose by 1.2 percent, the largest gain of the fourteen cities surveyed.[4] The region also saw an upturn in housing construction, with over 14 million dollars invested in 1941 in new houses before new restrictions on residential construction set in.[5] Governor Carr could rail at federal overreach all he wanted, but his protestations fell on deaf ears. Residents of the Mile High City recognized that their economic prosperity would not be secured in the legislative chambers at Broadway and Colfax, but rather by decisions made fifteen hundred miles away in Washington, DC.

This chapter places Denver's economic growth during mobilization within the context of the expansion of the role of the federal government in the national economy. A publicly-funded wartime economy provided a material solution to a decade-long national ideological debate. The question of individual economic prosperity had plagued the country throughout the Great Depression. The precipitous decline of the New York Stock Exchange, and the attendant national and global economic woes, spurred a conversation about the continued viability of capitalism

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[3] "Coast Turning to Denver for Meat Supply," *Denver Post,* December 7, 1941.

[4] "Denver Living Costs Increase 1.2 Percent in Month, Says U.S.," *Rocky Mountain News,* December 18, 1941.

[5] Leonard and Noel, *Denver,* p. 228. Despite restrictions, the Office of Price Management continued to allow residential construction as long as the project did not use war material or take architects, engineers, and construction labor away from essential defense work. "OPM Will Help in Building of Private Homes," *Denver Post,* December 27, 1941.

and market exchange and what role, if any, the federal government should play in mitigating its worst effects. For some critics on the left, President Roosevelt's New Deal did not go far enough at a time when central planning seemed like the only solution. From the other end of the ideological spectrum, the New Deal looked like an attempt by the state to consolidate its power by controlling the economy when the only way to protect industrial capitalism and ensure the economic security of all Americans was to unfetter the market completely.[6] Although the ideological debates coursed throughout the 1930s, the increasing belligerence of totalitarian nation-states with centralized, planned national economies posed an external threat to the United States while at the same time providing an example of what could happen if such economic reorganization took place at home.[7] In response, the U.S. began mobilizing, which, as David Kennedy observes, effectively shifted the goal of the New Deal from stabilization of the economy to expansion. This change brought far more federal intrusion than earlier policies had, but the government intervened in a business-friendly manner that facilitated capitalist production and, ultimately, expansion of the market economy.[8] The efforts of Denverites during

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[6] Alan Brinkley's *The End of Reform: New Deal Liberalism in Recession and War* (New York: Vintage, 1995) remains one of the clearest histories of the New Deal, especially the transformations within the FDR administration that took place after the recession of 1937-38 and during mobilization for World War II. The literature on the New Deal and its war years is far too vast for a single footnote, but some notable recent works that explore the New Deal and its enduring legacies with respect to the strength of the state are: Jefferson Cowie, *The Great Exception: The New Deal and the Limits of American Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016)*;* Ira Katznelson, *Fear Itself: The New Deal and the Origins of Our Time* (New York: Liveright, 2013); Jason Scott Smith, *Building New Deal Liberalism: The Political Economy of Public Works* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Steve Fraser and Gary Gerstle, eds., *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989). James T. Sparrow, in *Warfare State: World War II Americans and the Age of Big Government* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), draws a distinction between the New Deal and the war years and argues that it was the war specifically that did much to expand the size and scope, in both material and ideological terms, of the state.

[7] Katznelson, *Fear Itself,* p. 12.

[8] David M. Kennedy, *Freedom from Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999)*,* pp. 623-24. Almost immediately after the end of World

mobilization, I argue, helped define the federal government's responsibilities in shaping the economy.

Debates about federal economic intervention occurred almost simultaneously with the rise of the "American Way." As Wendy Wall argues, this politics of consensus wove together a number of different issues, from racial and religious pluralism to free enterprise, into a single ideological tapestry. Removing one thread, whether capitalism or liberal democracy, could unravel the whole cloth. Wall acknowledges that the "American Way" was itself a contested ideology; every proponent had different ideas about which values were essentially American.[9] But out of this maelstrom emerged a consensus that economic security could not be achieved through centralization; instead, private businesses producing commodities for market exchange had to be the driving engine of economic growth.

As war mobilization efforts increased, so too did the role of the federal government. In order for the U.S. military to have the necessary materiel, some level of federal intervention had to occur because the military branches could not, by themselves, produce all that was needed. The state used war contracts, often negotiated on cost-plus-fixed-fee terms, to enlist private

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War II, scholars in a range of disciplines began the task of analyzing the effects of mobilization on the economy and public policy. See, e.g., Robert H. Connery, *The Navy and the Industrial Mobilization in World War II* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951); Eliot Janeway, *The Struggle for Survival—A Chronicle of Economic Mobilization in World War II* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1951); George Q. Flynn, *The Mess in Washington: Manpower Mobilization in World War II* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1979); Paul A. C. Koistinen, "Mobilizing the World War II Economy: Labor and the Industrial-Military Alliance," *Pacific Historical Review* 42, no. 4 (November 1973): 443-78; Arthur Hermann, *Freedom's Forge: How American Business Produced Victory in World War II* (New York: Random House, 2012). For a comparative analysis, see Mark Harrison, "Resource Mobilization for World War II: The U.S.A., the U.K., U.S.S.R., and Germany, 1938-1945," *Economic History Review* 41, no. 2 (May 1988): 171-92.

[9] Wendy L. Wall, *Inventing the "American Way": The Politics of Consensus from the New Deal to the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008). Jefferson Cowie echoes this, writing, "American political culture is not one of consensus values as much as a conflict over them—and an often bloody one at that." Cowie, *The Great Exception,* p. 17.

producers into a national project for the public good.[10] These public-private ventures put billions of dollars into private hands, but they also had an added benefit: they marked the boundaries of federal intervention into the economy.[11] Rather than completely nationalizing all war industries—though it did nationalize a few—the federal government used its vast purchasing power to enter into and negotiate contractual relationships predicated on the logic of the market to outfit the military, in essence becoming a consumer. For residents of Denver, contracts mediated their interaction with the state without undermining the tenets of free enterprise and capitalist production. For one, private businesses were not denied the opportunity to make profits. Second, those businesses were free to hire and fire workers as necessary to maximize their profits so long as they met their contractual obligations. And Denverites were not conscripted into the production machine; these "soldiers of production" chose when and where they wanted to work. This market, embedded and imperfect though it may have been, did not so much mystify the relationship between private producer and public consumer as it made federal involvement legible and legitimate.[12]

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[10] Herman, *Freedom's Forge,* pp. 91-92.

[11] In total, the federal government spent $296 billion during World War II on military operations. In 1945 alone, defense spending accounted for 37.5 percent of the Gross Domestic Product. Stephen Daggett, *Costs of Major U.S. Wars,* CRS Report No. RS22926 (Washington: Congressional Research Service, 2008), p. 2, http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/108054.pdf (accessed July 23, 2016).

[12] On modern market economies as "embedded in social structures of relations," see Mark Granovetter, "Economic Action and Social Structure: The Problem of Embeddedness," *American Journal of Sociology* 91, no. 3 (November 1985): 481-510. The concept of embeddedness, that is, the social relations that influence how actors in a market interact, came to prominence in the "substantivist" school of anthropology most closely associated with the work of Karl Polanyi, the Austro-Hungarian economic historian. See Polanyi, *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time* (1944; Boston: Beacon Press, 2001). Some historians have adopted this framework; e.g., E. P. Thompson in "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century," *Past and Present* 50 (February 1971): 76-136. However, William H. Sewell, Jr. argues that historians need to continue developing this analysis. See his "A Strange Career: The Historical Study of Economic Life," in "The Next Fifty Years," *History and Theory* 49, no. 4 (December 2010): 146-66, esp. pp. 157-58.

This chapter explores the war effort as both an expansion of federal authority and a protection of free enterprise in Denver. Although mobilization reached almost every community in the country, few cities were as well placed as Denver to expand so quickly. Denver's World War II economic growth occurred at such a startling pace because so little development had taken place during the previous two decades. As Stephen Leonard and Thomas Noel argue, the war awakened an "isolated" city. That isolation was by design. When Progressive-Era Mayor Robert W. Speer died in 1918, an early casualty of the worldwide influenza pandemic, the city's elite moved to limit outside investment in an attempt to consolidate their own economic and political power.[13] When the war effort began in earnest, the federal government found firms throughout the metropolitan region in desperate need of both financial investment and a market for their products, as well as thousands of unemployed people capable of transforming that capital into materiel. That firms and labor received capital and wages through secured contracts with the federal government, rather than private investment, did not matter.

And yet it did matter. While soldiers, whether from the U.S. or its allies, fought to defeat the Axis powers, at home Americans went to work to ensure that free enterprise continued to underpin their economic livelihoods. Paradoxically, they turned to the federal government and relied upon state action of a certain kind—market intervention as a consumer—to guarantee that industrial capitalism remained vibrant. In Denver, a small group of manufacturing firm owners revived their companies' and the city's industrial sector by seeking out contracts with the U.S. Navy. Meanwhile, the city served as the hub for a private venture between two firms that worked to construct a U.S. Army camp in the Rocky Mountains, pulling skilled and unskilled laborers

[13] Leonard and Noel, *Denver: Mining Camp to Metropolis,* pp. 235-50. On Mayor Speer and the development of Denver during his tenure, see Carol McMichael Reese, "The Politician and the City: Urban Form and City Beautiful Rhetoric in Progressive Era Denver" (PhD diss., University of Texas at Austin, 1992).

from across the country to Colorado. At the same time, the metropolitan region welcomed new corporations that opened plants in Denver and hired local workers in order to fulfill their governmental contracts. The Denver Ordnance Plant, operated by Remington Arms and its parent company, E. I. du Pont de Nemours and Company, employed nearly 20,000 Denverites to produce .30-caliber munitions for the Ordnance Department. For those directly engaged in war production, securing their livelihoods through negotiated contracts both between the state and private producers and between private employers and workers mattered because those arrangements preserved the "American Way" at a time when it seemed to be under threat.[14] Victory in the war may have been the ultimate goal, but how Americans gained that victory was of great import. If the state remained an actor in market transactions, then it would be clear that free enterprise and market logic, rather than nationalization or central planning, were underpinning the wartime effort.

The Second World War strengthened Denver's relationship with the federal government. Gerald D. Nash once famously argued that the war transformed the West from "an area with a self-image that emphasized colonialism into one boasting self-sufficiency and innovation."[15] But,

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[14] Denver also played an important role in the training and stationing of U.S. soldiers, especially for the Army's Air Technical Corps, the predecessor of the U.S. Air Force before it became a separate military branch. However, sites like Lowry Field and Buckley Field, important though they were to Denver's contributions in the war effort, are outside the scope of this chapter. My focus, in particular, is on those who labored in the public-private spaces in the metropolitan region. On the early history of the U.S. Air Force, including its formation as a separate branch, see Alfred Goldberg, ed., *A History of the United States Air Force, 1907-1957* (Princeton, NJ: D. Van Nostrand, 1957).

[15] Gerald D. Nash, *The American West Transformed: The Impact of the Second World War* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985), p. vii. Not all agree with Nash's argument. Paul Rhode, an economic historian, finds particular problems with Nash's assessment, especially as it relates to the historical development of California. According to Rhode, Nash's contention that the war reduced forty years' worth of development into four years is greatly misleading. He argues instead that California's economy had grown substantially since 1900 and the war consolidated four-decades-worth of development rather than causing sudden expansion. Paul Rhode, "The Nash Thesis Revisited: An Economic Historian's View," in "Fortress California at War: San Francisco, Los Angeles, Oakland, and San Diego, 1941-1945," ed. Roger W. Lotchin and Martin Schiesl, special issue, *Pacific Historical*

as Nash later argued, the region's politics and economics, at least in the twentieth century, cannot be divorced from extra-local entities, particularly the federal government.[16] Other historians have shown how the war created a moment in which westerners suspended all pretensions of self-sufficiency and actively collaborated with the federal government. But Denver has not received attention in these studies.[17] As James Sparrow writes in his study of the federal government during the war, "the leviathan that Americans rapidly erected to meet the challenges of this global cataclysm required *legitimacy,* accorded by citizens who were invested somehow—materially or ideologically—in the power of the national government."[18] In this chapter, then, I

Review 63, no. 3 (August 1994): 363-92. Despite the criticisms of Nash, his work remains influential, especially the claim that the war ended the West's colonial dependency. See, e.g., David W. Mills, *Cold War in a Cold Land: Fighting Communism on the Northern Plains* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2015).

[16] Gerald D. Nash, *The Federal Landscape: An Economic History of the Twentieth-Century West* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1999). Nash's work calls to mind Richard White's claim that, along with cities, federal bureaucracies and corporations became the dominant institutions of power in the West beginning in the 1880s. Richard White, *"It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own": A New History of the American West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), pp. 391-93. Historians focusing on the Intermountain West have examined the influence of other extra-local institutions, particularly multinational corporations and national labor unions. In this scholarship, westerners have both embraced and rejected the power of outside institutions to shape their lives and communities. See, e.g., Laurie Mercier, *Anaconda: Labor, Community, and Culture in Montana's Smelter City* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001); Monica Perales, *Smeltertown: Making and Remembering a Southwest Border Community* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

[17] California, perhaps more than any other western state, has a history of partnership with the federal government to bring about economic development, especially but not exclusively in its metropolitan areas. Roger W. Lotchin explores what he calls "the metropolitan-military complex" in *Fortress California: From Warfare to Welfare, 1910-1961* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992). See also the essays in Lotchin and Martin Schiesl, eds., "Fortress California at War: San Francisco, Los Angeles, Oakland, and San Diego, 1941-1945," special issue, *Pacific Historical Review* 63, no. 3 (August 1994): 289-392. Others, in telling the broader urban history of the West, have addressed the importance of the federal government in the process of urbanization. See, e.g., Carl Abbott, *The Metropolitan Frontier: Cities in the Modern American West* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1993), and *How Cities Won the West: Four Centuries of Urban Change in Western North America* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2008), esp. pp. 163-85. For other studies of the western home front, see, e.g., Matthew L. Basso, *Meet Joe Copper: Masculinity and Race on Montana's World War II Home Front* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013); Marilynn S. Johnson, *The Second Gold Rush: Oakland and the East Bay in World War II* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

explore a moment in Denver's history when many Denverites recognized that their livelihoods depended on the power of the federal government and thus they collaborated with a more expansive state when it worked to their economic advantage.[19] With few exceptions, white men, who were already the primary participants in the U.S. economy, stood to gain the most from expanding the power of the state and they were the most visible actors, although not the only ones, involved in this process. At the same time, the capital class believed that the national project of protecting the "American Way" could not happen without preserving market-based industrial capitalism. After a decade of uncertainty, they welcomed federal involvement that was broad reaching yet limited in scope by the logic of the market. Doing so would keep capitalism as the guiding principle for economic organization in the United States.

Manufacturing for the State

By the autumn of 1941, Denver's economy had not only stabilized, it had started expanding. Much of that growth came, surprisingly, in the manufacturing sector. As the economic hub of the Intermountain West, Denver had long been identified not by its industrial output, but by its dense web of regional retail distribution networks. This was so true that *Rocky Mountain News* columnist Lee Casey summed up Denver's relationship with manufacturing in 1941 by writing, "Denver is not an industrial city—never has been and perhaps never has wanted

[18] Sparrow, *Warfare State,* p. 17 (emphasis in original).

[19] My thinking is influenced by Christopher Capozzola's study of the contests over the power of the wartime state during World War I. As he points out, "American history's received wisdom about steadily expanding state power and steadily declining localism," does not address the Great War, when "wartime Americans engaged in lurching and ambivalent expansions and contractions of state capacities and bureaucratic authority." Capozzola, *Uncle Sam Want You: World War I and the Making of the Modern American Citizen* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 12.

to be."[20] His assessment finds some support in the distribution of Denver's employed. According to a study prepared for the United States National Bank of Denver, 51 percent of the metropolitan region's labor force in 1940 worked in an office setting, while the average for the thirty-four largest metropolitan regions was 42 percent.[21] But what Casey had failed to grasp was that even if Denver's manufacturing sector could not compete with the output of the industrial East, and historically manufacturing had not driven Denver's economy, the city's industrial firms were integral engines in driving the metropolitan region's economic recovery. They did so by tapping into networks of federal money earmarked for defense-related contracts. Local businesses struggling for capital found a new purchaser outside of the private market: the federal government. And because these contractual relationships were primarily market transactions, Denver firms welcomed involvement by the state in the local, and national, economy.

The mobilization effort did not mark the first arrival of federal money or federal bureaucracy to Denver or to the rest of the state. If one listened closely to Governor Carr's objections to federal intervention, one heard critiques of existing federal programs to assist employment in his state. The governor even objected to attempts at nationalizing employment services in the autumn of 1941, relenting only when he discovered he had no other option and he received assurance that the State of Colorado would retain control of its employment agencies after the war.[22] But a 1942 report by the National Resources Planning Board (NRPB) that examined the economy of Wyoming, Colorado, and New Mexico highlighted a crucial aspect of

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[20] Lee Casey, "Ordnance Plant to Alter Denver," *Rocky Mountain News,* August 17, 1941.

[21] The Econometric Institute, *Industry in Denver and the Denver Industrial Area: An Economic Report Prepared for the United States National Bank of Denver* (Denver: United States National Bank of Denver, 1950), p. II-4.

[22] "U.S. Moves to Take Over All Colorado Employment Setup," *Denver Post,* December 19, 1941; *Rocky Mountain News,* December 21, 1941.

employment in the state: Colorado residents already viewed federal employment programs favorably. During the 1930s the region had one of the highest population increases—over 13 percent. But the labor force suffered in an increasingly competitive market that did not create new jobs. Federal programs provided one solution. In 1940, 7.4 percent of Coloradans, the fourth highest labor force percentage, worked on federal Public Emergency Works programs.[23] Even before mobilization, Coloradans looked to the federal government when the private market could not provide a livelihood and they held few, if any, reservations about earning a wage paid out in public money.

That same report not only provided a snapshot of the Mountain West's economy, it also considered whether the federal government should pour money into the region for the mobilization effort. The authors' findings supported Casey's judgment that manufacturing was not a priority, but while Casey despaired over the underdevelopment, the NRPB saw potential. For example, Colorado's average yearly per-capita value added by manufacturing over the last half of the 1930s was only 73 dollars, a hundred dollars less than the national average of 173 dollars, and this figure included the output of the Colorado Fuel and Iron mill in Pueblo, which produced 2 percent of the country's steel.[24] The authors concluded, however, that the state's

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[23] Colorado's neighbor to the south, New Mexico, had the highest proportion enrolled in Public Emergency Works at 9.1 percent. National Resources Planning Board, *Mountain States Industrial Development* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1942), p. 18. On the migratory patterns of New Mexican labor, particularly by Hispanos, to Colorado, see Sarah Deutsch, *No Separate Refuge: Culture, Class, and Gender on an Anglo-Hispanic Frontier in the American Southwest, 1880-1940* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987).

[24] The Colorado Fuel & Iron Company, a holding of the Rockefeller family, has attracted much scholarly attention, especially the company's often-fraught relationship with labor that culminated in a bloody battle in the coalfields of Ludlow in 1913-14. See Thomas G. Andrews, *Killing for Coal: America's Deadliest Labor War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008). The company responded to Ludlow with a new plan for industrial relations that sought to include labor in making decisions. See Ben M. Selekman and Mary Van Kleek, *Employes' Representation in Coal Mines* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1924); Howard M. Gitelman, *Legacy of the Ludlow Massacre: A Chapter in American Industrial Relations* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988); Jonathan H.

manufacturing potential was far greater than its current output. Colorado's 1940 employment figures supported this assessment. The state's figures lagged behind those for the rest of the country, with only 83.4 percent of Colorado's labor force earning a paycheck of any kind.[25] The year before, a total of 12,697 Denverites worked for 673 manufacturing firms throughout the metropolitan region.[26] According to the Denver Chamber of Commerce, by March 1940 that number had increased to 19,310 wage earners, approximately 14 percent of the metropolitan region's 140,000 employed laborers.[27] From the federal government's viewpoint, an under-utilized labor force willing to work in its employ and factories operating under capacity pointed to the region as one worthy of enlisting in the war mobilization effort.

For the authors of the NRPB report, the persistent myth of Coloradans' anti-government stance led them to question if private firms would accept contracts for public money. It is not clear if they paid attention to Governor Carr's rhetoric, but they did take seriously this concern and decided that Denver-area firms would be the most open to working with the federal government. Taking the city's meat packing industry as its example, the authors told a story of how the city came to dominate that industry in the West. With the advent of refrigerated train

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Rees, *Representation and Rebellion: The Rockefeller Plan at the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company, 1914-1942* (Boulder: University Press, of Colorado, 2010). For an overview of the company, see H. Lee Scamehorn, *Mill and Mine: CF&I in the Twentieth Century* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992).

[25] National Resources Planning Board, *Mountain States Industrial Development,* pp. 14, 18.

[26] Industrial Bureau, "An Economic Analysis of the Denver Metropolitan Area, 1947-1950: Special Report to the Mayor," April 10, 1951, Appendix Table II, p. ii, Western History Collection (hereafter WHC), Western History and Genealogy Department, Denver Public Library (hereafter DPL).

[27] Industrial Development Department, *Denver Labor: An Analysis of Reasons for the High Productivity of Denver Labor* (Denver: Denver Chamber of Commerce, 1946), p. 10, WHC, DPL; Industrial Development Department, *Industrial Denver* (Denver: Denver Chamber of Commerce, 1951), p. 27, WHC, DPL.

cars, Denver's meat producers shifted from fresh to processed meat and began shipping packaged beef to eastern markets. Shipping processed meat across state lines, however, required federal inspectors, and by 1939 four of the region's five companies with federal inspectors called Denver home, making Denver the natural point for interstate shipping.[28] The authors concluded that because Denver firms enjoyed a competitive advantage by having in-house federal inspectors, Denverites understood that collaborating with the federal government could be in their financial interest.

What the NRPB report did not consider, though, was that Denverites had already begun to learn the benefits of federal money. In 1937, the City and County of Denver considered a proposition to donate the disused Agnes C. Phipps Memorial Sanatorium to the U.S. Army for the construction of a branch of its Air Corps Technical School. Denver voters supported the measure by a nearly three-to-one margin. The Army quickly took possession of the facility and more than 1,500 Works Progress Administration workers began transforming the sanatorium into Lowry Field.[29] By the end of June 1941, over eight thousand men were stationed there and the Army expected that number to swell to more than twenty thousand.[30] While the servicemen and women were first and foremost soldiers, they were also consumers who contributed to Denver's economy. The Army, too, was a consumer and, where possible, it spent as much money as it could locally to secure supplies for the base. Since the base's inception, the Office of the Quartermaster had purchased over 1.95 million dollars' worth of furniture, clothing, and food from Denver retailers, with 750,00 dollars spent in 1941. And the Army had hired local

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[28] National Resources Planning Board, *Mountain States Industrial Development,* p. 29.

[29] Phil Goodstein, *From Soup Lines to the Front Lines: Denver During the Depression and World War II, 1927-1947* (Denver: New Social Publications, 2007), p. 427; Leonard and Noel, *Denver,* p. 218.

[30] "Lowry to get 1200 New Men During Week," *Denver Post*, July 13, 1941.

construction firms, paying out nearly 11 million dollars for supplies and wages to Denverites.[31] For residents, inviting the Army to their city was not only an act of patriotism; it was also a business decision. The injection of federal money into the local economy through the Army and soldiers at Lowry made it that much easier for Denver firms to feel secure about the financial benefits of working with the government during mobilization.

Curiously, the NRPB did address the industrial work already taking place in Colorado, and especially Denver, for the defense effort, but the authors concluded that war work would not have any appreciable impact on the region's economy. This might have been true for the region as a whole, where agriculture remained dominant, but their macro-scale focus elided the micro-level changes federal money brought. According to a report by the Manufacturers Association of Colorado released in January 1942, during the previous year the federal government had directed nearly 175 million dollars to Colorado industrial firms solely through defense contracts, a sizable increase from the 109 million dollars state businesses secured in 1940.[32] Of the 175 million dollars Colorado businesses gained in defense industry contracts in 1941, 55 million dollars went to a small number of industrial firms in Denver through contracts signed with the U.S. Navy for the production of twenty-four destroyer escort class vessels to be leased to Great Britain.[33] Of all the industrial output in Denver during the war, the fabrication of warships for the Royal Navy under contracts with the U.S. Navy is not only the most surprising, given the city's midcontinent

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[31] "Lowry Becomes Denver's Biggest and Most Active Business," *Denver Post,* n.d., clipping file, folder 3, box 20, Metro Denver Chamber of Commerce Collection, WH1216, WHC, DPL (hereafter Metro Denver Chamber of Commerce Collection).

[32] "Colorado Received Almost 200 Million in Industrial Defense Contracts in 1941," *Rocky Mountain News,* January 3, 1942.

[33] Tom Lytle, "Shipbuilding on a 'Mountaintop': World War II's Rocky Mountain Fleet," *Colorado Heritage* (Summer 1998): 14-24, referenced material on p. 15.

location, but also the best example of how Denver firms sought federal money through public-private partnerships. It also highlights how willing Denverites were to contribute to the national cause, even if doing so demanded learning new skills. Denver's location in the interior, far from both oceans and the Gulf of Mexico, or any major waterway, meant that the city's firms had little experience in constructing ocean-going vessels, especially those of the size required by the British and U.S. navies. Despite the obvious obstacles inherent in creating a shipbuilding industry one mile above sea level, six Denver manufacturing firms, one transfer and storage company, and a chemical company responded to the Navy's need with palpable alacrity.[34]

The order for the twenty-four destroyer escort class vessels strained an already overextended U.S. Navy. When Denver shops secured these contracts, there was precedent for private firms to fabricate materials and even entire ships for the federal government. In 1936, Congress passed the Merchant Marine Act, which created the Maritime Commission to enlist private companies in the production of Merchant Marine vessels while reserving control over warship production for the Navy. Together, the two bodies facilitated and oversaw private shipbuilding at a time when the federal government had become the only customer for companies engaged in this work.[35] The outsourcing of fabrication turned the Naval Yards into sites for the assembly of ships.[36] Bethlehem Steel Corporation was just one company working

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[34] The six manufacturing firms were: Ajax Iron Works, E. Burkhardt and Sons Steel and Iron Works, Midwest Steel and Iron Works, Silver Engineering Works, Thompson Pipe and Steel, R. Hardesty Manufacturing, and Eaton Metal Products. Weicker Transfer and Storage handled loading and unloading of steel plates. Also, General Chemical Company contributed chemicals used to treat the steel before it was sent to the manufacturing firms. Lytle, "Shipbuilding on a 'Mountaintop,'" pp. 15-16.

[35] Frederic Chapin Lane, *Ships for Victory: A History of Shipbuilding under the U.S. Maritime Commission in World War II* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1951), pp. 3-13.

[36] At the height of shipbuilding during WWII, the U.S. Navy operated twelve shipyards. On the Atlantic, ships were built at Norfolk, VA, Kittery, ME, Charlestown, MA, Charleston, SC, Brooklyn, NY, and Philadelphia, PA. On the Pacific, ships were built at Bremerton, WA, Long Beach, CA, Hunters Point, CA, and Vallejo, CA. In addition, the Navy also had shipyards at New Orleans, LA, and Honolulu,

with the Navy and Merchant Marines. According to Bethlehem's records, during the course of World War II alone, the company produced a total of 1,127 seagoing naval and merchant vessels, approximately one-third of all the U.S. Navy's major vessels.[37]

Despite Bethlehem's massive output, it could not provide all of the labor to meet the federal government's demand. Nor, for that matter, could the U.S. Navy's Mare Island Shipyard in Vallejo, California. During the war, Mare Island emerged as the most important Navy Yard on the Pacific Coast. In the years leading up to the war, officials there discovered that their location near several other private yards, including the four Permanente Metals shipyards in Richmond working on Maritime Commission contracts, meant that the Navy had to compete with private corporations for local supplies and labor.[38] Because Mare Island's problem was one of stiff competition over scarce local resources, the Navy found a solution by turning to other regions of the country that held those two resources in abundance.[39] Steel mills in the East could produce enough product and it was more cost-effective for the Navy to transport the steel across the country than to try to purchase it locally. The same proved true for labor. However, relocating bodies was far more costly than moving supplies. The Navy's responded by transporting the steel to places where workers lived.

HI. Shipbuilding History, "U.S. Naval Shipyards and Bases," http://www.shipbuildinghistory.com/history/shipyards/3public.htm (accessed October 15, 2015).

[37] *Building of Destroyers at Quincy, Massachusetts: Hearing Before the Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Defense Activities*, U.S. House of Representatives, 83rd Cong., 1st sess., pp. 100-101 (1954) (statement of Daniel D. Strohmeier, Vice President, Bethlehem Steel Company).

[38] William D. Walters, Jr., "American Naval Shipbuilding, 1890-1989," *Geographical Review* 90, no. 3 (July 2000): 418-31, referenced material on p. 424. For a broad overview of the East Bay during the war, See Johnson, *The Second Gold Rush*.

[39] The intense competition for limited resources in the Richmond-Vallejo shipbuilding industry resonates with William Cronon's argument that the history of the North American West is animated by the dialectic between scarcity and abundance. See William Cronon, "Revisiting the Vanishing Frontier: The Legacy of Frederick Jackson Turner," *Western Historical Quarterly* 18 (April 1987): 157-76.

The cross-country journey from the East Coast to Mare Island often took the steel through Denver, where the Office of Production Management had moved to make the city a hub of shipbuilding as early as July 1941.[40] Then, in December, Clyde C. Hartzell, state director of contract distribution for the Office of Price Management (OPM), met with Commander A.S. Pitre, Lieutenant J.H. McQuilken, and Lieutenant E.F. Metzler of the Navy Bureau of Ships to select a suitable site in Denver to stockpile ship hull parts produced by Denver firms. The group awarded a $135,000 contract to Weicker Transfer and Storage for the transport of steel and Weicker immediately leased abandoned shops owned by the Colorado and Southern Railroad at 1901 Seventh Street for storage of the steel.[41] The site, which became known as the Denver Branch of the Navy Yard, met the approval of Hartzell, Pitre, McQuilken, and Metzler because it already had suitable crane hoists for unloading and reloading railroad cars. Once the steel plates arrived in Denver, they were unloaded at the depot and distributed to shipbuilding firms throughout the city. After the plates were cut and fabricated into the necessary parts, the firms returned them to the depot where the parts were loaded and the finished hull plates were shipped by rail to Mare Island for final assembly. The Navy estimated the entire project to cost 144 million dollars. Included in that cost was the building and staffing of a naval office in Denver, where at least ten Navy representatives coordinated construction with Mare Island.[42]

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[40] The war reoriented shipping in the U.S., with more rail freight travelling westward than ever before. As a percentage of total tonnage terminated nationally, tonnage terminated in the three Pacific Coast states increased from 4.46 percent to 6.20 percent between the first quarter of 1941 and the first quarter of 1943. Over this time, total tonnage terminated nationwide increased 32 percent. Thor Hultgren, *Railway Traffic Expansion and Use of Resources in World War II* (New York: National Bureau of Economic Research, 1944), p. 10.

[41] "Denver Firm Awarded Steel Handling Contract," *Denver Post*, December 21, 1941.

[42] "Site of Stock Pile For Denver Shipbuilding Program Sought," *Denver Post,* December 3, 1941; "Hulls of 24 Large Navy Escort Ships to be Built Here Starting Next Month," *Rocky Mountain News,* December 3, 1941; "Navy to Establish Office Here to Speed Hull Production," *Rocky Mountain News,* December 4, 1941.

For Denver manufacturers, the transition to shipbuilding was not straightforward. Gerald H. Garret, for example, oversaw Thompson Pipe and Steel Company, one of those firms that repurposed its shop floor to produce parts for ships.[43] In an interview with Duncan Emerich, a researcher for the Library of Congress's Radio Research Project, Garret told his story of traveling to Washington early in 1941 to offer support to the war effort. After meetings there and back in Denver with the War Production Board, he learned that his shop, which produced water pipes, smokestacks, and tanks, would receive a contract with the Navy. In the interview, Garret expressed his commitment to the war effort, detailing the process of repurposing his plant for shipbuilding. In just five weeks he had a new shop constructed. He also noted that his greatest challenge was finding enough labor to complete the job order, but the Office of Employment Management (OEM), which had an active branch in Denver, provided skilled, trained workers for him. In the end, he was grateful for OEM's involvement so that his firm could play its part in the war effort.[44]

During the war, Denver firms maintained an advantage over their competitors. The advantage had to do with both economies of scale and bureaucratic inefficiencies. Robert W. Gordon, who served as both deputy regional director of the War Production Board and regional director of the Smaller War Plants Corporation in Denver, testified before a congressional hearing on the difficulty small Rocky Mountain firms had in securing war production contracts. Small companies in rural communities struggled to replace labor when men enlisted, whereas Denver companies could work in concert with the OEM and draw from a much larger pool. The

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[43] Lytle, "Shipbuilding on a 'Mountaintop,'" pp. 14-15.

[44] Duncan Emerich, "Dear Mr. President," AFS 6463, transcript and audio, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, Washington, DC, 1942, http://memory.loc.gov/cgibin/query/r?ammem/afcpearltext:@field(DOCID+@lit(afcpearlsr576463a)) (accessed June 28, 2016).

contracts with the various agencies made it difficult for smaller firms to compete. Navy contracts from Mare Island, for example, might place an order for ship valves, but rather than ordering a large quantity to keep in stock, the shipyard would order the valves as needed. The company fulfilling that order would need to be flexible enough to produce a small number of valves of varying sizes. By using a just-in-time ordering process, Mare Island forced every shop in the supply-chain to adapt, and Denver companies, which enjoyed favorable shipping rates compared to those in smaller towns, benefitted. Further complicating this process, and making it easier for Denver firms, was the Maritime Commission's process of procuring contracts. As Gordon told the committee, the commission had headquarters in Washington and San Francisco, but it did not have a purchasing agent at the San Francisco office. This meant that western firms had to travel to Washington for contracts. Occasionally someone from the office would travel, but that person rarely strayed beyond Denver and Salt Lake City. Unlike the Ordnance Department or the Office of the Quartermaster, both of which had programs in place to find small firms, the Maritime Commission did not.[45] Western businesses often had to seek contracts out, and travel costs were more prohibitive for those that did not have access to the travel connections that existed in Denver.

A further benefit enjoyed by Denver firms, and evidence of how important the city was becoming to the war work, was their proximity to the OPM's Division of Contract Distribution office. Early in 1942, the OPM moved to create an office in Denver that would facilitate manufacturers in securing contracts. The primary purpose of this office was to sanction pools of companies bidding for a single contract, like the association that brought shipbuilding to Denver.

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[45] *Problems of American Small Business, Part 21: Maritime Procurement: I: Hearings Before the Special Committee to Study Problems of American Small Business,* U.S. Senate, 78th Cong., pp. 2945-52 (1943) (statement of Robert W. Gordon). See also Jim F. Heath, "American Mobilization and the Use of Small Manufacturers, 1939-1943," *Business History Review* 46, no. 3 (Autumn 1972): 295-319.

Before, firms had to travel to Washington, DC, to gain legal clearance so that an association would not run afoul of antitrust laws. The OPM named Clyde Hartzell head of the office and entrusted him to liaise with James I. Henderson at the Denver Field Office of the Department of Justice's Antitrust Division. Together, the pair worked to speed the process of legally securing contracts for Denver firms that proposed to create what was known as a "defense production association."[46]

The federal government dictated the terms of the contracts secured by Denver firms. For instance, according to Garrett, Thompson Pipe and Steel entered into a cost-plus-fixed-fee contract to produce parts for the Navy. The fixed-fee portion of the contract promised a profit for the firm, typically around 7 percent.[47] While the money paid out by the Navy for the fixed-fee portion was guaranteed, the profit margin itself was not. Under the terms of such a contract, the federal government reimbursed the firm for costs accrued, but that figure was based on an initial bid, not the actual cost of the completed project. If the cost ran over, the government only paid out the agreed amount of the bid, leaving the plant to shoulder the financial burden of completing the project. However, if the plant managed to come in under bid, the windfall went to the government, not the plant. Garret, buying into the wartime idea of sacrifice as an obligation, believed this is exactly how his business relationship with the federal government should work. As he told Emerich, this "means that nobody is making any money out of it, but I'm glad of that because no one should be making a lot of money out of supplying materials for the war."[48]

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[46] "Defense Pools May Get Legal O.K. in Denver," *Denver Post,* January 2, 1942; National Resources Planning Board, *Mountain States Industrial Development,* 51.

[47] Lytle, "Shipbuilding on a 'Mountaintop,'" p. 20.

[48] Emerich, "Dear Mr. President," AFS 6463.

Such contractual agreements between private firms and the federal government legitimized the relationship between business and the state by ensuring the market mediated between them. As historian Arthur Herman points out, the German and Japanese militaries could rely on nationalized industries to produce materiel, but the U.S. military did not have that luxury. Instead, it had to depend on various state agencies that approached private producers as purchaser-consumers.[49] In doing so, federal offices created monopsonies, markets in which a single purchaser exerted demand power over a number of competing suppliers. While these were not perfect markets, they still introduced a market relationship between private producers and a public purchaser. In this buyer's market, manufacturers considering wartime contracts had to make a cost-benefit analysis. Garret, for example, may not have considered a 7 percent profit "a lot of money," but he knew that if he did not agree to the stipulations of the contract, the federal government would find a different producer. In this way, the state did not compel businesses like Garret's to join the war effort through nationalization, but instead it let contracts on an open market, trusting that competitive free enterprise would yield a firm willing to take the contract. While the state wielded immense purchasing power over manufacturers in monopsonies, this power was legitimate within free enterprise. And, although private firms were producing for the state, free enterprise was protected by negotiated contracts.[50]

If the Navy's assessment of the work done in Denver is any indication, firms there put their full effort into meeting their contractual obligations. In February 1942, just three months

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[49] Herman, *Freedom's Forge,* pp. 91-93.

[50] This is not to say that both parties had equal negotiating power. At times the federal government exercised its immense power over those contracts, especially in renegotiating them if it believed a firm's profits were too great. See Mark R. Wilson, "'Taking a Nickel out of the Cash Register': Statutory Renegotiation of Military Contracts and the Politics of Profit Control in the United States during World War II," *Law and History Review* 28, no. 2 (May 2010): 343-83.

after production began in the city, the Navy ordered fifteen more destroyer escort class ships from the Denver yard—and improved the terms of the contracts. The new contracts, known as Type C and created specifically for Denver businesses, continued the 7 percent fixed fee, but the Navy agreed to biweekly, rather than monthly, reimbursements. Furthermore, the Navy recognized Denver as a major steel-fabricating hub. With this new designation came the ability for Denver firms to subcontract as needed to speed up the process of production. Eventually, the Navy turned the Type C contract into its national standard. Even as the Navy's needs changed during the war, it continued to contract with Denver firms. In 1943, Mare Island again turned to the city to begin producing LCT-6s (Landing Craft, Tank), a smaller vessel designed to transport platoons and tanks from larger crafts to shore. Later that year, both the Army and Navy contracted with Denver companies to produce Army sea barges and Navy pontoons. Thompson Pipe and Steel secured one of these contracts, with the Army paying 1.32 million dollars for the company's work.[51] Production at the Denver Yard continued until the end of the war.

While the public-private nature of the contracts meant that the federal government capped the profits of the Denver shipbuilders, the state did provide non-financial rewards for firms and their workers. The other shipbuilding companies in Denver matched Thompson Pipe and Steel's commitment to service and within a year of beginning production, Denver had become integral to national shipbuilding efforts. The Army and Navy together recognized what an achievement it was for these firms to repurpose themselves and create the Denver Branch of the Navy Yard. During the spring and summer of 1943, the military branches honored six different companies with the Army-Navy "E" Production Award. The six firms—William Ainsworth & Sons, Inc.; Denver Steel & Iron Works, Eaton Metal Products Company; Thompson Pipe & Steel Company;

[51] Lytle, "Shipbuilding on a 'Mountaintop,'" pp. 21-23.

Weicker Transfer & Storage Company; and E. Burkhardt & Sons Steel & Iron Works Company—each received the prestigious award at ceremonies hosted by the Army and Navy. Instigated by the Navy in 1906, the award had originally been reserved for excellence in gunnery, but was soon extended to recognize performance in engineering and technology. After the U.S. entered World War II and the War Department realized the immensity of the effort necessary for production, it modified the award to recognize civilian labor in a time of war.[52]

The ceremonies themselves were elaborate events commensurate with the scale of transformation undertaken by the companies. For the event on April 25, 1943, which honored Denver Steel & Iron Works, Eaton Metal Products, and Thompson Pipe & Steel, the Navy brought Rear Admiral Wilhelm L. Friedell, Commandant of the Mare Island Navy Yard, to Denver to recognize the companies. Colorado Governor John C. Vivian, Denver Mayor Benjamin F. Stapleton, and Robert Harvey, civilian-military coordinator for the City and County of Denver, also attended. To be sure, the companies' shift to shipbuilding was impressive. Denver Steel & Iron Works, founded by John Anthony Crook in 1916, specialized in structural steel for bridges, buildings, and metal culverts. Under the leadership of his widow, Minnie, and their daughter Constance Crook Stauffer, who together took ownership after Mr. Crook passed away, Denver Steel & Iron Works became the only industrial plant engaged in shipbuilding owned and operated solely by women. Eaton Metal Products, founded only three years after Denver Steel & Iron Works, fabricated petroleum storage tanks that dotted the landscape of the Rocky Mountains. Between the company's plants in Denver and Albuquerque, New Mexico, and its affiliates in Omaha, Nebraska, and Billings, Montana, it employed over one thousand men.

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[52] "Presentation of the Army-Navy 'E' Production Award to the Employees and Management of WM. Ainsworth & Sons, Inc.," (1943), folder 3, box 22, Metro Denver Chamber of Commerce Collection.

Over four hundred in Denver earned a paycheck from Eaton. Thompson Pipe & Steel Company had a more illustrious history stretching back to its formation in 1878 as the Weigele Pipe Works. The company's two Denver plants produced pipe for a range of projects, including welded steel penstocks for U.S. Bureau of Reclamation hydroelectric plants. With the war, the plant shifted to manufacturing steel bulkheads, gun platforms, and deckhouses for destroyer escort vessels at Mare Island.[53]

Other Denver firms also earned the award. In the summer of 1944, the Army confirmed that Major General William N. Porter would travel to Denver to recognize Brigadier General Alexander Wilson, commanding general of the Rocky Mountain Arsenal, with an "E" Award.[54] That same summer, the Sturgeon Electric Company and the McCarty-Johnson Plumbing & Heating Company also garnered praise for their efforts. And, the Navy again chose to award Eaton Metal Products with an "E," marking the third award for the employees.[55] In total, 14 percent of Denver firms engaged in defense-related production earned the prestigious award, compared to only 5 percent nationwide.[56]

The booklet prepared for the ceremony for William Ainsworth & Sons, Inc., described the award "as our fighting forces' joint recognition of exceptional performance on the production front…of the determined, persevering, unbeatable American spirit which can be satisfied only by

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[53] "Presentation of the Army-Navy 'E' Production Award to the Employees and Management of Denver Steel & Iron Works Company, Eaton Metal Products Company, Thompson Pipe & Steel Company," (1943), folder 3, box 22, Metro Denver Chamber of Commerce Collection.

[54] "Arsenal to Receive 'E' Award Friday," *Rocky Mountain News,* June 25, 1944; "Denver Arsenal Will Get 'E' Award," *Denver Post,* June 6, 1944.

[55] "2 Denver Firms Win Navy 'E' For War Work," *Rocky Mountain News,* June 22, 1944.

[56] Industrial Development Department, *Denver Labor*, p.6.

achieving today what yesterday seemed impossible."[57] To any observer who agreed with *Rocky Mountain News* reporter Lee Casey, an expansion of the city's manufacturing sector certainly was impossible. Such dismissals, however, were based on past understandings of the private market, which could not bear such an increase in output, and the city's normal distribution networks, which primarily focused on the Intermountain West. Once the federal government became a consumer, the market and its geography looked different. The expansion of heavy industry in Denver during the 1940s occurred because firms there could look to a place like Mare Island. As the meat packing industrialists already knew, manufacturers in Denver learned that collaboration with the federal government provided access to markets far removed from local distribution networks. At the same time, Denverites in another related sector, construction, also discovered how public-private projects funded by the federal government could provide new work and employ new arrivals in the city.

The Limits of Employment

In a city without a history of shipbuilding, none of the firms producing for the shipyard could imagine their contracts extending beyond the war. They knew this market intervention was inherently ephemeral, but they still welcomed public money to help secure their financial well being for the immediate future. Under the tenets of free enterprise and the logic of the market, limited-term contracts and a purchaser's right not to renew, even when the purchaser was the federal government, made sense because those were the rational choices of economic actors operating in their own self-interest. At the same time, the temporary nature of war work meant that even as workers secured wages funded by federal money, employment was coterminous

[57] "Presentation of the Army-Navy 'E' Production Award to the Employees and Management of WM. Ainsworth & Sons, Inc."

with the length of the project itself.[58] Federal intervention did not do away with precarity for labor; it did, however, make accepting the uncertain conditions of wartime employment an act of service.[59] Nowhere was this truer than in the building and construction trades, which attracted workers from across the country to Denver for temporary building projects, especially military installations, constructed by private firms. Camp Hale, located in the Rocky Mountains but built with labor recruited in Denver, was one such public-private space of temporary employment.

Construction, more than any other line of work in Colorado, exerted a centripetal force, drawing both skilled and unskilled labor to Denver. In 1940, the metropolitan region had a population of 407,000, but over the course of the war some 70,000 people moved there.[60] The same NRPB report that analyzed manufacturing also considered the impact of construction work, especially in relation to population growth. The authors identified several broad trends for the

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[58] Mary L. Dudziak argues that through World War II, the concept of "wartime" was posed as a temporary disruption of normal "peacetime." The transitory nature of war created conditions that allowed civilians and governments alike to make decisions they normally would not make. Dudziak, *War Time: An Idea, Its History, Its Consequences* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), esp. pp. 3-4.

[59] Analyses of precarity have proliferated in scholarship across a range of disciplines in the last decade. Broadly speaking, it refers to temporary, flexible, and casual employment, as well as the material and immaterial costs borne by those who live with this uncertainty. Although much of this scholarship sees precarity as a historically-situated condition arising from the shift to post-Fordism, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri argue that post-Fordism merely pulled precarity from the periphery to the core in the process of capital accumulation. I borrow from them in considering the nature of precarious labor during World War II. See Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* (New York: Penguin Press, 2004). For examples of scholarship on contemporary precarity, see Aziz Choudry and Thomas Collombat, eds., "New Voices on Labour Precarity and Resistance," special issue, *Labour, Capital and Society* 45, no. 1 (2012); Austin Zeiderman, "Submergence: Precarious Politics in Columbia's Future Port-City," *Antipode* 48, no. 3 (June 2016): 809-31; Arne L. Kalleberg, "Precarious Work, Insecure Workers: Employment Relations in Transition," *American Sociological Review* 74, no. 1 (February 2009): 1-22; Hannah Lewis, Peter Dwyer, Stuart Hodkinson, and Louise Waite, "Hyper-precarious Lives: Migrants, Work, and Forced Labour in the Global North," *Progress in Human Geography* 39, no. 5 (October 2015): 580-600.

[60] Denver Chamber of Commerce, *Postwar Jobs and More Business in Denver* (Denver: Denver Chamber of Commerce, 1945), p. 3, WHC, DPL. During the war, nearly 20 million Americans left their homes to find employment elsewhere in war plants, and by the war's end, approximately 15.3 million people resided someplace other than where they had in December 1941. See Herman, *Freedom's Forge,* p. 258.

region. The first was that mobilization came later to the Mountain West than either coast or the Midwest, and many skilled workers left for defense centers elsewhere. This outmigration from the region did not slow until the middle of 1941, when war work in Denver and Cheyenne, Wyoming, began to provide local opportunities. The second trend they highlighted was migration into the region, particularly from midwestern states. Over a 25-month period, from June 1, 1940 to June 30, 1942, 357 million dollars in war construction contracts had been awarded to the region. Of that figure, just under 150 million dollars were spent on military facilities in Colorado, two-thirds on projects located outside Denver.[61] Although mobilization came later to Colorado, the proliferation of building projects created a demand for workers that was met by the state's newcomers.

Many new arrivals found jobs in Pando, Eagle County, the Army's choice for Camp Hale. Built over six months in 1942, the 28-million-dollar camp was the only place in the United States where soldiers could learn winter survival skills and mountaineering, as well as downhill skiing while carrying Army-issued equipment.[62] Pando, with ample space to build a camp capable of housing 20,000 servicemen, had transportation links on both the Denver & Rio Grande Western railway and U.S. Highway 24, making it accessible from Denver. The valley also had water and coal, both of which would be necessary for such a military installation.[63] The

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[61] National Resources Planning Board, *Mountain States Region Industrial Development,* pp. 49-52. Although the report focused on migration from Midwest states, Governor Carr noted that many families relocated to Denver from the West Coast. "West Coast Families are Moving Here," *Rocky Mountain News,* December 31, 1941.

[62] Pando Constructors Engineering Section, "Camp Hale, Colorado Completion Report, Job Number Pando T I, 1942, Part 1a," (1943), p. 1, folder 24, box 2, 10th Mountain Division Records, TMD1, 10th Mountain Division Collection, Western History and Genealogy Department, Denver Public Library, Denver (hereafter cited as 10th Mountain Division Collection).

[63] Joseph A. Shaw, unpublished manuscript, (n.d.), p. 5, folder 24, box 2, 10th Mountain Division Collection.

rugged terrain of the surrounding area offered numerous opportunities to prepare soldiers for the Alps, with elevations ranging from 9,000 feet above sea level on the valley floor to mountains that peaked at over 14,000 feet. In some sections, the elevation gained more than one thousand feet in a quarter-mile, producing gradients steep enough to mimic the topographical challenges of some of the most treacherous mountain faces in northern Italy. The climate also suited the Army's needs, with an average of 163.5 inches of snowfall between September and June, and temperatures that plummeted as low as forty degrees below zero Fahrenheit.[64] Although in 1942 the U.S. Army could not predict how integral alpine battles would be to its efforts in the European theater, it nonetheless felt compelled to train soldiers for those conditions. The mountains surrounding Pando Valley offered the perfect climatic and topographical conditions to prepare men for the European Alps. The Army was so convinced of the site's suitability that it called the camp the Pando Ski Cantonment (cantonment was a common military word for a permanent residential structure whose etymological antecedents include the French noun *canton,* a subdivision of a country, the same word used for the affiliated member states that comprise Switzerland).[65] For the Army, Pando appeared to be the perfect place to simulate the European Alps and prepare the 10th Mountain Division to fight in treacherous mountain conditions.

Denver claimed Camp Hale as its own even though Pando was located 115 miles to the west by car. Doing so was in keeping with Denverites' habit of viewing the mountains as an extension of their city, a practice that dated back at least to the tenure of Mayor Speer, who believed outdoor recreation to be both physically and morally edifying. Under Speer, Denver

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[64] Pando Constructors, "Camp Hale, Colorado Completion Report, Part 1a," p. 1.

[65] "cantonment, n." *Oxford English Dictionary Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/27302?redirectedFrom=cantonment& (accessed on October 22, 2015).

created a system of mountain parks catering to a diverse array of outdoor pursuits.[66] By the 1940s, the Denver Mountain Parks contained about 13,500 acres of land at forty-seven interconnected sites spread over several hundred miles.[67] During the war, the idea that the city extended into the mountains led media outlets to present Camp Hale as part of Denver. For example, the radio station KOA broadcasted a weekly Saturday morning orientation program from Camp Hale called "Why We Fight" that stressed the need for Coloradans to continue their war mobilization efforts.[68] While the land in Pando where the U.S. Army constructed Camp Hale did not physically sit within the city limits, for Denverites to consider the site within the expanded territory of the city required little mental dexterity. To them, the physical distance separating their city from the camp was immaterial.

There were material reasons to consider Camp Hale part of Denver as well. As with other defense-related projects, those reasons had to do with the wartime combination of public money, private companies, and civilian labor. In April 1942, the Army entered into a contract with Black and Veatch, an architectural and engineering firm from Kansas City, Missouri, to design the camp. The construction firm Platt Rogers of Pueblo, Colorado, secured the construction contract. The two companies, known collectively as Pando Constructors, worked in concert with the Army Corp of Engineers to design and erect the camp. Although both companies came from outside

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[66] William H. Wilson, *The City Beautiful Movement* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), pp. 184-89. Although he focuses on a later period, William Philpott briefly discusses the class implications of Denver's Mountain Park System under Mayor Speer. See *Vacationland: Tourism and Environment in the Colorado High Country* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2013), pp. 15-17.

[67] History Colorado, "Denver Mountain Parks," http://www.historycolorado.org/oahp/denver-mountain-parks (accessed April 16, 2016).

[68] Harold J. Alford to James R. MacPherson, personal correspondence, October 1, 1943, folder 19, box 3, 10th Mountain Division Collection; James R. MacPherson to Harold J. Alford, personal correspondence, October 9, 1943, folder 19, box 3, 10th Mountain Division Collection.

Denver, they knew they needed local quarters and quickly moved to set up planning operations in the Mining Exchange Building on the corner of Fifteenth and Arapaho streets in Denver. By creating an office in Denver, the companies hoped to be able to recruit local labor, including those who had migrated there in search of work. On June 1, Pando Constructors had over four hundred people working in the Denver office while its field forces in Pando prepared the site for the arrival of the construction crew.[69]

J.R. Smith, the project's chief electrical engineer, was one of those who migrated to Denver specifically to work on the project. Although Smith had advanced skill and education, his story still illuminates the precarious nature of the work because of both its limited term and the range of demands placed on workers in such conditions, which all who traveled to Denver for wartime construction experienced. Smith and his colleagues embraced the temporary job despite knowing that their labor situation would change as soon as they completed the contract. They worked long days at a grueling pace to finish the camp as soon as possible, even though the sooner they finished, the sooner they would need to look for new employment. Furthermore, Smith accepted this working environment because he knew that if he did not, Pando Constructors would find someone willing to take his place. Many workers combined a sense of wartime duty with the reality that they needed paychecks whatever the job. Smith was one such man. At a moment when the "American Way" appeared under threat from external enemies, accepting this precarity seemed a small price to pay for the potential to preserve presumably shared values while financially supporting his family.[70]

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[69] Ibid, p.8.

[70] Mark H. Leff argues, however, that Americans did have limits in how much they were willing to sacrifice for the war effort. Leff, "The Politics of Sacrifice on the American Home Front in World War II," *Journal of American History* 77, no. 4 (March 1991): 1296-1318.

Smith, who lived with his wife and two sons in Oklahoma, eagerly accepted the offer to relocate to Denver to begin working for Pando Constructors in April 1942. He was so excited, in fact, that he and his wife, Betty, went to the finest department store and bought him a brown three-piece business suit. They agreed that contributing to the war effort called for professional attire, and he recalled that, upon arriving in Denver wearing his suit, he "thought it made me look great. I thought it made me look like a 'big shot' and when I got to my new job in Denver, I acted like one!"[71] Why Smith felt compelled to buy a three-piece suit for a job that would have him working outside in the Rocky Mountains is not clear. But, that he and his wife did not hesitate to make such a purchase hints at the high hopes they both held for this job, regardless of its short-term nature. The cost of expensive clothing that was hardly essential was not too much to bear if it allowed him to take pride in his new position.

Other costs, such as the separation from families that mobile laborers faced, required a different calculus. Those with a limited term of employment that took them away from familiar surroundings had to choose between two different, but equally taxing options: endure months apart from loved ones or relocate the entire family. Within a week of his arrival, J.R. Smith made up his mind that Betty and their two sons, Don and Jim, would join him in Colorado. Betty, still in Oklahoma, found this prospect less enticing because the bulk of the work of preparing to uproot the family would be left to her. Despite her protestations, J.R. told his wife that he knew she could handle the challenges and he missed her and needed her with him. She eventually relented and set about making the necessary arrangements. After finding a place to store their furniture and putting their older son, Don, on a bus to spend the summer with his paternal grandparents, she and her younger son, Jim, drove to Tulsa, where they met a young woman

[71] Smith, "The Building of Camp Hale," p. 3.

whose husband worked for Black and Veatch in Denver. The woman and her husband had apparently come to the same conclusion as J.R. and Betty: relocation seemed a better option than separation. From Tulsa, the trio set off for Denver and arrived several days later to the relief of the two women's eagerly awaiting husbands.[72]

When the project shifted from Denver to Pando that summer, Smith and his colleagues faced a jobsite with unique challenges. Because of wartime rubber rationing, crews could not ship materials using cars with rubber tires. Instead, they shipped materials via Denver & Rio Grande Western rail to the Pando Depot.[73] At the depot, the men turned to animal power to ferry the supplies to the valley floor. After two days of transporting men and goods, work began in Pando on June 3. Immediately, Smith ran into a problem with the generators brought to the site to provide power, a major setback for an electrical engineer. The Army engineers had procured two surplus generators, but these were of different makes and operated at different speeds. Smith spent several days synchronizing the generators so that they could be used together. He felt frustrated by the circumstances of the project, which he summarized as "specify what you want—take what you get—and make it work." Smith did, however, accept the constraints of wartime restrictions when he otherwise would have demanded different equipment or even considering leaving. In his mind, the cost, in both financial and temporal terms, of acquiring two similar generators was far too great because it could delay the war effort. He also knew that he had little choice but to accept these conditions because if he did not, the most likely outcome would be his dismissal and replacement. Despite this, he did not let his efforts flag. A billboard

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[72] Ibid, pp. 4-5.

[73] The Pando depot was situated on a branch of the Denver & Rio Grande Western completed in 1880 that ran from Salida to Leadville. Robert G. Athearn, *The Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad,* 5th ed. (1962; Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1977), p. 99.

on the valley floor with a depiction of Adolf Hitler implored the construction crew to keep an intense pace, reminding them "we've got a date with this son-of-a-bitch—let's not be late!"[74] Whatever the conditions of his employment and the job site, Smith remained committed to keeping his job and completing the camp as quickly as possible so that the troops could begin their training.

The relocation to Pando also drastically altered the plans for the cantonment. The Army hoped to train and station 20,353 enlisted men and officers at the camp in semi-permanent structures. In addition, the plans also called for quarters substantial enough to house 11,288 pack animals to be used during construction and then by the Army during training exercises. Despite these grand plans, the engineers had to rescale the design once they arrived on site and took stock of the topography and soil composition. They discovered the ground to be less stable than they had hoped, forcing a redesign of the building plans. Ultimately, the Army constructed living space for 16,392 men in less permanent quarters and made plans to accommodate only 3,925 animals.[75]

In such a remote part of Colorado, living quarters posed a problem for the construction crew as well. The vacancy rate in the nearby towns of Leadville, Red Cliff, and Minturn hovered just above zero, and, because the entire crew was comprised of people not from the area, temporary housing had to be built until they could move into the more permanent housing built for the troops.[76] While those without families lived in separate male and female barracks, Pando Constructors did not make provisions for those with families. The weekend before the move,

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[74] Smith, "The Building of Camp Hale," p. 10.

[75] Pando Constructors, "Camp Hale, Colorado Completion Report, Part 1a," p. 1.

[76] Ibid, p. 2.

then, the Smiths, along with three other couples, took a trip to Pando to find housing near the jobsite. They scoured the county, looking in Minturn, Eagle, Glenwood Springs, Carbondale, and Aspen without luck. Eventually, they found four furnished, unoccupied cabins on a site near an old sawmill outside of Minturn. Each of the four couples happily agreed to rent a cabin at a monthly rate of 25 dollars, even if the men would have to make the sixteen-mile journey—including traversing Battle Mountain—separating the cabins from Pando twice each day.[77]

Housing difficulties might have been one effect of precarity; the grueling work pace was another. While the desire to complete the project as quickly as possible so that the Army could begin training surely drove their efforts, so, too, did the climate in the Colorado High Country. In the race to complete as much work as possible before the cooler autumn weather and early-season snowfalls arrived, the crews worked a minimum of six ten-hour shifts each week, with half-days on Sunday mornings a regular occurrence as well. The impending snow drove the concrete work at the site, with crews pouring as many as thirty foundations in a single day. By the end of August, Smith observed the "the whole valley was bristling with fresh concrete foundations of all sizes and shapes."[78] Although Smith did not contribute much to the concrete work, he admired the effort of these men to keep the project moving forward, even when doing so meant that their own employment situation would soon change.

The workforce Smith watched erecting the camp was impressive. By September, approximately 8,600 employees resided within the camp in either temporary housing or in the military barracks, while another 2,800 employees lived off-site. At the peak, Pando Constructors paid wages to over 11,000 employees. These workers travelled from all over Colorado as well as

[77] Smith, "The Building of Camp Hale," pp. 6-7.

[78] Ibid, pp. 10, 16.

the surrounding states to reside in Eagle County for the six-month project.[79] With such a sizeable crew of construction workers assembled, Pando Constructors managed to have Camp Hale prepared enough for troops to begin arriving in November and by January 15, 1943, over 16,000 soldiers had begun their training in the Rockies.[80]

For Smith, as for the rest of the crew, the push to finish the camp put a strain on the holidays. In November, he made plans to take his family, including Don, who had joined them at the end of summer, to Glenwood Springs to spend Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after with friends. However, he could not afford to take time away from the construction site and had to stay behind while his wife and children celebrated the holiday without him. The Christmas season was not much kinder to him, although he did manage to spend some time with his family. He did not work on Christmas, but his memories of the day consist of taking a walk in the deep snowdrifts around the cabin and nursing his son Don, who had contracted hepatitis. Noticeable by their absence are stories of festivities, presents, or a grand meal. Of course, for a family isolated in a tiny mountain hamlet, amenities like gifts and a Christmas ham would have been difficult to obtain. Missing out on the normal enjoyments in life was a cost of taking this job in a remote part of the country. And yet, Smith's memories of the holiday season were fond ones because the hardships he endured were, in his mind at least, necessary when the country was at war. [81]

Smith's memoirs of his time in Pando give a glimpse into the life of a civilian who understood his labor to be integral to the war effort while accepting the circumstances of his

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[79] Pando Constructors, "Camp Hale, Colorado Completion Report, Part 1a," p. 2.

[80] Smith, "The Building of Camp Hale," p. 24.

[81] Ibid, pp. 20-23.

employment. He willingly took on short-term work on a jobsite with limited resources. For him, the uncertainty of his time in Colorado, from housing to tools and technology, while not preferable, were the costs of staying employed and contributing to the war effort. Although he was far too modest in his writing to claim credit for the work he did, his conclusion points to one of the ways that Smith justified tolerating this job in Colorado. He ends his story by narrating his family's departure from Pando as the troops of the 10th Mountain Division were arriving. In his final sentence, written with the benefit of hindsight, he declares, "subsequent events in the mountains of Northern Italy attested to the quality of their training in Pando Valley."[82] That training, he knew, could only happen because he had made it possible.

When the project was completed, the members of the construction crew had to find new employment in a different location. Once the Army finished its move into Camp Hale, the contract with Pando Constructors ended. The short-term joint venture that brought over 11,000 men and women to Pando disbanded because the federal government no longer needed its services. For those who had received temporary economic security by working in the Rockies, this meant a search for new work. One of those men, H.E. Robinson, captured this uncertainty in a poem he penned three days before Christmas, 1942. The final stanza opens with the lines, "If we go to another Defense Job/Let's start from the first to be true."[83] Denver, with its proliferation of defense-related jobs, provided one option for those looking to earn their next paycheck in the war effort. As men and women labored in the mountains to construct Camp Hale, their city-dwelling peers performed similar work, building the grounds of the new Denver Ordnance Plant.

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[82] Ibid, pp. 23-25, quoted material on p. 25.

[83] H. E. Robinson, "The Building of Camp Hale," unpublished poem, 1942, in appendix to Tom Wood, "A Historical Study of Camp Hale, Colorado" (unpublished manuscript, 1974), pp. 8-9, folder 43, box 2, 10th Mountain Division Collection.

Colorado's Fourth-Largest City

On a crisp autumn morning late in October 1941, a crowd of several hundred gathered around the steps of the administration building on the grounds of the newly erected Denver Ordnance Plant in Lakewood, Jefferson County. Although they did not know it at the time, those in attendance were celebrating the creation of what would come to be known as Colorado's "fourth largest-city."[84] The dedication ceremony, led by commanding officer Lieutenant Colonel Duncan G. McGregor, included numerous military dignitaries as well as public officials from all levels of government. Senator Ed C. Johnson, Governor Ralph Carr, and Mayor Ben Stapleton attended the dedication, as did military officials from across the country who expected to benefit from the labor of Denverites at the plant. Also in attendance were officials from Remington Arms Company of Bridgeport, Connecticut, the private corporation contracted to run a facility that cost 35 million dollars to construct. Although the munitions produced at the plant would be used solely by the military, Remington would oversee the day-to-day operations.[85] As in the construction of Denver's naval vessels, the federal government used a contractual agreement to enfold the world of a private corporation into the production of materiel.

Before the First World War, a fete celebrating a public-private venture involving the Ordnance Department would have been impossible to imagine. Since its inception in 1812, the Ordnance Department had been entrusted with the design and production of military weapons. Unlike European militaries, which sponsored private production, the U.S. military was the sole

[84] Office of the Chief of Ordnance, "Denver Ordnance Plant History #652, Copy #5," (1942), p. ii, folder 6, box 1, Reports and Historical Narratives, 1940-1945, Records of the Office of the Chief of Ordnance, Record Group 156-93-209, National Archives at Denver (hereafter Records of the Chief of Ordnance).

[85] "New Ordnance Plant Dedicated Saturday," *Denver Post*, October 24, 1941.

producer of its own arms and ammunition.[86] During the early years of the Great War, before the United States officially entered, the Ordnance Department and the U.S. Congress disagreed over both proper scale and production methods for army munitions. Congress insisted that the governmental armories continue to be the only producers unless private concerns could compete on price, which they could not under the time constraints the military faced. Congress also believed that relying on private firms would weaken the Ordnance Department in the future because it would not be prepared for another emergency. The legislative body could not, or would not, recognize that the department was already in the midst of its own crisis and, should the U.S. enter the war, the military would be woefully under-armed. Indeed, once the U.S. joined the war, the military had to rely on Great Britain and France to provide arms and ammunition for its troops in Europe. The war did, however, teach the Ordnance Department that private firms could produce for the military because U.S. manufacturers did so for European armies throughout the conflict. Learning from its mistakes, after the 1918 armistice the department developed plans for industrial mobilization to produce munitions during an emergency.[87]

The Ordnance Department had a blueprint, but the U.S. was not the first military to turn to private U.S. firms at the outset of World War II. This time, the department found ways to capitalize on production for European armies, something it had not been able to do in the Great War. With the outbreak of war in Europe in 1938-39, Remington, which specialized in recreational arms and munitions, began producing military-grade weapons for the British under the terms of lend-lease. Despite the differences between recreational and military weaponry,

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[86] Constance McLaughlin Green, Harry C. Thomson, and Peter C. Roots, *The Ordnance Department: Planning Munitions for War* (Washington: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1955), p. 3, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015025142053;view=1up;seq=5 (accessed April 16, 2016).

[87] Ibid, pp. 20-29.

Remington met its production schedule for the British solely from its facilities in Bridgeport, Connecticut, and Ilion, New York.[88] Remington's conversion to military work, particularly the manufacture of .30-caliber ordnance, proved a benefit for the Office of the Chief of Ordnance (OCO) when it approached the company about making small-arms munitions for the U.S. military.[89] Remington could not continue to meet the fabrication demands for the Ordnance Department from Bridgeport and Ilion alone, but the OCO had ideas for new facilities designed solely for the manufacture of small-arms ordnance. The OCO turned to Remington to operate these sites.[90]

From a financial standpoint, the public-private ordnance plant made sense for both Remington and the OCO. In late 1940, the OCO, under the War Department's direction, approached Remington about the possibility of overseeing the manufacture of small-arms ammunition. Earlier that year, Congress had made 90 million dollars available to the Ordnance Department solely for procuring contracts with private companies over the next twelve months.[91] Even before contract negotiations began, the OCO made clear its desire to have Remington undertake the project. In early November 1940, the OCO stated that it wanted to sign a contract with Remington by December 20. If the two parties did not reach an agreement by that date, then the government would not only reimburse Remington for costs incurred, but also assume

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[88] Remington Arms, *In Abundance and On Time, 1939-1943: A Record of Remington Arms Company's Share in the Production of Small Arms and Ammunition for the Armed Forces of the United States and Her Allies* (Bridgeport, CT: Remington Arms Inc., 1944), p. 16.

[89] Green et al., *The Ordnance Department,* p. 75.

[90] Remington, *In Abundance,* p. 17.

[91] The Ordnance Department had a total of $103,829,565 from which to draw for service and supplies, while another $90,085,520 was made available to be used in entering into contracts before July 1, 1941. Public—No. 667—76th Congress, Chapter 432—3rd Session, in Elmer A. Lewis, compiler, *Laws Relating to National Defense Enacted During Seventy-Sixth Congress* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1941), pp. 72-85.

financial obligations Remington had made for the project. The government would then take ownership of titles and rights to materials and equipment Remington procured, as well as possession of engineering plans, studies, and data the company produced.[92] If Remington agreed to a contract, which would be negotiated on a cost-plus-fixed-fee basis, the plant would eventually achieve a production schedule of 4,000,000 rounds of .30-caliber ammunition each day.[93]

For a private company like Remington, working with the government had its benefits. Because Remington would be fulfilling a contractual order, many of the potential pitfalls of producing for the open market would be avoided. The government offered to cover the costs of initial research into the feasibility of the project even before a contract was reached. If the research showed that Remington should not take on the project, the company could walk away from the negotiating table without losing those costs. True, the knowledge produced and any equipment acquired up to that point would become government property, but Remington would not face a loss of capital. Furthermore, by entering into a contract with the Ordnance Department, especially a cost-plus-fixed-fee one, Remington had a guaranteed purchaser for its product even before production began. Unlike producing for the private market, which did not come with guaranteed returns, Remington knew what it would earn for this project. The agreement protected the Army as well by ensuring that if a contract were not signed, the Army would still have the knowledge Remington produced and any equipment the company acquired.

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[92] Brigadier General L. H. Campbell, Jr., contracting officer, to President C.K. Davis, contractor, Remington Arms, Letter of Intent, November 6, 1940, appendix exhibit 2 in Office of the Chief of Ordnance, "Denver Ordnance Plant History."

[93] Ibid.

During the first weeks of November, Remington combed the country for suitable production sites and submitted a list to the OCO that ranked Denver as the best location for the plant, with Council Bluffs, Iowa, and Indianapolis, Indiana, listed as other acceptable locations.[94] After the contract was signed, the OCO agreed to move forward with the Denver plant, which eventually became the headquarters of Remington's small-arms program that included plants in Salt Lake City and Lake City, Missouri.[95] In February 1941, Thomas J. Morrissey, the United States District Attorney for the District of Colorado, filed a petition to condemn and take 2,080 acres in three parcels in Jefferson County, just three miles from Denver city limits. The federal government offered an estimated sum of 181,000 dollars to the landholders in exchange for the absolute and unqualified fee simple title. Morrissey supported his petition to the federal court with a Declaration of Taking filed by Henry L. Stimson, U.S. Secretary of War, which included a deposit of the specified amount and a schedule of disbursement to the three owners of the parcels.[96]

Plant construction began in early 1941. The Army Contract Board in Washington, DC, secured the services of the Detroit architectural firm Smith, Hinchman, and Grylls to design and engineer the plant, but Denver firms provided the labor.[97] Broderick and Gordon, a joint venture between two companies formed solely for this project, secured the construction contract from the

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[94] D.F. Carpenter, Director of Manufacture, Remington to Chief of Ordnance, official correspondence, November 15, 1940, appendix exhibit 5 in Office of the Chief of Ordnance, "Denver Ordnance Plant History."

[95] "Denver is to be Headquarters for Three Big Ordnance Plants," *Denver Post,* October 24, 1941, p. 17.

[96] Petition 11395, District Court of the United States for the District of Colorado, February 17, 1941, appendix exhibit 6 in Office of the Chief of Ordnance, "Denver Ordnance Plant History."

[97] Office of the Chief of Ordnance, "History of Denver Ordnance Plant," p. 10.

Quartermaster General and became the chief contractor in January 1941.[98] Twenty different local firms secured either sub- or sub-sub-contracts, with each paid out as a lump sum.[99] All of the thirty-five subcontractors, however, employed local labor, and over 90 percent of the workers came from the Denver area. The peak day of construction, June 26, saw six thousand bodies on site.[100] In August, as construction of the plant neared completion, Lee Casey reported in the *Rocky Mountain News* that the contractor's weekly payroll had been around 500,000 dollars over the previous few months.[101]

The construction of the Denver Ordnance Plant was a symphony of many parts moving in concert. Although thirty-five different firms had crews spread out across the 2,080-acre site, the pace of construction did not suffer. When ground was broken on March 1, 1941, Broderick and Gordon expected to finish fifty-three weeks later, on March 10, 1942. Denver workers, however, had other ideas. The completion date moved forward twice because construction crews worked so rapidly. Officially, the plant opened on September 30, 1941, although the first run of .30-caliber ordnance had been completed three days earlier. By the end of the month, the Ordnance Department had received and inspected the first run, confirming to Remington that it could move ahead with the production schedule.[102] When the plant was finished, Walter Scherer, personnel director for Broderick and Gordon, praised the American Federation of Labor-affiliated

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[98] Ibid, pp. 20, 24.

[99] "Supplemental Sub-Contracts to Principal Supplemental Contract Covering Work by the General Contractor under Jobs 41-1, M1-1, and M1-2," n.d., appendix exhibit 14 in Office of the Chief of Ordnance, "Denver Ordnance Plant History."

[100] Office of the Chief of Ordnance, "Denver Ordnance Plant History," p. 21.

[101] Lee Casey, "Ordnance Plant to Alter Denver," *Rocky Mountain News,* August 17, 1941.

[102] Office of the Chief of Ordnance, "Denver Ordnance Plant History," p. 25.

construction crews, saying, "high praise is due the unions and their leaders. They built that plant; we didn't."[103] Much like their counterparts working on Camp Hale, Denver workers fully committed themselves to getting the plant built as quickly as possible.

While the crews neared completion, the OCO and Remington had to finalize the process of hiring workers, which began in March when an employment office opened in Denver. The Army assigned commanding officers to the plant because it was a military facility, but left the hiring of rank and file, as well as shop-floor management, to Remington. The Army even turned to civilian labor to fill many of its administrative positions. Back in November 1940, the OCO began a two-month intensive training program at its existing arsenals for clerical workers. Sixty civilians relocated to the arsenals to train for the position of Senior Clerk, thus creating a pool from which the three new ordnance plants could draw military staff.[104] When Lieutenant Colonel McGregor received two assistants from this training program in March, he immediately noted their limited abilities and the additional training they would need on-site. After several rounds of communication, McGregor secured permission from the OCO to hire and train civilian personnel himself, obviating the need for the training program.[105] Even the OCO relied upon local labor.

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[103] "Building Crafts Win Praise for Defense Work," *Colorado Labor Advocate,* October 2, 1941.

[104] Brig. Gen. L.H. Campbell, Jr, assistant chief of industrial services facilities, U.S. Army, to Commanding Officer, Denver Ordnance Plant, official correspondence, January 28, 1941, appendix exhibit 31 in Office of the Chief of Ordnance, "Denver Ordnance Plant History."

[105] Lt. Col. D. G. McGregor, 1st Indorsement, n.d., appendix exhibit 32 in Office of the Chief of Ordnance, "Denver Ordnance Plant History"; R.H. Hannus, 2nd Indorsement, February 24, 1941, appendix exhibit 33 in Office of the Chief of Ordnance, "Denver Ordnance Plant History"; Lt. Col. D. G. McGregor, 3rd Indorsement, March 12, 1941, appendix exhibit 33 in Office of the Chief of Ordnance, "Denver Ordnance Plant History"; Lt. Col. D.G. McGregor to Office of the Chief of Ordnance, Industrial Services, Facilities Division, March 8, 1941, appendix exhibit 34 in Office of the Chief of Ordnance, "Denver Ordnance Plant History"; R. H. Hannus to Lt. Col. McGregor, 1st Indorsement, March 12, 1941, appendix exhibit 34 in Office of the Chief of Ordnance, "Denver Ordnance Plant History."

Despite the involvement of the OCO in hiring administrative staff, Remington remained in charge of hiring shop-floor managers and workers. Because Denver, Salt Lake City, and Lake Mills did not have any small arms manufacturing firms, Remington could not draw upon a trained workforce. Instead, the company devised a two-phase hiring system. The initial phase, which commenced soon after construction began in Denver, brought 450 employees onto Remington's wage roll. These trainees, mostly men selected for key operative and supervisory positions, travelled to Remington's main plant in Bridgeport to learn on fully operational lines so that they would be ready to manage the plants once construction was completed. By September 1, more than 500 men had finished training in Bridgeport and were ready oversee production at Denver, Salt Lake City, and Lake Mills.[106] According to Remington's own publication, *In Abundance and On Time, 1939-1943,* the company's training program at Bridgeport, known as Bridgeport University, was so effective that the War Production Board used it as a model for other industries.[107]

The second hiring phase, which began simultaneously with the first, focused on hiring the rank and file in Denver. By October 1, the local recruitment office had processed over 12,000 applications, interviewed 3,000 applicants, and hired over 1,500 employees. Once production began in earnest in October, the workforce grew rapidly. That month alone Remington hired another 2,058 people. Hiring continued at a similar rate through August 1942, with each month except two bringing in at least 1,500 new employees. By August, Remington employed some 16,000 laborers at the Denver plant alone, and the total peaked at 19,565 in November of that year. And the employees were not all male; in November 1942, over 9,000 women worked at the

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[106] Office of the Chief of Ordnance, "Denver Ordnance Plant History," p. 74.

[107] Remington, *In Abundance*, p. 53.

plant.[108] Despite this incredible growth rate, the number of applicants far exceeded available jobs. By January 1943, the local hiring office had processed a total of 109,992 applications for the plant.[109]

Because the contract for the ordnance plant was one of production for the war effort, Remington had to take all possible steps to ensure it assembled a workforce committed to the national project. It used a rigorous background check to screen applicants. This was especially true of those selected for management training in Bridgeport. While the screening process focused on managerial and technical skill, the company also assessed character and morale, hoping to assemble a management and teaching team that would not undermine the mission of the plant. Remington looked closest at "physical characteristics, capacity for leadership, education, and work experience," using proxy criteria to assess character and leadership potential. The most important was family status. The company believed "family men"—husbands and fathers—made better managers and tried to hire as many married applicants as possible. It did so because "these human considerations are beneficial not only to the man but also to the Government, since the man will be working in a plant owned by the Government."[110]

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[108] On the labor of women during the war, see Doris Weatherford, *American Women and World War II* (New York: Facts on File, 1990); Daron Acemoglu, David H. Autor, and David Lyle, "Women, War, and Wages: The Effects of Female Labor Supply on the Wage Structure at Midcentury," *Journal of Political Economy* 112, no. 3 (June 2004): 497-551; Ruth Milkman, *Gender at Work: The Dynamics of Job Segregation by Sex during World War II* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987), and "Redefining 'Women's Work': The Sexual Division of Labor in the Auto Industry during World War II," *Feminist Studies* 8, no. 2 (Summer 1982): 336-72. For a comparison with British women's war production work, see Penny Summerfield, *Women Workers in the Second World War: Production and Patriarchy in Conflict,* 2nd ed. (1984; New York: Routledge, 1989).

[109] Office of the Chief of Ordnance, "Denver Ordnance Plant History," pp. 74-82; "Employment Figures," n.d., appendix exhibit 29 in Office of the Chief of Ordnance, "Denver Ordnance Plant History."

[110] War Production Board, "Organizing Manpower for a Small-Arms Ammunition Plant…Example No. 8," n.d., appendix exhibit 30 in Office of the Chief of Ordnance, "Denver Ordnance Plant History."

In its thinking, the men who adhered to the male breadwinner model and took responsibility for others at home were most likely to view working for Remington as service to the armed forces. The company felt confident these men would best lead its plants in meeting its production contracts.

The inculcation begun in Bridgeport did not end once management returned to the West. One of the ways ordnance employees communicated their conviction that their work contributed to the national project was through their own on-site newspaper, the *Denver Ordnance Bulletin.* Like most newspapers printed for a particular audience, the *Bulletin* catered to, while simultaneously shaping in subtle and not-so-subtle ways, the interests of its readership. Unlike most newspapers, however, in which owners, editors, and staff writers craft stories in an effort to maximize advertising revenue and circulation, the *Bulletin* was a collaborative effort between the unnamed editors and its readers. Anyone who worked at the plant could contribute a story. The newspaper, therefore, served as a forum for the opinions and beliefs of a broad array of employees at the plant. Despite this diversity, one theme remained at the heart of the publication: boosting production to ensure the continuation of the "American Way."

The first issue of the *Bulletin,* printed just after the official declaration of war in December 1941, stressed the importance of the work done in Denver to continuing this way of life. In a section called "Christmas Greetings to Employees," several messages from Remington officials underscored the connections among ordnance production, victory in the war, and the supremacy of the "American Way." C.K. Davis, president and general manager of Remington, and A.T. Twing, works manager, expounded upon the role of privately employed civilians in securing victory. Davis, who praised the Denver plant for its contribution to Remington's war efforts, closed his note by saying, "This Christmas, when we pause to honor Him to whom we all

turn for strength, we can lift our heads and hearts, proud and unafraid as only a free people can be. Ours is a fight for our way of living—a Christian, democratic way that cannot exist in a world ruled by dictators—a contest from which we must and will emerge victorious." Twing, whose message was printed below that of Davis, continued the theme of impressing upon the rank and file how vital their labor was to the war effort. But whereas Davis spoke about the conflict in broad terms, Twing reminded the employees not to forget the personal implications of their work. He wrote, "we must not and cannot let down the man behind the gun who is risking his all to preserve our way of life. …It is the patriotic duty of each of us to give everything we have in our all-out effort to produce every possible cartridge our Plant is capable of producing."[111] In this way, he drew a direct line from working at the DOP to the conflict abroad to the preservation of the "American Way."

Davis's praise of democracy resonated with other plant workers who used the *Bulletin* to voice their own support for a war effort to defeat those countries that placed the "American Way" in peril. Employees often did this by writing letters to the editor, which were published in the "Editor's Mailbag" in each issue. Virginia L. Patterson, who worked in the Reinspection Department, for example, wrote about the threat to democracy that the Axis powers posed. Despite the dangers of combat, she remained dismissive of the opposing side, in part because she believed they underestimated the strength of the U.S. She told a story of having heard comments that in some foreign countries people believed U.S. citizens to be "disorganized and quarrelsome." She asserted that this belief could only come from a misperception of pluralism, that "because the American people are entitled to disagree with each other in opinion we are not unified." To her, pluralism made the U.S. stronger than its adversaries because "never having

[111] "Christmas Greetings to Employees," *Denver Ordnance Bulletin,* December 2, 1941.

possessed a democracy such as ours, I can see how it would be difficult for them to understand that those very differences of opinion are the things which have made us great." Calling the Axis powers nations "of little men" who "stupidly dropped their calling cards of war upon our doorsteps," she predicted that they would be "overwhelmed when that door opens and a hundred million American hearts beat around the world." She closed her letter, "The UNITED States of America, first, last, and always."[112] Other employees agreed with Patterson. Dorothy Fey, also a member of the Reinspection Department, wrote to the paper in response to the same rumor, that difference in the United States amounted to discord. In her letter, she analogized the U.S. to a "stout rope" with Democracy—capitalized—as the main strand around which all other strands, the "millions of Americans," wove together. She admitted that some "loose ends" might exist, but the war called for unity. Continuing her rope analogy, she reminded her fellow employees "no matter how many countries want to play tug-of-war with us, we know surely and certainly that our American way—the stout, strong way—will win out."[113]

For employees like Patterson and Fey, belief in the U.S. success on the battlefield was more than simple patriotic boasting, although their words certainly are tinged with chauvinism. Rather than claim U.S. superiority from a place of nationalism, they instead believed that the U.S. would be victorious because of the sacrifices those at home were making. Indeed, they themselves were contributing to the cause every day at the plant, performing their duty as members of the inspection team. In their minds, labor at the plant would produce ammunition of the highest quality. As Twing's Christmas message called on them to do, they would not let

[112] Virginia L. Patterson, "Editor's Mailbag," *Denver Ordnance Bulletin,* February, 1942.

[113] Dorothy Fey, "Editor's Mailbag," *Denver Ordnance Bulletin,* April 15, 1942.

down the man behind the gun. They could be sure of this because they inspected the projectiles he fired.

While Patterson and Fey focused on inspecting the shells manufactured in the plant, others highlighted the fabrication process and its importance to the war. Walt Paulk, who worked as a toolsetter, adopted what historian James Sparrow has identified as the "ideology of production." As Sparrow elucidates, this wartime ideology "harked back to nineteenth-century ideals that identified producerism as a citizenly virtue fundamental to American independence."[114] Paulk certainly viewed his work in the factory as foundational to the GI's efforts to defend the "American Way." He hoped his fellow laborers would too. He called on them to recognize that there were two forms of production, and the war effort called on a very different form than that practiced before the war. He estimated, rather unscientifically, that after December 7, 1941, a quarter of the U.S. populace "awoke to the fact that Production was a BIG WORD." The other 75 percent, he claimed, remained indifferent towards what was required of them. These skeptics, he asserted, averred, "Production, why we have been producing for centuries." Paulk conceded that this was true, but pressed further, asking *how* had Americans been producing. "In our own selfish, independent ways" was his summation of U.S. efforts before the war. After drawing the distinction between the two "classes" of producers, Paulk challenged each plant employee to declare allegiance to one of those classes. But because the production of a single shell relied on the specialized labor of so many people, he stressed that the plant as a whole had its own form of production. Each individual contributed, and each had a duty to help the plant operate at the higher level of production. In his estimation, this happened when each man or woman in Denver worked as a "careful producer," combining perfection and

[114] Sparrow, *The Warfare State,* pp. 160-200, quoted material on p. 167.

speed. Other industries, he claimed, could tolerate a variance of a thousandth of an inch in its products, but sloppy work at the Denver Ordnance Plant was unacceptable. Paulk also used the "man-behind-the-gun" trope to stress the importance of work in Denver. On the battlefield, he surmised, "it might be our shells that would put a finish to this war."[115] Although not explicitly stated, his message was clear: Denverites were producing the materiel that would secure U.S. freedom and preservation of the "American Way."

Whether by purpose or happenstance, Paulk's piece about forms of production ran in the same issue as a front-page article about an all-out War Production Drive at the plant, a drive inaugurated by the federal government. Its main aim was to increase efficiency by streamlining communications and cooperation between the different sectors of production. This would be achieved by a committee of nine men, each representing a different operation at the plant, including Paulk. In order to aid the War Production Drive Committee, other sub-committees were formed. Together, these committees promoted men from the rank and file into liaison positions, but not into management. As the article explicitly stated, membership on these committees did not equate to authority, which remained with the foremen and shift supervisors.[116] Instead, as Chairman of the War Production Drive and superintendent D. B. Campbell told the *Bulletin* the day after the drive started, "committee members…cannot assume any of management's authorities, but must appeal to employees' patriotism to do their best for their country. Furthermore…no cause could be more worthy or deserving of the best efforts of all of us."[117] From a corporate standpoint, this organization benefitted Remington. Through

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[115] Walt Paulk, "What Class Are We In?—Paulk," *Denver Ordnance Bulletin,* April 13, 1942.

[116] *Denver Ordnance Bulletin,* April 13, 1942.

[117] "War Production Drive Off to Auspicious Start," *Denver Ordnance Bulletin,* April 15, 1942.

appealing to its workforce's patriotism, the company's management could call upon employees to raise production levels, while passing off the responsibility for demanding such increases onto the federal government.

Not coincidentally, next to the announcement of the War Production Drive, the *Bulletin* reprinted the text of a letter from President Roosevelt to Donald M. Nelson, chairman of the national War Production Board. Again, the distinction between private desires and public concerns blurred, with Remington's management relying on the federal government to ask its own employees to increase production. President Roosevelt wrote,

> The months just ahead are the critical months of the war. Victory depends in large measure on the increased war production we are able to get from our factories and arsenals in the Spring and Summer of 1942. What has been done so far must be exceeded. This is total war. We are all under fire—soldiers and civilians alike. No one is a spectator, we are all belligerents. To win we must fight.
>
> The urgency of tomorrow must be felt in every shop and factory producing war goods, in every home and on every farm. Then we shall achieve the vigor of thought and cooperative action that carries a team to victory.
>
> I therefore direct you to take every possible step to raise production and to bring home to labor and management alike the supreme importance of war production this crucial Spring.[118]

Denverites responded to the president's plea for increased output. In April 1943, the *Rocky Mountain News* reported that the plant was exceeding the initial expectations, with more than 6.5 million rounds a day coming off the production line.[119]

Amidst the calls for increased collectivity, the *Bulletin* editors turned to a familiar facet of the "American Way," individualism and personal responsibility, to argue that the national project would succeed against the threats posed by the Axis powers. In an editorial that rhetorically posed the question "why this ruthless attempt to overthrow the American way of

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[118] *Denver Ordnance Bulletin,* April 13, 1942.

[119] "They Really Pass the Gun at Denver Ordnance Plant," *Rocky Mountain News,* April 7, 1943.

life?," the editors responded that it was necessary for "you and I, as individuals," to mobilize for a war effort to preserve "a great heritage...upon which our homes, our churches and our system of free enterprise have been developed." They stressed to their readers that each individual had to understand the magnitude of his or her job as a constituent piece of the public goal. The only way the U.S. could win, they emphasized, was by each individual taking responsibility for his or her work, thereby guaranteeing the totality of the war effort would be as flawless as possible.[120]

The call for personal accountability found receptive ears among plant employees. H.F. Nees, a safety engineer, agreed with the editors in a letter to the *Bulletin* that explained the consequences of individuals not taking responsibility for their actions. He did so through the example of lost man hours, pointing out that in 1941, U.S. factories lost enough man hours to produce as many as 18,000 large bombing planes or 195,000 tanks. He wrote that these lost hours, which were "wasted, through carelessness," were not tolerable during "a period when everyone is concerned over the defense of our American way of life." That defense, he believed, rested on everyone at the plant taking responsibility for his or her own safety. If every employee did so, the plant would not lose any man hours and it could exceed its production schedule.[121] Nees clearly believed that each individual had a duty to his or her fellow Americans to protect the "American Way."

To communicate the importance of individual contributions, and contrast U.S. production habits with those of their Japanese combatants in particular, the unnamed *Bulletin* editors ran a series detailing the exploits of a fictional Japanese operative who had gained access to the Denver plant in order to conduct espionage and sabotage. In the first installment, when the

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[120] "Why Ammunition," *Denver Ordnance Bulletin, March, 1942.*

[121] H.F. Nees, "Accidents and Defense," *Denver Ordnance Bulletin,* March, 1942.

editors introduced the character, they called him "as vile a rat as ever came from Tokyo." Conceding "it was bound to happen—the chumps of Cherry-blossom Land, those Nipponese nincompoops, yes those Japanese jerks—have managed to sneak a sabotaging snoop into the Plant!," the editors warned everyone to be vigilant and guard against his attempts to undermine their efforts. In the editors' minds, it was unsurprising that a Japanese special agent might infiltrate the grounds, not because of poor plant security, but because the Japanese lacked the moral compass that Americans held. They bestowed upon the infiltrator the mocking name Secret Agent Nojapahero.

The use of racist tropes to depict enemies during times of war has a long history and the Japanese were favorite targets of such representational violence at the hands of Americans during World War II.[122] However, Special Agent Nojapahero was more than a racist depiction of a wartime foe; he served a didactic purpose at the plant. The editors used Japanese espionage, although of a more spectral than material variety, to prescribe and proscribe certain actions. The first story in the series claimed the spy had "whispered into the ears of a few of us operators along the Production Front that inspecting components from our particular machines is the line inspector's job. He's tried to make us become uninterested in what we ourselves are making." His intent was to persuade those on the production line that they did not have to be precise in their work because the inspection department would take on the job of quality control. The editors described the agent as a product of Japanese manufacturing customs, claiming, "this odious Oriental comes from a land where workers have no individuality, no enterprise." They remained confident that the saboteur's overtures would be rebuffed because "he doesn't realize

[122] See especially John W. Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (New York: Pantheon, 1986).

that most of us like to be our own bosses; that we prefer to reject our own work, be our own judge and jury."[123]

In the minds of the editors, private citizens working for a private corporation producing ordnance for the U.S. Army did not spell a loss of individuality. Rather, that Americans freely chose to work for a private corporation contracted to make ammunition for the state military evinced a higher level of individual liberty than that enjoyed by their Japanese counterparts who worked in nationalized industries. In the public-private milieu at the DOP, where Denverites secured their economic future by laboring for a private corporation to fulfill a contract for the federal government, citizens on the production line worked to protect the "American Way," particularly free enterprise, from eroding at the hands of the state. This happened because the market mediated their relationship with Remington and with the state. Don Belcher, who worked in the Salvage Department, reiterated that workers remained private citizens contributing to the war effort through a contractual agreement. In praising his colleagues for their response to conservation campaigns, he told them "there is still another commodity which must be very well taken care of and that is man power." [124] By referring to their labor as a "commodity," Belcher reminded his fellow workers that they had not been conscripted into service; even if they considered themselves "soldiers of production," as he wrote, the work they performed demanded a wage in exchange for the product they created. Whether the goods of their labor were sold on the open market or sent to the front lines in Europe mattered little. But the labor itself, the commodity the rank and file held in abundance, was exchanged for wages through a market transaction.

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[123] "Special Communique: Beware of NipponeseSecretAgentNojapahero," *Denver Ordnance Bulletin,* April 13, 1942.

[124] Don J. Belcher, "Safety and Duty," *Denver Ordnance Bulletin,* June 1, 1942.

Despite all their efforts to produce for the defense project, Denverites could not keep the plant open. On May 4, 1944, the Ordnance Department officially ordered the cessation of small-arms production in Denver at the end of the contract. As the Army's needs changed, it altered the goods it ordered and purchased from private producers. In fact, the Ordnance Department had secured the services of the Henry J. Kaiser Corporation, Shell Division, to produce eight-inch and 155-milimeter artillery shells in Denver. Kaiser's needs, however, paled in comparison to those of Remington, and the company took charge of only one building at the plant. A smaller production run meant fewer employees, and Denverites suffered the consequences.[125] The logic of the market could even be brought to bear on the wartime production of ammunition.

Even as the physical plant entered into transition from one private company to another, the public-private nature of employment remained constant. Both the War Manpower Commission and the United States Employment Service (USES) featured heavily in the process, attempting to mitigate the turbulence caused by layoffs, tenuous employment contracts, and a change in management. For the USES, which would be the chief staffing agency for Kaiser, its influence over the transition could not be more evident. The agency wrote a letter to all employees who remained at the plant in May, stressing the importance of not downing tools in the face of uncertain times. The USES made clear that remaining on the job would increase a worker's chances of securing employment with Kaiser in the coming months. This benefitted Kaiser since the USES could provide laborers who had proved their commitment to the war

[125] Office of the Chief of Ordnance, "Denver Ordnance Plant History, Supplement III, 1 April 1944 to 30 September 1944–Report on Contract Termination, Small Arms Ammunition," n.d., p. 4, folder 3, box 1, Records of the Chief of Ordnance; Negotiated Contract for Services Between War Department and Kaiser Industries, Contract No. W 05-013-ORD-2, appendix exhibit 12 in Office of the Chief of Ordnance, "Denver Ordnance Plant History, Supplement III."

effort even as their employment status remained uncertain. Amidst all the tumult at the plant, the federal government exerted an authority over labor that bolstered Remington's management.[126]

Although the federal government referred to those at the DOP as governmental employees, the management of that labor force adhered to the dicta of the market. As the Army demanded other kinds of artillery, Remington responded with massive layoffs. The first wave, which took place in December 1943 after Remington adjusted its production schedule, saw 4,000 men and women lose their jobs. Remington laid off the same number in April 1944, several days before the official closure announcement. When the announcement was made on May 4, just 3,238 Remington employees remained on site. Over the course of the next three months, plant workers aimed to complete the production run while facing weekly attrition. By the end of the contract on July 31, only 1,367 Denverites earned a paycheck drawn from public money.[127]

The possibility of retaining employment at the plant, whether realized or not, was enough to ensure that the remaining employees endeavored to complete the production schedule by the termination of Remington's contract. While it is difficult to glean from the historical record how Denverites responded to this transition, the remaining traces do show cooperation with the termination of the Remington contract and the conversion to shell production. The OCO reported "no appreciable volume of voluntary terminations" after the official announcement on May 4.[128] At the same time, the OCO instituted security measures designed to prevent disgruntled employees from undermining the production effort. The Ordnance Department began conducting

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[126] "USES to Co-operate with Kaiser Co. and Remington," *Denver Ordnance Bulletin,* May, 20, 1944; "Production Schedule Must Be Met Throughout Duration of Contract," *Denver Ordnance Bulletin,* May 20, 1944.

[127] Office of the Chief of Ordnance, "Denver Ordnance Plant History, Supplement III," p. 4.

[128] Ibid, p. 4.

random searches of both the shop floor and employee vehicles to keep production standards high and deter workers from damaging or absconding with governmental property. Nonetheless, Remington and Ordnance Department officials discovered few instances of employee sabotage.[129] Instead, workers accepted that their employment could not continue indefinitely. It made sense to them that their terminations came about because the purchaser, the federal government, no longer demanded the product they were making.

In another way, the end of the contract also represented a victory. Most immediately, a decrease in the Army's demands for .30-caliber carbine rounds and an increase in shell artillery pointed towards a change on the battlefield as Allied forces claimed triumphs over their Axis enemies. As they had been reminded time and again, the success of the soldiers depended on their labor at home. Denverites could easily connect the dots between their work and winning the war, and the change in their employment status served as evidence that they had performed their duty for the effort. At the same time, throughout their years at the plant, they remained private citizens contractually employed by a private corporation to produce for the needs of the federal government. The victories in the Pacific and European theaters over foes with centralized economies also gave credence to the notion that free enterprise—indeed, the "American Way"—could out-produce governmentally controlled industrial operations. True, they produced for the federal government, but that production remained mediated by the market. So, too, did the government's efforts to provide economic security for Americans. The federal government had managed to provide a livelihood to nearly 20,000 Denverites by employing them at a single plant. But free enterprise gave the consumer the power to end those contracts when demand waned, even if that buyer was the state. *Rocky Mountain News* columnist Lee Casey observed

[129] Ibid, p. 14.

that the end of Remington's contract was due to "men and women [who] worked so efficiently and effectively that they worked themselves out of jobs."[130] The sizable layoffs at the plant and uncertainty over employment signaled the success of the "American Way," not a failure of free enterprise.

When Remington's small-arms production moved out and Kaiser took control, only a few thousand residents of metropolitan Denver continued to work at the plant. In addition to Kaiser, General Foods leased several buildings to pack C-rations for the Army, while Remington also employed about one thousand people to make fuses for the shells produced by Kaiser. Kaiser, General Foods, and Remington employees remained until the surrender of Japan on August 15, 1945. The next morning, production ceased and within the week two thousand Denverites lost their jobs. On October 18, the final six hundred remaining employees were let go when the 2,080-acre plant, with its 230 buildings and 2.5 million square feet of floor space, was deemed surplus property.[131] Although a wartime economy provided a solution to the economic woes that had plagued the country since 1929, the federal government would not artificially support that economy by purchasing what it did not need. The logic of the market underpinned its relationship with wartime producers.

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Shipbuilding, military construction, and ordnance work all enfolded Denver into the national project and the expanding wartime economy. Without a doubt, this changed the

[130] Lee Casey, "The Ordnance Layoff—Rumors vs. Facts," *Rocky Mountain News,* November 14, 1943.

[131] Christine Pfaff, "Bullets for the Yanks: Colorado's World War II Ammunition Factory," *Colorado Heritage* (Summer 1992): 33-45, referenced material on p. 45.

metropolitan economy. For one, the defense effort translated into jobs on an unprecedented scale. Recall that in March 1940, only 140,000 jobs existed in a metropolitan region of 407,000. According to the Denver Chamber of Commerce, at the height of Denver's wartime production, 206,000 metropolitan residents held wage-earning employment.[132] Of course, some of these jobs went to new arrivals, but that was a change from the Depression years when migrants came to the state and struggled in an ever-tightening labor market. National demand for products that could be produced locally meant that jobs now existed where they previously had not.

Beyond the increase in jobs, mobilization also showed Denverites that working in collaboration with the federal government could have great benefits. The partnership increased both individual and aggregate wealth in the Mile High City. In 1939, residents of the metropolitan area earned 251.7 million dollars in income. Just two years after the war's end, in 1947, they had managed to treble their pre-tax take-home pay, with nearly 800 million dollars paid out to residents.[133] Furthermore, during the war, Denverites knew the provenance of the money in their pocketbooks and bank accounts; it did not come from the private financial institutions in the East. That money had originated in public coffers and reached them as financial remuneration for their labor as "soldiers of production." While some in the state, especially Governor Carr, decried federal spending of the kind that employed countless Coloradans in various New Deal public works projects, defense spending was a wholly different proposition because that money went to private firms and corporations through negotiated contracts. Federal intervention of the kind that occurred during the war, where the state entered

[132] Denver Chamber of Commerce, *Postwar Jobs and More Business in Denver* (Denver: Denver Chamber of Commerce, 1945), p. 3, WHC, DPL.

[133] The Econometric Institute, *Industry in Denver*, table IV-4.

into contracts as a purchaser-consumer, brought the logic of the market, and not central planning, to its economic policies.

As much as the war effort in Denver had focused on producing materiel for U.S. and Allied forces abroad, the broader political and economic ramifications of the war were not lost on Denverites. To them, their sites of labor, where public goals and private concerns converged, and the shifts they worked there gave them the opportunity to make manifest the "American Way." They remained private citizens, freely choosing to work for private companies, even if they felt in some way compelled to contribute to the national project. For Denver residents, because the victory abroad had been secured through public-private relationships, free enterprise ensured the continued existence of the "American Way."

Chapter Two

Red, White, and Blue Tape:
Federal Bureaucracy and the Politics of Economic Security

To the French journalist Michel Gordey, everything in postwar Denver glittered with middle-class comfort. Gordey, who wrote for the daily *France-Soir,* spent two months with his wife at her parents' home in Denver in 1951. To introduce his readers to "an America you do not know," he crafted an insurance agent named Henry Johnson, a pastiche of all the middle-class men he met in this "average American city."[1] What most impressed Gordey, and what he assumed his readers would be most surprised to learn, was that Americans like Johnson consumed their way to a standard of living higher than that enjoyed by middle-class people in France. Every Denver house had a two-car garage with two occupied bays unless there was an empty "space for the automobile in which the husband goes to work." Inside, he incredulously noted, houses were filled with so many implements to aid housework that domestic help was redundant.[2] To this outside observer, the postwar economy, driven by Keynesian policies that facilitated employment and consumption, had created an unparalleled quality of life, and Denver, more than any other city, best exemplified the impressively wide distribution of the material

[1] Gordey's insistence that his French readers would not have knowledge of the U.S. might be overstated. According to historian Christopher Endy, by 1951, tourism in France had become important to Franco-American relations and many in France had contact with middle-class U.S. Americans. See Endy, *Cold War Holidays: American Tourism in France* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

[2] Don Sterling, "We Knew It, But 'Merci' Anyhow…Denver Lawful, Modern Climate 'Paradise,' Says Writer," *Denver Post,* February 10, 1952. In 1948, Denverites across the metropolitan region owned 152,695 registered automobiles. By 1956, that number had increased by 94 percent to 295,976. This was not simply a product of population growth. Over that same time span, the average number of persons per vehicle declined from 3.0 to 2.4. Inter-County Regional Planning Commission, "Transportation in the Denver Region!" (Denver: Inter-County Regional Planning Commission, 1958), p.16. Population data from Stephen J. Leonard and Thomas J. Noel, *Denver: Mining Camp to Metropolis* (Niwot: University Press of Colorado, 1990), p. 481.

benefits of market capitalism and free enterprise. Protecting the "American Way," as Denverites had done in the war, was proving its benefits after reconversion in what one historian calls the "Consumers' Republic."[3]

Gordey stressed Denver's ordinariness to make a point—the ubiquity of commodities and how they signaled material security—even as he elided what made Denver *un*ordinary. Denver had an economic engine that worked harder than in any other city except Washington, DC: the federal bureaucracy. Gordey constructed a fictional insurance salesman as the quintessential Denver professional, but far more Denverites earned paychecks as federal civil servants than as insurance agents.[4] And yet, both Denver's insurance sector and its federal bureaucratic apparatus worked toward the goal of protecting the economic security of western Americans. Denver's thousands of civil servants, in earning their paychecks, performed labor that also contributed to the state project of bolstering U.S. capitalism through federal management.

Thomas Bender observes that if historians are to bring an imperial analytic to urban history, analyses of how the concerns of cities and nation-states have converged must take precedence.[5] The politics of security in the postwar world presents one such moment. Gary

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[3] The phrase is taken from Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* (New York: Vintage Books, 2003).

[4] Employment in Denver's FIRE (finance, insurance, and real estate) sector totaled 11,222 persons, approximately 5 percent of all employed persons, in 1950. Although the exact number working in the insurance industry in the early 1950s is not known, the Denver Planning Office concluded that Denver is "not an insurance center" because most insurance offices were divisions of companies headquartered elsewhere. On January 1, 1953, the federal government employed 17,306 Denverites, approximately 12.5 percent of the region's workforce. Denver Planning Office, *Working Denver: An Economic Analysis by the Denver Planning Office, 1953* (Denver: Denver Planning Office, 1953), pp. 2, 88, 96-97, 134, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015085500935> (accessed March 12, 2017). By March 1964, the FIRE sector employed 21,400 people, but as a percentage of the employed workforce, it still accounted for only 5.2 percent. State of Colorado Department of Employment, "Statistical Abstract" (Denver: State of Colorado Department of Employment, April 1964), p. 2.

[5] Bender uses the example of borders to highlight how the concerns of cities and nation-states diverge. He argues that where nation-states desire closed borders, cities thrive on porous boundaries

Gerstle, in his exploration of the shifting reach of the state, notes that "the federal government did acquire one new tool for its state building arsenal after 1945: 'national security.'"[6] Although Gerstle's focus is primarily on the relationship between state power and political and civil rights, his insight is nevertheless salient for economic policy during the Cold War because the politics of security extended beyond questions of international diplomacy and foreign entanglements. In her examination of the moment of liberal ascendency in the 1990s, Emma Rothschild argues that security came to be understood as "extended" through a dense network of individuals, bodies politic, nation-states, and super-national organizations that sought security in multiple forms.[7] This extended security was not unique to a post-Soviet world. Historian Jennifer Klein argues that the New Deal order "put *security* at the center of American political and economic life." This earlier era, she continues, was marked by contests "to define the ideological meaning of security—job security, health security, economic security—as this concern gained legitimacy in the wake of the New Deal."[8] Likewise, in the immediate postwar years, President Truman explained to the U.S. public that national security rested on the vibrancy of capitalist production

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through which people and capital circulate. See Thomas Bender, "Globalization: City Vs. Nation-State?" *NeoAmericanist* 5 (Winter 2010): 13-14.

[6] Gary Gerstle, *Liberty and Coercion: The Paradox of Government from the Founding to the Present* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015), p. 8. For other histories of the emergence of national security as a political tool, see Michael J. Hogan, *A Cross of Iron: Harry S. Truman and the Origins of the National Security State, 1945-1954* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Julian E. Zelizer, *Arsenal of Democracy: The Politics of National Security: From World War II to the War on Terrorism* (New York: Basic Books, 2012); Melvyn P. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992); John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security Policy,* rev. ed. (1982; New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); Ira Katznelson, *Fear Itself: The New Deal and the Origins of our Times* (New York: Liveright, 2013), chaps. 11-12.

[7] Emma Rothschild, "What is Security?," *Daedalus* 124 (Summer 1995): 53-98, referenced material on pp. 55-57.

[8] Jennifer Klein, *For All These Rights: Business, Labor, and the Shaping of America's Public-Private Welfare State* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), p. 3 (emphasis in original).

and market exchange over and against planned economies.[9] As the United States transitioned from World War II to the Cold War, the imperatives of protecting national security and economic security converged, giving the central state a striking ability to intervene in the daily lives of the U.S. populace that even stretched to managing the market economy.[10]

In this chapter, I place Denver at the heart of the expansion and of a postwar bureaucratic apparatus entrusted, until the late 1960s, to protect the economic wellbeing of Americans. Denverites engaged in a continued project that normalized active federal intervention in the economy. Just as the federal government and the scientific community had to make acceptable the use and proliferation of nuclear weapons for national security, the central state had to promote its economic policies.[11] While the Keynesian policymakers may have resided in Washington, their abstract prescriptions could not have become a material reality for Americans

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[9] President Harry S. Truman made this claim in a speech to Congress on September 6, 1945. In spelling out his vision for reconversion, Truman told Congress that, should the U.S. strive for and achieve the goals in president Franklin Roosevelt's Second Bill of Rights, international conflicts would subside. "America's own rightful place in the world depends in large part upon how fully these and similar rights have been carried into practice for our citizens," he told Congress, adding, "for unless there is security here at home there cannot be lasting peace in the world." Harry S. Truman, "Special Message to the Congress Presenting a 21-Point Program for the Reconversion Period," September 6, 1945, in *The American Presidency Project,* eds. Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, available online at <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=12359#axzz1NgTWreWb> (accessed March 30, 2017).

[10] There is a vast scholarship on U.S. foreign policy during the Cold War and its attempts to build capitalist democracies to combat the influence of the Soviet Union. For a small selection of examples, see Nils Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future: Modernization Theory in Cold War America* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003); Andrew J. Bacevich, ed., *The Long War: A New History of U.S. National Security Policy Since World War II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007); H.W. Brands, *The Wages of Globalism: Lyndon Johnson and the Limits of American Power* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); Francis J. Gavin and Mark Atwood Lawrence, eds., *Beyond the Cold War: Lyndon Johnson and the New Global Challenges of the 1960s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014); Melvyn P. Leffler, *For the Soul of Mankind: The United States, the Soviet Union, and the Cold War* (New York: Macmillan, 2007); Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*.

[11] On the normalization of nuclear weapons, see Paul Boyer, *By the Bomb's Early Light: American Thought and Culture at the Dawn of the Atomic Age* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985).

without bureaucrats and other federal employees elsewhere performing the important work of implementation. This was especially true in the U.S. West, where residents engaged federal bureaucracy in Denver and civil servants there sought to keep both labor and capital happy. While it is all too easy to see western politics in the twentieth century through a prism of anti-federal localism, the day-to-day experiences of many was much more complex. In Denver, thousands of westerners collaborated with the central state when it served their economic interests.[12] Moreover, Denverites in federal employ found their own economic livelihoods in working for the state. They did so in part because they believed their labor contributed to the economic security of their neighbors, whether the neighbors worked on the factory line, sat behind a desk, harvested crops, or sold the very commodities Gordey hailed as emblematic of postwar abundance.

And yet, postwar abundance did not translate into economic security for all Americans. While thousands of Denverites had middle-class comforts, many of their metropolitan neighbors, especially those of color, were cut adrift from the very markets of labor and consumption that so many in Denver enjoyed. This was also true across the country. In 1963, when Lyndon Baines Johnson became president, 19 percent of Americans lived at or below the poverty level, prompting his administration to act.[13] The next year, the federal government launched the War

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[12] The tension between local control and the federal government has been a fertile ground for historians of the American West. Some examples of scholarship that explore this topic in the twentieth century include Stephen Haycox, *Battleground Alaska: Fighting Federal Power in America's Last Wilderness* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2016); Lisa L. McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001); Louis S. Warren, *The Hunter's Game: Poachers and Conservations in Twentieth-Century America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997); Kevin Allen Leonard, "Federal Power and Racial Politics in Los Angeles during World War II," in *Power and Place in the North American West,* eds. Richard White and John M. Findlay (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999), pp. 87-116.

[13] U.S. Census Bureau, "Table 6. People Below 125 Percent of Poverty Level and the Near Poor," *Historical Poverty Tables: People and Families—1959 to 2017,* available online at <https://www.census.

on Poverty, a large-scale effort to provide economic security to the country's poorest residents by assisting their entry into the labor market. Although unstated, the program carried an implicit critique of postwar Keynesian federal programs. As historian Jason Scott Smith argues, the early years of the Cold War ushered in a change in how the federal government provided security; gone were the social safety programs of the New Deal and in their stead emerged a bureaucracy focused on economic growth through efficiency.[14] The War on Poverty constituted recognition that a narrow emphasis on economic expansion could produce markets that did not have room for all Americans. The campaign was an attempt by the Johnson administration's Great Society initiative to correct some of the outcomes of a postwar federal economic policy focused on macroeconomic growth.[15] To do so, it had to create new bureaucratic offices charged with administering federal funds to support a multitude of antipoverty programs. Although Denverites did not work directly for the federal government in the War on Poverty, the municipal government and residents eagerly partnered with the newly created Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) to fight poverty in the Mile High City. But the program also exposed fractures, both between Denver and the federal government and among various communities in Denver. For example, the War on Poverty came in for criticism from the OEO for not including Denver's poor in leadership positions. Meanwhile, Denver's black and Latinx communities, when they could voice their preferences, found themselves at odds over the direction the

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gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/income-poverty/historical-poverty-people.html> (accessed January 9, 2019).

[14] Jason Scott Smith, "The Transformation of the Cold War State: From Welfare to Security," in *Liberty and Justice for All?: Rethinking Politics in Cold War America,* ed. Kathleen G. Donohue (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2012), pp. 281-301.

[15] The best analysis of how federal policies worked in favor of white Americans is Ira Katznelson, *When Affirmative Action was White: An Untold History of Racial Inequality in Twentieth-Century America* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2005).

program should take. Eventually, white Denver tired of what it viewed as a dysfunctional system of federal assistance going directly to minority groups and embraced the end of the War on Poverty. They welcomed instead the Model Cities Program, which placed a much greater emphasis on urban renewal projects to create jobs rather than assistance for job seekers. The Model Cities Program also limited the federal government's authority to direct local antipoverty efforts.

Denverites were integral to defining the scope of the postwar bureaucratic apparatus and the state's ability to protect economic security for western Americans, even if those policies did not always work in harmony with each other. During World War II and reconversion, federal agencies in Denver mediated between labor and management on disputes over wages and benefits. These agencies aimed to reduce friction in the workplace and stabilize the postwar economy through Keynesian policies. After the war, the former Denver Ordnance Plant became home to the Denver Federal Center, a campus where as many as seven thousand Denverites extended the reach of the state across the West. But by the 1960s, nearly one in five Americans did not enjoy postwar abundance. At a moment when Washington could ill afford capitalism to be challenged from within, the Johnson administration waged its War on Poverty. Denver's participation, in turn, shaped the contours of the federal program. By the 1970s, however, arguments over the acceptable reach of the state, and who should reap the most benefits, eroded any perceived consensus on federal management, opening the door for pro-market voices to dominate urban political economy. None of these collaborative efforts between Denverites and the federal government sought to undermine capitalism as the organizing economic system in the U.S. Denverites, either as civil servants or working with federal agencies, were involved in

defining and redefining the acceptable reach of the bureaucratic apparatus to keep capitalism vibrant during the Cold War.

Security in a Postwar World

By the spring of 1945, for many across the U.S., peace hung like the sword of Damocles. No one could reasonably inveigh against the end of armed conflict. At the same time, few, especially those who had opposed the New Deal, could be sanguine in their predictions about the world that would emerge once the fighting abroad ceased. Far too many questions remained unanswered: What would be the shape of the new international order? How would the U.S. economy survive without wartime demand? Would the presence of the Soviet Union threaten the continued existence of capitalism? Uncertainty over the postwar trajectory of the U.S. produced a contested politics of security. In this moment, the notion of protecting the U.S. by cultivating a harmonious international order converged with ideas of economic security at home.[16]

The linkage between economic and national security was an outgrowth of the worldwide conflict. When Harry S. Truman addressed Congress for the first time as president in August 1945, he proclaimed he would continue Franklin Roosevelt's legacy by fighting for the ideals Americans held dear. These ideals, which he traced back to the founding of the U.S., included "religious tolerance, political freedom, and economic opportunity." In his address, Truman emphasized that millions of military personnel fighting abroad were protecting these principles not only for the U.S., but the entire world. The forward-looking president predicted a victory for

[16] Kim Phillips-Fein argues that for those who opposed Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal, "all they could see in the postwar order was a landscape of defeat. After all, from their perspective, the war had created a newly gargantuan federal government." This unease, she notes, was not in any way relieved by developments in Europe, especially after the installation of a Labour government in Britain in 1945. Kim Phillips-Fein, *Invisible Hands: The Businessmen's Crusade Against the New Deal* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2009), p. 33.

the Allied troops that were "assisting in the liberation of entire nations," which meant that "gradually, the shackles of slavery are being broken by the forces of freedom." As his words made clear, the totalitarianism and central planning that had taken root in Europe were anathema to the freedom promoted in the "American Way." The goal of the war became the preservation of liberal democracy and free-market capitalism. In spelling out the world he believed would take shape after the war, one in which international cooperation through free trade reigned, he told Americans, "we must learn to trade more with other nations so that there may be for our mutual advantage—increased production, increased employment and better standards of living throughout the world." He continued, "in that way, America may well lead the world to peace and prosperity."[17] In the war, peace and economic prosperity became one and the same.

Near the end of the war, many Denverites agreed with Truman that the central state could, and should, use all means necessary to promote the interests of the U.S. abroad. A national survey by the Council on Foreign Relations about postwar security offered evidence that Denverites believed there was a pressing need for the U.S. to take an active role in constructing an international security system. The Denver Committee on Foreign Relations was reluctant to claim it spoke for all Denverites, but it did believe they largely agreed with its position that the U.S. had to be more active in the postwar world than it had been during the interwar years.[18] The Denver committee, based on conversations with residents, argued that the U.S. should be able to send troops to occupy ex-enemy states, such as Germany, and that the U.S. should have the

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[17] Harry S. Truman, "Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress," April 16, 1945, in *The American Presidency Project,* eds. Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, available online at <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=12282&st=&st1=> (accessed on April 1, 2017).

[18] Walter Rice Sharp and Percy W. Bidwell, comps., *American Public Opinion and Postwar Security Commitments: Results of an Inquiry Addressed to Twenty Committees on Foreign Relations, Spring, 1944* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1944), pp. 5-6.

flexibility to intervene "wherever any serious threat to peace may arise."[19] Intervention, as historian Melvyn Leffler shows, became fundamental to U.S. defense policy in the early years of the Cold War as the country established a network of overseas air bases capable of rapid deployment.[20] At the same time, Denverites fully supported the use of economic sanctions either before or in conjunction with military intervention.[21] According to the Denver Committee on Foreign Relations, most Mile High City residents held few if any reservations about empowering the federal government to take whatever steps necessary to protect national security and they recognized that economic sanctions could further international peace.

Denverites' broad postwar support for a preemptive interventionist foreign policy linked to economic security starkly contrasted with the community's reticence to commit one way or the other in the early days of mobilization. In fact, the city figured so prominently in the national debate over interventionism in 1941 that it briefly dominated proceedings on the U.S. Senate floor. The controversy started on November 4 when Colonel Early W. Duncan, Commanding Officer of Lowry Field, declared the headquarters of the isolationist America First Committee to be "out-of-bounds" for his soldiers and banned the possession of pacifist literature on the air base.[22] Duncan's decision became a story when the national press misreported his judgment,

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[19] Sharp and Bidwell, *American Public Opinion and Postwar Security Commitments*, pp. 11-13, quoted material on p. 13.

[20] Melvyn P. Leffler, "The American Conception of National Security and the Beginnings of the Cold War, 1945-1948," *American Historical Review* 89 (April 1984): 346-381, referenced material on pp. 349-56.

[21] Sharp and Bidwell, *American Public Opinion and Postwar Security Commitments,* pp. 10-11.

[22] The phrase "America first" has reentered American political discourse in the wake of Donald J. Trump's election to the presidency. The phrase is derived from the historical America First Committee, which took a hardline isolationist stance. Several of the group's more famous members, including the industrialist Henry Ford and the pilot Charles Lindbergh, espoused antisemitic views that informed their isolationist position. On the reemergence of the phrase and its history, see Krishnadev Calamur, "A Short History of 'America First,'" *The Atlantic.com,* available at <https://www.theatlantic.com

claiming he also banned attendance at all religious institutions with anti-war clergy. The national press eventually corrected its mistake, but the local discussion surrounding Duncan's action focused almost exclusively on the issue of religious freedom, not intervention.[23] The *Denver Post,* for example, sidestepped the intervention debate and instead highlighted the necessity of preserving religious freedom and pluralism in order to protect the "American Way."[24] The paper, through its selection of quotations from clergy on protecting religious freedom, conceded that U.S. entry into foreign entanglements might be justified if there was a clear threat to the "American Way," but otherwise there was little consensus in Denver over the extent to which the U.S. should involve itself in foreign hostilities that did not directly concern the country.

/politics/archive/2017/01/trump-america-first/514037/> (accessed on May 30, 2017). See also Susan Dunn, *1940: FDR, Willkie, Lindbergh, Hitler—The Election Amid the Storm* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013); and Lynn Olson, *Those Angry Days: Roosevelt, Lindbergh, and America's Fight Over World War II, 1939-1941* (New York: Random House, 2013).

[23] "America First Office Now Taboo for Lowry Soldiers," *Denver Post,* November 5, 1941; "Lowry Ban Causes Stir Throughout U.S.," *Denver Post,* November 6, 1941; "Army to Keep Hands off Lowry Incident," *Denver Post,* November 7, 1941; "Army Order Stirs Isolationist Ire," *New York Times,* November 7, 1941. There is a contentious debate over the extent of isolationism in the U.S., both as foreign policy and as a broader political project in the first half of the twentieth century. For overviews, see Robert W. Tucker, *A New Isolationism: Threat of Promise?* (New York: Universe Books, 1972); Manfred Jonas, *Isolationism in America, 1935-1941* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1966). For an argument that U.S. foreign policy under Franklin Roosevelt leaned toward isolationism, see Wayne S. Cole, *Roosevelt and the Isolationists, 1932-45* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983). Others, such as John Lewis Gaddis, contend that the bombing of Pearl Harbor marked the end of isolationism. See Gaddis, *We Now Know* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), esp. pp. 35-36. Bear F. Braumoeller, however, argues that even before Pearl Harbor, the U.S. did not have an isolationist policy. See Braumoeller, "The Myth of American Isolationism," *Foreign Policy Analysis* 6 (2010): 349-371. On isolationism as a political ideology in the years before World War II, see Ross A. Kennedy, "The Ideology of American Isolationism, 1931-1939," *Cercles* 5 (2002): 57-76.

[24] "Lowry Ban Causes Stir Throughout U.S.," *Denver Post,* November 6, 1941. Wendy L. Wall astutely observes that Judeo-Christian religious pluralism was fundamental to the construction of the "American Way." See, Wall, *Inventing the "American Way": The Politics of Consensus from the New Deal to the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 77-87. For an overview of religious pluralism in the mid-twentieth century, see William R. Hutchison, *Religious Pluralism in America: The Contentious History of a Founding Ideal* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), pp. 196-218.

As the war wound down, the U.S. moved to protect the "American Way" by creating institutions to manage and stabilize international trade. It did so by partnering with Canada, Western European nations, Australia, and Japan at the United Nations Monetary and Financial Conference at Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, in July 1944. At the conference, the forty-four Allied countries agreed to adopt a monetary policy that tied their respective currencies to gold and the U.S. dollar. The signatories facilitated international trade by maintaining fixed exchange rates between currencies and lower import tariffs. Moreover, the conference also created the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, institutions that further enmeshed individual nation-states' monetary and economic policies into a single, global order. According to the U.S. State Department, the conference led to a host of resolutions, including "a general recommendation that all nations seek to cooperate fully with each other to reduce obstacles to trade, to bring about the orderly marketing of stable commodities at fair prices, and to hasten the solution of various international economic problems."[25] But with the U.S. as the chief architect of the agreement, and its dollar as the primary non-gold currency, the country was well-placed to inject its national security concerns into an international system of economic cooperation.[26]

The U.S. demonstrated its commitment to developing international trade by pouring money into Western European countries. The outcome of defeating totalitarianism in Europe was

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[25] U.S. Department of State, *Proceedings and Documents of the United Nations Monetary and Financial Conference,* vol. I (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1948), p. ix, available online at <https://fraser.stlouisfed.org/files/docs/publications/books/1948_state_bwood_v1.pdf> (accessed July 1, 2017).

[26] On the Bretton Woods conference, see Donald Markwell, *John Maynard Keynes and International Relations: Economic Paths to War and Peace* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 210-67; Barry Eichengreen, *Globalizing Capital: A History of the International Monetary System,* 2nd ed. (1998; Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), pp. 91-184.

not an end to ideological conflict, but an eastward shift of the adversary. In 1946, a special report to the president unequivocally stated that "the gravest problem facing the United States today is that of American relations with the Soviet Union."[27] The over eighty-page report covered a range of disputes between the two countries, but one of the central issues was that of reparation payments by Germany.[28] The tension over German reparations led to the initiation in 1947 of the European Recovery Program, more commonly known as the Marshall Plan. Under this policy, the U.S. injected over thirteen billion dollars into eighteen western European countries to stimulate their economies.[29] If isolationism had some vocal support before the war, U.S. foreign policy flatly rejected that doctrine in the years immediately following the conflict.

Although ostensibly a program to rebuild countries rent apart by war, the real aim of the Marshall Plan was to develop transatlantic trade with these countries to ward off their economic engagement with the U.S.S.R. As Scott Jackson argues, the plan's origins "must be traced ultimately to the deterioration of Europe's economies and to American perceptions of what economic collapse would mean to the international system."[30] From the U.S. point of view,

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[27] Clark Clifford, "American Relations with the Soviet Union: A Report to the President by the Special Counsel to the President" (unpublished report, September 24, 1946), p. 1, Ideological Foundations of the Cold War Research File, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library online collection, available at <https://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/coldwar/documents/index.php?documentdate=1946-09-24&documentid=4-1&pagenumber=1> (accessed on April 3, 2017).

[28] The State Department feared that the aim of the Soviet Union's demands was threefold: 1) using reparations to rebuild German industry; 2) increasing Soviet military strength by taking German industrial output; 3) ensuring that the German state would become beholden to Moscow. Clifford, "American Relations with the Soviet Union," p. 53.

[29] James T. Patterson, *Grand Expectations: The United States, 1945-1974* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 31.

[30] Scott Jackson, "Prologue to the Marshall Plan: The Origins of the American Commitment for a European Recovery Program," *Journal of American History* 65 (March 1979): 1043-1068, quoted material on p. 1046. For recent Marshall Plan historiography, see the essays in "Special Forum: The Marshall Plan and the Origins of the Cold War Reassessed," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 7 (Winter 2005): 97-181.

bolstering the values of individual responsibility and political restraint for Europeans, identified as values "traditional to their continent," would best stabilize Europe by warding off a return to totalitarian organization.[31] Although asserting shared Euro-American democratic values rooted in the individual political subject, the policy furthered U.S. economic interests by attempting to revive European markets for U.S. exports and European industry for U.S. consumption.[32] The emerging U.S. foreign policy rested on U.S. ability to increase the living standards of western Europeans through international trade that was sanctioned and managed, but not controlled, by nation-states.[33]

Ultimately, protecting capitalism, both abroad and at home, from Soviet attempts to undermine its dominance produced a far stronger state than many Americans had envisioned. As Gary Gerstle argues, "national security became a fourth constitutional peg to add to the trinity of the commerce, taxation, and post office clauses—one on which to hang expenditures and initiatives that otherwise might not have passed congressional or judicial muster."[34] But as national security and economic security became two sides of a Janus-faced coin, the U.S. state

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[31] U.S. Department of State, "Certain Aspects of the European Recovery Problem," (unpublished paper, July 1947), p. 3, Truman and the Marshall Plan Research File, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library online collection, available at <https://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections /marshall/large/documents/index.php?documentdate=1947-07-00&documentid=6-1&pagenumber=1> (accessed April 3, 2017). Tony Judt explores the postwar construction of a Europe based on shared values and traditions in *A Grand Illusion?: An Essay on Europe* (New York: New York University Press, 2011).

[32] Department of State, "Certain Aspects of the European Recovery Problem," p. 4.

[33] On peace building in Europe under the Marshall Plan, see Marc Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace: The Making of the European Settlement, 1945-1963* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), pp. 3-94. Although much of my narrative of foreign policy focuses on Europe, the rest of the world was not immune to American overtures. However, the threat of communism so colored U.S. foreign policy that while the particulars of U.S. policy varied in different places, much American effort outside of Europe and the Soviet Union fell within the broad policy of containment. For a cogent analysis of containment, see Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment.*

[34] Gerstle, *Liberty and Coercion,* p. 252.

had to devise a policy framework that would allow intervention in the domestic economy without undermining the "American Way." The state drew from its wartime approach to find a middle path between laissez-faire economics and central planning. Denverites, for their part, were integral to crafting and implementing this policy.

Managing Western Markets

A foreign policy centered on stability through markets and trade could not, by itself, ensure economic security at home for Americans. For that to happen, the U.S. federal government had to navigate reconversion carefully, deciding where and how to intervene in the economy without offending either business or labor.[35] Many New Dealers and federal policy makers believed reconversion could not be left to the invisible hand of the market. Strategic interventions by federal bureaucracies could smooth out distortions in market processes associated with converting a wartime economy into a peacetime one. This federally-directed reconversion hinged on the Denverites who had the authority to force western businesses to comply with federal directives, especially concerning wages, and the power to require labor to sit at the bargaining table with muted demands. In the process, Denver would become the frontline of a federal project to provide economic security for Americans. Denverites worked to increase efficiency within certain markets by threading a needle between the demands of capitalist producers and protections for labor at a time when market volatility could threaten to derail reconversion.

[35] According to Elizabeth Fones-Wolf, from the perspective of a rapidly mobilizing business community with political concerns, the two most important postwar battles were protecting free enterprise by limiting federal intervention and regaining control of the shop floor by curtailing the power of labor organizations. See Fones-Wolf, *Selling Free Enterprise: The Business Assault on Labor and Liberalism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), p. 15.

Politicians in Washington drawing up reconversion policies did not have to look far in searching for evidence of federal intervention producing incredible results in the economy. In fact, the war years provided plenty of justification for a continued federal presence. One Denver office of the bureaucratic apparatus, the Nonferrous Metals Commission (NMC), had done much to assist a collection of industries—mining, milling, and smelting—in achieving a key capitalist goal: increased efficiency throughout the supply chain. Although popular memory holds World War II as a moment of complete sacrifice by civilians, the early years of mobilization were marked by disputes between labor and management. President Roosevelt reinstated the National War Labor Board (NWLB) in January 1942, reviving the World War I-era bureaucracy. In October 1942, after hearing a series of cases involving mining concerns, the board established the NMC to streamline the mediation process in this sector. Creating the commission also served the War Department, which recognized that the needs of producers like the Denver shipbuilding consortium rested on an efficient supply chain. According to Charles Graham, who served as chair of the NMC, the War Department considered output levels in 1942 dangerously low, and pushed for the commission's creation to increase output and decrease the time it took to get the raw materials to production plants.[36] The nonferrous metals industry was one of eight sectors to have its own commission.[37]

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[36] Charles A. Graham, interview by Arthur Gaeth, KLO Salt Lake City, November 10, 1943, transcript, p. 1, folder "Item 20," box 3, Nonferrous Metals Commission, 1943-1945, Commission—Panel non-case record list Series 3, Series 287 (accession no. 8NN-202-92-122), National War Labor Board/National Wage Stabilization Board, Record Group 202, National Archives and Records Administration—Rocky Mountain Region (Denver) (hereafter, Nonferrous Metals Commission Records).

[37] John E. Gorsuch, "Nonferrous Metals Commission of the War Labor Board," *Rocky Mountain Law Review: Symposium on the National War Labor Board* 18 (June 1944): pp. 151-161. John Gorsuch is the paternal grandfather of current U.S. Supreme Court justice Neil Gorsuch, a jurist who, prior to his confirmation to the highest court, was best known for the anti-labor opinions he issued while serving as a federal judge for the U. S. 10th District Court of Appeals in Denver. On Justice Gorsuch's anti-labor position, see Branko Marcetic, "The Gorsuch Files," *Jacobin,* February 1, 2017, <https://www.jacobinmag.com/2017/02/neil-gorsuch-supreme-court-trump-scalia/> (accessed April 4,

The commission had a broad remit to adjudicate disputes pertaining to any aspect of wage packages, benefits, or working conditions. In wage disagreements, the NMC issued binding wage-bracket guidelines for all non-management positions. The commission had the authority to apply these wage brackets to a single company or, as it did for a series of cases originating in Utah in 1943, to all operations within a geographic area. That one Utah decision raised wages for nearly ten thousand miners, millers, and smelters. The NMC also ruled on other aspects of remuneration, including vacations and sick leave, group health and accident plans, and wage differentials between day and night shifts. At other times, as in a series of cases originating in Arizona, the commission heard claims of racial discrimination. In the majority of cases, the NMC applied what was known as the Little Steel formula, which dictated a flat increase of 15 percent to all non-management hourly wages. The intent of the formula was to allow wages to keep pace with inflation. Graham conceded that labor was rarely satisfied with the Little Steel formula, but he also explained that the commission had a duty to convince labor to accept it, often reminding both AFL- and CIO-affiliated unions that their parent organizations had signed no-strike pledges.[38] With the authority to make the Little Steel formula binding, the NMC circumvented labor strife through its application.

2017). Others, however, argue that Gorsuch has not been anti-labor. See Camille E. Peeples, "Rights, Facts, and Relevant Inquiries: Surveying Judge Neil M. Gorsuch's Employment Law Jurisprudence," *Stanford Law Review Online,* March 2017, <https://www.stanfordlawreview.org/online/spotlight-labor-employment-law/> (accessed April 4, 2017).

[38] Graham, interview, pp. 5-6; Charles A. Graham to National War Labor Board, memorandum, October 5, 1943, p. 1, folder "Jurisdiction," box 3, Nonferrous Metals Commission Records. On the no-strike pledges signed by both the AFL and CIO, see Nelson Lichtenstein, *Labor's War at Home: The CIO in World War II,* rev. ed. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2003), p. 28; Andrew E. Kersten, *Labor's Home Front: The American Federation of Labor during World War II* (New York: New York University Press, 2006), p. 4. Alan Brinkley notes that labor was rarely satisfied with the Little Steel formula. See Brinkley, *The End of Reform: New Deal Liberalism in Recession and War* (New York: Vintage, 1995), pp. 210-16.

Although the NMC had the power to diffuse clashes with binding decisions, Graham and others in his Denver office chose a different tack in hopes of preventing tension between management and labor. The NMC started an outreach campaign to all industrial firms under its jurisdiction. In a letter to management, organized labor, and unorganized shops, the NMC explained that much of its work had shifted from adjudicating disputes to approving voluntary agreements, and it encouraged labor and management to continue this trend. To craft guidelines for these voluntary plans, the NMC turned to earlier incentive efforts by the NWLB and the Management Consultant Division of the War Production Board. The NMC referred to 234 voluntary agreements approved by the NWLB and signed between labor and management in various industries located throughout the Midwest. In every case, the NMC stated, these agreements led to better industrial relations and higher wages for workers. Furthermore, production levels had increased without production costs rising, meaning wartime fabrication shops could more easily secure raw materials.[39]

These agreements almost always resulted in gains for workers and an increase in labor costs for producers, but the commission believed that they balanced the needs of all involved, including producers further down the supply-chain, in a way that did not undermine the free-enterprise. With rapid mobilization, fabrication outfits like the Denver Ordnance Plant had an insatiable appetite for raw materials. The NMC worked to convince firms to enter into voluntary agreements with labor that increased output. In fact, to get approval from the commission, the arrangements had to incentivize production. For a plan to take effect at a firm, two conditions had to be met. First, both labor and management had to concur before submission to the NMC for approval. More important, however, the plan had to lead to increases in output without an

[39] Nonferrous Metals Commission, "Guide to Establishing Incentive Systems," (n.d.), pp. 3-4, folder "Incentive Systems," box 2, Nonferrous Metals Commission Records.

attendant increase in production cost. In Graham's estimation, the entire nonferrous metals industry could benefit from collective bargaining that produced such incentivized compensation plans.[40] The NMC and its focus on cooperation yielded results like those the NWLB produced in the Midwest, with western miners taking home more money by keeping production costs under control for their employers. Without turning to centralization or artificial production schedules, one office of the federal government managed to increase efficiency and raise output.

The success of institutions like the NMC during the war provided evidence that the federal government could direct a capitalist economy without turning to centralized planning. According to Alan Brinkley, the war years initiated a shift away from the more far-reaching reform agenda of the New Deal and an embrace of Keynesianism, a less-intrusive form of management.[41] The Keynesian approach that came to dominate Washington rejected classical economics and the belief that supply necessarily creates its own demand. Instead, drawing from John Maynard Keynes's *The General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money* (1936), economists and policymakers sought to increase demand by raising employment levels.[42] As

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[40] Graham, interview, p. 3.

[41] Brinkley, *The End of Reform,* p. 7. Jefferson Cowie, in a different analysis of the New Deal, argues that the greatest moment of reform occurred from 1935 to 1938, when Congress passed the National Labor Relations Act, the Social Security Act, and the Fair Labor Standards Act. However, as Cowie is quick to point out, these reforms largely benefitted white men at the expense of women and non-whites, rendering this moment of reform far more conservative than a structural overhaul of capitalism's inequalities. Cowie, *The Great Exception: The New Deal and the Limits of American Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016).

[42] John Maynard Keynes, *The General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1936). The demand-side economics of Keynesianism remained dominant until the economic crises of the 1970s, when the economists associated with the Chicago School eventually ushered in a supply-side response to the New Deal. For a coherent introduction to the history of economic thought, see Mark Blaug, *Economic Theory in Retrospect,* 4th ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985). On the rise of pro-market, anti-regulation economics, see Philip Mirowski and Dieter Plehwe, eds., *The Road from Mount Pèlerin: The Making of the Neoliberal Thought Collective* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009); Angus Burgin, *The Great Persuasion: Reinventing Free Markets Since the Depression* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012). Although not

more Americans earned wages that could be used to purchase commodities, they believed, producers would have to increase supply to meet demand. Greater demand, therefore, had a multiplier effect on the economy because producers had to make new investments in durable goods and labor, as well as purchase more resources, to keep up with demand. Policymakers also believed Keynes's argument that there is an inverse relationship between production levels and commodity prices; a greater supply required lower prices to sell enough volume to earn the greatest profit.[43] For the federal government, then, management of the economy according to Keynesian principles and free enterprise were not antithetical.

Not everyone applauded ongoing federal intervention. For Denver's conservative business community, the success of war production foreshadowed an end, not a continuation, of free enterprise.[44] This is most evident in how such businessmen politicized the issue of full

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specifically about the Chicago School, Daniel T. Rodgers explores the broader effects of pro-market ideas in *Age of Fracture* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011), esp. ch. 2. Historian Nancy MacLean has elevated the University of Chicago-trained economist James McGill Buchanan into the pantheon of pro-market economists, arguing that it was his fusion of states-rights rhetoric and free-market economics in response to the Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* (1954) that has become foundational to contemporary radical libertarianism. See Nancy MacLean, *Democracy in Chains: The Deep History of the Radical Right's Stealth Plan for America* (New York: Viking Press, 2017).

[43] Keynes was neither the first economist nor the only one to assert that mass consumption was the bedrock upon which economic growth would occur. Meg Jacobs, for example, traces the rise of the Labor Bureau, Inc. in the 1920s and the group's focus on increasing the purchasing power of the working class. But, she notes, the Labor Bureau was more than a political organization; the men behind the group "formalized a critique of high prices and low wages into an economic theory of underconsumption." See Meg Jacobs, *Pocketbook Politics: Economic Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005, pp. 53-92, quoted material on p. 74.

[44] For a sociological account of how local business organizations came to play a prominent part in national politics, see Elizabeth S. Clemens, "From City Club to Nation State: Business Networks in American Political Development," *Theory and Society* 39, no. 3/4, Special Issue in Memory of Charles Tilly (1929-2008): Cities, States, Trust, and Rule (May 2010): 377-96. Although no extended historical account of Denver's business community exists, there are examinations of similar communities in other cities. On the rise of local business elites in nineteenth-century New York City as a distinct social class with specific political goals, see Sven Beckert, *Monied Metropolis: New York City and the Consolidation of the American Bourgeoisie, 1850-1896* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001). For a comparative study of business class formation in two cities with vastly different outcomes, see Jeffrey

employment, pitting their needs against that of the state. The city's Chamber of Commerce analyzed employment data in the autumn of 1944, and it did not like what it observed. Over the course of the war, 70,000 people moved into Denver and mobilization added 66,000 jobs to the region's economy. In the chamber's estimation, full employment after reconversion would require at least 46,000 more jobs than existed before the war.[45] To ward off high unemployment, the chamber created a local chapter of the Committee for Economic Development (CED), which coordinated its efforts with the national group of the same name in Washington.[46] The Denver chapter began sending a booklet, including a confidential worksheet, to local businesses, imploring them to use the sheet to "plan now for full employment after the war." The booklet stressed the necessity of doing so, reminding business owners of their responsibility to plan wisely, since their decisions could "determine the continuance of our Free Enterprise System."

Haydu, *Citizen Employers: Business Communities and Labor in Cincinnati and San Francisco, 1870-1916* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008). One contemporary outcome of the politicization of the super wealthy is an influx of money into elections across the country. In the wake of the Supreme Court's decision in *Citizens United v. Federal Elections Committee* (2010), which declared political donations constitutionally protected free-speech, the ultra rich have become even more involved in funding campaigns and they have been able to do so anonymously through super political action committees. On this development, see Jane Mayer, *Dark Money: The Hidden History of the Billionaires Behind the Rise of the Radical Right* (New York: Doubleday, 2016).

[45] Denver Chamber of Commerce, *Postwar Jobs and More Business in Denver* (Denver: Denver Chamber of Commerce, 1945), p. 3, Western History Collection, Western History and Genealogy Department, Denver Public Library (hereafter Western History Collection); Industrial Bureau, "An Economic Analysis of the Denver Metropolitan Area, 1947-1950: Special Report to the Mayor," April 10, 1951, 1, Western History Collection. The chamber's report did not mention how many residents left employment to serve in the war, but a September 1943 estimate from the War Manpower Commission reported 34,000 Denverites in the armed services. Those currently serving were not counted in the regional population or among the labor force during the war. See Denver Chamber of Commerce, *Survey of Denver, CO, Compiled by Industrial Development Department of the Denver Chamber of Commerce* (Denver: Denver Chamber of Commerce, 194?), p. 61, Western History Collection.

[46] Kim Phillips-Fein observes that the Committee on Economic Development accepted that Keynesianism had come to dominate federal policies. Facing this reality, the group focused its efforts on a flexible Keynesianism that worked to the advantage of its constituent members. Phillips-Fein, *Invisible Hands*, p. 31.

To reiterate its position, the committee's materials twice printed its slogan: "if private business doesn't, government will."[47] The position of the CED and the Chamber of Commerce was unmistakable: federal intervention into the labor market would jeopardize the foundation of the U.S. economy and any hope of economic security for Americans.

The CED's prediction that government would intervene proved prescient, but the conservative business community was prepared to fight. In 1945, legislators in Washington, DC, considered the Full Employment Bill to smooth the process of returning to a peacetime economy. Taking the turbulent years after World War I as their historical example, policymakers and politicians pointed to an unemployment rate that spiked to nearly twelve percent in 1921, almost ten percentage points higher than the unemployment rate at the end of the war.[48] To prevent such a drastic increase after World War II, they proposed to bestow broad powers on the federal government to "assure continuing full employment," including the ability to inject public money to augment flagging private investments as well as create jobs when the private sector did not.[49] The bill rested on the belief that Americans had a fundamental right to employment as laid out in President Roosevelt's Economic Bill of Rights. But not all agreed the state should have the legal power to manage employment. A coalition of conservative northern Republicans and southern Democrats, representing the interests of groups like the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, defeated the 1945 bill, but they could not defeat its

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[47] Committee for Economic Development of the Denver Chamber of Commerce, "Confidential Check Sheet," (Denver: Denver Chamber of Commerce, n.d.), folder 26, box 21, Metro Denver Chamber of Commerce Collection, WH1216, Denver Public Library.

[48] G.J. Santoni, "The Employment Act of 1946: Some History Notes," *Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis Review* 68, no. 9 (November 1986): 5-16, referenced material on p. 6, available online at <https://files.stlouisfed.org/files/htdocs/publications/review/86/11/Employment_Nov1986.pdf> (accessed March 2, 2017).

[49] Ibid, pp. 1-2.

amended successor, the Employment Act of 1946.[50] The 1946 act did not give the same broad powers to the federal government, but it did preserve the commitment to full employment, giving the federal government the responsibility to "promote maximum employment, production, and purchasing power" without undermining free enterprise.[51]

In the first fifteen months after V-J Day, that focus on increasing purchasing power led to the creation of a different federal agency in Denver that addressed westerners' economic security. Although protecting purchasing power did not become codified in law until 1946, in the autumn of 1945 the federal government directed the War Labor Board to create a separate entity that would specifically address wage stabilization.[52] The War Labor Board formed twelve regional boards and located the Ninth Regional Wage Stabilization Board (NRWSB) in Denver. This board was charged with managing wage increases across all economic sectors in the Intermountain West, performing the work President Truman explicitly described as fundamental to reconversion. Addressing Congress, he spoke of the need for wage stabilization to protect labor from efforts by "short-sighted management to seize upon the chance to reduce wages and try to injure labor unions." At the same time, wage stabilization boards would not allow "labor leaders to shirk their responsibility and permit widespread industrial strife."[53] Much like the

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[50] Cohen, *A Consumer's Republic*, p. 114.

[51] Ibid., p. 118; Katznelson, *Fear Itself,* pp. 380-81; *An Act to Declare a National Policy on Employment, Production, and Purchasing Power, and for Other Purposes,* Public Law 304, *U.S. Statutes at Large* 60 (1947): 23-26, available online at https://www.loc.gov/law/help/statutes-at-large/79th-congress/c79s1.pdf (accessed March 2, 2017).

[52] Joseph Shister, "The National War Labor Board: Its Significance," *Journal of Political Economy* 53, no. 1 (March 1945): 37-56, reference material on pp. 46-49.

[53] Truman, "Special Message to the Congress Presenting a 21-Point Program for the Reconversion Period." For an early analysis of the wage stabilization boards, see Barton J. Bernstein, "The Truman Administration and its Reconversion Wage Policy," *Labor History* 6, no. 3 (September 1965): 214-31.

Nonferrous Metals Commission before it, the NRWSB was charged with managing wage increases in ways that put more purchasing power in the pocketbooks of westerners without upsetting labor markets.

When it came to organizing labor markets, the members of the wage stabilization board took their cue from the NMC. Like the wartime commission, the NRWSB was reluctant to exert its authority, instead hoping to reduce workplace friction by encouraging negotiations that kept employers and workers happy. In fact, the bulk of their work consisted of reviewing wage-increase notices from employers. Over the first seven months of 1946, for example, the NRWSB handled 259 notices from Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Utah, New Mexico, and Colorado.[54] As in the case of Luby Chevrolet automobile dealership in Denver, employers often agreed to a flat percentage wage increase for a particular position within the company; the car dealer requested an hourly raise of 25 percent for its auto mechanics, and the NRWSB simply sanctioned the increase without any other involvement.[55] Once the NRWSB sanctioned an increase, it then forwarded the notice to the Office of Price Administration (OPA) so that the OPA could stay apprised of wages as it set price ceilings for goods. According to historian Meg Jacobs, it was the OPA, more than any other federal bureaucracy, to which Americans turned from 1941 to 1946 when they demanded economic security and protection from those seeking inflated profits by

[54] Paul N. Guthrie to J. Glenn Donaldson, memorandum, August 8, 1946, untitled folder, box 1, Records Relating to National Wage Stabilization Board 9, 1946 (accession no. 8NN-202-90-009), Records of the National War Labor Board, Record Group 202, National Archives and Records Administration—Rocky Mountain Region (Denver) (hereafter National Wage Stabilization Board Records).

[55] Henry Luby, "Form NWSB 9, Notice of Wage or Salary Increase," NWSB Docket no. W-5-1220-11, November 12, 1946, folder "Form 9s, 101-200, Denver Board," box 1, National Wage Stabilization Board Records.

capitalizing on sacrificing Americans.[56] As important as the OPA may have been, it could not have performed its price setting without the equally important wage-stabilizing work undertaken by boards like the NRWSB. If the federal government's goal truly was economic growth through full employment, wage stabilization to prevent market forces from leading to layoffs was every bit as necessary as controlling commodity prices.

This, however, did not mean that the NRWSB was a rubber stamp for labor's demands. While the unions may have pushed for pay raises at the negotiation table, employers could, on occasion, convince the Denver office to protect them. The board truly considered each request and each sector's market before deciding. In certain cases, the board lowered hourly wages when companies could provide evidence that the wages were not in harmony with the local market or when they placed an undue burden on the employer. In May 1946, for instance, Eaton Metals, one member of the Denver consortium of fabricators that produced ships for the Merchant Marine, successfully petitioned for wage relief at its Albuquerque plant. The company had negotiated a 15 percent raise with the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Ship Builders, and Helpers of America, Local Lodge 338, but it claimed it could not extend the raise to the non-unionized employees in its sales and stenography departments. In its appeal to the board, the company successfully showed that applying a 15 percent increase to the monthly salaries of these positions would far exceed the market rate for sales agents and stenographers in Albuquerque. Instead, it asked the NRWSB for permission to provide a monthly wage increase of 20 dollars for those in sales, and a 15-dollar increase for those in its stenography department.

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[56] Meg Jacobs, "'How About Some Meat?': The Office of Price Administration, Consumption Politics, and State Building from the Bottom Up, 1941-1946," *Journal of American History* 84 (Dec. 1997): 910-941. See also Andrew H. Bartels, "The Office of Price Administration and the Legacy of the New Deal, 1939-1946," *The Public Historian* 5 (Summer 1983): 5-29.

The NRWSB agreed to Eaton's request and granted relief to the company because the proposed wages were within area standards.[57]

From the federal government's viewpoint, the economic benefits of protecting wages were obvious. For one, requiring employers and labor to agree to wages that were comparable to those within the region helped ward off volatility within the labor market. This explains the NRWSB's attention to regional market information when considering a wage-increase notice. Even more important, however, encouraging wage increases accorded with a shift in economic thinking, especially of the president. Although Truman did not articulate his Fair Deal until 1949, reconversion provided many seeds that would germinate into his later policy. The Fair Deal largely continued the New Deal, but it altered the scale of federal policy in a crucial way, changing the focus from protecting individual consumers to growing the economy. According to historian Alonzo Hamby, this shift is attributable to changing contexts of scarcity and abundance. The New Deal, he writes, arose in a time of extreme scarcity, and the Roosevelt administration wrestled with how best to protect individual consumers in an economic crisis. The Fair Deal, on the other hand, responded to a period of abundance and, he observes, took a more macroeconomic view, focusing on economic growth instead of distribution.[58] In the postwar world, the state would manage market volatility in order to ensure economic security. When Truman announced the Fair Deal, he made just this point, asserting "the government must see

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[57] Eaton Metals Products Company, "Analysis Sheet," Wage Relief Petition Docket Number 9-3-113, April 18, 1946, folder "Eaton Metal Products Company—Price Relief and Production Cost, 9-3-113," box 3, Voluntary Wage and Salary Adjustment, 1945-1946 (accession no. 8NN-202-92-161), World War II, Region IX, National Wage Labor Board/National Wage Stabilization Board, Record Group 202, National Archives and Records Administration—Rocky Mountain Region (Denver) (hereafter Voluntary Wage and Salary Adjustment Records).

[58] Alonzo Hamby, "The Vital Center, the Fair Deal, and the Quest for a Liberal Political Economy," *American Historical Review* 77 (June 1972): 653-78, cited material on pp. 662-64.

that every American has a chance to obtain his fair share of our increasing abundance." Crucially, however, he stressed, "we cannot maintain prosperity unless we have a fair distribution of opportunity and a widespread consumption of the products of our factories and farms."[59] Well-paying employment would be the engine driving economic security.

The state's focus on managing wages and employment to grow the economy produced mixed results for labor. In many cases, employees, whether organized or not, reaped the rewards of federal protections. The NRWSB, for example, meted out harsh criticism to the Burns Realty and Trust Company of Denver when it tried to reduce the commission its agents earned on properties developed by the company. The company's petition claimed that even with a reduction in rate, agents would take home more in earnings because of the company's aggressively expanding development projects. The NRWSB summarily dismissed the company's claim, arguing that employees would have to increase substantially the number of transactions to maintain the same commission earnings under this proposal. In effect, as J. Glenn Donaldson, the board's chair, wrote to the company's attorney, "the adjustments described in the application referred to above constitute a salary decrease which is not approvable."[60] The NRWSB ruled that the realty company could not decrease commission rates as a means to extract more labor from its employees. Economic security could not come about without certain protections for labor.

Labor unions recognized that overall the NRWSB gave them leverage in bargaining with employers. William Ainsworth & Sons, one of the Denver shipbuilders during World War II,

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[59] Harry S. Truman, "Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union," January 5, 1949, in *The American Presidency Project,* eds. Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, available online at <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=13293&st=&st1=> (accessed on March 30, 2017).

[60] J. Glenn Donaldson to Charles J. Beise, September 11, 1946, folder "DC Burns Property & Trust Co., 9-4-382, Wage Decrease, Return to Region IX," box 6, Voluntary Wage and Salary Adjustment Records.

learned firsthand how organized employees could rely upon the NRWSB's propensity to grant wage increases and other benefits in their bargaining. During reconversion, the company's 71 employees, who were members of United Steel Workers of America, Local 3753, pushed for wage increases, a loosening of overtime restrictions, an expansion of training programs, and guaranteed wage increases upon completion. The company, aware that it had little room to negotiate, acquiesced to the union's demands and voluntarily entered into a new collective agreement. After the union successfully negotiated its desired gains, the company sent a lengthy document to the NRWSB notifying it of the wage and benefit increases for its employees.[61] Unions used protections provided by the federal government, protections intended to harmonize industrial relations, to their advantage.

But the belief in an efficient market did not translate into support for industrial democracy. In fact, to those committed to free enterprise, powerful unions looked for all the world like an inefficient externality. The same business community that successfully lobbied against the 1945 Full Employment Act again worked with a friendly Congress in 1947 to secure passage of the Labor Management Relations Act, more commonly known as Taft-Hartley. The bill was a response to the raft of strikes in 1946 that halted production at factories across the country.[62] The National Association of Manufacturers, for example, spent more than 3 million dollars lobbying Congress for a legislation to curtail labor's ability to engage in certain practices,

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[61] Gordon S. Clayson, "Form NWSB 9, Notice of Wage or Salary Increase," NWSB Docket no. W-5-1023-10, May 23, 1946, folder "Form 9s, 101-200, Denver Board," box 1, National Wage Stabilization Board Records.

[62] On the history of the 1946 strike wave, see Barton J. Bernstein, "The Truman Administration and the Steel Strike of 1946," *Journal of American History* 52 (March 1966): 791-803; Irving Richter, *Labor's Struggles, 1945-1950: A Participant's View* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), esp. ch. 3; Lichtenstein, *Labor's War at Home*, esp. ch. 11.

especially strikes, and restrict union leadership.[63] Taft-Hartley did just that, even giving the president the power to break a strike when national security was at stake. Although historians debate the real effects of Taft-Hartley on unions, the act's passage assuaged some anxieties within the business community that the federal government protected the interests of unions at their expense.[64] Instead, the federal government signaled that it could mediate between business and labor in a way that improved efficiency.

One outcome of the short-lived Non-ferrous Metals Commission and Ninth Regional Wage Stabilization Board was the legitimation of the institutions of the federal government to protect capitalist free enterprise. Although, as one political scientist has noted, the end of the war and beginning of ideological conflict with the Soviet Union reanimated a strong current of anti-statism, the U.S. polity and its governmental representatives were not willing to revive laissez-faire policies because of the very real threat posed by economic uncertainty.[65] Employers and workers throughout the Intermountain West complied with the policies implemented by Denver's federal agencies, in the process empowering the bureaucracy to continue this work. In her analysis of the OPA, Meg Jacobs writes that this "bottom up" approach to state building, one in which non-state actors dialectically shape the state itself, contributed to the normalization of

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[63] On Taft-Hartley as part of an emerging postwar conservative politics led by the business community, see Kim Phillips-Fein, "'If Business and the Country Will Be Run Right:' The Business Challenge to the Liberal Consensus, 1945-1964," *International Labor and Working-Class History* 72, no. 1 (Fall 2007): 192-215.

[64] James Patterson contends that the act had little impact on unions. Rather, the relative strength of a union before passage of the act determined how that union fared after Taft-Hartley. See Patterson, *Grand Expectations*, p. 52.

[65] On the rise of antistatism after the war, see Aaron L. Friedberg, "American Antistatism and the Founding of the Cold War State," in *Shaped by War and Trade: International Influences on American Political Development,* eds. Ira Katznelson and Martin Shefter (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), pp. 239-66.

state intervention in the economy.[66] But the point of consumption was not the only economic location where westerners felt the hand of the state. Nor were these actions moves toward totalitarianism. In fact, as President Truman told a crowd in Pendleton, Oregon, in May 1950, "us[ing] the powers of Government to achieve a higher living standard and a fair deal for all the people is not statism and it is not socialism. It is part of the American tradition."[67] Denverites did their best to keep that "American tradition" alive by implementing Keynesian policies through their work in federal bureaucracies.

A Principle Administrative Center

If some Denverites addressed economic security by bringing Keynesian principles to wages and benefits in reconversion, others performed equally important, yet far less visible, labor to make the bureaucratic apparatus function efficiently. As the postwar leviathan increased in scale and scope, and policy prescriptions from Washington, DC, became more far-reaching, men and women in Denver met the state's growing demand for labor by filling the positions necessary for the bureaucracy to operate. In performing the quotidian tasks of civil service, they produced the very bureaucratic apparatus that made it possible for their western neighbors to enjoy the fruits of postwar abundance while the federal government continued its efforts to spur economic growth. Their reasons for doing so were multifaceted. Most immediately, they ensured their own economic security through federal employment. But, as federal employees, they also had an inside view of just how important the bureaucratic apparatus was to the functioning of the

[66] Jacobs, "'How About Some Meat?'" pp. 912-13.

[67] Harry S. Truman, "Address in Pendleton, Oregon," May 10, 1950, in *The American Presidency Project,* eds. Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, available online at <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/address-pendleton-oregon> (accessed April 5, 2017).

U.S. economy and came to see how their work in Denver benefitted their western neighbors. And, at times, they even saw their daily lives as foundational to the national project of upholding capitalism during the Cold War. Though they may have been bureaucrats in a city fifteen hundred miles away from the U.S. capital, they served as imperial agents who protected capitalist production and market exchange throughout the western U.S. Nowhere in metropolitan Denver was this more apparent than at the Denver Federal Center (DFC) in Lakewood, a hub of bureaucracy that Denverites created from the disused remains of the Denver Ordnance Plant. In World War II, Denverites worked at the site to produce bullets for the protection of the "American Way"; after the war, they produced the bureaucratic apparatus for very similar reasons.

Denverites had a less material, but equally important, reason to construct the federal bureaucracy: its presence in their home city was vital to their sense of place.[68] The city had been second only to Washington in hosting administrative offices since at least the 1930s. In fact, when Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS) moved to close its Denver office and relocate to Salt Lake City in 1933, the announcement caused a furor as residents worried their home was being supplanted by the Utah capital. The *Rocky Mountain News* proclaimed, "Denver's supremacy as the 'second capital' of the United States apparently is being threatened by Salt Lake City."[69] These fears rested on a pattern of offices shifting westward from Denver. Over the previous two years, the Department of Justice and the Department of Prohibition both

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[68] I borrow the phrase "sense of place" from Keith Basso, who eloquently argues that places can "become objects of awareness" which "come to generate their own fields of meaning." Keith H. Basso, "Wisdom Sits in Places: Notes on a Western Apache Landscape," in *Senses of Place,* ed. Steven Field and Keith H. Basso (Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press, 1996), pp. 53-90, quoted material on pp. 54, 56.

[69] "Denver's Supremacy as Second United States Capital Threatened by Bureau Transfers to Salt Lake City," *Rocky Mountain News,* October 25, 1933.

closed their Denver offices and relocated to Salt Lake City.[70] Not only did these moves threaten Denverites' sense of place, but, as the paper pointed out, they also would have real consequences. When the relocation of the INS office was announced, it was not clear how it would affect the city's economy, but the loss of jobs was cause for concern. The newspaper conceded that the move, part of a restructuring process intended to save the federal government over 1.5 million dollars, made financial sense, but editors still believed that Denver had more to offer the federal government than any city between Chicago and Los Angeles.[71] Despite these fears, Denver was not unseated from its position of prominence. At the end of 1933, the *Rocky Mountain News* proudly proclaimed that Denver remained the "Second Capital of U.S"[72]

By 1947, Denver's centrality to the exercise of federal power could not be overstated. Even an organization as committed to reducing federal activity as the Denver Chamber of Commerce expressed pride in the city's employees. The organization touted the federal presence in Denver as a selling point in its booster literature. *Industrial Denver,* a postwar booklet mailed out by the chamber's Industrial Development Department, devoted a whole page to federal activities, informing those considering relocating to Denver that the city "is frequently called 'The Little Capital of the United States.' It is said to have more government offices than any other city, save Washington DC."[73] In the immediate postwar years, this "little capital" hosted 220 separate administrative units, including offices of the departments of Agriculture,

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[70] On the importance of prohibition laws to the development of the federal state, see Lisa McGirr, *The War on Alcohol: Prohibition and the Rise of the American State* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2016).

[71] "Denver's Supremacy as Second United States Capital Threatened by Bureau Transfers to Salt Lake City," *Rocky Mountain News,* October 25, 1933.

[72] Harry Tarvin, "Denver Second Capital of U.S.," *Rocky Mountain News,* December 31, 1933.

[73] Industrial Development Department, *Industrial Denver* (Denver: Denver Chamber of Commerce, 1947), p.3, Western History Collection.

Commerce, Interior, Justice, Labor, Navy, Post Office, Treasury, and War. To highlight the city's importance to the nation-state, the chamber noted that every constituent department of the president's cabinet except the Department of State had an office in Denver. In total, 167 of the federal offices were national in scope, leading the chamber to proclaim "this indicates recognition by Washington of Denver as a principal administrative center of the United States."[74] Even a mooted plan in 1951 to relocate more agency offices to the region brought civic pride to some Denverites. Don Sterling, writing in the *Denver Post,* lamented the failed expansion, but he noted that the federal government's willingness to consider relocating some offices to Denver was itself a recognition of how integral the city had become to the workings of the state.[75]

To be sure, Denverites did not work for the federal government solely for reasons of civic identity. Those same jobs provided paychecks to thousands who, through their own practices of consumption, used their wages to support the region's economy. A 1953 report by the Denver Planning Office observed that in 1950 more than 17,000 Denverites worked for the federal government, and this figure did not include the thousands of civilian and armed forces personnel employed at the city's Veterans Administration hospital and the U.S. Army's Fitzsimmons hospital, or transient military personnel stationed at Lowry Air Force Base.[76] The figure represented a 70 percent increase in the number of federal employees in the region since 1940.[77] The structure of Denver's postwar economy made these federal jobs even more important to the

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[74] Denver Chamber of Commerce, *You Really Live in Denver* (Denver: Denver Chamber of Commerce, 1947), p. 3, Western History Collection.

[75] Don Sterling, "U.S. Considering Federal Center Building Project," *Denver Post,* February 16, 1951.

[76] Denver Planning Office, *Working Denver,* pp. 134-136.

[77] The 1940 federal employment number is taken from Denver Chamber of Commerce, *Survey of Denver,* p. 119.

region than raw employment data suggests. The Planning Office authors had come to a startling realization: Denver's economy resembled that of its "instant city" days during the nineteenth-century gold rush.[78] They found the similarity in the relationship between basic and local service jobs. The Planning Office defined basic service jobs as those that produced a commodity or service for a market beyond the Denver region, while local jobs catered only to residents. In the nineteenth century, boom towns that accompanied extractive industries provided the classic western example, with innumerable merchants and entrepreneurs capitalizing on the domestic needs of those engaged in extraction. In postwar Denver, each basic sector job produced another 1.536 local service jobs. Although few other cities calculated the ratio of basic to local service jobs, the Planning Office estimated Denver's to be one of the highest in the country, surpassing that of manufacturing centers like New York City and Detroit. Of Denver's 17,306 federal employees, 14,400, or 83 percent, were engaged in basic service jobs. According to the Planning Office's estimate, these 14,400 workers produced another 21,000 local service jobs to cater to their needs.[79] The influx of public money in the form of wages supported far more people than those on the federal payroll.

As more and more Denverites went to work for the federal government, they strained the state's physical resources. Prior to the war, federal offices in Denver were scattered across office buildings in the downtown core. Some of these buildings, like the Old Customs House on 19th Street and the U.S. Post Office and Courthouse Building at the intersection of 18th and Stout streets, were federal property, but many agencies rented space in privately owned buildings like

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[78] The phrase "instant city" is Gunther Barth's. In his comparative study of San Francisco and Denver, he identifies patterns specific to urban organization that emerge when thousands of laborers pour in to a specific location at a single moment. Gunther Barth, *Instant Cities: Urbanization and the Rise of San Francisco and Denver* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975).

[79] Denver Planning Office, *Working Denver,* pp. 26-29, 134-36.

the First National Bank Building and the Patterson Building.[80] Fortunately for the federal government, it already owned over two-thousand acres of land in Jefferson County. At the end of the war, after both Remington and Kaiser had completed their contracts, the War Department moved to sell its surplus assets, which included the Denver Ordnance Plant. After reclassifying 780 acres of improved land as "Institutional, Administrative and Office," the War Assets Corporation transferred the land and buildings to the Public Buildings Administration—later Public Buildings Service (PBS)—for disposal.[81] Public Buildings officials in Denver opted to hold onto the Ordnance Plant and transform it into office space to alleviate overcrowding in the downtown offices.

Although PBS had grand plans to repurpose the Denver Ordnance Plant, it had to wait for the U.S. Congress to give it the authority to put its designs in place. In June 1946, Congress amended the Public Buildings Act of 1926 to grant PBS the ability to take possession of the property without transfer of funds and become the site's sole operator with the authority to reassign federal agencies to the Lakewood location as necessary.[82] Under this authority, PBS first moved the Veterans Administration from its downtown office to Building 41 of the newly christened Denver Federal Center. Shortly thereafter, the Bureau of Reclamation took up residence at DFC. By the end of 1951, the General Services Administration (GSA), the new

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[80] Tarvin, "Denver Second Capital of U.S." On the historical importance of custom houses to the formation of the federal government in the early decades of the U.S. republic, see Gautham Rao, *National Duties: Custom Houses and the Making of the American State* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016).

[81] Ross L. Hudson to Public Buildings Administration, March 11, 1946, folder "Denver Ordnance Plant Disposal Documents," box 1, Facility Histories, 1949-1965 (accession no. 8NS-121-97-468), Records of the Public Buildings Service, 1801-2000, Record Group 121, National Archives and Records Administration—Rocky Mountain Region (Denver) (hereafter Facility Histories, 1949-1965).

[82] *An Act to Grant to the Federal Works Administrator Certain Powers with Respect to Site Acquisition, Building Construction, Purchase of Buildings and Other Matters,* Public Law 413, *U.S. Statutes at Large* 60 (1947): 257-259.

parent agency for PBS, had spent 2.4 million dollars to upgrade 710,000 square feet of office space. This renovation enabled approximately 4,500 federal employees across 17 different agencies, including the departments of Agriculture, Interior, Labor, and Treasury, to inhabit the former ordnance plant.[83]

For those who worked at DFC, it was not simply a place of work; it was a site where they could transform how the bureaucratic apparatus functioned. For example, GSA employees, after surveying their new home, set about solving a problem that had plagued the federal government: inefficient use of resources. After the war, GSA officials in Washington, DC, decided to centralize the process for purchasing office supplies. Prior to GSA's inception, individual agencies did their own buying and warehousing, frequently over-purchasing items in bulk to get the lowest cost. The surplus items often sat unused, even though a different office or agency might need them. To combat the waste, Otto Klein, regional director of GSA in Denver, decided to take advantage of DFC's highway and rail connections and turn it into the central node of a distribution network the covered 860 governmental offices throughout the Intermountain West and Northern Plains. The agency converted an existing 300,000-square-foot warehouse into a storage and distribution facility for office supplies. When a federal facility like the Intermountain Indian School in Brigham City, Utah, needed school supplies such as crepe paper, staples, or pencils, it placed an order with the GSA. Fulfillment happened at the Federal Center, where as many as one hundred truck- and rail-loads departed every day to deliver supplies to the offices in its distribution network. In 1951, monthly transactions at the warehouse totaled over half a million dollars. GSA officials claimed that this system saved the federal government millions of

[83] General Services Administration, "Denver Federal Center," (n.d.), folder "DFC 1948-51," box 2, Facility Histories, 1949-1965; Denver Federal Center Bank, "Directory of Agencies at the Denver Federal Center," (n.d.), folder "DFC 1948-51," box 2, Facility Histories, 1949-1965; "Denver Federal Center Remodeling Work Starts," *Denver Post,* April 25, 1951.

dollars every year. According to Klein, "paperwork on an order of $2 could sometimes cost as much as $12." Under new GSA guidelines, agency offices received what the *Denver Post* called a "Sears-Roebuck-like catalog" from which they could order immediately the needed supplies.[84] Within a year of the creation of the DFC warehouse, GSA employees had grown their distribution network to cover 950 offices and they processed approximately 18 million dollars' worth of orders in 1952, saving an estimated 4 million dollars.[85] Klein did not take the job of reducing expenses lightly. As he told the *Rocky Mountain News,* his job was to "save every penny of the taxpayers' money we can." At a moment when the federal government aimed to increase efficiency, GSA employees like Klein believed in making the bureaucracy itself less wasteful. Their efforts garnered praise for GSA from other federal offices because, according to Thor Severson of the *Rocky Mountain News,* it uses "big business methods" and "takes the country-store operation out of the federal system."[86]

If Klein and his warehouse employees saved taxpayer money on office supplies, the 57 women and 8 men who worked for the Treasury Department made sure that federal employees across the West were remunerated for their work. The scale of the operation was impressive. By 1955, the 65 employees issued a staggering 585,000 checks each month, totaling 87 million dollars in wages to federal employees. In addition to wage disbursement, the office also collected revenue for the federal government. These employees initiated payroll deductions for both federal and state taxes as well as government life insurance premiums and Series E treasury

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[84] Wayne Phillips, "Biggest Store in Empire Set Up in Federal Center," *Denver Post,* May 17, 1951.

[85] "Depot Built of 'Junk' Saves Taxpayers $4 Million," *Denver Post,* August 26, 1952.

[86] Thor Severson, "GSA at Denver Federal Center Polices U.S. Records, Purchasing," *Rocky Mountain News,* September 11, 1951.

bonds. The Denver office also collected roughly 18 million dollars each month from veterans for G.I. insurance premiums. Although Treasury Department employees in Denver did not set policy, they communicated with their parent office in Washington, including sending daily inflow and outflow totals "down to the penny," according to the regional disbursing officer, C.E. Evans.[87] Because employment, whether public or private, was so important to the federal government's postwar economic policies, the state could not ignore the hundreds of thousands of employees on its own books and the tens of millions of dollars in wages they earned each month. The payroll processing center at DFC made sure that money made its way into the western economy.

It was not just administrators like Klein and Evans who recognized how working within the bureaucratic apparatus could help improve the economic security of westerners. Beginning with the New Deal, the central state began to focus on improving infrastructure in ways that would increase efficiency within the market and lead to higher profits.[88] During the Cold War, the Bureau of Reclamation became a key agency for economic growth because of the hydroelectric projects it managed.[89] In 1951, for example, the bureau administered ninety

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[87] "Federal Center Unit Issues 585,000 Checks Monthly," *Denver Post,* October 30, 1955. In recent years, historians have turned to the ways in which the American public interacts with the federal government through revenue raising efforts. For examples, see James T. Sparrow, *Warfare State: World War II Americans and the Age of Big Government* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 119-59; Julian E. Zelizer, "The Uneasy Relationship: Democracy, Taxation, and State Building Since the New Deal," in *The Democratic Experiment: New Directions in American Political History,* eds. Meg Jacobs, William J. Novak, and Julian E. Zelizer, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), pp. 301-26.

[88] See Jason Scott Smith, *Building New Deal Liberalism: The Political Economy of Public Works, 1933-1956* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

[89] Donald J. Pisani, "The Bureau of Reclamation and the West, 1945-2000," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* 43 (Winter 2000): 363-83. For an earlier history of the Bureau of Reclamation, see Pisani, *Water and the American Government: The Reclamation Bureau, National Water Policy, and the West, 1902-1935* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002). For an analysis of how state-supported efforts to provide electricity by the Tennessee Valley Authority eventually made private energy companies more efficient, see Brent Cebul, "Creative Competition: Georgia Power, the Tennessee Valley

projects in the West, including nine power stations, two hundred miles of canals, and two-thousand miles of power transmission lines. That year, the Denver office focused its efforts on redeveloping the Missouri Basin, a project totaling one hundred dams, forty power plants, and many miles of canals and power lines. The project's designers aimed to irrigate 6 million acres of land and increase power capacity in the West by approximately 2.5 million kilowatts, enough to support an additional 750,000 households. According to the project's leaders, the Missouri Basin, one-sixth of the continental U.S., accounted for one-half of the country's grain production.[90] In response to population growth after the war, the federal government wanted grain production to keep up with demand. By the end of the 1950s, the bureau was spending an average of 170 million dollars annually on its hydrological projects and administered a small loans program to fund local irrigation projects.[91] Denverites played their part in federal efforts by ensuring that western grain producers had access to water and electricity.

Some Denverites in the Bureau of Reclamation took on an opportunity to ensure their scientific and engineering knowledge directly contributed to the Cold War national security effort. In 1958, the bureau acquired at least a dozen technical manuals of Soviet engineering projects that used technologies different from those of the bureau. Because the manuals were in Russian, the bureau's engineers could not decipher them. So, twenty-one employees began an eighteen-month language course, spending four hours each week in classes and an additional six to ten hours in independent study. By the end of the course, only six male engineers and two

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Authority, and the Creation of a Rural Consumer Economy, 1934-1955," *Journal of American History* 105, no. 1 (June 2018): 45-70.

[90] "U.S. Blueprints Huge Development in West," *Denver Post,* September 23, 1951.

[91] U.S. Department of Commerce, *Federal Activities Helpful to Communities* (Washington: U.S. Department of Commerce, 1958), p. 25.

female administrative assistants remained, but collectively, they could translate the manuals into English. Their efforts added to the Bureau of Reclamation's technical library as well as the intelligence community's knowledge of crucial Soviet infrastructure. Despite the importance of the translation work, the eight who completed the course did so without financial assistance from the federal government to cover the cost of tutors, books, and other course-related materials or compensation for the time spent off the clock.[92] While it is not known if these men and women took the training courses solely because they were committed to assisting the national project or if they felt pressure through what historian Christopher Capozzola calls "coercive voluntarism," their willingness to take on extra work without reimbursement for expenses or increased compensation points toward an understanding of themselves as integral to the exercise of state power.[93] Like their colleagues throughout the bureau, they knew they had the technical and administrative knowledge to make infrastructure projects possible throughout the West. At the same time, they acquired Russian language skills in order to assist U.S. intelligence in its understanding of sensitive Soviet infrastructure should the military need to target these sites.[94] Some civil servants in Denver believed themselves more than agents of bureaucracy; they used their skills for national security in addition to their daily work of helping their western neighbors.

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[92] "Employes' Russian Studies Glean Vital Technical Data," *Denver Post,* September 24, 1959.

[93] Christopher Cappozolla, *Uncle Sam Wants You: World War I and the Making of the Modern American Citizen* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

[94] There is a sizable body of scholarship exploring the intimate relationship between science and technology and the state during the Cold War. For examples, see Audra J. Wolfe, *Competing with the Soviets: Science, Technology, and the State in Cold War America* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013); Naomi Oreskes and John Krige, eds., *Science and Technology in the Global Cold War* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2014); Stuart W. Leslie, *The Cold War and American Science: The Military-Industrial-Academic Complex at MIT and Stanford* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).

Not all who worked at the Denver Federal Center were so closely connected to federal efforts to ensure economic security and national defense, but they nonetheless understood their labor to be intimately tied to the workings of the state. Consider the men—they were almost exclusively men—who worked as engineers for the General Service Administration's Design and Construction Branch at DFC. Although these men focused their energy on making the Federal Center campus run smoothly, they knew their labor built the physical infrastructure that others relied on for their day-to-day duties. Albert Green was one GSA employee who, over the course of thirty-five years at the DFC, oversaw many projects to improve the grounds. Whether installing a 15,000-volt underground electrical system or maintaining the campus-wide fire alarm, Green saw his efforts as facilitating the projects that others performed in the service of the state.[95]

When assessing the value of his work, Green pointed not just to the safety of his Federal Center colleagues, but what he made possible. He began his tenure with the GSA in 1961, although he had worked for the Bureau of Reclamation for several years before coming to Lakewood. In his estimation, the most important work at the Federal Center was that carried out by the scientists in the laboratories, and he saw their research as linked to economic security for westerners. The Department of Agriculture's Animal Disease Research Center coordinated a wide range of experiments, but Green considered their efforts to develop vaccines for equine encephalitis and blue tongue disease most praiseworthy. Both diseases had plagued the country's cattle industry, and he appreciated that USDA scientists were protecting the livelihoods of ranchers. Although he was less familiar with the research of the Department of Fish and

[95] Albert Green, interview by Chris Pfaff, November 11, 1997, transcript, Jeffco Stories Collection, Jefferson County Public Library, Lakewood, Colorado, available online at <http://jeffcostories.omeka.net/items/show/85> (accessed March 12, 2017).

Wildlife, he did know of several projects conducted on the dangers of the pesticide DDT to migratory waterfowl. In recounting his time at DFC, Green hinted that the work of Fish and Wildlife may have contributed to the Environmental Protection Agency's decision to ban DDT in 1985.[96] Without his efforts to safely provide electricity to their labs, the scientists could not have made the advances that worked to help other westerners.

To Green and his colleagues, DFC was more than a collection of buildings; it was a central node in a network of state power that stretched across the West. Not unlike the soldiers of production who preceded them at the Denver Ordnance Plant, DFC employees realized that their labor afforded others far removed from Denver to improve their lives. Although time almost always colors the act of remembering, Green fondly recalled his career at the Lakewood campus, even if he did have some complaints. "That was a job. I can't say I enjoyed all of it," he allowed, "but I certainly did get a feeling that I was doing a lot of good."[97] And he stressed that his colleagues in GSA held the same conviction about the importance of their work. Whether administering veteran health insurance, opening productive farm land to irrigation, or developing vaccines to protect cattle, the work of Denverites at DFC contributed to federal efforts to ensure capitalism's supremacy. It also influenced how these Denverites understood their own relationship with the federal government during the Cold War.

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[96] Green, interview. The history of DDT is fraught. Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1962) is one of the earliest studies of the deleterious effects of DDT use and is credited with raising public awareness of its consequences to humans. On the politics of this and other controversial pesticides, see David Kinkela, *DDT and the American Century: Global Health, Environmental Politics, and the Pesticides that Changed the World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011).

[97] Green, interview.

Capitalism's Fault Lines

And yet, for all the economic prosperity Americans enjoyed in the first two decades after the war, there were fissures in the federal system. In the 1960s, millions of Americans, and nearly 75,000 in the City and County of Denver, lived at or below the poverty line, raising doubts over the federal government's ability to manage a market economy in a way that protected the most vulnerable from capitalism's most destructive forces. In the political calculus of the Cold War, poverty threatened the assumed superiority of capitalism as the most egalitarian economic system. The Soviet Union compounded the situation by highlighting the U.S. civil rights movement as evidence that liberal democracy failed its own political subjects.[98] In 1964, President Lyndon Johnson made assisting the poorest one-fifth of the country's population a cornerstone of his Great Society by waging a War on Poverty.[99] The architects of this policy designed a program to address the twin issues of poverty and exclusion from the political process. Denver, under the direction of its Democratic mayor, Thomas G. Currigan, actively collaborated with the federal bureaucracy to put this program into effect at the local level, dovetailing municipal efforts with those of the federal government.[100] Although historians have

[98] Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War, Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy,* rev. ed. (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011); Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001).

[99] Johnson cited the poverty rate at 20 percent to justify his bill to Congress. Lyndon Baines Johnson, "Message on Poverty," address to Congress, March 16, 1964, folder 6, box 35, Thomas G. Currigan Papers, WH929, Western History and Genealogy Department, Denver Public Library (hereafter Currigan Papers). On the Great Society, see Julian E. Zelizer, *The Fierce Urgency of Now: Lyndon Johnson, Congress, and the Battle for the Great Society* (New York: Penguin, 2015); Randall B. Woods, *Prisoners of Hope: Lyndon B. Johnson, The Great Society, and the Limits of Liberalism* (New York: Basic Books, 2016).

[100] Tom I. Romero, II, in "War of a Much Different Kind: Poverty and the Possessive Investment in Color in the Multiracial 1960s United States," *UCLA Chicana/o Latina/o Law Review* 26, no. 1 (2006): 69-86, argues that Denver's participation in the War on Poverty exposed the limits of a federal policy that, explicitly and implicitly, linked poverty with blackness. In his analysis, competition between the

recently recast the War on Poverty as more progressive than earlier scholars had, in Denver the municipal government hitched its program to what one historian has called a federal "effort to update and preserve liberal capitalism."[101] Denver's most vulnerable communities recognized this. They realized the War on Poverty was designed to paper over cracks, not radically reshape the system of wealth distribution in the U.S. Despite the inherent conservatism in the antipoverty program, Denver's poverty war lost support when conservative white Denverites rejected federal spending on social services for the poor and people of color. They helped usher in the Model Cities Program, in which the federal government funded politically-appointed organizations to rebuild blighted areas and entice private investment to create jobs for the urban poor. The new program gained traction largely because it was administered by a weakened federal bureaucracy that had far less oversight of how funds were spent at the local level. By the early 1970s, antipoverty efforts at the federal level focused on investment in capital improvement projects, not support for employment and social services, as the most effective means to combat destitution. Denverites helped redefine the federal bureaucracy's approach to urban political economy.

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black and Latinx communities in multiracial Denver became a struggle for who could claim the rights and privileges guaranteed by federal civil rights legislation.

[101] Woods, *Prisoners of Hope,* p. 392. For histories that focus on the more radical aspects of the War on Poverty, especially by community organizations, see Marisa Chappell, *The War on Welfare: Family, Poverty, and Politics in Modern America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010); Felicia Kornbluh, *The Battle for Welfare Rights: Politics and Poverty in Modern America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007); Jennifer Frost, *An Interracial Movement of the Poor: Community Organizing and the New Left in the 1960s* (New York: New York University Press, 2001); Annelise Orleck, *Storming Caesar's Palace: How Black Mothers Fought Their Own War on Poverty* (New York: Beacon Press, 2005); Rhonda Y. Williams, "'To Challenge the Status Quo by Any Means': Community Action and Representational Politics in 1960s Baltimore," in *The War on Poverty: A New Grassroots History, 1964-1980,* eds. Annelise Orleck and Lisa Gayle Hazirjian (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011), pp. 63-86.

Denver's engagement in the War on Poverty began in March 1964, when Mayor Thomas Currigan received a package from the United States Conference of Mayors that included the text of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, set to go before Congress for a vote later that month.[102] He had good reason to study the act closely; 15 percent of his city's population of 493,000 lived in households with annual incomes below 3,000 dollars, the poverty line in 1960. At the same time, just over 19 percent of Denver's families had household incomes over 10,000 dollars, while the median household income for the entire metropolitan area was 6,551 dollars. In Denver, as in so many other cities across the country, this poverty was geographically concentrated. Currigan's office identified 28 census tracts in the north and northwest portions of the city as those with the highest rates of poverty. Although this "target area" had just over one-quarter of the city's population, it accounted for nearly one-half of the residents living in poverty.[103] Unsurprisingly, these neighborhoods, including Five Points, Globeville, and Elyria-Swansea, had the highest concentrations of African American and Latinx residents.[104] Any attempts to ameliorate poverty would have to address the relationship between race and economic insecurity, a departure from earlier federal efforts that had so often worked to the benefit of white men.[105] The War on Poverty offered a solution.

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[102] John J. Gunther to Thomas Currigan, March 14, 1964, folder 6, box 35, Currigan Papers.

[103] Mountain States Telephone, "A Profile of Denver and the Denver Metropolitan Region," report prepared for Denver Chamber of Commerce and Denver Committee on Human Relations and Full Employment, 1967, Summary, charts 9, 10, folder 23, box 2, Denver Commission on Community Relations Collection, WH903, Western History and Genealogy Department, Denver Public Library.

[104] Mountain States Telephone, "A Profile of Denver and the Denver Metropolitan Region," Population, pp. 4-9.

[105] On white Americans, especially men, enjoying the benefits of federal assistance, see Katznelson, *When Affirmative Action was White*; Cowie, *The Great Exception*.

Ironically, the federal government's presence in metropolitan Denver helped to expose the geographic and racial concentration of poverty in the city. The Federal Center in Jefferson County was a driving force in the region's postwar suburban growth. From 1940 to 1950, Denver County added 93,374, residents, while the four adjacent suburban counties added only 73,553 residents. From 1950 to 1960, however, for every new resident in Denver County, the suburban counties grew by three.[106] One study, which did not include Boulder County, found that Denver had the third fastest rate of growth in the 1950s, behind only Miami and San Diego.[107] Jefferson County had a growth rate of 128 percent in the 1950s.[108] Throughout the 1950s, Denver came to resemble the multi-nodal metropolis, with new job clusters forming in the suburbs, including the Martin Marietta plant and the Rocky Flats Nuclear Facility.[109] The DFC was one of the largest concentrations of suburban jobs by 1960, with nearly seven thousand on-campus employees.[110] The outmigration and proliferation of federal jobs and, importantly, capital to the suburbs had lasting consequences for the City and County of Denver.

Despite a moniker that had great political currency, this was less a war on poverty and more a war on unemployment. Those who crafted the Economic Opportunity Act, including President Johnson's close advisor, Sargent Shriver, and the bureaucrats who served in the Office

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[106] Leonard and Noel, *Denver: From Mining Camp to Metropolis*, p. 481.

[107] Kenneth E. Gray, *A Report on Politics in Denver, Colorado* (Cambridge, MA: Edward C. Banfield Joint Center for Urban Studies of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard University, 1959), Part I, p. 1.

[108] Peter G. Chronis, "WWII's End Forever Altered City's Identity," *Snapshot of Colorado, Denver Post Online,* n.d., <https://extras.denverpost.com/snapshot/part2a.htm> (accessed May 1, 2017).

[109] On Martin Marietta, see chap. 4, "Denver Takes Off: The Aerospace Age," and on Rocky Flats, see chap. 5, "Nuclear Divisions: Constructing and Contesting the Empire at Rocky Flat Nuclear Facility."

[110] Inter-County Regional Planning Commission, "Transportation in the Denver Region!," p. 7.

of Economic Opportunity (OEO), made no effort to redistribute wealth. Instead, they directed federal funds to programs intended to alleviate the worst effects of poverty as a means of enabling the unemployed to find jobs.[111] The focus on creating opportunities was an outgrowth of the 1960s policy discourse on poverty, which cast the urban poor as victims of circumstances who needed assistance to lift themselves from these conditions.[112] Although metropolitan Denver had relatively healthy unemployment rates—3.3 percent for men and 3.4 percent for women—the same could not be said of its minority communities. In 1960, 9 percent of black men were unemployed while 7.9 percent of their Latino counterparts did not have jobs. Women of color fared marginally better, with 6.4 percent of black women and 5.3 percent of Latinas not earning wages. With job growth taking place largely in the suburbs, and Denver's transportation infrastructure favoring those who owned automobiles, the city faced an uphill battle to combat the forces working against these residents.[113] Its solution, however, was not structural change, but breadwinner capitalism, a problematic approach because, as historian Jefferson Cowie concludes, "democratizing access to a market is not the same a democratizing economic security."[114] By focusing on increasing access to the labor market, the program retained a federal commitment to upholding capitalism, not reforming it.

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[111] On the close connection between antipoverty efforts and employment assistance, see Jennifer Mittelstadt, *From Welfare to Workfare: The Unintended Consequences of Liberal Reform, 1945*-1965 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005); Michael B. Katz, *The Undeserving Poor: America's Enduring Confrontation with Poverty,* 2nd ed. (1989; New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); Chad Alan Goldberg, *Citizens and Paupers: Relief, Rights, and Race From the Freedmen's Bureau to Workfare* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

[112] Joshua Guetzkow, "Beyond Deservingness: Congressional Discourse on Poverty, 1964-1996," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 269 (May 2010): 173-97.

[113] Mountain States Telephone, "A Profile of Denver and the Denver Metropolitan Region," Summary: chart 12; Inter-County Regional Planning Commission, "Transportation in the Denver Region!," p. 7.

[114] Cowie, *The Great Exception,* p. 183.

As a comprehensive program, the War on Poverty aimed to bring the federal government's focus on efficiency to the welfare state. Denver had desired the same for its local efforts since at least 1953, when the Department of Welfare reached out to the Denver Management Office for assistance in overhauling its case record system.[115] When Bernard Valdez, the chief operating officer of the Denver Department of Welfare, wrote to Mayor Currigan asking his office to use its powers of persuasion to support Denver's adoption of the War on Poverty, Valdez made just this point. In outlining how the program would be carried out in practice, he described the federal effort as one of consolidation. "The most significant factor in the present 'war on poverty' is not necessarily the new legislative programs which are being proposed," he explained to the mayor, "but rather the coordination of the multiplicity of services now being offered by a myriad of federal agencies." Furthermore, he continued, Denver citizens hoping to access state and municipal aid faced the same problem of "segmentation of services."[116] By partnering with the federal government, Valdez stressed, his department could more effectively address the multitude of problems associated with poverty.

He did not have to work hard to convince the mayor. In Currigan's mind, Denver had a duty to partner with the federal government in this initiative for reasons of national security. In his speech declaring Denver's own War on Poverty on June 11, 1964, he harkened back to the rhetoric of Truman in the final years of World War II. Drawing little distinction between the domestic and the international, he cautioned that "if we fail to resolve our domestic problems we cannot hope to exert proper leadership at the international level." At the top of the list of

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[115] Management Office of the City and County of Denver, *Management, A Guidepost to Modern Government: A Report of The Activities of The Management Office of the City and County of Denver, 1947-1955* (Denver: Management Office of the City and County of Denver, 1955), pp. 31-35.

[116] Bernard Valdez to Thomas G. Currigan, April 22, 1964, folder 6, box 35, Currigan Papers.

challenges facing the U.S., he argued, was a failure to ensure that all in the country enjoyed a comfortable standard of living. In Currigan's estimation, much like Truman's two decades earlier, poverty stemmed not from any structural inequalities within capitalism, but a failure of the U.S. populace to ensure all had an equal opportunity to work for a wage. In a rhetorical flourish, he declared, "we wish to have the opportunity to find gainful employment at not only a living wage but at a wage which will enable us to afford a few luxuries of life available to citizens of this, the richest society in the world's history. Should we not be concerned if others are denied the same employment opportunities?"[117]

At both the federal and local levels, the War on Poverty had an answer to Currigan's question. In Washington, the OEO oversaw the distribution of federal funds to communities. To facilitate entry into the workforce for those not currently employed, the OEO relied on local organizations to create programs with community-specific goals. These efforts, called community action plans (CAP), were eligible to receive up to 90 percent of their expected budget from the OEO in their first year of operation, with state and local governments funding the remainder. Denver's War on Poverty, Inc. (DWOP), a non-profit corporation established by the mayor's office, administered the city's efforts. A 23-member board, with Mayor Currigan as an ex-officio member, directed the program. On September 9, 1964, the board officially met for the first time to begin considering how to empower people to take control of their own economic livelihoods.[118]

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[117] Mayor Thomas G. Currigan, "Remarks of Mayor Currigan at Conference Concerning Denver's 'War on Poverty,'" July 11, 1964, folder 6, box 35, Currigan Papers; Mayor Thomas G. Currigan, "Proclamation of Denver's War on Poverty," July 11, 1964, folder 6, box 35, Currigan Papers.

[118] Office of the Mayor, City and County of Denver, press release, September 8, 1964, folder 7, box 35, Currigan Papers.

The federal War on Poverty appealed to municipalities because it funded community efforts. DWOP's role became one of mediating between the desires of community organizations and the available federal funding. In its mission statement, DWOP asserted "the purposes of the corporation are the establishment and operation of a community action program to prevent and alleviate poverty and its causes through the development of knowledge and understanding of the needs of people and neighborhoods." To make this happen, the board would engage in "the securing and expenditure of monies to achieve the purposes of the corporation."[119] At the first board meeting, Mayor Currigan praised the War on Poverty because it "is strictly a Community Action Program. Since no two cities are alike, communities will tailor their programs to meet their own needs."[120]

Mayor Currigan's ebullience for the War on Poverty was in part a product of the history of tension between Denver and the State of Colorado. Prior to the Great Society initiative, the City and County of Denver had made attempts to address poverty, but found their efforts blocked by the Colorado statehouse and the governor's office. In 1958, Mayor William F. Nicholson testified on federal grant-in-aid programs in Washington, DC, before a House of Representatives subcommittee of the Committee on Government Operations. He outlined his frustrations with the State of Colorado and his preference for collaboration with the federal government, telling the committee, "they don't understand it as well as you do." Every attempt Denver made to address welfare, health, and education went through state commissions that, he claimed, made "decisions

[119] Denver's War on Poverty, Inc., "Proposed Structure of 'Denver's War on Poverty,'" 1964, folder 6, box 35, Currigan Papers.

[120] Denver's War on Poverty, Inc. Meeting Minutes, September 9, 1964, folder 6, box 35, Currigan Papers.

based on conditions not exactly the opposite but not comparable to ours."[121] To Nicholson, the U.S. government would succeed where the State of Colorado failed because federal programs facilitated local efforts without the onerous oversight Denver received from the state boards. From Mayor Currigan's perspective in 1964, collaborating with the federal government assured that his city would have the financial support and political latitude to tackle poverty in ways that furthered the goal of increased employment within the specific context of Denver's labor market.

At the same time, Mayor Currigan did find the governor's office newly receptive to using federal funds. This represented a change from earlier administrations. Recall the history of Colorado governors' resistance to accepting federal money even during the depths of the Great Depression. The War on Poverty attempted to avoid such intransigence by allowing municipalities to identify the programs they needed most. Even though President Johnson and the OEO viewed poverty as a national affliction, the cure, they believed, rested in localized remedies, not strong central institutions.[122] This appealed to the State of Colorado. The Republican governor, John A. Love, applied for and received a 56,000-dollar grant from the OEO that his office used to assist municipalities in the creation of local antipoverty organizations.[123] Colorado was one of nine states to receive funding in fiscal year 1965, along with twelve cities, six rural areas, and the Tohono O'odham reservation.[124] With Governor

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[121] *Federal-State-Local Relations, State and Local Officials, Part 3: Denver, Colo., and San Francisco, Calif.: Hearings Before Intergovernmental Relations Subcommittee of the Committee on Government Operations,* U.S. House of Representatives, 85th Cong., 1st sess., pp. 91-112 (1957) (statement of William F. Nichols, Mayor of Denver).

[122] Sidney M. Milkis, "Lyndon Johnson, the Great Society, and the 'Twilight' of the Modern Presidency," in *The Great Society and the High Tide of Liberalism*, eds. Sidney M. Milkis and Jerome M. Mileur (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2005), pp. 1-49, referenced material on pp. 5, 28-32.

[123] Office of Economic Opportunity, press release, November 25, 1964, folder 8, box 35, Currigan Papers.

Love's support for this federal program evident, Mayor Currigan brought the War on Poverty to Denver.

CAPs served another important purpose. The Great Society not only recognized that communities of color bore an unequal share of the costs of capitalism, it attempted to enfold those same communities more fully into the democratic process.[125] CAPs contained traces of what political philosopher Barbara Cruikshank calls "the will to empower," a will expressed through a variety of technologies of governance designed to increase participation in democratic society. Social service programs were one such technology, operating as they did "according to a political rationality for governing people in ways that promote[d] their autonomy, self-sufficiency, and political engagement."[126] Under the Economic Opportunity Act, those receiving social services had to be involved in their creation. By the time of the Johnson administration, the Democratic Party, as historian Erick Schickler argues, had completed a three-decades-long shift to a liberalism that placed civil rights at the forefront.[127] In attempting to broaden the scope of rights available to those who had been excluded on the basis of race, gender, sexuality, and even class, the party committed to a project of increasing democratic participation in the U.S. polity. CAPs furthered this agenda by bringing community organizations into the federal project.

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[124] The nine states receiving money in FY 1965 were: Alabama, Colorado, Georgia, Michigan, Missouri, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, and Wisconsin. The twelve cities that participated that year were: Atlanta; Chicago; Corinth, MS; Denver; Detroit; Los Angeles; New Haven; New York; Pittsburgh; St. Petersburg; San Francisco; and Washington, DC. The initial round of funding from the federal government totaled $12,032,616. Office of Economic Opportunity, press release, November 25, 1964, folder 8, box 35, Currigan Papers.

[125] Woods, *Prisoners of Hope,* p. 6.

[126] Barbara Cruikshank, *The Will to Empower: Democratic Citizens and Other Subjects* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), pp. 1-7, quoted material on pp. 2, 4.

[127] Eric Schickler, *Racial Realignment: The Transformation of American Liberalism, 1932-1965* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016).

DWOP followed the Economic Opportunity Act in identifying the specific issues it wanted to tackle. Title I of the act, which addressed youth programs, called for the creation of a Youth Job Corps, work-training programs for youth aged 16 to 21, and a work-study program for those in higher education who required additional funds to cover tuition and living expenses. Title II authorized the funding of CAPs, adult basic education programs, and in-school programs for elementary-aged children. Title V focused on supporting the nuclear family by assisting parents—primarily fathers—in finding gainful employment.[128] The prescriptions of Title V turned out to have lasting consequences, as Robert Self assiduously observes, because they linked welfare assistance to participation in the heteronormative nuclear family.[129] Adhering to the direction laid out by the Johnson administration, DWOP focused on adult literacy, adolescent education, and healthcare.[130] Doing so, it believed, would produce employable residents from nuclear families with the discipline to join, and excel, in the labor force.

DWOP took both a short- and long-term view in its antipoverty offensive. The majority of the CAP applications the board supported during the first year focused on child welfare and education. In the postwar world, protecting children, both at home and abroad, became a humanitarian act intertwined with the country's political and economic project. According to Sara Fieldston, in the three decades following World War II, numerous organizations across the

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[128] The White House, "Economic Opportunity Act of 1964: A Summary," March 16, 1964, folder 6, box 35, Currigan Papers.

[129] Robert O. Self, *All in the Family: The Realignment of American Democracy Since the 1960s* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2012), p. 10. See also Chappell, *The War on Welfare*, pp. 65-105. On the effects on black men of a heteronormative approach to the family in welfare programs, see Alison Lefkovitz, "Men in the House: Race, Welfare, and the Regulation of Men's Sexuality in the United States, 1961-1972," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 20 (September 2011): 594-614.

[130] Office of the Mayor, City and County of Denver, press release, August 27, 1964, folder 7, box 35, Currigan Papers.

globe attended to child welfare, but "voluntary workers from the United States looked to child rearing as a means of molding a new generation that would promote political freedom and stimulate economic development."[131] Even if DWOP did not make macroeconomic claims about economic growth, the board clearly believed in fostering individual economic stability through waged labor and consumption, both of which were fundamental to postwar economic policy. Under the Economic Opportunity Act, local antipoverty corporations like DWOP received CAP applications from local organizations and then, after deciding which ones to endorse, sent those applications to the OEO, which made the final decision on acceptance and funding. In the spring of 1965, the corporation forwarded applications for eight different CAPs to the regional OEO in Kansas City. Denver Public School District No. 1 sponsored five of those eight, requesting funding for programs to improve literacy, expand supervision outside of school hours, provide individual attention for new students, and increase vocational training options.[132] In its first year, DWOP initiated programs designed to prevent children from becoming adults who struggled for employment.

The more immediate concern for DWOP, however, remained assisting adults. Because Denver already operated employment assistance services, the board chose to focus on health care. When the board sponsored CAP applications for health care programs early in 1965, Congress had not yet created a federally-supported program to assist those not covered by employer-sponsored health insurance. The creation of Medicare and Medicaid came later that

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[131] Sara Fieldston, *Raising the World: Child Welfare in the American Century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), p. 3.

[132] Denver's War on Poverty, Inc., memorandum, March 19, 1965, folder 9, box 35, Currigan Papers; Denver's War on Poverty, Inc., "Progress Report," April 1, 1965, folder 9, box 35, Currigan Papers. On the history and development of after-school programs for children, see Robert Halpern, "A Different Kind of Child Development Institution: The History of After-School Programs for Low-Income Children," *Teachers College Record* 104 (March 2002): 178-211.

year with the passage of Title XIX of the Social Security Act of 1965. Before the creation of Medicaid, health insurance had been linked almost exclusively to employment, which posed an obstacle for those unable to work.[133] The board recognized the burdens that an employment-mediated health care system placed on the unemployed, especially those who needed care to become healthy enough to work. To address these problems, the board endorsed two separate programs from the Denver Department of Public Health to create a neighborhood health clinic and a dental care clinic.[134] A health-care-first approach to combating poverty would allow the city's destitute to become well enough to gain employment.

Recovering from illness or beginning the correct medication regimen were only the first steps to economic security; the more important step was finding a job. Toward this end, the board also sponsored a proposal for the creation of a neighborhood service center that would, among other things, provide employment assistance. This center would further Bernard Valdez's efforts to consolidate resources and facilitate access. Where the federal program created a centralized office for the disbursement of money to fund programs, the proposed neighborhood center in Denver would house outreach offices for all the health, welfare, and jobs services in the city. By placing these offices in a single location, the board hoped to eliminate the obstacles to accessing the programs and the assistance they offered.[135] A key justification for the

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[133] Jennifer Klein argues that both Medicare and Medicaid were designed to "compensate the gaps in privately provided health insurance." Neither program was intended to disrupt the insurance market, leaving most Americans to continue receiving health insurance from their employer. See Klein, *For all these Rights,* pp. 258-60, quotation on p. 260.

[134] Robert E. Allen to Denver's War on Poverty, Inc., Board of Directors, memorandum, March 19, 1965, folder 9, box 35, Currigan Papers; Denver's War on Poverty, Inc., "Progress Report," April 1, 1965, folder 9, box 35, Currigan Papers.

[135] Bill Miller to Tom Currigan, April 7, 1965, p. 2, folder 9, box 35, Currigan Papers.

neighborhood service center was that it would make existing jobs-related services within the Denver Department of Welfare more accessible.

As DWOP officials quickly discovered, they had to temper their excitement for these CAPs because the War on Poverty remained federally directed. At a moment when other municipal and state governments around the country were actively rebelling against federal efforts to promote civil rights, Denver strove to work with the federal government's demands.[136] When the regional OEO in Kansas City considered DWOP's first slate of CAPs, it offered harsh criticism of the board's approach. William H. Bozman, the OEO's Associate Director of Operations, explained to the board that it had failed to develop a strategic vision for addressing poverty. This lack of planning led DWOP to sponsor applications for programs that, in some instances, overlapped with others in the services they offered. Moreover, DWOP's approach was so piecemeal that not all residents in the target area would have access to all services. According to Bozman, the health center proposed a service area of five census tracts while the neighborhood service center would be accessible to residents of four tracts, but only two tracts would have access to both facilities. He suggested a "building block" approach in which, after completing the neighborhood center, the Department of Health would begin operating a medical

[136] The issue of school integration sparked much of the antifederal sentiment in the years after the Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954). While resistance to desegregation occurred across the country, it was in the South where those opposed to integration took the most vehement antifederal position. On the politics of localism in opposition to the central state, see Matthew Lassiter, *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006); Matthew Lassiter and Andrew B. Lewis, eds., *The Moderates' Dilemma: Massive Resistance to School Desegregation in Virginia* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1998); Brian Daugherity and Charles Bolton, eds., *With All Deliberate Speed: Implementing* Brown v. Board of Education (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2008). Nancy MacLean argues that in Virginia this resistance was part of a larger, burgeoning libertarian movement that decried majoritarian democracy as a limit on the rights of the propertied class. This movement, which had support from Senator Robert Byrd, saw opposing integration as an opportunity to introduce their laissez-faire approach to political economy. See MacLean, *Democracy in Chains,* pp. 45-73.

clinic at the same site.[137] Even though the War on Poverty enlisted local organizations, it remained a federal program and Denver's efforts had to abide by guidelines crafted in Washington and implemented in Kansas City.

DWOP's haphazard planning may have elicited criticism from the OEO, but the organization's inability to include the War on Poverty's intended recipients in the administration of the program threatened to derail its efforts. DWOP's by-laws only required that one member of the board serve as a representative of the target communities. Throughout 1964, Rose Widman was the only member who counted as such a representative. Mayor Currigan appointed her to the board because she "was a welfare recipient" and "active in an organization of ADC mothers which is endeavoring to promote a better understanding of the ADC program in Denver."[138] But in an exchange with Ted Princiotto, City Editor at the *Cleveland Plain-Dealer,* about Denver's experience with the War on Poverty, Currigan explained that DWOP ran into pushback from the public because "civil rights groups as such are not represented." He acknowledged that part of the problem was that among the 23 members of the board were "negroes, Spanish-Americans, and other nationality representation," but these men "serve[d] as individuals, not representatives."[139] By this he meant that the men were appointees, not elected representatives

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[137] William H. Bozman to Dr. James Galvin, April 23, 1965, folder 9, box 35, Currigan Papers; Robert E. Allen to Denver's War on Poverty, Inc., memorandum, March 19, 1965, folder 9, box 35, Currigan Papers.

[138] Mayor Thomas Currigan to Ted Princiotto, December 18, 1964, folder 8, box 35, Currigan Papers. For a brief history of Aid to Dependent Children, which became Aid to Families with Dependent Children in 1988 before President Bill Clinton's reforms in 1995, see Susan W. Blank and Barbara B. Blum, "A Brief History of Work Expectations for Welfare Mothers," *Welfare to Work* 7 (Spring 1997): 28-38. For an extended gendered analysis of welfare efforts before passage of the 1935 Social Security Act, see Linda Gordon, *Pitied But Not Entitled: Single Mothers and the History of Welfare* (New York: Free Press, 1994).

[139] Mayor Thomas Currigan to Ted Princiotto, December 18, 1964, folder 8, box 35, Currigan Papers.

from the black and Latinx communities. With only a single member of the board officially serving as a representative of the target communities, Denver still had work to do to increase participation.

Currigan's acknowledgement of DWOP's shortcomings, however, translated into limited improvements. The same April 1965 letter from the OEO that criticized Denver's lack of cohesion in its programs also made note of DWOP's failure to address the issue of representation. Bozman explained he did not feel comfortable making prescriptions on the exact composition of the board, but he did believe that "poverty statistics in Denver would imply that a substantial number of Spanish Americans need to be added, as well as a number of Negroes. I believe that the proposal to your board that 6 Spanish Americans and 2 Negroes be added…would be in line with our policy on minority representation."[140] The DWOP board responded to Bozman's letter by appointing twelve new members to the board to fill vacancies as the board entered its second year. All twelve increased minority representation.[141]

Beyond shifting the composition of the board, Currigan also hoped a change in leadership would satisfy Bozman. Late in the summer of 1965, he asked the Chicano activist Rudolfo "Corky" Gonzales to consider chairing the board.[142] Gonzales, who was instrumental in starting the community organization Crusade for Justice in 1967, was a skilled, if divisive, figure in Denver's political landscape. For the mayor, Gonzales, who was already a member of the board, was simultaneously a safe and dangerous leader. On one hand, the activist and community organizer's presence lent legitimacy to the efforts to increase minority representation and

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[140] William H. Bozman to Dr. James Galvin, April 23, 1965, folder 9, box 35, Currigan Papers.

[141] Rudolfo Gonzales to William Shovell, November 2, 1965, folder 12, box 35, Currigan Papers.

[142] Ernesto B. Vigil, *The Crusade for Justice: Chicano Militancy and the Government's War on Dissent* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999), pp. 21-22.

leadership. On the other hand, the former boxer was pugilistic by nature and had few reservations about upsetting white Denverites in the process of securing political and economic improvements for his community.[143] One member of the board, A. Edgar Benton, even voted against Gonzales because he feared his polarizing rhetoric would alienate too many white politicians and residents, and eventually lead to a loss of local support.[144] Despite some pushback to Gonzales's nomination, the mayor held firm in his belief that the activist would address the needs of his community while also helping the board meet federal requirements. On September 1, the board elected him as their new chair.

Unfortunately for Currigan, Gonzales became problematic for the antipoverty program when he was accused of attending too closely to his own community. In addition to chairing DWOP, Gonzales also served as president of the Neighborhood Youth Corps program. Within the program, there were grumblings that Gonzales showed favoritism to Latinx youth, assigning them better jobs and promoting them faster than black applicants.[145] At the same time, Denver's black community was unhappy with his management of DWOP, especially after he fired Assistant Director Dick Clark for administrative incompetence.[146] With criticism coming at him from both white and black Denverites, Gonzales found his leadership position increasingly

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[143] For an example of Gonzales's rhetoric, see Rodolfo Gonzales to Dale R. Tooley, May 15, 1967, reprinted in Rodolfo Gonzales, *Message to Aztlan: Selected Writings of Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales,* comp. Antonio Esquibel (Houston, TX: Arte Publico Press, 2001), pp. 229-30.

[144] Vigil, *The Crusade for Justice,* pp. 22-23.

[145] In 1973, Sociologist Palmer R. Anderson criticized the Neighborhood Youth Corps because it was rooted in a theory that poverty was a type of social deviance to be corrected. This meant the program aimed to correct this deviance by inculcating ideas of work and wealth accumulation through wage labor. In essence, he concluded, this was a job training program because full employment had become the objective of social welfare efforts. See Anderson, "Job Corps and Neighborhood Youth Corps: A Critical View," *Humboldt Journal of Social Relations* 1, no. 1 (Fall 1973): 8-16.

[146] Jim Gibney, "Interracial Tiff Besets Denver's Poverty War," *Denver Post,* February 11, 1966; "GI Forum Calls for Spanish, Negro Poverty War Unity," *Rocky Mountain News,* February 16, 1966.

untenable. Some Republicans petitioned OEO for a full investigation of Gonzales, although that did not materialize.[147] Then, in April 1966, the *Rocky Mountain News* published an article exposing the accusations of mismanagement.[148] The confrontational Gonzales refused to be cowed by the press, instead calling for a boycott of the newspaper. The very next day, April 24, Currigan unceremoniously removed him from his position with National Youth Crops for his public conduct in response to the press.[149] Gonzales, for his part, remained sanguine about his leadership role with DWOP, trusting that the mayor could not dismiss him because he had been elected by his fellow board members.[150] The Chicano activist had become a liability for Denver's war on poverty, but Gonzales held fast in his commitment to serving the Latinx community even in the face of public pressure from the mayor's office.

As spring gave way to summer, the criticism of Gonzales's leadership began to come from OEO as well. Once again, the racial makeup of DWOP's board led the federal office to upbraid the organization for its failures to comply fully with federal requirements. If William Bozman had given a gentle nudge to DWOP on the issue of representation in April 1965, William L. Shovell had lost all patience for tactful diplomacy by May 1966. Shovell, the Acting Regional Director for Community Action Programs at the OEO office in Kansas City, sent a scathing letter to Gonzales outlining DWOP's failures. Even with Gonzales's elevation to chair,

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[147] Dan Thomasson, "Allott Asks U.S. Probe of Denver's War on Poverty," *Rocky Mountain News,* April 22, 1966; Weber, "Model Cities," p. 108.

[148] Dan Thomasson, "Denver's Poverty War Under Watch," *Rocky Mountain News,* April 22, 1960.

[149]Cliff Edwards, "Currigan Ousts Gonzales as Chief of Youth Corps," *Rocky Mountain News,* April 25, 1966; Vigil, *The Crusade for Justice,* pp. 25-26; Leonard and Noel, *Denver: Mining Camp to Metropolis*, pp. 395-96.

[150] Weber, "Model Cities," p. 111.

the board still failed to meet federal guidelines on representation because he had not been elected by Denver's poor. Further angering Shovell was the board's failure to address conflicts of interest in situations where members were employed by the very organizations receiving CAP funding. So incensed was Shovell that he gave the board one month to address these issues, after which he threatened his office would "feel free to take whatever steps necessary to either bring the program into OEO policy or to terminate the grant and use other resources that might be available to continue the War on Poverty."[151]

Evidently, Shovell's pressure reached receptive ears. By threatening to tighten the purse strings, he forced the board to act. Rather than directly electing board members, DWOP chose instead to form the Westside Action Council to provide more immediate access to those in the target areas. Within two weeks of his letter, the board sanctioned and held elections for the 21-member Westside Action Council, which took place on May 24. By this time, the target area had been reduced to fourteen census tracts. Each of the fourteen elected a representative, and the remaining seven positions were filled by various neighborhood agencies. The action council assumed sole responsibility for identifying the kinds of projects necessary and then collaborated with the board to develop CAPs that would receive sponsorship from DWOP. The board's response to Shovell's threat did not stop there, however. The board extrapolated his willingness to withhold funding to areas he had not explicitly addressed in his letter. To smooth relations with the OEO, the board decided to synchronize all its proposed CAPs for the upcoming year. By beginning the fiscal year at the same time for renewed programs as well as new ones, Kansas

[151] William L. Shovell to Rudolfo Gonzales, May 4, 1966, folder 9, box 37, Currigan Papers.

City could more easily make funding decisions.[152] With one harshly worded letter, Shovell had convinced the DWOP board to make wholesale changes designed to ward off further criticism.

As if 1966 had not been eventful enough for DWOP, the organization would undergo several other high-profile transformations before summer's end. First, in early August, Corky Gonzales angrily resigned from the board and relinquished his position as chair after continued criticism of his leadership. Although the OEO did not believe he exhibited favoritism, he had become increasingly frustrated with continued attacks and accusations of bias.[153] After Gonzales's dismissal, DWOP changed its name to Denver Opportunity (DO). The OEO pressured DWOP to adopt the new name to bring the organization more in line with the federal program.[154] The name change also brought an updated charter, with the local chapters of the Congress of Racial Equality, the Latin American Research and Services Association, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and American G.I. Forum, and Motivate Against Poverty, which was part of Gonazales's Crusade for Justice, now formally included in decisions. This was an attempt to give all non-white groups equal representation and counter the perception of bias.[155] While Denver Opportunity formally expanded participation in the decision-making process, the new name signaled that the organization's idea of welfare assistance was increasing access to the labor market as the chief means of economic security.

Many in Denver recognized that the directors of the city's poverty war were unwilling to intervene too much in the labor market even to benefit the program's participants. This was

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[152] Denver's War on Poverty, Inc., "Report—Board of Directors," June 2, 1966, pp. 6-7, folder 9, box 37, Currigan Papers.

[153] Romero, "War of a Much Different Kind," p. 82.

[154] Ibid., 69.

[155] Ibid., 83.

evident in Denver Opportunity's own hiring practices. Rita Scott, for example, believed that if the War on Poverty was to provide economic security to the most vulnerable, then Denver Opportunity had no choice but to hire people of color. Scott, a onetime employee of the organization, sent an acerbic letter to Thomas Berry, Director of the Community Action Program for the OEO in Washington, DC. She used the War on Poverty's own language of uplift through employment to criticize Denver Opportunity's failure to provide employment opportunities for black and Latinx residents. As she noted, "applicants of Spanish surname or negro race have been told positions are filled through the various programs under the War on Poverty program." If this were true, she asked, "how in all conscience can those in authority" hire whites "and disregard the very tenets of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964?"[156] In addition to this critique, she also identified a series of choices made by Denver Opportunity management that had undercut employee morale. These included a lack of advancement opportunities, refusal to hold staff meetings or consider feedback, and differential wage increases for white and non-white employees. Although she did not say it explicitly, her letter hinted that she believed a non-profit organization intended to help Denver's poor and residents of color should not operate like a profit-seeking business. If Denver Opportunity management conducted the organization this way, Denver's vulnerable communities saw the program as another vehicle for white, middle and upper class to enrich themselves. Rather than protecting precarious communities, the War on Poverty created new and better opportunities for those who did not need assistance.

Other aspects of Denver Opportunity's administration also elicited pushback from communities of color. In 1966, Denver Opportunity sanctioned elections for three more action councils. In 1967, the four councils struggled to reconcile disagreements with Denver

[156] Rita H. Scott to Thomas M. Berry, December 9, 1966, folder 25, box 36, Currigan Papers.

Opportunity executive director Michael C. Moore, leading to their public threat to take their complaints to Mayor Currigan and Sargent Shriver during Shriver's planned visit to Denver. They were incensed over Moore's refusal to hire Ben Gayton as coordinator of the proposed Platte Valley neighborhood service center. The Platte Valley Action Council deemed Gayton the best of the ninety-nine candidates it considered, in part because he had grown up in the neighborhood, spoke Spanish, and knew many of the people who would use the service center. Moore vetoed their hiring motion, telling the action council that coordinators needed administrative skills like his own and that Gayton clearly did not have the supervisory and managerial qualifications. After Moore refused even to consider a three-month trial period for Gayton, the Platte Valley Action Council, along with members from three other councils, appealed to Mayor Currigan in the *Denver Post,* complaining that War on Poverty program recipients had no real voice in program administration. Gayton himself concurred, telling the newspaper that poor people and people of color like himself were "just window dressing," not actual participants in building a program to ameliorate poverty.[157] Despite its rhetoric of increasing political participation, in practice Denver Opportunity would not cede control to the very communities who were supposed to benefit from the federal program.

For all the board's dysfunction, Denver Opportunity and OEO did eventually build a relationship that allowed DO to initiate several programs that served some residents by 1967. In March of that year, the *Colorado Democrat* devoted an entire issue to the poverty war. Among the successes the newspaper praised were the neighborhood service centers, the upcoming expansion of the community health program to a second location in West Denver in addition to the existing center in the Five Points-Curtis Park neighborhood, and the Head Start Program,

[157] Judith Brimberg, "Mayor to Get DO Appeal," *Denver Post,* n.d., clipping folder, box 37, Currigan Papers.

which had forty-three centers open, with more to come for the next academic year. In addition, the paper praised the democratically-elected action council.[158] By that summer, Denver Opportunity oversaw five neighborhood centers and its CAPs were slated for refunding for fiscal year 1968.[159]

But the dreams of continuing to expand Denver's war on poverty were denied. By the summer of 1967, the program's future hung in the balance as the U.S. Congress debated whether or not to close the OEO. Michael C. Moore, Denver Opportunity's embattled directory, traveled to Washington, DC, to lobby for the OEO's continued existence in the face of calls to end it. Although fully acknowledging the shortcomings of Denver's efforts, he stated that the goals of the federal government and Denver's antipoverty campaign were one and the same. Whether easing health care access, centralizing social services, or increasing democratic participation, Moore claimed OEO projects not only allowed more people to compete in the labor market, but gave them jobs to earn their way out of poverty.[160] Not all in Denver agreed with him, however. In addition to the pushback from the target communities, the efforts made by DWOP/Denver Opportunity, as in other War on Poverty cities, spurred a white backlash towards the federal government over what white people felt were unnecessary intrusions into local politics. For one, they had grown weary of a program that produced only modest results. In 1967, an estimated 7

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[158] "The Denver Opportunity Program—What Is It? Where Is It Going?," *Colorado Democrat,* March 18, 1967; "Head Start Gives 'Fighting Chance to Underprivileged Preschool Children," *Colorado Democrat,* March 18, 1967; "Health Centers Strive to Break Poverty-Sickness-Poverty Cycle," *Colorado Democrat,* March 18, 1967.

[159] Denver Opportunity, "Open House and Grand Opening," July 1967, folder 3, box 37, Currigan Papers.

[160] Michael C. Moore, "Presentation to the House Committee on Education and Labor in Washington, July 19, 1967," Carl D. Perkins chairman, July 19, 1967, p. 12, folder 3, box 37, Currigan Papers.

percent of both black men and Latinos were not working, while the estimates for Latinas and black women showed no evidence of change since the program began.[161] Furthermore, throughout the 1960s, Denver Public Schools struggled to comply with federal desegregation laws, eventually leading to a landmark legal case that exposed the limits of a biracial federal policy that did not account for Latinx students.[162] In response to federal welfare efforts, the fickle white Denver voting bloc, and a majority of Coloradans, flocked to the "law and order" campaign of Republican Richard Nixon in 1968, helping to throw their state's six electoral votes to the former Vice President from California.[163] With Nixon as president, many hoped that federal efforts to provide security would neither favor people of color nor come with so many strings attached.

The Nixon administration answered the calls for a different approach. It did so by using the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act of 1966, better known as the Model Cities Program, to prioritize urban renewal over social services while also empowering mayoral offices and political appointments over community participation in the antipoverty projects. The

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[161] Mountain States Telephone, "A Profile of Denver and the Denver Metropolitan Region," Summary: chart 12.

[162] Tom I. Romero II, "'Our Selma is Here': The Political and Legal Struggle for Educational Equality in Denver, Colorado, and Multiracial Conundrums in American Jurisprudence," *Seattle Journal for Social Justice* 3 (Fall/Winter 2004): 73-142; Danielle R. Olden, "Becoming Minority: Mexican Americans, Race, and the Legal Struggle for Educational Equity in Denver, Colorado," *Western Historical Quarterly* 48 (Spring 2017): 43-66.

[163] The history of municipal elections in Denver makes it difficult to draw broad conclusions about the city's electorate. Although Thomas Currigan was a Democrat who adopted the Great Society, Denver's two previous mayors, Will F. Nicholson and Richard Y. Batterton, were fiscal conservatives affiliated with the Republican party. In 1968, conservative Democrat William H. McNichols, Jr. took office after Currigan resigned. He went on to serve as Denver's mayor for fourteen years, largely due to his ability to appeal to Republicans. On the history of mayoral elections up to 1959, see Gray, *A Report on Politics in Denver, Colorado,* Part II, pp. 7-24. On McNichols, see Leonard and Noel, *Denver: Mining Camp to Metropolis,* p. 401-04. On the 1968 presidential election results, see Gerhard Peters and John T. Wooley, "Election of 1968," in *The American Presidency Project,* available at <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/showelection.php?year=1968> (accessed July 5, 2017).

bill grew out of the assessment in Assistant Secretary of Labor Daniel Patrick Moynihan's *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action* (1965), which identified a "culture of poverty" that was exacerbated by living conditions in cities. Moynihan's report concluded that in addition to War on Poverty programs, rebuilding the physical environment in cities was also necessary.[164] When Nixon took office in 1969, his administration and Republicans in the U.S. Congress saw an opportunity to reorient antipoverty efforts for conservative ends. While the intent behind Model Cities was to ensure even greater community participation than the OEO had required under the Economic Opportunity Act, when implemented by the Nixon administration, the project largely moved away from that goal. Instead of focusing on the social services of the War on Poverty, the president directed the newly-created Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), which administered appropriations under the bill, to emphasize urban renewal programs.[165] Their reasoning was that redevelopment of blighted areas would attract private investment and businesses, leading eventually to job creation for the urban poor and opportunities to lift themselves out of poverty. Of course, developers and business owners, not

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[164] Daniel Patrick Moynihan, *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Labor, 1965). On the Moynihan Report, which focused intently on the relationship between black family structures on poverty, see James T. Patterson, *Freedom is Not Enough: The Moynihan Report and America's Struggle over Black Family Life—From LBJ to Obama* (New York: Basic Books, 2010). Alice O'Conner points out that by the 1960s, scholars across a range of disciplines had turned to studying the causes and effects of poverty in the postwar world. In her analysis, one of the most insidious outcomes of this scholarly attention was the creation of the concept of a "culture of poverty," which could be marshaled for very conservative ends. The concept, she argues, grew out of the postwar behaviorist revolution and the Cold War-focus on development and modernization. See Alice O'Conner, *Poverty Knowledge: Social Science, Social Policy, and the Poor in Twentieth-Century U.S. History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001).

[165] U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, *Improving the Quality of Urban Life: Program Guide: Model Neighborhoods in Demonstration Cities. Title I of the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act of 1966* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1966), p. 1; Bret A. Weber, "Denver's Model Cities Program" (PhD diss., University of Utah, 2007), pp. 262-365. On the intersection of race politics and urban renewal, see Eric Avila and Mark H. Rose, "Race, Culture, Politics, and Urban Renewal: An Introduction," *Journal of Urban History* 35 (March 2009): 335-47.

residents of the neighborhoods, were the direct recipients of this aid, with the destitute benefitting indirectly. Under the new administration, federal money was used not to address the needs of the most vulnerable, but to further the goals of those already succeeding. And the federal government attached far fewer stipulations to the grants it doled out to municipalities.

White Denverites were far more receptive to the Model Cities Program under the Nixon administration. Conservatives who had opposed any involvement in the War on Poverty supported a move away from providing social services for racial minorities as well as a program in which HUD attached far fewer stipulations than the OEO had on how money was spent.[166] The newly-elected conservative Democratic mayor William H. McNichols took advantage of the new stream of federal money and began distributing it to politically-appointed groups like the Denver Urban Renewal Authority. Because the authority was ostensibly charged with fighting poverty, it focused its efforts on the neighborhoods where the poorest residents lived. Its vision for how to improve the lives of those in these neighborhoods emphasized removal. For example, in 1971 the Renewal Authority began a project to transform 173 acres just to the west of the central business district, a census tract with one of the highest percentages of non-white residents and lowest median family incomes in the city.[167] HUD condemned the area because it exhibited the "major adverse environmental element of noise, dirt and visual pollution."[168] After removing

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[166] Moore, "Presentation to the House Committee on Education and Labor," p. 11; Weber, "Denver's Model Cities," p. 330-31.

[167] City and County of Denver, *Denver's "War" on Poverty* (Denver: City and County of Denver, n.d.), pp. 28-29.

[168] U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development—Region VIII, *Environmental Impact Statement Draft for Auraria Urban Renewal Project, Project No. Colo. R-24, Denver, Colorado* (Denver: Department of Housing and Urban Development, June 14, 1971), p. 6; *An Act to Provide for Uniform and Equitable Treatment of Persons Displaced from their Homes, Businesses, or Farms by Federal and Federally Assisted Programs and to Establish Uniform and Equitable Land Acquisition Policies for Federal and Federally Assisted Programs,* Public Law 91-646, *U.S. Statutes at Large* 84 (1971): 1894-

poor people, the Renewal Authority worked with private developers to build the Auraria Higher Education Center, a complex that today serves four post-secondary institutions.[169] The Denver Urban Renewal Authority was not the only organization to receive federal funds from the mayor's office, but other initiatives, such as a drug-treatment facility, had little political support from conservative white voters and were quickly abandoned. By 1974, when the federal government ended funding for Model Cities, the Auraria Higher Education Center was one of the few lasting results in Denver.[170]

Although short-lived, the Model Cities program reoriented expectations of how federal funding should be used to address urban issues and how the federal government should administer those funds. Now, federal and municipal officials agreed that public money should be used for renewal and capital improvement projects, not to address the lives of those in poverty and communities of color. Just as important, Model Cities also helped usher in a new age of distrust of the federal bureaucracy to tackle problems. As the President's Task Force on Model Cities wrote in 1970, "over-regulation has led to waste and frustration. With about 400 grant-in-aid programs involving roughly $10 billion a year, federal aid to cities is now on such a scale that the federal bureaucracy is incapable of administering it."[171] One of the Task Force's primary recommendations, which the Nixon administration and HUD worked to implement until it was eventually codified into law in 1975, was to drastically reduce the number of program-specific

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1907, available online at <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/STATUTE-84/pdf/STATUTE-84-Pg1894.pdf> (accessed July 10, 2017).

[169] U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development—Region VIII, *Environmental Impact Statement Draft for Auraria Urban Renewal Project*, p. 4.

[170] Weber, "Denver's Model Cities Program," pp. 321-30.

[171] President's Task Force on Model Cities Program, *Model Cities: A Step Towards the New Federalism* (Washington, DC: President's Task Force on Model Cities, 1970), pp. 1-2.

grants and instead move to distribute block grants to municipal governments to apportion to meet their community's needs.[172] Under Nixon, the federal bureaucracy's primary purpose was to distribute federal funding and then allow local governments the freedom to address problems without federal oversight. The two outcomes of Model Cities, urban renewal and a weakened federal bureaucracy, marked a shift from the broader welfare programs of the 1960s that focused on facilitating entry into the labor market. Instead, the federal government now believed that spurring investment in property and jobs would eventually provide a way out of poverty for the urban poor.[173]

Over the decade of antipoverty efforts, Denver partnered with the federal government to address the shortcomings of capitalism in a way that continued, rather than undermined, the economic system. Initially, the federal bureaucracy required Denver's local efforts to identify those hit hardest by poverty and to provide the social services those communities needed to increase their participation in the labor force. Doing so required recognizing that in cities, the worst effects of capitalism disproportionately fell on communities of color. White residents in Denver and elsewhere eventually voiced resentment over the use of public money to support minority communities by electing Richard Nixon to the presidency in 1968. Under the new administration, the federal bureaucracy's efforts to protect economic security looked noticeably different, especially in its hands-off approach, but the bureaucracy continued the fundamental goal of protecting capitalism. Organizations like the Denver Urban Renewal Authority used

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[172] On the adoption of block grants, see Timothy Conlan, *From New Federalism to Devolution: Twenty-Five Years of Intergovernmental Reform* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1998).

[173] For scholarship on the limits of urban renewal within Model Cities, see, e.g., Andrew R. Highsmith, "Demolition Means Progress: Urban Renewal, Local Politcs, and State-Sanctioned Ghetto Formation in Flint, Michigan," *Journal of Urban History* 35, no. 3 (March 2009): 348-68; Irene V. Holliman, "From Crackertown to Model City?: Urban Renewal and Community Building in Atlanta, 1963-1966," *Journal of Urban History* 35, no. 3 (March 2009): 369-86.

public money to initiate projects designed to entice investment in new businesses in redeveloped areas, thereby continuing the relations of capitalism to provide economic security. Denverites, especially conservative white voters, were instrumental in this transformation.

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The politics of security looked drastically different by the 1970s than when the U.S. began the transition from a wartime to a peacetime economy three decades earlier. That moment of postwar uncertainty, both abroad and at home, led to the continued presence of the federal government in domestic economic policies through Keynesian ideas of full-employment and increased consumer purchasing power. Of course, after a war in which the demand power of the federal government had gone a long way towards reviving an economy still struggling from the Great Depression, using the institutions of the federal government to manage the economy to the same ends made sound political and economic sense. This was especially true if doing so meant that stability at home would translate into greater international harmony through increased trade with those countries ideologically and politically aligned with the U.S.

To make these policy prescriptions a reality, thousands of Denverites went to work in the service of the federal government, shaping a bureaucratic apparatus intimately intertwined with ensuring that capitalism remained vibrant and the postwar economy continued to boom. At times, bureaucrats like those with the Ninth Regional Wage Stabilization Board enforced regulations to suppress market volatility. But civil servants in other federal bureaucracies also performed work important to ensuring economic security. Those at agencies like the Bureau of Reclamation, the Department of Agriculture, and Department of Fish and Wildlife all labored in the service of the state to facilitate safer and more efficient working conditions for residents

across the West. Moreover, western bureaucracy could not function without the networks of supplies and revenue managed by those in the General Services Administration and the Department of Treasury at the Denver Federal Center.

Denver's contribution to the federal bureaucracy extended beyond its civil servants. During the War on Poverty, the city's antipoverty campaign championed the more conservative breadwinner capitalism of the Office of Economic Opportunity to eradicate poverty. In doing so, Denver's War on Poverty, Inc./Denver Opportunity made legitimate the prescriptions of the Great Society. But Denver's struggles to comply with federal guidelines on issues like representation and eliminating conflicts of interest, as well as the disagreements between the black and Latinx communities over the use of funds, all contributed to a conservative white backlash to an active federal state. These Denverites help usher in Model Cities, the circumscribed reach of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and an embrace of urban renewal instead of social services to fight poverty.

Ultimately, even as the politics of economic security turned toward a rejection of rigorous federal management efforts, Denver remained central to the state project of upholding capitalism. New Deal institutions like the NRWSB might have become historical artifacts, but the rise of a pro-market approach did not reverse the state's commitment to making the ideology of capitalism a material reality. Denverites were part of reshaping the contours of how the state achieved this goal. Moreover, the unseating of Keynesian dominance did not end Denver's relationship with the federal government in upholding capitalism; rather, it continued to work with the state, albeit in a different manner, to prove capitalism's superiority.

Chapter Three

Moving to the City:
American Indian Relocation and the Formation of Market Subjects

When James Bixby (Cheyenne) and his family arrived in Denver in July 1959, they were retracing the steps of their Cheyenne ancestors. Bixby's forebears had met with Arapaho parties at the confluence of the South Platte River and Cherry Creek to construct a seasonal trading encampment prior to the discovery of gold in 1858. But the arrival of Anglo-American argonauts and the Treaty of Fort Wise in 1861 effectively mapped their territory as the province of the non-indigenous.[1] The federal government had denied Bixby's ancestors access to Denver, but now, with the help of the state, he and his family set off on a bus from Billings, Montana, and disembarked in the city, ready to make a new home for themselves. The Bixbys settled into permanent housing within two days of arriving, and, six days after that, James started the first of three jobs he would hold to provide for his family.[2] Unlike Cheyenne a century before, however, Bixby did not travel to Denver with goods to trade. Instead, he brought himself, a body capable of laboring in the service of a private employer. For Indians, Denver was no longer the site of the

[1] Carl Abbott, Stephen J. Leonard, and Thomas J. Noel, *Colorado: A History of the Centennial State,* 5th ed. (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2013), pp. 81-83; Alyssa Landry, "Native History: The Birth of Denver, From Boom to Bust to Boom," *Indian Country Today,* October 29, 2013 <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2013/10/29/native-history-when-worlds-collide-first-store-opens-denver-1858-151971> (accessed September 29, 2016) (webpage disabled). On the history of nineteenth-century Anglo-American migration to the Rocky Mountains, see Elliott West, *Contested Plains: Indians, Goldseekers, and the Rush to Colorado* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998). On the arrival of Anglo Americans and the effects on the Colorado Utes, see Ned Blackhawk, *Violence Over the Land: Indians and Empires in the Early American West* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), pp. 175-225.

[2] Bureau of Indian Affairs, "Annual Report—Relocation Services—Fiscal Year 1959," (unpublished manuscript, September 1959), p. 1, folder "Annual Reports (Relocations) 051—1956-1960," box 4, Employment Assistance Reports, 1952-1963 (accession number 8NN-075-92-134), Navajo Area Office—Gallup, NM, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Records Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration-Rocky Mountain Region (Denver) (hereafter, Employment Assistance Reports—Navajo Area Office).

seasonal exchange of goods; it was now a place where they transformed human energy into labor power in exchange for an hourly wage. Industrial capitalism and wage labor supplanted trade as the organizing economic structure for indigenous migration to this place on the South Platte.

For the federal government, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in particular, the markets of goods, services, and labor that existed in Denver far outpaced anything Indians could find on or near reservations. In the years after World War II, as the country consumed its way to a new standard of living, the BIA worried that the distribution of postwar abundance did not extend to Native Americans on reservations. Such uneven development within the territorial limits of the United States led to a new definition of the "Indian problem," a centuries-old vexation for the state. Dillon S. Myer, who served as commissioner of the BIA from 1950 to 1953, believed "the number one problem is the problem of poverty."[3] In 1945, the average Indian farming family netted just 501 dollars, one-fifth the income a non-indigenous farming family earned that year.[4] After more than a century and a half of federal policies that oscillated back and forth between the poles of extermination and full assimilation without achieving either, and more often than not producing a colonial paternalism, the federal government viewed Native

[3] Dillion S. Meyer, interview by Helen S. Pryor, Berkeley, California, July 7, 1970, audio and transcript, Berkeley Regional Oral History Office, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, transcript available online through Harry S. Truman Library and Museum at <http://www.trumanlibrary.org/oralhist/myerds3.htm> (accessed October 4, 2016). Prior to his appointment as Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Meyer served as Director of the War Relocation Authority during World War II, overseeing the creation of ten internment camps and the relocation of nearly 120,000 people of Japanese descent across the West. See Richard Drinnon, *Keeper of Concentration Camps: Dillon S. Meyer and American Racism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987). On Meyer's influence on the policy of termination, see Kenneth R. Philp, "Dillon S. Meyer and the Advent of Termination: 1950-1953," *Western Historical Quarterly* 19 (Jan. 1988): 37-59.

[4] William Zimmerman, Jr., Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs, testimony before the Senate Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, Joseph C. O'Mahoney, Chairman, February 3, 1949, p.5, folder 9, box 7, Denver Commission on Community Relations Collection (hereafter DCCR Collection), WH903, Western History and Genealogy Collection, Denver Public Library.

Americans on reservations as wards of the state.[5] Any attempt by the BIA to address poverty on reservations directly would necessarily require continued federal involvement, a problem because, as Stanley Lyman, a former BIA agent who served in Denver from 1954 to 1958, put it, Commissioner Myer had been brought in "with the specific instruction to terminate the Bureau of Indian Affairs."[6] In the state's view, the question of how to end reservation poverty and the BIA itself became one and the same.

Denver, along with a handful of other cities, appeared to offer the BIA a solution to both the "Indian problem" and the continued existence of the bureau. As the federal government began the controversial policy of termination, an attempt to end the special legal status of Native Americans, it also initiated a policy of relocation.[7] If the BIA could move Native Americans

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[5] For examples of scholarship that highlight the colonial paternalism of the federal government, see Jeffery Ostler, *The Plains Sioux and U.S. Colonialism from Lewis and Clark to Wounded Knee* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Cathleen D. Cahill, *Federal Fathers and Mothers: A Social History of the United States Indian Service, 1869-1933* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011).

[6] Stanley D. Lyman, interview by Kathryn MacKay, Floyd O'Neil, and Greg Thompson, 1971, transcript and audio, item no. 1029, Doris Duke Indian Oral History Collection, Utah American Indian Digital Archive, Marriott Library, University of Utah, <http://content.lib.utah.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/uaida-oht/id/5952/rec/2> (accessed November 5, 2016). Lyman left Denver in 1958, moving first to head the Chicago Field Relocation Office and then becoming the Superintendent at the Pine Ridge Agency, where he served during the 1973 occupation by indigenous activists. His account of the occupation was published as Stanley David Lyman, *Wounded Knee 1973: A Personal Account*, eds. Floyd A. O'Neil, June K. Lyman, and Susan McKay (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991). Scholars have contested his version of the events on the reservation. See, for example, Ward Churchill, review of *Wounded Knee 1973: A Personal Account,* by Stanley David Lyman, Floyd A. O'Neil, June K. Lyman, and Susan McKay, *American Indian Quarterly* 16, no. 3 (Summer 1992): 419-421.

[7] For histories of termination and its effects on various tribes, see Donald L. Fixico, *Termination and Relocation: Federal Indian Policy, 1945-1960* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986); Nicolas Peroff, *Menominee Drums: Tribal Termination and Restoration, 1954-1974* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1982); Roberta Ulrich, *American Indian Nations from Termination to Restoration, 1953-2006* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010); Charles Wilkinson, *Blood Struggle: The Rise of Modern Indian Nations* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2005); R. Warren Metcalfe, *Termination's Legacy: The Discarded Indians of Utah* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002); Laurie Arnold, *Bartering with the Bones of Their Dead: The Colville Confederated Tribes and Termination* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2012).

away from reservations and relocate them to cities with labor markets capable of absorbing these new arrivals in wage-labor positions, the federal government could abdicate its financial responsibilities to Indian people by shifting the burden of their welfare to the market. To do so, however, the state had to ensure that those it relocated could survive as wage laborers and, crucially, transform those wages, through consumption, into the material goods that would raise the standard of living for Indians. Thus, the BIA had to facilitate the entry of Indians into a host of urban relationships that reproduced the relations of capitalism. This was a gendered process. The BIA developed different requirements for men and women to determine suitability for relocation, and, once they were in the city, local agents worked to shape native men and women according to dominant ideals of work and heterosexual familial relations. If the BIA could transform Native Americans into fully marketized subjects capable of providing for themselves in cities, it could simultaneously raise their standard of living and obviate the need for its own existence.[8]

The BIA did not engineer its own extinction, but it did create a program to remove Indians from reservations. From 1948 to 1973, the bureau helped about 8,500 Native Americans relocate to Denver.[9] Although other metropolitan areas, notably Los Angeles, the San Francisco Bay Area, and Chicago/Waukegan, hosted larger populations of relocated Indians, Denver served

[8] My thinking here is influenced by the work of geographers Katharyne Mitchell and Matthew Sparke. Writing about approaches to philanthropy after the turn of the millennium, the pair argue that the new approach "facilitate[s] the recruitment and fostering of new market subjects, pulling individuals and communities away from claims for government-led social protection within nation-states, and towards market preparedness both locally and globally." Although their focus is on a philanthropic approach that aims to work outside the purview of the nation-state, I argue that the idea of facilitating "market preparedness" in aid recipients is very similar to the approach taken by the BIA in relocation. In this case, however, the state actively worked to engender that market preparedness. See Katharyne Mitchell and Matthew Sparke, "The New Washington Consensus: Millennial Philanthropy and the Making of Global Market Subjects," *Antipode* 48 (June 2016): 724-49, quoted material on p. 729.

[9] Azusa Ono, "Crossroads of Indian Country: Native American Community in Denver, 1950-2005" (PhD diss., University of Arizona, 2005), p. 37.

as the program's administrative center. In 1952, relocation became an official policy of the BIA and in 1954 the bureau placed the Central Office of the Branch of Relocation Services in Denver because it wanted its administrators to be closer to the reservation agencies, area offices, and field offices erected in relocation cities.[10] In this system, the Denver Field Relocation Office (DFRO), under the direction of Stanley Lyman and, later, Chester E. Hazard, made manifest the BIA's policy of relocation, utilizing a range of tools to shape relocatees into capitalist subjects with market discipline. Few cities in the country were as important as Denver to the project of providing economic security for western Americans, and the BIA took every step to integrate Native Americans into the city's labor and commodity markets during the halcyon days of postwar Keynesianism.

My assertion that the policy of relocation aimed to make fully marketized subjects of Native Americans has two potential interrelated pitfalls that this chapter seeks to avoid. First, I do not mean to claim that Indians on reservations existed outside market economies. Historians have shown that Indians developed a wide range of responses to market economies and were adept at carving out spaces for themselves within these systems of trade and labor.[11] Rather, my contention is that the federal government after World War II viewed poverty on reservations as a failure of both markets and individuals. If the territorial limits of urban markets could not extend

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[10] "Indian Bureau Office to Move to Denver Aug. 1," *Rocky Mountain News,* July 8, 1954.

[11] Numerous works highlight the ways that Native Americans participated in market economies and engage in wage labor, even using this economic system to reinforce their indigenous identities. See, for example, the collected essays in Brian Hosmer and Colleen O'Neill, eds., *Native Pathways: American Indian Culture and Economic Development in the Twentieth Century* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2004); Brian Hosmer, *American Indians in the Marketplace: Persistence and Innovation Among the Menominees and Metlakatlans, 1870-1920* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1999); Colleen O'Neill, *Working the Navajo Way: Labor and Culture in the Twentieth Century* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2005); William J. Bauer, Jr., *We Were All Like Migrant Workers Here: Work, Community, and Memory on California's Round Valley Reservation, 1850-1941* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009); and Chantal Norrgard, *Seasons of Change: Labor, Treaty Rights, and Ojibwa Nationhood* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014).

to encompass those on reservations, then relocation provided a solution by moving the supply of labor to those markets. At the same time, the BIA assumed American Indians would be unfamiliar with the rhythms of market economies, but not inherently unable to adapt to market practices. With direction and teaching, the BIA believed it could turn Native Americans into urban laborers and consumers.

This leads to the second problem. Such totalizing statements can collapse difference and diversity within Native American communities, turning Indian peoples into a single, monolithic racial category. As other scholars have pointed out, this is a persistent, and pernicious, problem with the production of knowledge about Indigenous peoples.[12] While this chapter does often discuss Native Americans in totalizing terms, it does so because the federal government viewed them through a single lens. Here, I am paying particular attention to the policies and actions of the state, and how those choices shaped the experiences of relocated Native Americans. Although privileging policy in indigenous histories can lead to truncated accounts of American Indians and their agency as historical actors, ignoring state policy can be equally problematic. The agency of Indians to define their own lives, especially within the program of relocation, was constrained by state policies intended to insert Indians into capitalist relations. In this chapter, I elucidate how the BIA, through the DFRO, worked to direct American Indians towards market-based practices in the city.

[12] Vine Deloria, Jr. explores the ways in which such totalizing knowledge works to produce myths about Indians. With caustic wit, he probes the absurdity of white Americans' knowledge production about indigenous people, writing, "There appears to be some secret osmosis about Indian people by which they can magically and instantaneously communicate complete knowledge about themselves to these interested whites. Rarely is physical contact required. Anyone and everyone who knows an Indian or who is *interested,* immediately and thoroughly understands them." Vine Deloria, Jr., *Custer Died for your Sins: An Indian Manifesto* (New York: Avon Books, 1969), pp. 9-34, quoted material on p. 13.

My aim in this chapter is not to trace the development of a pan-Indian community born from the shared experience of moving to Denver; Azusa Ono has already excavated that story.[13] Nor is my goal simply to add another case study to the analysis of relocation. Numerous works of scholarship on the program in other cities consider either the policy itself or the range of experiences of relocatees, especially the relationship between identity and place.[14] Other scholars, although not explicitly focusing on the relocation program, have worked diligently to show that Indian country has existed beyond the boundaries of reservations, rewriting twentieth-century urban scholarship to counter the Myth of the Vanishing Race.[15] In this chapter, I draw connections between relocation and attempts by the state to insert Native Americans into relations that reproduced industrial capitalism.

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[13] Ono, "Crossroads of Indian Country."

[14] James B. LaGrand, *Indian Metropolis: Native Americans in Chicago, 1945-75* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002); Nicolas Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country: Native American Migration and Identity in Twentieth-Century Los Angeles* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012); Fixico, *Termination and Relocation*; Ned Blackhawk, "'I Can Carry on from Here': The Relocation of American Indians to Los Angeles," *Wicazo Sa Review: Journal of Native American Studies* 11 (Fall 1995): 16-30; Mary Patrick, "Indian Urbanization in Dallas: A Second Trail of Tears?" *The Oral History Review* 1 (1973): 48-65; Kenneth R. Philp, "Stride Toward Freedom: The Relocation of Indians to Cities, 1952-1960," *Western Historical Quarterly* 16 (Apr. 1985): 175-90; Larry W. Burt, "Roots of the Native American Urban Experience: Relocation Policy in the 1950s," *American Indian Quarterly* 10 (Spring 1986): 85-99.

[15] The body of scholarship on urban indigenous communities is large. See, for example, Coll Thrush, *Native Seattle: Histories from the Crossing-Over Place* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007); Alan L. Sorkin, *The Urban American Indian* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1978); Donald L. Fixico, *The Urban Indian Experience in America* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2000); Deborah Davis Jackson, *Our Elders Lived It: American Indian Identity in the City* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2002); Joan Weibel-Orlando, *Indian Country, L.A.: Maintaining Ethnic Continuity in a Complex Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); Nancy Shoemaker, "Urban Indians and Ethnic Choices: American Indian Organizations in Minneapolis, 1920-1950," *Western Historical Quarterly* 19 (Nov. 1988): 431-47; Nicolas G. Rosenthal, "Repositioning Indianness: Native American Organizations in Portland, Oregon, 1959-1975," *Pacific Historical Review* 71 (Aug. 2002): 415-48; Jeffrey C. Sanders, "The Battle for Fort Lawton: Competing Environmental Claims in Postwar Seattle," *Pacific Historical Review* 77 (May 2008): 203-35; Carolyn Strange and Tina Loo, "Holding the Rock: The 'Indianization' of Alcatraz Island, 1969-1999," *The Public Historian* 23 (Winter 2001): 55-74; Robert A. Trennert, "Victorian Morality and the Supervision of Indian Women Working in Phoenix, 1906-1930," *Journal of Social History* 22 (Autumn 1988): 113-28.

I begin by analyzing the ideology underpinning the relocation program. I then shift to the workings of the Denver Field Relocation Office, first exploring how the office controlled access to the program to ensure that only those it deemed capable of becoming capitalist subjects received relocation assistance. Then, I trace the specific interventions the DFRO made in the lives of relocatees after they arrived in Denver to ensure they remained in relationships that reproduced capitalism. I argue that the DFRO, the bureaucratic office in the city that worked directly with relocatees, engaged in a program of shaping and molding American Indians into capitalist subjects. Throughout, I attend to the various ways this process also relied on instilling heteronormative ideas of work and the family. Native Americans across the U.S. who desired to leave their home reservations and construct new lives in Colorado with the help of the state had to negotiate the demands of the agents in the Commonwealth Building in downtown Denver.

The Roots of Independency

The networks of legal and financial support James Bixby and his family used to facilitate their move had broad backing in the U.S. Congress and the Department of the Interior, the BIA's parent bureaucracy. In fact, Congress appropriated 3.5 million dollars to the BIA specifically for relocation in 1950. That appropriation was part of a larger 88.5 million dollars given to the BIA to aid the Diné (Navajo) in the Navajo-Hopi Long-Range Rehabilitation Act of 1950.[16] The Diné suffered through an intense drought and harsh winter in 1947-48, prompting Congress to make available funds to address the environmental and economic consequences. As the drought decimated crops across the Southwest, the Diné, still reeling from the federal government's

[16] *An Act to Promote the Rehabilitation of the Navajo and Hopi Tribes of Indians and a Better Utilization of the Resources of the Navajo and Hopi Indian Reservations, and for Other Purposes,* Public Law 474, *U.S. Statutes at Large* 64 (1950): 44-47.

livestock reduction program during the New Deal, struggled to cope. Winter brought harsh conditions that only exacerbated the crop failure and the struggles on the reservation became a national story.[17] For the federal government, the timing could not be worse. According to Alison Bernstein, because the drought coincided with the development of the Marshall Plan, the U.S. public criticized the decision to send aid abroad while so many at home suffered.[18] In this political climate, the state and the BIA felt compelled to help the Diné.

The BIA responded with efforts to relocate some Diné to cities where they could find jobs. In 1948, the bureau created placement offices in Denver, Salt Lake City, and Los Angeles to assist relocatees. Then, after the 1950 appropriation, the BIA envisioned a relocation program open to Indians of all tribes who resided on reservations. This program, which eventually became known as direct employment, provided financial assistance during relocation and supported relocatees in finding a job as soon as they arrived in their new home. The bureau asked for and received an appropriation for the fiscal year (FY) 1952, which began on July 1, 1951, to expand the relocation program. In November 1951, the BIA converted the Navajo Placement Offices to Field Relocation Offices in order to assist all Indians, and it opened an office in Chicago. At the same time, the BIA assembled a staff of agents in California, Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Colorado, and Utah to recruit relocatees and liaise with the field offices on behalf of those wishing to leave the reservation and move to a city.[19] The program aimed to have Indians

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[17] On the livestock reduction program, see Peter Iverson, *Diné: A History of the Navajos* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2002), chap. 5, esp. pp. 137-56. Marsha Weisiger considers the environmental, economic, and social consequences of livestock reduction, especially for Diné women, in *Dreaming of Sheep in Navajo Country* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009).

[18] Alison Bernstein, *American Indians and World War II: Toward a New Era of Indian Affairs* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), pp. 151-54.

[19] B.I.A, "The Bureau of Indian Affairs Voluntary Relocation Services Program," (unpublished manuscript, n.d.) pp. 2-3, folder 721.72 "Field Relocation Offices," box 1, Bureau of Indian Affairs

employed as soon as practical after arriving in the city. By July 1956, over 12,000 Indians had taken advantage of the relocation program.[20]

While relocation for direct employment opened avenues for Native Americans ready to work, those without education or skill struggled to be competitive in urban labor markets. For example, Jack Boone (Diné) arrived in Denver on September 23, 1958, but he bounced around several jobs before returning to the reservation in February of the next year.[21] Although the records reveal little about his situation, he probably would have been better served by the Adult Vocational Training (AVT) program instead of relocation for direct employment. The BIA created the AVT program after Congress passed Public Law 959 in 1956, appropriating another 3.5 million dollars to the BIA to create a vocational training program.[22] Through AVT, qualifying adults on or near reservations between the ages of eighteen and thirty-five could move to a city with a guaranteed place in a vocational education course lasting from ten to twenty-four months depending on the trade, and receive financial assistance while in training, including program tuition and fees. Alternatively, they could enter an apprenticeship if the trade provided on-the-job training. By 1960, the DFRO had approved eleven local sites, including a handful of courses at

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Employment Assistance Reports, 1965 (accession number 8NN-075-86-015), Phoenix Agency Office, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Records Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration-Rocky Mountain Region (Denver) (hereafter, Employment Assistance Reports—Phoenix Area Office).

[20] La Verne Madigan, *The American Indian Relocation Program: A Report* (New York: Association of American Indian Affairs, 1956), p. 5.

[21] B.I.A., "Analysis of Relocations for Fiscal Year 1959," box 4, Employment Assistance Reports, 1956-1967 (acc. no. 8NN-075-88-043), Bureau of Indian Affairs Field Employment Relocations Office—Denver Field Relocation Office, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Records Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration-Rocky Mountain Region (Denver) (hereafter, Field Employment Assistance Reports—Denver Field Relocation Office).

[22] Fixico, *Termination and Relocation,* p. 143.

the respected Emily Griffiths Opportunity School, to provide training opportunities.[23] Any trade, from engine repair to nurse aid to cosmetologist, that offered vocational training was eligible. With the creation of AVT, the BIA could assist even more Native Americans in making the transition from reservations to wage labor in cities.

The number of American Indians applying to the AVT program forced the BIA to expand its relocation services. Within the first nine years, over 32,000 Native Americans left their home reservation with support from the BIA through either direct employment or AVT.[24] To meet this demand, the bureau closed the Salt Lake City Field Relocation Office in 1954 because of limited job opportunities there and, over the next two years, opened new offices in Oakland, San Francisco, San Jose, St. Louis, Dallas, Cincinnati, Cleveland, and Waukegan, Illinois.[25] Indians from all reservations in the continental U.S., as well as Native Alaskans, took advantage of the opportunity the BIA presented to improve their material lives. From 1951 to 1973, over one hundred thousand Native Americans relocated from reservations to cities.[26]

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[23] B.I.A, Branch of Relocation Services, "Adult Vocational Training Services Activity," p. 3.

[24] B.I.A., "Emmons Cites Evidence of Indian Success in Relocation," Press Release, February 29, 1960, p. 1 <http://www.bia.gov/cs/groups/public/documents/text/idc016759.pdf> (accessed October 10, 2016).

[25] B.I.A., Branch of Relocation Services, "Adult Vocational Training Services Activity," (unpublished manuscript, October, 1960), p. 3, folder "AVT—General—Inactive Correspondence," box 2, Field Employment Assistance Reports—Denver Field Relocation Office. Although the BIA did not open a Field Relocation Office in Milwaukee, the city was a popular destination for those looking to leave their home reservation without BIA assistance. In Milwaukee, a number of non-governmental social service agencies catered to relocated Native Americans. See Judit Szathmári, "Urban Adjustment: American Indian Self-Help Organizations in Milwaukee," *Hungarian Journal of English and American Studies* 8 (Fall 2002): 133-152.

[26] Fixico, *Urban Indian Experience in America*, p. 25. For general histories of the relocation program, see Fixico, *Termination and Relocation,* esp. ch. 7; Fixico, *Urban Indian Experience in America,* chap. 1; Philp, "Stride Toward Freedom," pp. 175-190; Burt, "Roots of the Native American Urban Experience," 85-99; Ono, "Crossroads of Indian Country," pp. 13-55.

Although the BIA's relocation program originally took hold in direct response to the localized problem on the Diné reservation, the logic that underpinned removal from reservations had a more universal goal. For the state, relocation served a purpose larger than mitigating poverty; the program could shift the burden of Native American welfare to the market, relieving the federal government of its financial responsibility and ending the wardship status of Indians. D'Arcy McNickle (Salish Kootenai), an anthropologist and former BIA agent who grew up in St. Ignatius, Montana, on the Flathead Reservation, recognized economic independence as the BIA's ultimate aspiration for relocation. Writing in *Christian Century* in 1957, he asserted that the state wanted to "brush these peculiarities aside"—indigenous languages and religious practices, as well as rural living on reservations—because "out will come a standardized suburban commuter, or the equivalent."[27] McNickle pointedly adopted the figure of a suburbanite to represent the hopes of the state. At the end of the 1950s, suburban homeownership and mobility across the urban environment, symbolized by the automobile, had come to represent all that was praiseworthy in postwar abundance.[28] Through relocation, the federal government could stanch

[27] D'Arcy McNickle, "It's Almost Never Too Late," *Christian Century* 74 (February 20, 1957), reprinted by National Congress of American Indians in an untitled pamphlet, n.d., folder 8, box 5, DCCR Collection.

[28] See Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic: The Politics of Consumption in Postwar America* (New York: Vintage, 2008). On the relationship between consumption and politics after World War II, see Meg. M. Jacobs, *Pocketbook Politics: Economic Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), chap. 6. On the relationship between politics and suburbanization, see Eric Avila, *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight: Fear and Fantasy in Suburban Los Angeles* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004); Robert O. Self, *American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003); Becky M. Nicolaides, *My Blue Heaven: Life and Politics in the Working-Class Suburbs of Los Angeles, 1920-1965* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002); Matthew D. Lassiter, *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002); Kevin M. Kruse, *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005); Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*, Princeton Classic ed. (1996; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

the flow of public money to reservations and Native Americans could be forced to work for wages, becoming financially independent in the process.

For all his keen acumen identifying the goal of relocation, McNickle did not fully illuminate the political context of the decision to move American Indians away from reservations. As the Cold War began, the existence of racial minorities who did not enjoy the material benefits of postwar abundance, which ought to have been available to all, posed an internal threat to the U.S. and its claims that liberal democracy and capitalism were the most egalitarian political and economic systems.[29] Within this logic, un- or under-employed Native Americans living in poverty on reservations were doubly problematic to the state. Not only did they expose the limits of market distribution, but their constrained economic livelihoods, given their unique relationship to the federal government, directly implicated the state. Furthermore, under the Truman Administration's Fair Deal, the focus of federal economic policy shifted from the distribution of wealth to macroeconomic growth.[30] In postwar Keynesianism, employment and consumption were thought to contribute the most to economic expansion. In this climate, relocating American Indians so that they could secure jobs, purchase consumer goods, and lessen the financial burden of the federal government to reservations made sound political and economic sense.

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[29] Several historians have shown that during the Cold War, any distinction between international politics and domestic race relations was more artifice than artifact. My thinking here is informed by their work. See Brenda Gayle Plummer, *Rising Wind: Black Americans and U.S. Foreign Affairs, 1935-1960* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Cindy I-Fen Cheng, *Citizens of Asian America: Democracy and Race during the Cold War* (New York: New York University Press, 2013).

[30] Alonzo Hamby, "The Vital Center, the Fair Deal, and the Quest for a Liberal Political Economy," *American Historical Review* 77 (June 1972): 662-64.

Even before relocation became official policy, President Truman signaled his belief that the federal government should not continue financially supporting Native Americans. In 1946, he signed H.R. 4497 into law, creating the Indian Claims Commission, a juridical forum for tribes to bring land dispossession grievances against the United States. Although the commission would require the federal government to pay out awards, the state intended this process ultimately to create financially independent Native Americans. When Truman signed the law, he claimed to be "glad" to sign a bill "which removes a lingering discrimination against our First Americans and gives them the same opportunities that our laws extend to all other citizens to vindicate their property rights and contracts in the court against violations by the Federal Government itself."[31] But buried beneath the rhetoric celebrating the codification of Indians' right to use the judicial system for redress were Truman's beliefs about the need for the market economy, not the federal government, to ensure economic uplift for Indians. He invoked Indians' work during World War II, noting "they have served valiantly on every battlefront," to justify their inclusion in the national polity. He then asserted that the commission would set the American Indian community on a path to prosperity by ending its relationship with the federal government. He closed, stating, "with the final settlement of all outstanding claims which this measure ensures, Indians can take their place without special handicap or special advantage in the economic life of our nation and share fully in its progress."[32]

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[31] Harry S. Truman, "Statement by the President Upon Signing Bill Creating the Indian Claims Commission," August 13, 1946, in Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, eds., *The American Presidency Project,* <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=12495> (accessed August 9, 2016). Despite Truman's rhetoric, in practice the commission proved to be far less beneficial to Indians. As Helen Hornbeck Tanner writes, the federal government viewed claims brought to the commission as the equivalent of a legal suit, and thus fought them with adversarial opposition. Tanner, "A Worm's-Eye View of Indian Claims Litigation," in *Native Americans and the Legacy of Harry S. Truman,* ed. Brian Hosmer (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2010), pp. 76-81, esp. p. 78.

As Truman looked forward to the integration of Indians into the nation's economy, he looked back to the war effort for evidence that they could secure their economic livelihoods through wage labor. The war, as he stated, had made visible the participation of Indigenous peoples in all facets of life in the United States. As many as twenty-five thousand Native Americans had served in the armed forces while another forty thousand worked in defense-related industries at home.[33] Marginalized communities had long used service during times of war to prove their loyalty and argue for inclusion in the national polity based on their willingness to sacrifice for a national project. But where African Americans and the Latinx community, for example, used their service during World War II to agitate for political rights and dignity, the situation was different for Indians.[34] To the non-native U.S. public, war service and wage labor in war industries offered evidence that Native Americans should be removed from reservations. Historian Donald Fixico observes that war work led "many Americans" to argue "that the desegregation of reservation communities would enable Indian people to earn their livelihood like everyone else."[35] As his words evince, how Indians secured their economic wellbeing troubled other Americans because they believed Indigenous economic activities did not resemble their own. Politicians and BIA officials viewed Native Americans' war work as evidence that they could leave reservations and find economic security through wage labor for private firms. With just the right push, these state officials believed, Indians' wardship status could be ended

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[32] Truman, "Statement by the President Upon Signing Bill Creating the Indian Claims Commission."

[33] Bernstein, *American Indians and World War II,* p. 131.

[34] Ronald Takaki offers an extensive overview of the history of racial minorities using their service during World War II to argue for greater inclusion in the US polity. Takaki, *Double Victory: A Multicultural History of America in World War II* (Boston: Back Bay Books, 2001).

[35] Fixico, *Termination and Relocation,* p. 15.

by limiting federal largesse, and markets of labor and consumer goods could liberate Native Americans from their dependency on the federal government.

Relocation's Gatekeepers

Those hoping to receive a BIA-purchased one-way bus ticket to Denver had to convince officials at their local agency, their respective area office, and the Denver Field Relocation Office of their suitability for the program. In this application process, BIA agents in Denver wielded an incredible power that cut across the space separating their city from the reservations, a power that landed squarely on the bodies of Native Americans. With the Denver office acting as the gatekeeper of federal money for relocation, the networks that traversed the distance between reservations and Denver were not frictionless conduits of people. Instead, the complex system linking rural and urban spaces was beset with state-sponsored obstructions constructed by the DFRO. If one wanted to navigate these obstacles, he or she had to acquiesce to the demands of the field office, which aimed to relocate only those with the potential to become economically independent through wage labor. The Denver office used its authority to initiate the marketization of Native Americans even before they arrived in the city, becoming the federal agency capable of hailing Native Americans as capitalist subjects of the state.

The first barrier the BIA erected revolved around an applicant's ability to articulate to the state that he or she self-identified as a U.S. citizen. The need for Indians to demonstrate citizenship did not come about by mere happenstance. In fact, the issue of Native American citizenship was anything but transparent in the 1950s. Prior to the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924, American Indians could become U.S. citizens through marriage, military service, or meeting the prescriptions of the General Allotment Act of 1887, but many states limited the legal

rights of American Indians regardless of federal citizenship status.[36] The 1924 act ostensibly granted citizenship to all people of Indigenous descent, but what protections this legal classification extended to them remained unclear. Utah, for example, did not grant voting rights to Native Americans until 1962.[37] The question of Indian citizenship proved especially troubling during termination and relocation, when, as Jessica Catelino observes, assumptions about the incompatibility of membership in a sovereign tribe and U.S. citizenship dominated federal policy and public thinking.[38] Addressing this assumed tension was at the heart of the BIA's relocation program not because of the protections citizenship afforded Indians, but because, in the federal government's view, by living on reservations, they were abdicating their responsibilities as citizens. According to historian Nicolas Rosenthal, "officials worked to choose the candidates whom they thought had the best chance of becoming the idealized American citizens they envisioned."[39] The BIA explained that relocation "is not the solution to the problems of all Indians." Instead, it continued, "it does provide an avenue for those who desire to exercise their full rights, responsibilities, and prerogatives of citizenship."[40] To the BIA, citizenship was not a

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[36] Lauren L. Basson, *White Enough to Be American?: Race Mixing, Indigenous People, and the Boundaries of State and Nation* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), pp. 31-33; Deborah A. Rosen, *American Indians and State Law: Sovereignty, Race, and Citizenship, 1790-1880* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), chaps. 5-6.

[37] David E. Wilkins, "Dismembering Natives: The Violence Done by Citizenship Fights," *Indian Country Today* (blog), May 16, 2014, <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2014/05/16/dismembering-natives-violence-done-citizenship-fights> (accessed September 28, 2016).

[38] Jessica R. Catelino, "Termination Redux?: Seminole Citizenship and Economy from Truman to Gaming," in *Native Americans and the Legacy of Harry S. Truman,* ed. Hosmer, pp. 122-35, referenced material on pp. 122-23.

[39] Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country,* p. 51.

[40] B.I.A., "The Bureau of Indian Affairs Voluntary Relocation Services Program," (unpublished manuscript, n.d.), p. 7, folder 721.72 "Field Relocation Offices," box 1, Employment Assistance Reports—Phoenix Area Office.

simple legal classification; it was a performative act that required Native Americans to attend to specific obligations.

Foremost among those responsibilities, according to an internal BIA report, was becoming "a taxpaying citizen."[41] The bureau had a financial incentive to relocate only those it believed would become employed wage earners who paid taxes through payroll withholdings. Beginning in FY 1957, the first year of AVT, Relocation Services had an operating budget of 3,472,000 dollars and it estimated the cost of relocating an individual at 347.20, an increase of 177 percent from the cost in FY 1956.[42] That money covered a range of expenses associated with travel to the destination, subsistence payments until the first paycheck, household goods and furniture, and healthcare.[43] Despite the upfront costs of relocation, the BIA believed the program would eventually pay for itself once relocatees gained full-time employment and paid taxes. Although the cost of relocation varied with respect to a number of factors, including family size, the BIA believed that an employed relocatee could pay back the federal government in fifteen months simply through federal payroll withholdings.[44] Because the BIA understood paying taxes

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[41] Ibid, p. 7.

[42] Madigan, "The American Indian Relocation Program," p. 5.

[43] The BIA designated eleven different costs associated with relocation for which applicants were eligible based on need. They were: 1) physical examination; 2) transportation to destination; 3) subsistence en route; 4) subsistence at destination; 5) personal appearance; 6) transportation of household goods; 7) housewares; 8) furniture; 9) health insurance; 10) emergency subsistence during unemployment; 11) unusual emergencies. B.I.A., "The Bureau of Indian Affairs Voluntary Relocation Services Program," pp. 6-7.

[44] B.I.A., Branch of Relocation Services, "Adult Vocational Training Services Activity," (unpublished manuscript, October, 1960), p. 5, folder 797 "AVT—General—Inactive Correspondence," box 2, Field Employment Assistance Reports—Denver Field Relocation Office. The U.S. Treasury Department decided that the financial assistance AVT relocatees received, including tuition assistance, constituted non-taxable grant money and relocatees did not have to declare that money in their federal income tax filings. H.T. Swartz, Director, Tax Rulings Division of the U.S. Treasury Department, to Charles F. Miller, Chief, Branch of Relocation Services, July 12, 1956, folder 797 "AVT—General—Inactive Correspondence," box 2, Employment Assistance Reports—Denver Field Relocation Office.

as a material expression of citizenship, and it wanted to ensure that it recouped the cost of relocation, the field offices required applicants to demonstrate that they recognized themselves as citizen-subjects willing to undertake these responsibilities before entering the labor market.

Wayne Darrough (Yomba Shoshone) discovered this when he applied to move to Denver through the AVT program in August 1960. Darrough met with his relocation officer at the Nevada Agency in Stewart that month and quickly set about compiling the necessary paperwork to submit with his application. Not surprisingly, he had to have a fluent command of English to complete the application. The application asked for eighteen supporting documents. Some of the forms, like the medical examination and Indian Family Health Certificate, could be provided by a physician or a public health official, but the applicant had to seek out the particular state agents to acquire these documents. The BIA required other supporting materials to provide evidence of an applicant's citizenship. The most important documents on the application's checklist were the birth certificate and social security records. If an applicant did not have either of these in his or her possession, he or she would have to obtain a certified copy of at least one of the documents. Darrough could not provide a copy of his birth certificate, but he did have his social security records, and agents in Nevada, at the Phoenix Area Office, and at the DFRO deemed that sufficient.[45] Had Darrough not been able to articulate his relationship to the state as a citizen through official documentation, the Nevada Agency would have considered him ineligible for relocation.

Men like Darrough had an extra opportunity to prove they had already undertaken one of the "responsibilities" of citizenship by showing evidence of their draft status. Under the Selective

[45] B.I.A., "Advice of Arrival of Relocatees: Wayne Darrough," correspondence, November 23, 1960, folder 721.90 "Transmittal—Departures, Arrivals—Nevada Agency (1961)," box 2, Employment Assistance Reports—Phoenix Area Office.

Service Act of 1948, all males over the age of eighteen had to register for the draft and those between the ages of nineteen and twenty-six were eligible for the military. Although the available records do not list Darrough's age at the time of his application, he did show evidence of his draft registration to the Nevada Agency, which the agent noted as "1-A," meaning he was available to serve without restrictions.[46] Participants in the relocation program could secure a draft deferment once the BIA accepted their application. Darrough, however, could not receive his deferment until the DFRO processed his application and provided a relocation date. He had to wait six weeks while his application was reviewed first by the Agency Superintendent in Stewart and then by the Area Director in Phoenix before it arrived in Denver. His application was further delayed by a bureaucratic decision to limit relocation applications, but because he applied on August 18 and this decision was not communicated to the Nevada Agency until September 2, the agents in Denver agreed to review his case. On October 6, the DFRO assigned Darrough a relocation date of November 30.[47] Although securing a draft deferment required extra work on the part of BIA agents, Darrough's commitment to serving his country, coupled with his "excellent GATB," the General Aptitude Test Battery exam, convinced the Denver office to assign a relocation date.[48]

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[46] The Selective Service stopped classifying male registrants in 1976. To view the list of classifications used between 1948 and 1976, see Selective Service System, "Classifications," <https://www.sss.gov/Classifications> (accessed September 22, 2016). On the history of the draft, see George Q. Flynn, *The Draft, 1940-1973* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1993); Robert. K. Griffith, *The U.S. Army's Transition to an All-Volunteer Force, 1968-1974* (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center for Military History, 1996); Beth Bailey, *America's Army: Making the All-Volunteer Force* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 2009).

[47] B.I.A., "Advice of Arrival of Relocatees: Wayne Darrough,"

[48] In August 1958, the Central Office sent a memorandum to each of the Field Relocation Offices informing them that use of the GATB in screening applicants was entirely at their discretion. However, the Central Office believed the GATB to be most useful in instances "where there is little or no correlation between the individual's experience and education and the training objectives selected." For some vocational programs in Denver, especially those at the Emily Griffiths Opportunity School,

Citizenship alone was not enough to ensure eligibility for the relocation program. The BIA's requirement that an applicant live on a reservation posed another obstacle. Wayne Darrough had to provide an enrollment affidavit as evidence that he was a member of a recognized tribe and had a relationship with the agency on his home reservation. Unlike Darrough, Wheeler Jackson (San Carlos Apache) found himself excluded from the program. In 1960, Jackson wrote to the Phoenix Area Office to inquire about the possibility of receiving support once he was released from Arizona's Florence State Prison. Jackson had lived away from his reservation for more than five years and worked several odd jobs over that time without securing steady employment. In his letter, he stressed the difficulties he encountered as a Native American in rural Arizona living away from his home reservation. Unsurprisingly, he mentioned the hopelessness of his employment prospects several times, intimating that his dire circumstances forced the choices that led to his conviction and incarceration for attempted grand theft.[49] In response, Harold M. Mann, the Area Relocation Specialist at the Phoenix Area Office, strongly discouraged Jackson from even applying. Mann predicted that Jackson could not convince a field relocation office like the one in Denver to read his application, let alone approve it.[50]

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applicants had to meet minimum requirements on each of the four sections of the GATB. Charles F. Miller to All Field Relocation Officers, correspondence, October 21, 1958, folder 797 "AVT—General—Inactive Correspondence," box 2, Field Employment Assistance Reports—Denver Field Relocation Office; Denver Field Employment Assistance Office, "Approved P.L. 959 Vocational Training Course DE-63-24, Nurse Aid (2-42.20)," September 27, 1963, folder 797.20 "Training Courses Approved (1 of 2)," box 2, Field Employment Assistance Reports—Denver Field Relocation Office.

[49] Wheeler Jackson to Phoenix Area Office, n.d., folder 721.80 "Relocatees—General Correspondence," box 1, Employment Assistance Reports—Phoenix Area Office.

[50] Harold M. Mann to Wheeler Jackson, December 2, 1960, folder 721.80 "Relocatees—General Correspondence," box 1, Employment Assistance Reports—Phoenix Area Office.

Jackson's hypothetical application faced several problems. Mann told Jackson that, for one, his current situation gave the BIA pause. The conviction and incarceration were troubling because they served as evidence he could not uphold his responsibilities as a citizen. Even more problematic was Jackson's recent employment history, which unfolded entirely off the reservation. Jackson's inability to hold steady employment would certainly count against him if he applied for relocation. And yet, this mattered little because he did not live on the reservation and did not have an established relationship with the agency office there. By seeking employment off-reservation without the help of the BIA, Jackson had made himself temporarily ineligible for relocation assistance. If he wanted to apply to the program, Mann wrote, Jackson would need to return to the San Carlos reservation for a minimum of six months just to be considered eligible.[51]

In his response to Jackson's letter, Mann simply applied the policy set forth by the Branch of Relocation Services and implemented by the field offices. Had Jackson attempted to apply for help in relocating to Denver, he surely would have met the same fate as Albert Gooden (Turtle Mountain Chippewa) and his family. Gooden, not unlike Jackson, was counseled against applying because he was not known to the agents in Belcourt, North Dakota, his home agency. The Goodens moved to Los Angeles in 1953 with assistance from the BIA, but from there the family bounced around several western states. By 1959, they lived in Vernal, Utah, and Albert hoped to go to Denver through the AVT program. The year before, Gooden and his wife, who signed her name as "Mrs. Albert L. Gooden," had written to the Turtle Mountain Agency asking for assistance with the AVT application. That request was evidently denied because Mrs. Gooden

[51] Wheeler Jackson to Phoenix Area Office, n.d., folder 721.80 "Relocatees—General Correspondence," box 1, Employment Assistance Reports—Phoenix Area Office; Harold M. Mann to Wheeler Jackson, correspondence, December 2, 1960, folder 721.80 "Relocatees—General Correspondence," box 1, Employment Assistance Reports—Phoenix Area Office.

wrote again in May 1960. This time, however, she also wrote to Chester Hazard, the Field Relocation Officer in Denver. Armed with the knowledge that her request would be denied because the family did not live on the Turtle Mountain Reservation, she invoked the BIA's own rhetoric of financial independence through wage labor to make her husband's case. She wrote:

> Well we just cannot see going way back up to North Dakota right by Denver when there is no work up around the Turtle Mountain Reservation to keep us for six months. We would probably have to live off the Government them six months then be sent back down to Denver which would cost a lot more than if we would just go from here which is only a little over three hundred miles."[52]

Ultimately, both Hazard and Thurman C. Ingram, the Agency Relocation Officer in Belcourt, denied the request, with Ingram reiterating that "an applicant for Adult Vocational Training must reside on *restricted* or *trust land* or *Federal lands* under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior."[53] If the Goodens hoped to secure financial assistance for relocation, they would have to return to the Turtle Mountain Reservation and work with the agents there just to apply.

The DFRO's power over Native Americans stretched beyond controlling who could apply. Because the BIA committed to relocating only those it viewed as able to thrive as wage-earning capitalist subjects, relocation officials in Denver used many proxy criteria to determine which candidates were likely to succeed. In some cases, the office could make relocation contingent upon an applicant changing to better fit the BIA's ideal of a wage earner. This occurred most notably with regard to an applicant's health, which the DFRO attempted to control

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[52] Mr. and Mrs. Albert L. Gooden to Denver Field Relocation Office, May 10, 1960, folder "AVT—General—Inactive Correspondence," box 2, Field Employment Assistance Reports—Denver Field Relocation Office.

[53] C.E. Hazard to Mr. and Mrs. Albert L. Gooden, May 11, 1960, folder "AVT—General—Inactive Correspondence," box 2, Employment Assistance Reports—Denver Field Relocation Office; Thurman C. Ingram to Mr. and Mrs. Albert L. Gooden, May 17, 1960, folder "AVT—General—Inactive Correspondence," box 2, Field Employment Assistance Reports—Denver Field Relocation Office.

from afar.[54] If an applicant's body did not comport with certain standards, he or she had little hope of leaving the reservation through the program, at least not until demonstrating to the BIA that a prescribed health regimen could be followed. In this way, the DFRO used the application process as a technology of governance over Native Americans, turning the applicant's body into a site upon which the state could prescribe notions of health linked to capitalist productivity.[55]

One woman, Elena Honadick (Mojave), learned firsthand how committed the DFRO was to supporting only those it viewed as healthy. Ironically, she wanted to contribute to the health of others, applying to the AVT program in the spring of 1960 with hopes of moving to Denver and becoming a nurse aid. The Denver office wanted to accept her application, but it did not assign a relocation date due to what it deemed her "obesity." Charles Hazard voiced his concern to the Colorado River Agency in Parker, Arizona, over her application. Although the DFRO wanted to assist Honadick, it decided to delay her relocation without accepting or rejecting her application. The official reason given for doing so was that the field office could not place her in a vocational course until October. However, Denver officials easily could have accepted her application and assigned a relocation date closer to the start of her vocational training. Instead, Hazard told the Relocation Officer in Parker that his office wanted to wait until the autumn to reassess her application. He explained that her "examining physician has recommended that she follow a low

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[54] *The Navajo Yearbook of Planning in Action: Calendar Year 1955, Report No. V,* comp. Robert W. Young (Window Rock, AZ: Navajo Agency, 1956), p. 69, ft. nt. 1. On July 1, 1955, the federal government shifted responsibility for Indian health care from the Department of the Interior to the U.S. Public Health Service in an effort to standardize health care treatment and outcomes for Native Americans. B.I.A., "Your Government and the Indian" (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1962), box 5, folder 8, DCCR Collection.

[55] The regulation of populations through public health regimes has often been at the heart of imperial and colonial projects. On health and hygiene in U.S. imperialism, see Warwick Anderson, *Colonial Pathologies: American Tropical Medicine, Race, and Hygiene in the Philippines* (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2006); on the regulation of public health in the British Empire, see Alison Bashford, *Imperial Hygiene: A Critical History of Colonialism, Nationalism and Public Health* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).

calorie reducing diet" and that she should not move to Denver until after "the results of her reducing diet should be known to herself and her local examining physician."[56] Hazard communicated his decision to hold her application "in temporary abeyance" until she showed evidence that she could follow a prescribed diet and improve her health according to his office's metrics.[57] Hazard feared that Honadick's health would limit her ability to be a productive wage earner and that responsibility for her welfare would continue to fall to the state.

To judge an applicant's health, Indian Health Service physicians performed several different tests. Diné applicants, for example, had to undergo a medical examination at the Gallup Navajo Medical Clinic to submit with their application. The exam included a urinalysis and chest radiograph, both standard procedures. [58] The clinic used urinalysis to report color, specific gravity, albumin, and sugar, as well as any other notable observations, to the relocation officers. The chest film could indicate any number of medical problems relating to the heart or lungs, ranging from congestive heart failure or pneumonia all the way to pulmonary nodules, pleural abnormalities, or cavities indicative of cancer. During FY 1959, the year for which the best DFRO records exist, all three direct employment relocatees who were diagnosed with tuberculosis either did not make it to Denver or were sent back to their home reservation. Several other relocatees with undisclosed illnesses also had to leave Denver and return to the reservation

[56] C. E. Hazard to Superintendent, Colorado River Agency, May 17, 1960, folder "721.91 Transmittal Departures—Arrivals, Colorado River Agency, 1961," box 2, Employment Assistance Reports—Phoenix Area Office.

[57] Ibid.

[58] See the collection of medical reports in folder "Relocation Medical Examinations—Completed 1956," box 3, Employment Assistance Reports—Navajo Area Office.

for health care.[59] The BIA relied on a range of medical exams to inform its decision about relocation.

Good health, in the eyes of relocation officers, was not only a result of genetics, but the outcome of proper morality. Regulating intimate practices across great distances had been a hallmark of European colonialism, as Ann Laura Stoler argues, asserting that "sexual matters" were "foundational to the material terms in which colonial projects were carried out."[60] The BIA's relocation program followed this blueprint. At the Gallup Clinic, where applicants were screened for communicable diseases and hereditary disorders, the BIA also wanted to know if they had contracted a sexually transmitted infection. In addition to the urinalysis and chest x-ray, applicants were subjected to the Wassermann Test, a blood analysis used to detect the presence of syphilis antibodies.[61] The records do not indicate if a positive test by itself would lead to a denial, but during FY 1959, the one applicant whose test indicated a sexually transmitted infection, a Diné man who applied to Denver through the Tuba City, Arizona, substation, had his application cancelled. The BIA was not alone in using sexual histories to decide if applicants would receive federal assistance. Access to other federal welfare programs in the 1950s

[59] B.I.A., "Analysis of Relocations for Fiscal Year 1959," box 4, Field Employment Assistance Reports—Denver Field Relocation Office.

[60] Ann Laura Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), p. 14.

[61] See the collection of medical reports in folder "Relocation Medical Examinations—Completed 1956," box 3, Employment Assistance Reports—Navajo Area Office. The Wassermann Test, first developed in 1906 by the German team of August Paul von Wassermann, Albert Neisser, and Carl Buck, was one of the earliest diagnostic tests to analyze blood serum for antibody levels. However, the test could produce false-positive results for individuals who were nonsyphilitic. On the history of the Wassermann Test and its contribution to medical practice, see Rafal Bialynicki-Birula, "The 100th Anniversary of Wassermann-Neisser-Buck Reaction," *Clinics in Dermatology* 26 (Jan.-Feb., 2008): 79-88.

depended on proper heterosexual activity within the confines of a state-sanctioned marriage.[62] That the BIA included a report on an individual's sexual health in the application indicates that the bureau used this marker to make larger decisions about an applicant's ability to perform productive labor in Denver.

At the same time, neither reproductive labor, nor reproduction itself, constituted grounds for cancellation. But the BIA had a strong preference for relocating mothers as part of a legally married family unit so that it could support her husband. After 1958, the bureau refused to relocate pregnant women, preferring they stay on the reservation to receive prenatal medical care.[63] Once a mother gave birth, her options broadened, but maternal status also introduced more uncertainty. Single mothers with children born outside a state-sanctioned marriage did relocate to Denver, but most mothers relocated as wives of men receiving assistance from the BIA. While the field offices did provide relocation aid to single mothers, the BIA unofficially discouraged them from applying, instead urging them to marry their child's father and have him apply for relocation as the head of a family unit.[64] In FY 1959, sixty-three family units applied for relocation to Denver and all but two were two-parent households. Of those two exceptions, one, a San Carlos Apache woman and her child, postponed the application for unstated reasons,

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[62] John E. Hansan notes that until 1960, federal assistance was administered at the state level through block grants and individual states could deny participation in the Aid to Dependent Children program if the children did not live in "suitable homes" or the family was "undesirable." Most often, this meant that single and/or African-American mothers did not qualify for the program regardless of financial need. Hansan, "The Federal-State Public Welfare Programs: 1935-1995," *The Social Welfare History Project at Virginia Commonwealth University Libraries,* n.d., <http://socialwelfare.library.vcu.edu /public-welfare/federal-state-public-welfare-programs/> (accessed September 19, 2016). On the importance of the heterosexual nuclear family to U.S. politics more broadly, especially after 1964, see Robert O. Self, *All in the Family: The Realignment of American Democracy since the 1960s* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2012).

[63] Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country,* p. 56.

[64] Ibid.*,* p. 55.

while a second woman cancelled her application for direct employment when she decided instead to enter AVT.[65] The Denver office's willingness to relocate single mothers with children fits with the policy of other offices. According to Frederick Hoxie, approximately 25 percent of non-partnered relocatees during the 1950s were women, and a substantial portion of those were mothers with at least one child.[66] While single mothers did at times use relocation to leave the reservation, the BIA did not view the program as a substitution for heterosexual marriage and child-rearing in a two-parent family. Where possible, it preferred to provide employment assistance to husbands and fathers, not wives and mothers, because it remained committed to the male-headed, heterosexual family.

The scrutiny with which the Denver Field Office operated when assessing applicants and applications from afar served a purpose. The coercive technologies employed in shaping applicants into citizen-subjects contributed to the project of preparing them for the market. Despite wanting to do so, the BIA could not relocate all Native Americans, so it devised a system in which only those on reservations who convinced the field offices that they had the potential to be effective wage earners could receive financial assistance. In this state-sponsored migration system, the spatial extension of the field office's powers transcended the metropolitan borders and preceded relocatees' arrival in Denver.

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[65] B.I.A., "Analysis of Relocations for Fiscal Year 1959," box 4, Field Employment Assistance Reports—Denver Field Relocation Office.

[66] Fredrick E. Hoxie, "Seeing and Not Seeing: American Indians in the Truman Era," in *Native Americans and the Legacy of Harry S. Truman,* ed. Hosmer, pp. 3-21, referenced material on p. 15.

Relations of Capitalism in Denver

The DFRO's goal to shape Native Americans into capitalist subjects ready for the labor market did not end with the application process. In fact, securing a relocation date was only the first step for Indian people in navigating the policies and decisions of the office. Those policies, by design, forced relocatees to undertake practices intended to reproduce the relations of capitalism. Agents in Denver focused on two aspects of urban life, housing and managing finances, to inculcate capitalist ideas. To the BIA, these market practices were not only essential to reproducing capitalism, they were the ones Native Americans needed the most assistance to learn. In the field office, agents worked diligently to engender market behavior, hoping to turn Native Americans into full-fledged capitalist subjects with the knowledge and discipline urban life required.

One of the ways in which the Denver BIA agents worked most diligently to shape relocatees into capitalist subjects was by teaching them to budget the money they accumulated through wages. Agents began by managing the financial assistance relocatees received before they earned their first paycheck. For those who came to Denver through AVT, the office recognized that it could not operate a one-size-fits-all financial disbursement schedule. The needs of each individual or family differed greatly and the trainees relied on grant money to support themselves during training before they could earn a living wage through full-time employment. In May 1956, the DFRO reported to the Branch of Relocation Services that it had begun altering the disbursement schedule, especially for families, to meet the needs of each trainee. Because trainees with families were almost always men, agents distributed grant money to male heads of households. Agents set disbursements at weekly, biweekly, or monthly intervals depending on their assessment of a husband's financial management skills. According to the

DFRO, some families needed help with budgeting, so the office moved to dispense funds weekly in an effort to limit how much money the family would have at any particular moment, although the amount of each payment varied so that families would have sufficient funds to pay bills as they came due. For other families deemed better at budgeting, the office felt more comfortable distributing larger sums at less frequent intervals.[67] To the agents in Denver, controlling the flow of the grant money to AVT trainees and their families so that they learned how to budget encouraged a foundational practice of market discipline.

For direct-employment relocatees who began earning wages shortly after arrival, the office had to find other ways to control finances. Beyond the initial subsistence money distributed before the first paycheck or in cases of financial emergency, relocatees supported themselves and their families entirely through wages. For the field offices, in Denver and elsewhere, the initial subsistence money was a constant source of tension. According to Charles F. Miller, who served as the Chief of the Branch of Relocation Services, "the issuance of a full week's subsistence allowance immediately upon arrival of the relocatee generally and usually resulted in some form of celebration and the relocatee did not show up for a day or two, and when he did show up, he was broke."[68] This assessment, trading as it did on a racist stereotype of Native Americans as alcohol-dependent individuals incapable of exercising self-restraint, colored how the field offices handled the distribution of money; agents were reticent to issue funds in a lump sum. At the same time, Relocation Services worried about the field offices becoming de facto banking institutions for relocatees. As Miller reiterated, the field offices were not to

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[67] B.I.A., "May Narrative Report—Denver Field Relocation Office," 1956, folder 721.72 "Monthly Report, Vocational Training, FY 1956," box 1, Field Employment Assistance Reports—Denver Field Relocation Office.

[68] Charles F. Miller to Charles S. Rovin, October 13, 1954, folder 250 "Finance-Instructions on Supervised," box 1, Field Employment Assistance Reports—Denver Field Relocation Office.

provide financial services to relocatees, but instead to direct new arrivals to private financial institutions.[69] The DFRO did so independently of the wishes of the relocatees, forcing them into checking accounts with the Central Bank and Trust Company if they wanted access to their subsistence money.

Opening accounts for relocatees at Central Bank provided the DFRO with another layer of control: the accounts were jointly owned. Each account had three owners, two of whom worked at the field office. The agents, as joint owners, had the ability to write checks on behalf of the relocatee or to close the account. At the same time, the rules of Central Bank's so-called New Way Account forced relocatees to consider their use of money carefully. Opening the account required a two-dollar fee paid by the relocatee, who then received twenty checks. If the relocatee wrote more than twenty checks against the account, regardless of the total amount debited, more checks had to be purchased from the bank, which were sold in sets of twenty for two dollars.[70] Although financial institutions charging account owners ten cents per check was standard practice in the 1950s—commonly known as Dime A Check or the Tenplan—the DFRO used this system to reinforce ideas of saving and budgeting by placing what was in effect a ten-cent surcharge on each check written against the funds in the account. The agents further attempted to restrict relocatees' ability to write checks by holding unused checks in the office and requiring a countersignature from one of the joint owners, forcing a relocatee to seek approval for each expense.[71] Charles S. Rovin, the Acting Assistant Commissioner for

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[69] Ibid.

[70] Charles F. Miller to Stanley D. Lyman, November 24, 1954, folder 250 "Finance-Instructions on Supervised," box 1, Field Employment Assistance Reports—Denver Relocation Field Office; Stanley D. Lyman to Charles F. Miller, December 3, 1954, folder 250 "Finance-Instructions on Supervised," box 1, Field Employment Assistance Reports—Denver Field Relocation Office.

Community Services at the BIA Central Office in Washington, eventually decided against the countersignature requirement, but he believed that holding the unused checks in the office would still allow the DFRO to control relocatees' spending habits.[72]

Part of the reason BIA agents in Denver could be so involved in the consumption habits of relocatees is because the office knew exactly how much each relocatee had to budget for the housing the office had secured. Despite D'Arcy McNickle's claim that the BIA wanted to create a legion of Babbitts, the reality was that newly urban Indians lived in the sparsest of accommodations.[73] Because the goal of relocation was to facilitate the entry of Native Americans into the variety of urban markets, any movement—upward into the middle class or outward to the suburbs—would come about only through consumption patterns that prioritized thrifty spending and diligent saving habits.[74] Field offices in every city may have secured housing for Native Americans, but their options were constrained by the financial security of relocatees, who could afford only the lowest rents. Those who relocated through AVT did receive financial assistance while in training, but that aid often had to cover food and housing for entire families. In FY 1958, for example, the weekly allowance to those in Denver through AVT ranged from 30 dollars for an individual up to 97 dollars for the largest families.[75]

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[71] Charles F. Miller to Field Relocation Offices, October 13, 1954, folder 250 "Finance-Instructions on Supervised," box 1, Field Employment Assistance Reports—Denver Field Relocation Office.

[72] Charles S. Rovin to Charles F. Miller, November 15, 1954, folder 250 "Finance-Instructions on Supervised," box 1, Field Employment Assistance Reports—Denver Field Relocation Office.

[73] This was especially true in Chicago. See LaGrand, *Indian Metropolis,* pp. 112-22.

[74] In 1957, the BIA announced a pilot program in which the bureau would match the savings of about one hundred relocatees to assist with the purchase of a home. Committee for Study of Relocated Indians, "Minutes," December 11, 1957, folder 4, box 2, DCCR Collection.

[75] American Friends Service Committee, memorandum, May 12, 1958, folder 2, box 4, DCCR collection.

The DFRO placed most relocatees in inexpensive housing concentrated in downtown Denver's Capitol Hill and the neighborhoods just to the west. This housing was available because Denver's postwar housing boom drew many home owners out of the city and into the suburbs, leading to an increase in unoccupied homes.[76] In response, the city changed much of the zoning in the downtown neighborhoods during the late 1950s and early 1960s to allow single-family dwellings to be converted into multi-family ones. This also opened the door for the construction of the larger apartment complexes that dot the central neighborhoods today.[77] Relocatees without families, especially single men like Teddy Charley, often stayed in boarding houses in these neighborhoods where rent covered both room and board. In 1961, Charley worked at Ruwart Manufacturing Company as a woodworker for a wage of $1.25 per hour. He spent 20 dollars per week on rent, a typical amount for those who received room and board, to stay at 1218 Kalamath Street, twelve blocks west and two blocks south of Civic Center Park.[78] Charley's Lincoln Park neighborhood had one of the highest concentrations of residents with Spanish surnames according to a 1967 report that analyzed data from the 1960 decennial census, and it sat within the area of the city where residents had the lowest median income.[79] Charley

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[76] On the history of Denver's suburbs, see Stephen J. Leonard and Thomas J. Noel, *Denver: Mining Camp to Metropolis* (Niwot: University Press of Colorado, 1990), chaps. 22-25.

[77] Phil H. Goodstein, *Denver's Capitol Hill: One Hundred Years of Life in a Vibrant Urban Neighborhood* (Denver: Stuart McPhail—Life Publications, 1988), pp. 126-30. See also B. Erin Cole, "R-0: Race, Sexuality, and Single-Family Zoning in Denver's Park Hill and Capitol Hill Neighborhoods, 1956-1989" (PhD diss., University of New Mexico, 2014).

[78] Charley's tribal affiliation is unknown. He was referred to Denver by the Pima Agency, whose residents are today known as Akimel O'odham, but a copy of his report was also sent to the Shiprock Subagency, which was part of the Navajo Agency in Gallup, New Mexico. It is unclear why his report was sent to the Shiprock Subagency when he was referred by the Pima Agency. C.E. Hazard to Phoenix Area Relocation Specialist, Report on Teddy Charley, May 26, 1961, folder 721.910 "General Correspondence Relocatees A-M, 1961," box 4, Employment Assistance Reports—Phoenix Area Office.

[79] Mountain States Telephone, "A Profile of Denver and the Denver Metropolitan Region," report prepared for Denver Chamber of Commerce and Denver Committee on Human Relations and Full

was not the only relocatee residing in this neighborhood. In March 1964, the Denver Commission on Human Relations conducted a census of relocated Indians and found that at least seven Native Americans had 1218 Kalamath Street as their last known address in the city.[80]

Subsidized public housing provided another option for relocated Native Americans, but they faced an uphill battle in accessing these accommodations. The Denver Housing Authority administered placement in public housing and required applicants to reside in Denver for six continuous months before becoming eligible unless an applicant had served in the military.[81] Families applying for housing also had to demonstrate need based on annual income, with maximum limits set according to the number of children in the family. In Denver in 1958, a couple without children had to have an income that did not exceed 2,800 dollars. A family with one child could not earn more than 3,300 dollars annually. The limit increased incrementally with each additional child up to seven, topping at 4,300 dollars annually for families with seven or more children.[82] Between the residency requirements and income limits, few relocatees qualified for public housing in Denver. In October 1957, for example, as few as sixty indigenous families lived in subsidized housing, about 2 percent of all families in public housing in the Denver area.[83]

Employment, 1967, charts 5, 11, Western History and Genealogy Collection, Denver Public Library, Denver, CO.

[80] Helen L. Peterson, "Appeal for Help!!!," March 6, 1964, folder 22, box 2, DCCR collection.

[81] Denver Committee for Study of Relocated Indians, "Minutes," October 30, 1957, folder 4, box 2, DCCR Collection.

[82] Edward T. Kerley to Los Angeles, Chicago, and Denver Field Relocation Offices, March 14, 1958, folder 799.3 "Local Relocation Studies," box 4, Field Employment Assistance Reports—Denver Field Relocation Office.

[83] Denver Committee for Study of Relocated Indians, "Minutes," October 30, 1957, folder 4, box 2, DCCR Collection.

For those who did manage to move into public housing, their leases were tenuous at best because their living arrangements ran counter to dominant ideals of the nuclear family as the fundamental economic and affective unit. Eligibility for public housing was determined by the income of a familial unit with at most two members capable of earning an income, although it was more likely that in a household with a woman and a man, only the man earned a wage. Historian Robert Self argues that from the mid-1960s onward, debates about controlling the family became an animating issue for the country and, crucially, these debates were always also contests over the organization of the country's political economy.[84] The same was true in Denver in the 1950s. In a 1957 letter from the DFRO to all relocated families, Stanley Lyman explained that the Denver Housing Authority had made three broad complaints about Indians in public housing. The first was the familiar generalization that Native Americans consumed too much alcohol and were therefore poor residents. More troubling to the Housing Authority, however, was that Indian families often invited other relatives to move in with them or that families allowed visitors to stay for too long. In both cases, the expansion of the nuclear family to include other adults capable of earning an income constituted a transgression of the Housing Authority's rules.[85] Multigenerational indigenous families in public housing ran counter to the dominant notion of the heterosexual, male-breadwinning, nuclear family as the constitutive economic and social unit of U.S. society.

If relocation truly was about enabling Native Americans to support themselves in a market economy, housing, and how it was secured, played an outsized role in the reproduction of capitalist relations, especially during the Cold War. Debates about the role of the federal

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[84] Self, *All in the Family,* pp. 11-12.

[85] Denver Committee for Study of Relocated Indians, "Summary of Conference to Explore Problems of Relocated Indians in Denver," November 1957, folder 4, box 2, DCCR Collection.

government in the U.S. housing market had raged since the Great Depression, when state efforts to house the populace took two separate paths. To increase private homeownership, the federal government formed the Homeowners Loan Corporation (HOLC) in 1934 to provide low-interest, long-term mortgage loans and, in 1937, it created the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) to insure mortgages and encourage the savings-and-loan industry to lend money for home purchases.[86] Then, in 1937, the U.S. Congress passed the Wagner-Steagall Act. That act created the United States Housing Authority, which distributed subsidies to local housing agencies, like the Denver Housing Authority. While supporters of the act envisioned public housing as viable alternative to private homeownership for middle- and working-class families, in practice federally subsidized housing attended only to the needs of the poorest Americans because a coalition of conservative opponents, including the real estate lobby, opposed public housing, arguing it too closely resembled Soviet efforts.[87] By the 1950s, millions of Americans had taken advantage of the FHA and Veterans Administration mortgage programs, leading to a drastic uptick in private homeownership rates and private construction and real estate industries across the country. Public housing, however, was doubly problematic. First, it did not encourage private capital accumulation in the form of personal property. Second, it diverted the money residents paid in rent away from private landlords and elevated the federal government and local housing authorities as actors in the real estate market in a way that limited private competition.[88] In cities

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[86] Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 215.

[87] Alexander von Hoffman, "The End of the Dream: The Political Struggle of America's Public Housers," *Journal of Planning History* 4, no. 3 (August 2005): 222-53, referenced material on pp. 244-46; Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier,* pp. 219-30.

[88] Since the passage in 1937 of the United States Housing Act, which authorized the federal government to provide low-cost housing to qualifying individuals and families, real estate developers have opposed what they have considered an intrusion into free enterprise by the state. Kenneth Jackson's

across the West, especially Los Angeles and Oakland, Cold War crusaders in the 1950s equated public housing with socialism and vehemently fought its expansion.[89] Although the Denver Housing Authority did not meet the same fate as other local housing authorities, the stigma of public housing as anti-capitalist and un-American lingered.

And yet, as much as the DFRO might have wished to see relocatees become homeowners right away, Indians faced structural obstacles in the housing market. Most relocatees did not arrive with enough liquid capital or other collateral assets to secure mortgages, and, because they earned such meager wages upon their arrival, ownership in either the city or the suburbs was not financially feasible until they had saved enough money to purchase. And in the 1950s, racial minorities struggled to receive mortgage loans because of legal, race-based exclusionary practices. Both independent financial institutions and the FHA engaged in redlining, which "applied…notions of ethnic and racial worth to real-estate appraising on an unprecedented scale."[90] This practice privileged homogenous neighborhoods of white Americans, which

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chapter on the history of public housing remains one of the clearest and most concise analyses of the uphill battle advocates of public housing have faced. See Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, chap. 12. For other histories of public housing in the United States, see Miles L. Colean, *A Backward Glance—An Oral History: The Growth of Government Housing Policy in the United States, 1934-1975* (Washington, DC: The Fund, 1975); Gail Radford, *Modern Housing for America: Policy Struggles in the New Deal Era* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996); von Hoffman, "The End of the Dream"; D. Bradford Hunt, "Was the 1937 U.S. Housing Act a Pyrrhic Victory?" *Journal of Planning History* 4, no. 3 (August 2005): 195-221. On housing policy during the Truman Administration, see Richard O. Davies, *Housing Reform during the Truman Administration* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1966).

[89] On the defeat of public housing in Los Angeles, see Avila, *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight*, pp. 38-41; on opposition in Oakland, see Self, *American Babylon*, pp. 73-74.

[90] Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, p. 199. On the history of redlining and federal Home Owners' Loan Corporation, the forerunner to the FHA, in the 1930s and 1940s, see Amy E. Hillier, "Redlining and the Home Owners' Loan Corporation," *Journal of Urban History* 29, no. 4 (May 2003): 394-420. On private developers' influence in the creation of these federal policies, see Paige Glotzer, "Exclusion in Arcadia: How Suburban Developers Circulated Ideas about Discrimination, 1980-1950," *Journal of Urban History* 41, no. 3 (May 2015): 479-94. On efforts to end race-based housing segregation during the Cold War, see Cheng, *Citizens of Asian America,* chap. 1.

received the highest rating. Institutions were reluctant to loan funds to non-whites for home purchases in these neighborhoods. At the same time, the FHA's *Underwriting Manual* instructed institutions not to invest in racially and ethnically diverse neighborhoods, which were literally encircled by red lines on residential security maps.[91] Compounding the difficulties for relocatees were restrictive racial covenants, contracts that effectively kept racial minorities from purchasing homes with such restrictions in their deeds. Although the Supreme Court ruled in 1948 that states could not enforce restrictive covenants, it held that private parties could voluntarily adhere to these racially-based deed contracts and often the FHA required restrictive covenants before guaranteeing a loan.[92] In Denver, these practices continued throughout the middle decades of the twentieth century and by 1970, the region was one of the most racially segregated metropolitan areas in the country.[93] The DFRO and relocatees could not overcome these practices.

In the minds of the DFRO, quotidian practices such as financial management and housing were an opportunity to teach relocatees how to behave with market rationality and discipline. Whether controlling funds or directing newly arrived Indians to privately-let housing, agents focused their efforts on inserting relocatees into relations that reproduced capitalism. In a program designed to alleviate poverty, the BIA focused on teaching the skills and behaviors it viewed as essential to economic uplift.

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[91] Douglas S. Massey and Nancy A. Denton, *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), pp. 17-59. See also Richard Rothstein, *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How our Government Segregated America* (New York: Liveright, 2017); Anrold R. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940-1960* (1983; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

[92] James W. Loewen, *Sundown Towns: A Hidden Dimension of American Racism* (New York: The New Press, 2005), p. 103.

[93] David Rusk, *Denver Divided: Sprawl, Race, and Poverty in Greater Denver* (Denver: Gamaliel Foundation, 2003), pp. 33-37, available online at <http://www.law.du.edu/images/uploads/library /evert/DenverDivided.pdf> (accessed October 20, 2017).

Working in Denver

As important as securing housing in the private real estate market and inculcating discipline may have been to reproducing capitalism, the DFRO had a more immediate and intimate way to direct relocatees into capitalist relations: the world of work. In a program that aimed to make Indians self-sufficient, the DFRO concentrated its efforts on finding employment for relocatees. The office used wage labor in two different ways to reproduce the relations of capitalism. The first, and most explicit, was to shift relocatees' welfare onto the market. The second, and less obvious, was to reinforce mid-century gendered ideas about wage labor as men's work and unwaged, domestic labor as women's.[94] Who worked in Denver, and what jobs men and women did, mattered to the DFRO.

If DFRO agents worked diligently to relocate two-parent families wherever possible, once those families arrived in Denver, agents made every effort to reproduce heteronormative familial relationships, including pushing husbands towards waged work outside the home and wives towards unwaged domestic labor to facilitate their husbands' employment. When helping single women relocate, the field office offered very few options for work and those available to women closely mirrored dominant assumptions about the labor women were best suited to perform, namely domestic chores. In the DFRO's view, the only way for women to enter the

[94] On the gendering of this division of labor in the Cold War, see Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era,* Twentieth Anniversary ed. (1988; New York: Basic Books, 2008); Susan M. Hartmann, "Women's Employment and the Domestic Ideal in the Early Cold War Years," in *Not June Cleaver: Women and Gender in Postwar America, 1945-1960,* Joanne Meyerowitz, ed., (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1994), pp. 84-100. On the early history of how housework came to be considered separate from economic life, see Jeanne Boydston, *Home and Work: Housework, Wages, and the Ideology of Labor in the Early Republic* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990). Alice Kessler-Harris, in *Out to Work: A History of Wage-Earning Women in the United States* (New York: Oxford, 1982), however, provides an excellent historical overview of the different ways women have worked for wages throughout U.S. history.

labor market outside the home was to market the very skills they were expected to perform within domestic spaces.

Evidence of this gendering appears in a story C. E. Hazard took to Washington, DC, in 1960 when he attended a meeting with agents from other field offices. The story was based on the experience of Ethel Yazzie (Diné). Hazard shared her story to demonstrate how the DFRO had helped her navigate the transition from one living environment to another. Yazzie first experienced Denver in the spring of 1956 when she arrived to take a short-term job as a housekeeper during the summer between her junior and senior years of domestic service training at Intermountain School in Brigham City, Utah. The school encouraged students to explore their chosen vocation by contacting employment assistance agencies and pursuing off-campus training opportunities, which Yazzie did before graduation.[95] According to Hazard, when Yazzie arrived in Denver, she "appeared lonesome and frightened, finding difficulty in adjusting to employment conditions." Despite this struggle, she survived her summer placement and returned to Denver in 1957 after graduating from Intermountain, resuming work with the same employer.[96]

Yazzie was likely not alone at Intermountain School in entering the relocation program to secure work as a domestic servant. Historian Ned Blackhawk points out that of the nine young women graduating from Intermountain in 1962 who wished to relocate to Los Angeles, six wanted to go into home service jobs. He argues that the "connection between Relocation and

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[95] Bureau of Indian Affairs, "Preliminary Draft, Minimum Essential Goals for Indian Schools, Level Twelve," unpublished manuscript, Summer 1953, Goals 37-39, Intermountain Indian School Digital Collection, Merril-Cazier Library, Utah State University, Logan, UT, available online at <http://digital.lib.usu.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/IndSchool/id/5070/rec/2> (accessed September 21, 2016).

[96] C.E. Hazard, "Report on Outstanding Problem and Success Stories" (presentation, Meeting of Field Relocation Officers and Area Relocation Specialists, Washington, DC, July 21-26, 1960), folder 101.3 "Conferences, Meetings, Workshops, Etc.," box 1, Field Employment Assistance Reports—Denver Field Relocation Office.

'home service' suggests that in Los Angeles many single American Indian women were highly encouraged if not funded by the BIA to work as live-in domestic workers in non-Indian households."[97] While Hazard did not share any information about the household where Yazzie worked, most likely her employment situation resembled that of her fellow Intermountain School alumnae in Los Angeles. Indigenous families in Denver could not afford to hire a domestic servant of any race. If an Indian woman wanted to earn a wage for household work, she would have to do so in a non-indigenous domestic space, most likely in a white home. If she encountered another Indian woman there, that person probably also worked as domestic help.

Although Yazzie arrived in Denver for a specific job, she quickly developed a plan to take advantage of other vocational training options. Determined to move out of domestic service, she saved her money and enrolled in a nurse aid training program. After she completed it, she gained employment at a hospital. According to Hazard, she struggled with the routine of the work and lost interest, leading to her dismissal. The DFRO then helped her find a similar job in a different hospital, which she held for several months before opting to begin training as a nurse assistant in May 1959. By August, when she finished the course, she had employment in this new role. Her drive to continue her education did not stop with vocational training, and that autumn she enrolled in the Emily Griffith Opportunity School to work toward a high school diploma.[98]

Yazzie's story of successfully moving from a domestic service position into vocational training in healthcare highlights just how gendered relocation, whether direct-employment or AVT, truly was. Even though she moved out of domestic service, the range of available AVT training courses was constrained by ideas about the gendered nature of work. In Los Angeles, the

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[97] Blackhawk, "I Can Carry On From Here," p. 23.

[98] C.E. Hazard, "Report on Outstanding Problem and Success Stories."

field office there directed men and women into vocational tracks depending on the applicant's gender.[99] The same was true in Denver. Through AVT, men trained for or apprenticed in jobs that most closely corresponded with notions of productive labor, such as transmission repair, industrial electronics, or mechanical drafting, work that either produced or repaired a specific commodity. The DFRO directed women like Yazzie and Elena Honadick, on the other hand, towards service sector work like nursing and cosmetology or to clerical positions, which by the middle decades of the twentieth century had become women's work; it was seen as routine and it did not produce a commodity but rather a flow of documents and information.[100] This gendering was not by accident. The same ideology that informed the belief that families in public housing should not include multiple generations also upheld the male breadwinner household model. Where Native women did perform labor for a wage, they could do so only in limited circumstances. If Indigenous women had to enter the labor market, the DFRO encouraged them to do so by commodifying the same skills they used within the home, reinforcing essentialist notions of female-bodied people as the most appropriate to perform this kind of labor.

The DFRO's insistence on different work for women and men had implications for the families it relocated. The gendering of labor, especially within the family, has played an

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[99] Blackhawk, "I Can Carry On From Here," p. 22.

[100] Although I have not performed a statistical analysis of the gendered breakdown of vocational training, a cursory glance at the monthly reports produced by the Denver Field Office shows that men and women were directed toward very different vocations. See the reports in folder 101.3 "Conferences, Meetings, Workshops, Etc.," box 1, Field Employment Assistance Reports—Denver Field Relocation Office. On the history of clerical work becoming gendered in the first three decades of the twentieth century, see Sharon Hartman Strom, "'Light Manufacturing': The Feminization of American Office Work, 1900-1930," *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* 43, no. 1 (October 1989): 53-71. For other feminist critiques of clerical work, see Margery W. Davies, *A Woman's Place is at the Typewriter: Office Work and Office Workers, 1870-1930* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1982); Evelyn Nakano Glenn and Roslyn L. Feldberg, "Clerical Work: The Female Occupation," in *Women: A Feminist Perspective,* 5th ed., ed. Jo Freedman (1975; Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing, 1995), pp. 262-86.

important role in reproducing capitalism.[101] When family units relocated, the BIA focused on securing employment or vocational training for the male household head. The BIA privileged men as the dominant wage earners and their wives—there is no evidence that the BIA relocated families in which the adults were not legally married—were left to produce the surplus values in the home that allowed their husbands to labor for wages outside of it. Under this division of labor, redistribution within the family itself was necessary, as wage earners had to use their wages to purchase material goods for the family, which they could do because of the labor performed in the home by their wives.[102]

The DFRO did not oppose married women working outside the home for a wage, but the office provided little assistance to the wives of husbands it supported. The Denver field office was most willing to help women who married single men still in vocational training. A letter from Charles Miller at the Branch of Relocation Services to all field offices reminded local agents that if a single man married while still in training, the BIA would not increase the amount of grant money available to him. The field offices had two options in these instances: offer to assist the wife in finding employment or assist the trainee in securing part-time employment even

[101] For examples of relevant scholarship, see Christine Delphy, *Close to Home: A Materialist Analysis of Women's Oppression,* trans. and ed. Diana Leonard (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1984); Nancy Chodorow, *The Reproduction of Mothering,* 2nd ed. (1984; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Stephanie Coontz, *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap,* rev. ed. (1992; New York: Basic Books, 2016); Boydston, *Home and Work;* Heidi Hartman, "The Family as the Locus of Gender, Class, and Political Struggle: The Example of Housework," *Signs* 6, no. 3 (Spring 1981): 366-94.

[102] My thinking here is informed by J.K. Gibson-Graham, *The End of Capitalism (As We Knew It): A Feminist Critique of Political Economy* (1996; Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006).

as he met all requirements of his training course.[103] Except in such situations, the DFRO expected women married to trainees to secure their own employment.

More commonly, however, the field office encouraged wives to perform unwaged, volunteer labor within the community. When Chester Hazard spoke at the 1962 Employment Assistance Conference in Billings, Montana, he made exactly this point by praising the work of one woman married to a male trainee. The unnamed woman in his story moved to Denver with her husband and child and, after he had completed vocational training and secured a job, she took on volunteer work in the community. According to Hazard, she worked with the White Buffalo Council of American Indians, a pan-Indian organization in Denver that catered to the needs of urban Native Americans, and the Friends Visiting Committee, a non-Indian group that welcomed new relocatees making the transition to the city.[104] At the same time, she also expanded her activities to include collaboration with the Denver Council of Churches as well as an appointment by the Episcopal Bishop of Colorado to visit new arrivals on behalf of the Episcopal Church. Although Hazard did not explicitly say so, he hinted that his office relied on such unpaid labor performed by married women throughout the metropolitan area.[105] Even as the BIA focused its energy on directing relocatees into wage work, the DFRO recognized that preserving

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[103] Charles F. Miller, "Policy Regarding Single Male Trainees Who Marry during the Training Period," memorandum, October 6, 1958, folder 797 "AVT-General-Inactive Correspondence," box 2, Field Employment Assistance Reports—Denver Field Relocation Office.

[104] Azusa Ono discusses the importance of the White Buffalo Council in detail, especially in relation to the creation of a pan-Indian community in Denver. See Ono, "Crossroads of Indian Country," pp. 56-95.

[105] C. E. Hazard, "Contributions of Trainees and Relocatees for Community Enrichment," (presentation, Employment Assistance Conference, Billings, Montana, November 27-29, 1962), folder 101.3 "Conferences, Meetings, Workshops, Etc.," box 1, Field Employment Assistance Reports—Denver Field Relocation Office.

gendered divisions of labor, especially the unwaged work of married women, was critical to the marketization Native Americans.

In order for the DFRO to encourage married women to take up unpaid labor, it first had to ensure that men in the relocation program had wage-earning jobs. In a program designed to help Native Americans become financially self-sufficient by entering capitalist relations of production, securing waged labor for relocatees remained the chief concern. Without income earned through the exchange of labor for a wage paid by a private employer, relocatees could not reduce the financial burden of the BIA. Although the field office aimed for a seamless transition from reservation to urban wage labor for all relocatees, those who moved to Denver faced working conditions and wages that were not always commensurate with their background and skill.

Theodore Graves, a professor of anthropology at the University of Colorado, Boulder, directed a research project that explored how relocated Indians navigated the urban milieu, including their experiences at work.[106] The Navajo Urban Relocation Research Project, a

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[106] Graves was not the only social scientist to study urban Indian communities in the 1960s and 1970s. A number of scholars in both anthropology and sociology identified such communities and used them to test particular models of acculturation and assimilation. For examples, see Joseph G. Jorgensen, "Indians and the Metropolis," in *The American Indian in Urban Society,* ed. Jack O. Waddell and O. Michael Watson (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971), pp. 67-111; Hugh Brody, *Indians on Skid Row: Role of Alcohol and Community in the Adaptive Process of Indian Urban Migrants* (Ottawa: Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 1971); Jeanne E. Guillemin, *Urban Renegades: The Cultural Strategy of American Indians* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1975); Harry W. Martin, "Correlates of Adjustment among American Indians in an Urban Environment," *Human Organization* 23 (Winter 1964): 290-95; John A. Price, "The Migration and Adaptation of American Indians to Los Angeles," *Human Organization* 27 (Summer 1968): 169-175; Lynn C. White and Bruce A. Chadwick, "Urban Residence, Assimilation, and Identity of the Spokane Indian," in *Native Americans Today: Sociological Perspectives,* ed. Howard M. Bahr, Bruce A. Chadwick, and Robert C. Day (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), pp. 239-49. Peter Zane Snyder, a student of Graves at University of Colorado Boulder, used "social assimilation modeling" in his study of the Diné community. See Snyder, "The Social Assimilation and Adjustment of Navaho Indian Migrants to Denver, Colorado" (PhD. diss., University of Colorado Boulder, 1968). For an example of Graves's own work, see Theodore D. Graves and Minor Van Arsdale, "Values, Expectations, and Relocation: The Navaho Migrant in Denver," *Human Organization* 25 (Winter 1966): 300-07.

collaborative effort between Graves and his graduate students, studied the Diné community in Denver in the 1960s. Even though the project did not extend its analytical gaze beyond the Diné, the work performed by Graves and his students provides a wealth of information about the labor relocated Indians in Denver experienced.

In 1968, Robert Stephens Weppner, a doctoral candidate in the Department of Anthropology, conducted an economic study of the Diné under Graves's guidance with the ultimate goal determining which factors contributed to relocatees remaining in Denver. Weppner collected economic data on 244 Diné relocatees to paint a picture of how they survived the transition to wage labor in the city. Through a mixture of qualitative interviews and quantitative data, he identified four variables that indicated whether a relocatee would remain in Denver: 1) vocational training; 2) wage-labor experience before arriving in Denver; 3) time spent unemployed in Denver during first half of stay; and 4) starting wage. Of those who scored favorably on all four variables, 85 percent stayed longer than eighteen months in the city, the minimum duration Weppner used as evidence of assimilation. Conversely, of those who did not score well in these variables, 84 percent returned to the reservation within eighteen months of arriving in Denver.[107] The Diné were not alone in leaving Denver after arriving with the assistance of the BIA. In FY 1959 alone, 67 of the 153 family units that went to Denver eventually left the city, while the status of another 9 families was not known to the DFRO.[108]

Because he approached the Diné with an anthropologist's eye, Weppner looked for markers of cultural difference as an explanation for relocatees' experiences with wage labor, and

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[107] Robert Stephens Weppner, "The Economic Absorption of Navajo Migrants in Denver, Colorado" (PhD diss., University of Colorado Boulder, 1968), p. IV.

[108] B.I.A., "Analysis of Relocations for Fiscal Year 1959," Box 4, Field Employment Assistance Reports—Denver Field Relocation Office.

this led him to ask certain questions. His data on their behavior in Denver, however, does not necessarily align with his anthropological observations. For example, he wrote that the Diné struggled with wage labor because "their traditional values tend to be incompatible with the Western work ethic as a result of their concept that labor is not a commodity. It is given freely and also accepted in the same way."[109] And yet, in his interviews with employers, he found that they did not assume the incompatibility of Diné with wage labor. According to his findings, many employers believed Diné exhibited a willingness to learn their new jobs, and employers viewed Diné workers somewhat more favorably than they did white workers. More than three-quarters of employers found Diné employees competent, compared to only two-thirds who viewed white workers the same way. Likewise, a somewhat smaller percentage of employers found Diné "not competent" than found white labor lacking—13 percent versus 17 percent. Furthermore, nearly two-thirds of employers claimed Diné were very good or excellent workers or responded positively to the statement, "I wish I had more like him."[110] In his pursuit of evidence to support his anthropological observations, Weppner actually discovered that they could make the transition to wage labor.

Although Weppner's data pointed to a certain level of success for the Diné, the reality was more complicated for a number of reasons. For one, the wages Diné, indeed all Indians in Denver, earned were lower than those of their white counterparts. In Weppner's study, the average starting hourly wage for those who stayed longer than eighteen months was $1.48, while for those who returned to the reservation, it was only $1.30 per hour. White laborers, on the other hand, had an average starting hourly wage of $1.64. Of the Diné who stayed, the best-paid

[109] Weppner, "The Economic Absorption of Navajo Migrants in Denver, Colorado," pp. 19-20.

[110] Ibid., pp. 32-34.

employee earned $2.02 per hour, while the highest hourly wage for white workers was $2.35.[111] These wage rates correspond with the data collected by the DFRO on relocatees. For example, in the reports the field office sent to the Phoenix Area Office in October 1960, wages ranged from $1.15 per hour to $1.39 per hour.[112] While wages increased later in the decade, Diné laborers still earned less than did whites in the same position.

Weppner traced the wage disparity to factors other than job performance. In fact, he believed that the wage gap reflected not only race-based preference, but also employers' reluctance to promote Diné workers. The "negative trait" employers believed to be most common to Diné men was a "lack of initiative/aggression." According to Weppner, employers thought this trait would hinder Navajos' long-term upward mobility, but, as Weppner observes, this very easily could have been a rationalization for not promoting Diné laborers in the first place.[113] At the same time, as he discovered, skilled Diné faced another problem compounding the lack of opportunities for promotion and depressed wages: they were underemployed. Wages and positions did not always correspond with an employee's background and skill. For example, one man returned to the reservation because the only job he could find was as a custodian even though he was a skilled welder.[114] For Diné in Denver's labor market, skill alone was not enough to ensure advancement.

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[111] Ibid., pp. 62-64.

[112] See the collection of Reports transmitted by C.E. Hazard to Phoenix Area Relocation Specialist, folder 721.910 "General Correspondence Relocatees A-M, 1961," box 4, Employment Assistance Reports—Phoenix Area Office.

[113] Weppner, "The Economic Absorption of Navajo Migrants in Denver, Colorado," pp. 37-41.

[114] Ibid., p. 69.

Ultimately, depressed wages, employer assumptions about suitability, and mismatched skills did not stop Denver's Indians from entering the world of wage labor and consumption, the drivers of postwar abundance. Weppner's assertion that Indians did not commodify labor did not hold true. By the late 1970s, various estimates placed the indigenous population in Metro Denver at around 7,000, which swelled to as many as 10,000 when including seasonal migrant laborers. According to the 1970 census, 72 percent of Native men sixteen or older were employed, compared to 81 percent of males for the metropolitan region as a whole, while the rate of employment for Native women, 46 percent, was the same as that of non-native women. Of course, Indians faced structural disadvantages, especially lower wages. The 1970 census placed the median Indian family income at just over 7,000 dollars, about one-third less than the median family income for Metro Denver. Native families also earned less than Denver's black and Latinx families. And yet, Denver's Indians did adapt to life in the city. Nearly 30 percent of households owned their own home in 1970, even if nearly half of those homes were constructed before World War II—74 percent of the region's housing stock was built after the war—and the median value of the Indian-owned homes was only 82 percent of the median value for the region.[115] Some had even managed to escape Capitol Hill and its environs, moving to the suburbs and sending their children to schools in those areas.[116] Although standard of living markers

[115] Laurence Herold, "Who and Where: A Social-Geographic Profile of Denver Metro Indians in the 1970s," in *Moccasins on Pavement: The Urban Indian Experience: A Denver Portrait,* ed. Joyce Herold (Denver: Denver Museum of Natural History, 1978), catalogue of an exhibition of the same name at the Denver Museum of Natural History, November 30, 1978 through May 30, 1979, pp. 48-49, Western History and Genealogy Collection, Denver Public Library.

[116] According to Herold, Native students in metropolitan Denver schools were not bussed to schools outside their home district. Ibid, pp. 50-51. The desegregation of the Denver Public School system received national attention when a court case originating there, *Keyes v. School Board No. One,* reached the U.S. Supreme Court in 1968. The case was the first non-southern school desegregation case to be heard by the court. It introduced as-yet-unanswered questions about desegregation in multiracial school districts where the black/white binary did not apply. The lawsuit had been filed by "Negro," "Hispano," and "Anglo" parents in Denver. See Tom I. Romero Jr., "Of Race and Rights: Legal Culture,

pointed toward a community that struggled to keep pace with the rest of the region, Native Americans managed to carve a space for themselves within Denver's labor and consumption markets.

This was the outcome the DFRO hoped to engender when it began relocating Native Americans in the early 1950s. Although Denver's Indigenous community was not as large as those in Los Angeles or Chicago, those who moved to, and remained in, the Mile High City exhibited behavior consistent with foundational logic of postwar Keynesianism, working long hours for wages and transforming those wages into consumer goods. David Box (Ute) made just this point when he took umbrage at the suggestion that his success was due to the involvement of the federal government rather than his own ability to exchange his labor for a wage. In a conversation with researchers from the Denver Museum of Natural Science, he asserted that he brought about his own material success, telling them, "I think one of the things that annoys me most is the assumption that many Indian people are just *given* jobs…. We all had to come up the hard way, starting at the bottom and working hard for everything we've earned."[117] For those who relocated, the performance of discipline evinced their marketization. As full-fledged market actors, they were integral to the reproduction of capitalism.

Capitalist Resistance

Paradoxically, the success of the DFRO in shaping relocated Native Americans into capitalist subjects who relied on market transactions for their welfare came most clearly into

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Social Change, and the Making of a Multiracial Metropolis, Denver 1940-1975" (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 2004), pp. 367-426. See also Danielle R. Olden, "Becoming Minority: Mexican Americans, Race, and the Legal Struggle for Educational Equity in Denver, Colorado," *Western Historical Quarterly* 48 (Spring 2017): 43-66.

[117] Joyce Herold, *Moccasins on Pavement,* p. 16.

focus during a moment of political resistance by the Denver Indian community. By 1970, Denver's Indigenous community had developed a pan-Indian identity shaped by the common experience of both dislocation and relocation.[118] Although a disparate group of people with over fifty different tribal affiliations, the Indigenous community banded together to talk back to the state.[119] The politics of self-determination that emerged in this moment of resistance sought for better treatment within the labor market. In fact, the claim lodged by Denver's Indigenous residents against the state was that Indians were denied the opportunity to earn paychecks as federal employees. While their Red Power sisters and brothers were making radical demands to restructure the BIA, most notably through the occupations of the BIA Central Office in 1972 and BIA agency office on the Pine Ridge reservation in 1973, those in Denver agitated for incremental change by strategically using the BIA's own ideal of compensated labor against the bureau.[120] For them, self-determination meant working for the state to manage Indigenous affairs.

On March 16, 1970, Duane Bird Bear (Mandan-Hidatsa) and Bruce Glenn (Lakota Sioux) led a group of thirty Indians in an occupation of the BIA's Plant Management Engineering Center

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[118] The *Denver Post* published a special supplement focusing solely on the Indian community in 1970. The *Post*'s journalists covered both rural and urban Native Americans in its supplement, although they largely focused on the local community. Robert W. (Red) Fenwick, "The Original American," *Denver Post* (Empire Magazine), February 17, 1970, supplement. For a history of how this community developed through pan-Indian organization, see Ono, "Crossroads of Indian Country," pp. 56-95.

[119] Laurence Herold, "Who and Where," p. 49.

[120] On the history of the Red Power movement, see Paul Chaat Smith and Robert Allen Warrior, *Like a Hurricane: The Indian Movement from Alcatraz to Wounded Knee* (New York: The New Press, 1996); Daniel M. Cobb and Loretta Fowler, eds., *Beyond Red Power: American Indian Politics and Activism since 1900* (Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research Press, 2007); Daniel M. Cobb, *Native Activism in Cold War America: The Struggle for Sovereignty* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2008); Bradley Glenn Schreve, *Red Power Rising: The National Indian Youth Council and the Origins of Native Activism* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2011); Stephen Kent Amerman, "'Let's Get In and Fight!': American Indian Political Activism in an Urban Public School System, 1973," *American Indian Quarterly* 27, no. 3-4 (2003): 607-38.

(PMEC) in Littleton, a Denver suburb. The occupation took place just four days after Native American employees of the BIA lodged a formal complaint of discrimination against the bureau. The complaint, though national in scope, included employees at PMEC, which had been moved from Albuquerque to Littleton in 1962.[121] On March 15, the White Buffalo Council held a special meeting and voted to stand in solidarity with the complainants. The council sent a statement to the BIA, explaining its support for the claim that non-Indigenous people received better hiring and promotion opportunities within the BIA despite the explicit language of the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, which directed the bureau to give preferential treatment to Native Americans in hiring and promotion.[122] The next day, over fifty members of the Denver Indian community assembled outside the building and, after harassment "by a carload of Anglo youth, who pelted the Indians with eggs and snowballs," a thirty-strong group led by Bird Bear and Glenn entered the building with a list of eleven demands.[123] Eventually, eleven members chose to remain in the building by locking the front and back doors with tire chains.[124]

The occupation lasted until March 21, when Commissioner Louis R. Bruce (Mohawk/Oglala Sioux) met with the occupiers. The previous day, Gordon E. Joslyn, an investigator for the Equal Employment Opportunity Program, attempted to sit down with the protesters, but he quickly decided he could not do so in the circumstances. This forced Commissioner Bruce to fly from Washington, DC, to Denver that evening. After meeting with

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[121] George Lane, "Indians Continue BIA Center Lock-in," *Denver Post,* March 20, 1970; George Lane, "3 Officials of BIA Suspended," *Denver Post,* March 22, 1970; Ono, "Crossroads of Indian Country," p. 135.

[122] Ono, "Crossroads of Indian Country," p. 136.

[123] Dennis Mason, "Indians Protest at Littleton BIA Office," *Denver Post,* March 17, 1970.

[124] "Nine Indians Plead Innocent, Released," *Denver Post,* March 23, 1970; Lane "Indians Continue BIA Center Lock-in."

the protesters for two hours, Bruce signed a statement in which he agreed with the claim of discrimination. He also endorsed the occupiers' demands to reinforce preferential treatment in the hiring, training, and promoting of Native Americans, a timetable for staffing all BIA positions with Indians, and the creation of a review board to guarantee fair and equal opportunity and treatment of Native American employees within the BIA.[125] Furthermore, Bruce agreed to suspend Charles McRae, chief of operations at the PMEC office, and two other officials for the duration of the investigation into their employment practices.[126] Because the direct-action tactics led to arrests and charges of trespassing, Arapahoe County placed those removed from the building on probation.[127] Although the State of Colorado condemned the protest as criminal, the occupiers believed that the concessions won from Bruce justified their actions.

Ultimately, the protest and occupation in Littleton, along with the national lawsuit, contributed to gains for Native Americans in Denver who worked for the BIA. But the requests of the protesters were consistent with the ideology of capitalism, not radical demands to upend the system of wage-labor and capitalist accumulation. The protesters invoked "self-determination" in their rhetoric, and what this meant in practice was indigenous control of the BIA, a bureaucracy that, despite Dillon Myer's charge in 1950 to make it redundant, remained part of the state apparatus in the 1970s. Self-determination, at least in this instance in Denver,

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[125] Lane, "Indians Continue BIA Center Lock-in." Although Bruce endorsed a completely Indigenous-run BIA, Harrison Loesch, Assistant Interior Secretary for Public Land Management, told the Denver protestors in April that this would never happen because the "'BIA doesn't belong to the Indian people,'" but instead, "'belongs to the entire populace of the country.'" George Lane, "BIA Official, Indians Review Problems," *Denver Post,* April 7, 1970.

[126] "Nine Indians Plead Innocent, Released," *Denver Post,* March 23, 1970.

[127] Ono, "Crossroads of Indian Country," p. 147.

focused on directing and enacting federal policy by ensuring that Indians could work for, and receive wages from, the BIA.

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In the postwar years, the BIA reanimated its efforts to combat what it defined as the "Indian problem." At a moment when abundance seemed to be available to all, the existence of poverty on the reservations troubled the federal government because it exposed the limits of the market to distribute the material benefits of capitalism. Furthermore, because the government still considered Indians "wards of the state," any effort to eradicate poverty would necessarily require federal intervention. In response, the BIA created two relocation schemes, one a job-placement program and the other vocational training, to move Indians from reservations to cities where they could work for wages and eventually become self-sufficient. In short, the BIA hoped to shift native welfare away from the state and to the market.

From 1948 to 1973, the BIA assisted over 8,500 Indians in their move to Denver. However, it did not fund the relocation of every reservation-dwelling Indian. Rather, it assisted those it believed possessed the capabilities to become market actors able to thrive in the urban environment. To determine who would receive assistance and a bus ticket to Denver, the BIA and the DFRO scrutinized every application, accepting only those who could prove their citizenship and ability to perform the responsibilities of that legal category. At the same time, the DFRO only wanted to relocate those who were healthy enough to work as soon as they arrived in Denver, so it required applicants to show evidence of their health, or willingness to improve their health, according to the metrics of the office. Moreover, it also used the application process, and the promise of potential financial assistance, to encourage husbands and wives to relocate

together as two-parent households whenever possible. The application process allowed the DFRO to begin shaping Indians even before they reached Denver.

Upon arrival in the city, agents took every possible opportunity to direct relocatees into relationships that reproduced capitalism. At times this meant teaching relocatees how to manage their finances and work with private banks to accumulate capital. The DFRO also carefully secured housing for new arrivals, locating inexpensive, privately-let quarters that would allow relocatees to save money and eventually become homeowners themselves. Of course, in a program designed to shift Indian welfare to the market, agents concentrated their efforts on finding employment for relocatees. Wage labor, the BIA and the DFRO believed, would allow Indians to become financially self-sufficient. This was a gendered process. When working with families, the DFRO placed husbands in jobs while teaching wives the importance of unwaged domestic labor to support their wage-earning spouses. If the DFRO relocated a single woman, the agents directed her to specific vocations that allowed her to commodify the domestic skills she was expected to use in the home. These behaviors were all part of transforming relocatees into capitalist subjects.

Ultimately, a sizeable Indigenous community blossomed in Denver. Although many relocatees faced discrimination in the labor market, they managed to make a space for themselves. By the 1970s, many had accumulated enough capital to escape the Capitol Hill neighborhood and purchase homes in Denver and the suburbs. And the community had adopted the market practice of exchanging labor for a wage, even using the BIA's logic against itself and mobilizing when it denied them employment and advancement opportunities. In doing so, they made the Mile High City part of Indian Country.

Chapter Four

Denver Takes Off:
The Aerospace Age

In March 1959, Denverites flocked to the Denver Civic Center, the neoclassical City Beautiful-era public space, to view the most technologically advanced missile in the U.S. arsenal: the Titan class intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM). Little more than three years earlier, the Glenn L. Martin Company of Baltimore had opened a new plant in metropolitan Denver to fulfil its contract with the Department of Defense (DOD) and produce the ICBM for the United States Air Force (USAF). Denverites knew about the Titan, built at the Martin Company's plant nestled in Waterton Canyon in suburban west Jefferson County, but few beyond those who worked on "the bird" had personally seen a projectile capable of carrying a nuclear warhead 5,500 nautical miles at speeds greater than 18,000 miles-per-hour.[1] Although Denver had already become an important hub for air travel by the 1950s, the company's arrival and the success of its Titan ICBM initiated the aerospace age in the Mile High City.[2]

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[1] "Giant Titan to Tower Over City's Civic Center," *Rocky Mountain News,* February 22, 1959; "Civic Center TITAN to Go to Patrick," *The Missile,* November 6, 1959. Over the period covered in this chapter, the name of the company changed several times. First, in 1957, executives shortened the name from the Glenn L. Martin Company to the Martin Company. Then, in 1961, the Martin Company merged with the American Marietta Construction Corporation, becoming Martin Marietta. For consistency and clarity, I have chosen to refer to the company's Denver Division as "Martin-Denver," a term often used by the company in the early years of its Denver operation, throughout this chapter. When referring to the parent company, I have chosen to use "the Martin Company" for the years preceding the merger in 1961 and "Martin Marietta" for the period after.

[2] On the history of aviation and air travel in Denver, see Steven J. Leonard and Thomas J. Noel, *Denver: Mining Camp to Metropolis* (Niwot: University Press of Colorado, 1991), pp. 428-42; Roger D. Launius and Jessie L. Embry, "Cheyenne v. Denver: City Rivalry and the Quest for Transcontinental Air Routes," *Annals of Wyoming* 68, no. 3 (Summer 1996): 8-23; United Airlines Historical Foundation, "History of Continental Airlines," (n.d.), available online at <http://uahf.personalmasterpieceart.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/History-of-Continental-Airlines.pdf>.

The thirteen-story-tall temporary obelisk represented more than just Denver's postwar industriousness; it was also evidence of the connections among the region's manufacturing sector, the federal government, and expressions of U.S. global hegemony. During World War II, thousands across the metropolitan region had mobilized for the war effort, working for private employers to produce an array of defense materiel the U.S. armed forces used in combat to preserve the "American Way." Beginning in 1956, Denverites picked up where the war effort left off, working at the Martin-Denver plant and cementing Denver's importance to the nascent Cold War military-industrial complex and the expanding national security state. They continued the practice of privately-employed civilians building the material of imperial expansion. By the late 1950s, ICBMs had become an important part of the U.S. nuclear arsenal that propped up policy prescriptions across the globe and signaled to the Soviet Union that the U.S. could, and would, use these weapons.[3] Denverites, by producing the weapons that the U.S. used to bend the international community to its will, made their home city integral to the U.S. empire.

Within the ideological and material struggle between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, just as important as possessing ICBMs was producing ballistic missiles in a manner that reproduced industrial capitalism. At this moment in the development of the Cold War, U.S. foreign policy focused on containing the spread of communism by expanding the reach of capitalism and market-oriented economies across the globe.[4] To defend capitalism and democracy, the U.S.

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[3] Edward Kaplan argues that during the first two decades of nuclear armaments, the U.S. armed forces viewed these weapons as imminently usable and developed an offensive policy predicated on the idea that victory in nuclear war was possible. Only after the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 did this policy begin to change from an offensive to a defensive posture that recognized mutually assured destruction. Edward Kaplan, *To Kill Nations: American Strategy in the Air-Atomic Age and the Rise of Mutually Assured Destruction* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015).

[4] On containment, see John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy During the Cold War,* rev. ed. (1982; New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), and *George F. Kennan: An American Life* (New York: Penguin, 2011); Wilson D.

state took steps to prove that both were superior to totalitarianism and centralized economies. As I have argued in previous chapters, in Denver the efforts played out as residents and the federal government built a bureaucratic apparatus intended to ensure that westerners enjoyed economic security and to relocate American Indians to the city to combat poverty. The Martin Company's expansion to Denver was also part of this process. The company may have produced ICBMs for the USAF, but the relationship between the private firm and the state reproduced relations of capitalism. For one, the DOD let the contract on an open market, although this occurred in what economic historians call a monopsony, a market in which a single buyer exerts demand power over competing suppliers.[5] Second, the DOD required Martin to invest its own capital in land,

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Miscamble, *George F. Kennan and the Making of American Foreign Policy, 1947-1950* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992); David Mayers, *George Kennan and the Dilemmas of U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988); Arnold Offiner, *Another Such Vision: President Truman and the Cold War, 1945-1953* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002); Melvyn Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992); Marc Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace: The Making of the European Settlement, 1945-1963* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999). On U.S. foreign policy and its concern with expanding capitalism, see Melvyn P. Leffler, *Safeguarding Democratic Capitalism: U.S. Foreign Policy and National Security, 1920-2015* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2017), chaps. 4-7; John Lamberton Harper, *American Visions of Europe: Franklin D. Roosevelt, George F. Kennan, and Dean G. Acheson* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Thomas G. Patterson, *Soviet-American Confrontation: Postwar Reconstruction and the Origins of the Cold War* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973); Leo Panitch and Sam Gindin, *The Making of Global Capitalism: The Political Economy of American Empire* (New York: Verso, 2013), esp. chaps. 3-6.

[5] On the military-industrial complex as a monopsony, see Anne Markusen et. al., *The Rise of the Gunbelt: The Military Remapping of Industrial America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. 32-35. For studies of monopsony, see Marcelo Bucheli, "Enforcing Business Contracts in South America: The United Fruit Company and Colombian Banana Planters in the Twentieth Century," *Business History Review* 78, no. 2 (Summer 2004): 181-212; Janet T. Knoedler, "Market Structure, Industrial Research, and Consumers of Innovation: Forging Backward Linkages to Research in the Turn-of-the-Century U.S. Steel Industry," *Business History Review* 67, no. 1 (Spring 1993): 98-139; Michael A. Amundson, "Home on the Range No More: The Boom and Bust of a Wyoming Uranium Mining Town, 1957-1988," *Western Historical Quarterly* 26, no. 4 (Winter 1995): 483-505; Lawrence W. Boyd, "The Economics of the Coal Company Town: Institutional Relationships, Monopsony, and Distributional Conflicts in American Coal Towns" (PhD diss., University of West Virginia, 1993).

durable industrial goods, and labor if it wanted to earn financial profits from this project.[6] Finally, the contract did not guarantee profits. If the Martin Company wanted to add to its bottom line, it had to remain attentive to the needs of the DOD and the USAF while controlling production costs.[7] As far as the Martin Company was concerned, this was the ideal arrangement because it proved that private producers could partner with the state to safeguard both capitalism and democracy. In fact, Martin's chair, George M. Bunker, made just this point in a speech in 1961 to the American Bankers Association when he proclaimed "that in the development of this new form of quasi-economic, quasi-national industry, we are providing an answer to those who have claimed that democracy in crisis would have to turn to centralization to guarantee its survival."[8] If the nuclear arsenal was used to preserve industrial capitalist production and market-oriented economies, then manufacturing that arsenal by bringing private businesses into the military-industrial complex through contractual agreements made sense within the logic of the Cold War.[9]

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[6] On investment in illiquid durable goods as fundamental to industrial capitalism, see Jonathan Levy, "Capital as Process and the History of Capitalism," *Business History Review* 91, no. 3 (Autumn 2017): 483-510.

[7] Mark Wilson argues that historians need to avoid the assumption that participation in the military-industrial complex necessarily led to profits for private businesses and instead think about how company innovations turned these contracts into profitable enterprises. See Mark R. Wilson, "Making 'Goop' Out of Lemons: The Permanente Metals Corporation, Magnesium Incendiary Bombs, and the Struggle for Profits during World War II," *Enterprise & Society* 12, no. 1 (March 2011): 10-45.

[8] "Peacetime Defense Industry A Bulwark Of Democracy, Martin Executive Asserts," *Martin Mercury,* January 27, 1961. Gretchen Heefner calls the Titan's successor, the Minuteman intercontinental ballistic missile, "weapons in the economic and ideological Cold War. Minutemen were evidence of capitalism's triumph over communism." Heefner, *The Missile Next Door: The Minuteman in the American Heartland* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press), p. 36.

[9] Industrial capitalism refers to the investment of capital in illiquid industrial structures and equipment as a means of earning a profit. Historians consider the years from World War II to the 1970s the heyday of industrial capitalism. This gave way to financial capitalism during the crises of the 1970s, when investing capital in currencies and other liquid products—stocks, bonds, futures, derivatives—became foundational to earning profits. Financial capitalism is also marked by its ability to transfer

Denver was neither the first nor the only western place tied to the military-industrial complex during the Cold War, but its experience illustrates how the complex reproduced capitalism. While every state west of the Great Plains and many in the agricultural heartland contributed to the Cold War in some way, Denver is notably absent from the relevant historiography despite the relevant labor of thousands of its residents. In part this is a result of historians mapping industries and practices onto specific locations: aircraft building in Southern California and Seattle-Tacoma; nuclear research in New Mexico; electronics systems development in Silicon Valley and Phoenix; nuclear deployment in Montana and North Dakota.[10] Even Gerald Nash's brief sketch of the military-industrial complex in the West does

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income to non-laborers. On the shift from industrial capitalism to financial capitalism, which was not limited to the U.S., see, e.g., Judith Stein, *Pivotal Decade: How the United States Traded Factories for Finance in the Seventies* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010); Vanessa Ogle, "Archipelago Capitalism: Tax Havens, Offshore Money, and the State, 1950s-1970s," *American Historical Review* 122, no. 5 (December 2017): 1431-58; Niall Ferguson, Charles S. Maier, Erez Manela, and Daniel J. Sargent, eds., *The Shock of the Global: The 1970s in Perspective* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010). On financial capitalism more broadly, see Larry Neal, *The Rise of Financial Capitalism: International Capital Markets in the Age of Reason* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990); William N. Goetzmann and K. Gaert Rouwenhorst, eds., *The Origins of Value: The Financial Innovations that Created Modern Capital Markets* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

[10] On California's aviation industry, see Roger Lotchin, *Fortress California, 1910-1961: From Warfare to Welfare* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 206-98, 319-45. On the relationship between Seattle-Tacoma and Boeing, see Markusen et al., *The Rise of the Gunbelt*, pp. 148-73. On the importance of the nuclear research performed at Los Alamos National Laboratory and the closely allied Sandia National Laboratory in Albuquerque, see Jon Hunner, *Inventing Los Alamos: The Growth of an Atomic Community* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004); Necah Stewart Furman, *Sandia National Laboratories: The Postwar Decade* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1990). For Cold War histories of Silicon Valley, see Thomas Heinrich, "Cold War Armory: Military Contracting in Silicon Valley," *Enterprise & Society* 3, no. 2 (June 2002): 247-84; Margaret Pugh O'Mara, *Cities of Knowledge: Cold War Science and the Search for the Next Silicon Valley* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015), pp. 97-141. Elizabeth Tandy Shermer explores Phoenix's twentieth-century transformation through electronics-systems producing corporations with defense contracts in *Sunbelt Capitalism: Phoenix and the Transformation of American Politics* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), pp. 225-69. On the Cold War experience of both service members and civilians closely tied to missile deployment, see David W. Mills, *Cold War in a Cold Land: Fighting Communism on the Northern Plains* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2015); Heefner, *The Missile Next Door.*

not look beyond Colorado Springs's defense institutions when exploring Colorado's Cold War contributions.[11] This chapter is more than an argument for adding Denver to the map of the military-industrial complex, although it does correct a product of this mapping. One consequence of omitting Denver from the military-industrial complex is that the military-industrial complex has been elided from Denver's history. This is not to say that the aerospace industry has not received attention, but, rather, the importance of the Cold War political economy and the federal government to the industry and its development in the metropolitan region is under-analyzed.[12] Here, I provide a plant-level history to argue that the federal government's creation of a market for the products of the Martin-Denver plant, and the state's purchasing of that output, supported Denver's aerospace industry for two decades, until the plant shifted to developing and producing commodities for the commercial market.[13] But the state's creation of the market did not, by itself, translate into profits for Martin-Denver and economic success for Denverites at the plant. For that to happen, the company and its workers had to take the necessary steps to ensure that participation in this market brought financial rewards to Denver. In this reciprocal relationship, the state relied on the labor of thousands of Denverites to produce the arsenal of imperial

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[11] Gerald Nash, *The Federal Landscape: An Economic History of the Twentieth-Century West* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1999), pp. 77-99. Markusen et. al. also omit Denver from their discussion of the convergence between military spending and industrial growth in Colorado. See Markusen et al., *The Rise of the Gunbelt,* pp. 174-210.

[12] Steven J. Leonard and Thomas J. Noel mention Denver's aerospace industry in passing in *Denver: From Mining Camp to Metropolis,* pp. 416-17.

[13] Stephen Adams argues for a similar phenomenon in the development of wireless communication technology in the early twentieth century. According to Adams, the federal government, through the U.S. Navy, provided the large-scale demand that sustained the Federal Telegraph Company as "it became an industrial extension of American foreign policy." See Stephen B. Adams, "Arc of Empire: The Federal Telegraph Company, the U.S. Navy, and the Beginnings of Silicon Valley," *Business History Review* 91, no. 2 (Summer 2017): 329-59, quoted material on p. 332.

expansion, while those Denverites relied on the purchasing power of the state to keep the plant operating. Together, they made both possible.

Today, Denver has a thriving aerospace industry supported by a robust commercial market, but this was not always the case. Currently, metropolitan Denver and Northern Colorado rank second in the country behind Southern California both for private aerospace employment as a percentage of total employment and for total number of private aerospace employees. The region's 20,000 civilians in private employment work for 130 aerospace companies. These firms engage in a wide variety of aerospace research and production projects, ranging from satellite communications to guidance systems to space vehicles.[14] But this contemporary success obscures much about the early days of Denver's aerospace industry, when one company dominated the sector and, for nearly two decades, the only purchaser of its output was the federal government. This chapter, therefore, examines the first two decades of Denver's aerospace industry, when the federal government, not a commercial market, provided the demand to support the industry. At the same time, it also addresses how Denverites working at Martin-Denver responded to the needs of its customer, in the process proving Bunker's claim that private producers could manufacture weaponry without the state turning to centralization. In doing so, this chapter considers one of the themes that Richard R. John identifies as key to the new history of capitalism: "the mutual constitution of the state and the market."[15]

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[14] Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation, "AEROSPACE: Metro Denver and Northern Colorado Industry Cluster Profile," (Denver: Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation, 2017), pp. 1, 3, consulted online at <http://www.metrodenver.org/industries/aerospace/> (accessed November 19, 2017).

[15] Richard R. John, "Introduction: Adversarial Relations? Business and Politics in Twentieth-Century America," in *Capital Gains: Business and Politics in Twentieth-Century America*, ed. Richard R. John and Kim Phillips-Fein (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017), pp. 1-22, quoted material on p. 14.

To tell this story, I begin with the arrival of the Martin Company in Denver, teasing out how Martin's contractual relationship with the state reproduced industrial capitalism by requiring private investment in land, durable goods, and labor. Then, I turn to the development of the Titan ICBM complex to examine how Martin-Denver managed to turn ICBM building into a profitable enterprise. While the company did have to navigate its contractual relationship with the DOD and the USAF, the success of the operation relied on the creativity, ingenuity, and hard work of thousands of Denverites who were committed to ensuring their own economic success by producing missiles and company profits. Finally, the chapter explores Martin-Denver's pivot to space work, investigating how this shift introduced a new business paradigm for the plant, one that focused as much on research contracts as it did on manufacturing. Space work eventually led to the development of spinoff technologies that allowed Martin-Denver to participate in commercial markets beyond those created by the federal government. In analyzing how Denverites built an aerospace industry to meet the federal government's needs, this chapter tells part of the story of how Denver came to be, in the words of the *Rocky Mountain News,* a "Defense Hub of the Nation."[16]

Investing in Denver

On November 27, 1955, Glenn Martin made good on a promise he had extended to Denverites three years earlier. The founder and owner of the eponymous company first visited Denver in March 1952 and he so liked the city that he vowed to reporters and residents he would return. Although his storied aircraft company already employed 20,000 people at two factories in the Baltimore area, neither facility was prepared to research, design, and manufacture the Titan, a

[16] "Defense Hub of the Nation," *Rocky Mountain News,* April 19, 1959.

contract initially worth 358 million dollars that his company secured in October 1955.[17] In winning the contract, the company had to look beyond Baltimore because the federal government demanded a decentralized defense industry and the USAF wanted the Titan produced in the interior of the continent.[18] On the surface, the Martin Company's arrival resembled World War II mobilization, when Denverites went to work making defense materiel for the U.S. military. But, Cold War arsenal building in Denver differed from that in World War II in a crucial way: the federal government, in this moment of postwar economic development, used its monopsony to spur private investment rather than, as it had done at the Denver Ordnance Plant, contracting with private corporations to run publicly-owned facilities. The military-industrial complex in Denver furthered postwar industrial capitalism and the accumulation of private capital.

When Glenn Martin officially announced that his company would build a plant on nearly 6,000 acres of land in Jefferson County, Denverites rejoiced. Of course, the announcement of a new, major industrial project predicted to create 5,000 jobs was good news, but it was the private nature of the venture that fostered such ebullience. The company took strides to declare that the plant would be "'a permanent installation, constructed with Martin capital and owned by Martin.'"[19] In fact, the contract with the DOD required Martin to provide the capital to acquire

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[17] Bill Jones, "Missile Firm Leases Space for Office Here," *Rocky Mountain News,* November 28, 1955; U.S.A.F. Strategic Air Command, Office of the Historian, *SAC Missile Chronology, 1939-1988* (Offutt Air Force Base, NE: Headquarters, Strategic Air Command, Office of the Historian, 1990), p. 10; Colorado State Planning Division, *Colorado, 1956-1958: Year Book of the State of Colorado* (Denver: Brock-Haffner Press, 1958), p. 701.

[18] On decentralization in the defense industry after World War II, see Lotchin, *Fortress California,* pp. 321-22, 337-41. On the USAF's decision to have the Titan produced away from either coast, see Warren E. Greene, *The Development of the SM-68 Titan* (Norton Air Force Base, CA: Historical Office Deputy Commander for Aerospace Systems, 1962), p. 14.

[19] Warren Love, "Martin Aircraft to Build Plant Near Denver," *Rocky Mountain News,* November 29, 1955.

land, building materials, and other durable capital goods.[20] The company had plenty of funds for this investment. In 1955 alone, its sales of 271 million dollars produced a profit 13 million dollars, and its liquid holdings totaled more than 43 million dollars.[21] Those who lived through World War II mobilization in Denver knew the capricious nature of defense needs had potentially devastating consequences once contracts ended, so they looked favorably on the private investment in this project as a sign that the Martin Company would remain in Denver beyond the initial Titan contract.[22] The company and the local press cultivated this idea by explaining that the plant was not tied exclusively to any single DOD contract. Both newspapers, the *Denver Post* and the *Rocky Mountain News,* reported that in 1955 the company was working on six other projects for the DOD and its backlog of orders, which stretched through the end of 1959, stood at over 660 million dollars.[23] With the Martin Company assuring residents it was economically healthy and committed to Denver, local politicians, the business community, and labor looked forward to a future of financial success.[24]

Glenn Martin's decision to bid for the Titan contract was rooted in his expectation that the profits from this project would far exceed the capital investment necessary to create a new

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[20] Greene, *The Development of the SM-68 Titan*, p. 126.

[21] George McWilliams, "Martin's 1955 Earnings Set at $13 Million," *Denver Post,* March 23, 1956.

[22] For a discussion of how the Department of Defense's needs dictate the appropriation and apportionment of defense funds, see Markusen, et al, *The Rise of the Gunbelt,* pp. 8-25. See Chapter One for an examination of how a shift in defense needs at the end of World War II led to thousands of Denverites losing their jobs.

[23] "Martin Produces Number of Top Military Aircraft," *Rocky Mountain News,* November 29, 1955; George McWilliams, "Martin's 1955 Earnings Set at $13 Million."

[24] Love, "Martin Aircraft to Build Plant Near Denver."

plant.[25] He made this calculation by tracing out the trajectory of USAF spending on missiles and missile technology. In fiscal year (FY) 1952, the U.S. Congress earmarked about 4 percent of the USAF's budget for missiles, but by FY 1956 that number had increased to 12 percent. The projection for FY 1957 amounted to over 20 percent and was expected to reach as high as 35 percent by the final year of the decade.[26] Furthermore, in 1955 President Eisenhower designated ICBM development as the highest priority for the DOD.[27] The president did so because, even though the Korean War had led to a dramatic uptick in DOD funding by 1953, the U.S. continued to fear the Soviet Union gaining the upper-hand in missile technology.[28] All of this portended profits for businesses able to win ICBM contracts for the USAF.

A contested expansion of the missile program led to the increase in spending on projectiles. The USAF's adoption of self-propelled guided missiles was a result of decisions made by its predecessor, the Army Air Force (AAF). The AAF and the other military branches fought World War II with conventional armaments and controlled bombs, but the Nazi Army's development of guided missiles, most famously the V-2, convinced the AAF to explore the technology. After passage of the National Security Act of 1947, which created the USAF as a

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[25] My thinking here is influenced by Jonathan Levy, who argues that a fundamental feature of industrial capitalism is the process of capitalizing assets in the present, especially through investment, with an eye towards reaping a future pecuniary profit. See Levy, "Capital as Process and the History of Capitalism," esp. p. 487, and "Accounting for Profit and the History of Capital," *Critical Historical Studies* 1, no. 2 (Fall 2014): 171-214.

[26] "More Funds for Industry; Research Key to Security," *Martin Denver Missile,* July 27, 1956. On the early history of intercontinental ballistic missiles and the USAF, see Christopher Gainor, "The Atlas and the Air Force: Reassessing the Beginnings of America's First Intercontinental Ballistic Missile," *Technology and Culture* 54, no. 2 (April 2013): 346-70, esp. pp. 349-54.

[27] U.S.A.F. Strategic Air Command, *SAC Missile Chronology,* p. 10

[28] On the early history of the arms race and the decision to build the military quickly in response to Soviet mobilization, see Raymond P. Ojserkis, *The Beginnings of the Cold War Arms Race: The Truman Administration and the U.S. Arms Build-Up* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003), pp. 13-46.

separate branch on equal footing with the Army and Navy, the Air Force continued the AAF's trajectory, but it was not until President Eisenhower's 1955 decision that ICBMs became a serious focus for the branch.[29] Up to that point, the USAF had only one contract for an ICBM, the Atlas class, in design by the Convair Division of General Dynamics in San Diego.[30] The decision to develop a different ICBM was a contentious one, with Congress and some USAF brass initially unconvinced a second complex was either necessary or desirable. Ultimately, according to USAF Secretary Donald A. Quarles, the need to keep pace with Soviet advances led to the decision to move forward with the Titan complex.[31]

From the USAF's point of view, awarding the contract to the Martin Company made sense for several reasons. The Martin Company had excelled in producing for the Naval Research Laboratory twelve Viking rockets that flew from 1949 to 1954.[32] The company's history with rocketry foreshadowed an ability to address effectively a key technological development with the Titan. Unlike the Atlas, the new ICBM was a true multi-stage missile, with a second engine igniting at altitude after launch. The USAF believed that Martin's proposal

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[29] On the history of the creation of the Air Force, see U.S.A.F. Historical Division, *Legislative History of the AAF and USAF, 1941-1951,* U.S.A.F. Historical Studies No. 84 (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: Research Studies Institute, Air University, September 1955), pp. 53-59, available online at http://www.afhra.af.mil/Portals/16/documents/Studies/51-100/AFD-090601-114.pdf. On the USAF's reluctance to adopt ICBMs fully from 1945 to 1954, see Edmund Beard, *Developing the ICBM: A Study in Bureaucratic Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976). The USAF's turn to technologically-advanced intercontinental and intermediate-range ballistic missiles stood in contrast to the U.S. Army in the 1950s. Despite the rise of atomic weapons in the years after their first use in World War II, the Army continued to use traditional armaments throughout the decade. On the slow adoption of technology in the Army, see Brian McAllister Linn, *Elvis's Army: Cold War GIs and the Atomic Battlefield* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016).

[30] U.S.A.F. Strategic Air Command, *SAC Missile Chronology,* p. 9.

[31] "Martin Plant to Make Mightiest of Missiles," *Rocky Mountain News,* March 22, 1956; Greene, *The Development of the SM-68 Titan,* p. 14.

[32] U.S. Naval Research Laboratory, "Viking Program," <https://www.nrl.navy.mil/accomplishments/rockets/viking-program/> (accessed December 5, 2017).

recognized how difficult this would be, while neither Douglas Aircraft nor Lockheed Aircraft, Martin's competitors, sufficiently appreciated the challenges. In addition, the USAF preferred the management structure of Martin's proposal, which planned to create a separate division to work exclusively on the Titan.[33] In this monopsony, Martin won out by submitting a proposal that most clearly met the needs of the customer.

The DOD and the military branches spent public money on a destructive arsenal of nuclear weapons because projectiles were becoming foundational to national security and foreign policy in the 1950s. As Washington watched the U.S.S.R. advance its nuclear ballistic capabilities, the U.S. responded by developing a strategic nuclear strike force that consisted of aircraft-launched intermediate-range missiles, submarine-launched missiles, and ground-launched ICBMs like the Titan.[34] These weapons, especially ICBMs, drastically altered the geography of warfare in the Cold War because they could be deployed from thousands of miles away.[35] With the move toward planetary thermonuclear armaments, diplomats and military leadership eventually developed a policy of deterrence and second-strike, in which the U.S. amassed a vast stockpile of missiles to communicate to other nuclear-capable foes that it could

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[33] Greene, *The Development of the SM-68 Titan*, p. 17

[34] For an early analysis of how missile technology changed warfare, see Nels A. Parson, *Missiles and the Revolution in Warfare* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962).

[35] For studies of how verticality has shaped warfare, especially the ability to overcome distances, see the collected essays in Peter Adey, Mark Whitehead, and Alison J. Williams, eds., *From Above: War, Violence, and Verticality* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013). Anthropologist Joseph Masco explores how nuclear weapons brought about a "planetary imaginary" that radically reconfigured space and time. See Joseph Masco, "The Age of Fallout," *History of the Present* 5, no. 2 (Fall 2015): 137-68. The Cold War also helped usher in a more conscious understanding of the relationship between cartographic representations of power and how that power is deployed across the world. For two recent histories that explore how spatial representations shaped international diplomacy, see Aiyaz Husain, *Mapping the End of Empire: American and British Strategic Visions in the Postwar World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015); Timothy Barney, *Mapping the Cold War: Cartography and the Framing of America's International Power* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015).

defend itself against incoming attacks and would retaliate.[36] In order for this policy to become a reality, the federal government allocated vast sums of money to the DOD for nuclear weapons.

The state's decision to dispense public money to private firms through this monopsony opened the door for the Martin Company to succeed in Denver where other manufacturing companies struggled. Most businesses found Denver's isolation an insurmountable obstacle. Although it was the largest metropolitan area between Kansas City and the Pacific Coast, Denver's sparsely populated hinterland did not offer a large demand for goods made in the Mile High City. Compounding this problem for its manufacturing sector was the city's distance to other major markets. Mid-century shipping rates were set according to weight and distance, and few commodities had favorable cost-to-weight ratios that made rail shipping from Denver profitable.[37] ICBM production for the state, however, was not hindered by the distance to market. The proposed Martin-Denver plant would not depend on maximizing its economies of scale because it was not producing commodities for a competitive market, rendering shipping expenses far less influential to its bottom line. And, as the Colorado Planning Division noted,

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[36] For an account of the development of deterrence by one of the U.S.'s chief architects of the policy, see Bernard Brodie, *Strategy in the Missile Age* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1959). On the history of deterrence in the Cold War, see Patrick M. Morgan, *Deterrence Now* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 1-41. On deterrence more broadly, see Lawrence Freedman, *Deterrence* (New York: Polity Press, 2004); George P. Schultz and James E. Goodby, eds., *The War that Must Never be Fought: Dilemmas of Nuclear Deterrence* (Palo Alto, CA: Hoover Press, 2015); Robert Jervis, Richard N. Lebow, and Janice G. Stein, *Psychology and Deterrence* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985).

[37] A 1950 economic report on Denver by the Econometric Institute for the U.S. National Bank of Denver noted the region's isolation relative to other markets severely limited the types of goods that could be manufactured in the city and remain profitable. In assessing the industrial production that could reasonably grow, the report's authors focused on lightweight goods like suitcases and clothing that had favorable cost-to-weight ratios. Indeed, in 1952, luggage was the only manufacturing sector in the city that used the railroads for more than 50 percent of its outbound shipments. The Econometric Institute, Inc., *Industry in Denver and the Denver Industrial Area: An Economic Report* (Denver: The United States National Bank of Denver, 1950), p. I-7; Inter-County Regional Planning Commission, *Transportation in the Denver Region!* (Denver: Inter-County Regional Planning Commission, 1958), p. 51.

ICBMs fell into a category "in which the cost-weight ratio is high, and the transportation cost is a very small part."[38] With the particularities of this state-created market vastly reducing the effect of shipping expenditures on a producer's profits, the Martin Company could consider Denver a potential home for its new plant because the state shaped the geography of distribution for one manufacturing firm in the city.[39]

Denver offered several benefits that convinced the Martin Company to expand to the Front Range region. In the 1950s, both land and labor were underutilized because the city's isolation meant its firms could not be competitive in distant markets due to shipping costs. But if a manufacturer could overcome this obstacle, Denver had the workers to support expansion. In 1950, Denver had just over 36,000 manufacturing jobs, but the Denver Planning Office estimated that the region's labor force could support as many as 20,000 more.[40] The Metropolitan Denver Chamber of Commerce immediately recognized that the city offered Martin the benefits of inexpensive land and an educated workforce.[41] Cal Snyder, the chamber's manager, explained that the proposed site in Jefferson County's Waterton Canyon made Martin's shortlist after the company considered ninety-four different locations in thirty-one metropolitan regions. Snyder

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[38] Colorado State Planning Division, *Colorado, 1956-1958*, p. 734.

[39] My thinking about the ability of the state to reshape Denver's economic geography is informed by Eugene P. Moehring, *Urbanism and Empire in the Far West, 1840-1890* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2004). For other analyses of this process in the nineteenth-century West, see Noam Maggor, *Brahmin Capitalism: Frontiers of Wealth and Populism in America's First Gilded Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017), and "To Coddle and Caress These Great Capitalists: Eastern Money, Frontier Populism, and the Politics of Market-Making in the American West," *American Historical Review* 122, no. 1 (February 2017): 55-84.

[40] Denver Planning Office, *Working Denver: An Economic Analysis* (Denver: City and County of Denver, 1953), pp. 2-3.

[41] In 1950, an estimated 24 percent of the metropolitan region's population between the ages of 18 and 24 were enrolled in a higher education institution, well above the national metropolitan average of 16 percent. Ibid, p. 12.

detailed to the company that the site would have all necessary utilities and infrastructure, and he promised that his organization would liaise with real estate agents to facilitate the land sale. Moreover, he told the company that "'Denver is a fine place to live' with 'the finest climate anywhere,' and 'the best community' educational training facilities available, and also excellent recreational and cultural facilities." Eventually, "'due to a good advance selling job,'" the Martin Company's Board voted nine-to-one in favor of expanding to Denver.[42]

The Martin Company also carefully considered Colorado's labor laws. The Chamber of Commerce provided plenty of anecdotal evidence that the state ensured industrial harmony. By the end of World War II, the chamber recognized that it could use Colorado's Labor Peace Act of 1943 to convince companies to relocate to the Centennial State. The act, unique in the U.S., created strict guidelines for shop organization, with two separate votes required before an employer had to recognize a bargaining unit. The first vote, on whether to have a bargaining unit, required a simple fifty-plus-one majority. If the initiative passed, the election of a specific unit required a seventy-five-plus-one vote. The State of Colorado justified this law by claiming that it balanced the interests of employers, employees, and the wider public, giving no group undue influence.[43] While the chamber did not publicly promote the Labor Peace Act by name, its booster literature communicated that legislation made Colorado competitive with states that had less-stringent labor organizing regulations. As for Martin, it viewed the law favorably, especially because the company's Maryland-based production, maintenance, and cafeteria workers were

[42] "Chamber Manager Tells How Denver Landed Martin Plant," *Denver Post,* March 29, 1956.

[43] Alvin R. Weinberger, "An Analysis of the Colorado Labor Peace Act," *Rocky Mountain Law Review* 19, no. 4 (June 1947): 359-79.

represented by the United Automobile Workers.[44] According to Ross B. Hooker, Jr., Martin's Director of Procurement and Facilities, Colorado was the sound choice because Denver's "'labor situation looked particularly good.'"[45]

With the Martin Company investing heavily in this facility, it had to be sure its workforce was up to the task. The Chamber of Commerce highlighted the character of Denver workers, arguing they were particularly suited to this project. When Snyder met with Martin officials, he explained that Denverites' willingness, along with their skill and education, made them perfect employees for a highly-technical manufacturing plant.[46] For example, the chamber had solicited a quote from D.B. Campbell, Manager of the Denver Ordnance Plant for Remington Arms, who affirmed that Denver workers easily retrained for "jobs for which they obviously had no previous experience" and that Remington had "adequately prepared them for service with other industrial concerns which may enter the area."[47] For a company looking to relocate to Denver and bringing with it a new industrial sector, this adaptability was certainly necessary.

Of course, the nature of Martin's project at the new facility meant that it would have specific labor needs. Because the DOD contracts remained classified, security at the plant would be tight and the workforce had to be trusted with state secrets. The Chamber of Commerce and the IDD believed Denver's workers were well-suited to working with sensitive information because they were white and born in the U.S. Snyder assuaged Martin's concerns by stressing

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[44] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Wage Chronology: Martin Marietta Aerospace and the Auto Workers, March 1944—November 1975*, Bulletin 1884 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office," 1976), p. 1.

[45] "94-City Area Examined in Choosing Present Site," *Martin Denver Missile,* June 15, 1956.

[46] "Chamber Manager Tells How Denver Landed Martin Plant," *Denver Post.*

[47] Denver Chamber of Commerce, *Industrial Denver* (Denver: Denver Chamber of Commerce, 194?), p. 10.

that "Denver labor is American labor. The percentage of foreign element is unusually low." Any concerns about industrial espionage were misguided, the chamber believed, because Denverites were committed to the U.S. effort in the Cold War. Employers noticed this too. H.A. Winter of the Winter Weiss Company noted that "most of our workmen come from either Denver itself or from outlying communities where they have had an American background for several generations."[48] The chamber and local employers promoted Denver by implicitly contrasting the region with the metropolitan areas on the Pacific Coast or other industrial centers. The city's prewar population was 97.6 percent white, whereas the average for all metropolitan areas that year was 91.8 percent.[49] In the chamber's estimation, because Denver's workforce was largely Anglo American and included fewer immigrants, it was best suited to the Martin Company's sensitive projects. The chamber and local employers used racism and nativism to communicate to the Martin Company that Denverites were singularly capable of committing to a project of such national importance.

Before the Martin Company could hire Denverites, it first had to acquire a physical asset and factor of production: land.[50] Unlike the Denver Ordnance Plant, a federally-owned installation situated on land condemned and taken by the War Department, the Martin plant would remain private property. This meant the company would not have the power of the state behind its acquisition, but the Chamber of Commerce and the Jefferson County Government were prepared to assist. As soon as the chamber learned of Martin's intentions, it went to work to facilitate the company's purchase of 4,300 acres from rancher C.K. Verso and the lease of

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[48] Ibid., p. 10.

[49] Econometric Institute, Inc., *Industry in Denver and the Denver Industrial Area,* p. II-1.

[50] On the importance of private property to capitalism, especially in metropolitan spaces, see Ira Katznelson, *Marxism and the City* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

another 1,500 acres from the City of Englewood for twenty-five years.[51] The chamber also enlisted members of the Denver Realty Association to expedite the two transactions for the land, which totaled over 700,000 dollars. And, crucially, the chamber guaranteed that once Martin held the fee simple title, county officials would rezone the land for industrial use.[52] The decision, which came the day after Martin purchased the title to Verso's land, was described by the *Rocky Mountain News* as a "formality."[53] With 5,800 acres of industrial land now at its disposal, the Martin Company was ready to break ground on its new plant.

The company's acquisition of private property was not the only investment it had to make if it wanted to see the project move forward. To transform its property into a production facility, the company brought the Detroit-based architectural company Smith, Hinchman & Grylls to Denver. The firm had excelled in overseeing the construction of the Denver Ordnance Plant and the Martin Company trusted it to produce similar results. P.J. Ketelhut, the chief architect of the

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[51] The Metropolitan Denver Chamber of Commerce was not the only organization to broker leases of this type to entice businesses. For example, the Phoenix Chamber of Commerce did the same to entice Sperry Rand to relocate its aviation electronics division to Phoenix in 1955. See Shermer, *Sunbelt Capitalism,* pp. 255-58.

[52] Scholars of the urban U.S. have explored zoning as both a tool for enacting urban policy and a political power wielded by municipalities that can have dramatic consequences for land valuation. For histories of zoning as a policy tool and political power, see Richard F. Babcock, *The Zoning Game: Municipal Practices and Policies* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1966); Seymour I. Toll, *Zoned American* (New York: Grossman Publications, 1969); Marc A. Weiss, *The Rise of the Community Builders: The American Real Estate Industry and Urban Land Planning* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), chap. 5; Patricia Burgess, *Planning for the Private Interest: Land Use Controls and Residential Patterns in Columbus, Ohio, 1900-1970* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1994); Andrew H. Whittemore, "How the Federal Government Zoned America: The Federal Housing Administration and Zoning," *Journal of Urban History* 39, no. 4 (July 2013): 620-42; Andrew C. Baker, "Metropolitan Growth Along the Nation's River: Power, Waste, and Environmental Politics in a Northern Virginia County, 1943-1971," *Journal of Urban History* 43, no. 5 (September 2017): 703-19, esp. pp. 707-08.

[53] "Jefferson County Land Rezoned for New Glenn L. Martin Plant," *Rocky Mountain News,* January 4, 1956. Rezoning the land for industrial use also had revenue implications for Jefferson County. For example, in 1957 the county collected 180,351 dollars from Martin for taxes on land, improvements, and equipment. Mark Bearwald, "Jeffco Seeks to Tax Martin Federal Land," *Denver Post,* June 3, 1958.

Martin project, believed the plant would be completed in one year, with as many as ten-thousand men on site during the peak months of construction, far more than a typical three-thousand-strong workforce for a project of this size.[54] After Jefferson County rezoned the land in January 1956, Smith, Hinchman & Grylls employees began arriving in Denver to initiate the project.[55] The Detroit firm hired the New York-based Fuller Company as its construction contractor.[56] As Fuller amassed a workforce of sub- and sub-sub-contractors, it revised its completion schedule from one year to seven months, expecting to finish the 20 million-dollar plant by November 1.[57] By the end of June, the plant was 20 percent complete and on schedule for opening on the target date.[58] After spending the capital both to purchase the land and to create an industrial facility, Martin looked forward to seeing a return on its investment.

Of course, for Martin to begin generating revenue at the plant, it had to staff its operation and the company hoped to attract the best candidates in the region. To do so, it offered wages that often exceeded those of other employers. This was especially true for public employees of the State of Colorado. The situation was so dire that the Colorado State Highway Department, which had come to realize it could not compete with the Martin Company, hosted a special hearing with a committee from the state legislature in February 1956. The committee, comprised

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[54] Robert Stapp, "Martin Speeds Building of Top Secret Plant Here," *Rocky Mountain News,* December 8, 1955.

[55] Ibid.; "Jefferson County Land Rezoned for New Glenn L. Martin Plant," *Rocky Mountain News.*

[56] "Fuller Co. Approved for Testing Work," *Martin Denver Missile,* May 18, 1956.

[57] "Martin Co. Sets Nov. 1 Opening," *Denver Post,* January 26, 1956; Robert L. Perkin, "Dirt to Fly Soon on Super-Secret Martin Plant," *Rocky Mountain News,* January 25, 1956; "Guided Missile Output Seen for Martin Plant," *Denver Post,* January 27, 1956.

[58] George McWilliams, "Building of Martin Missile Factory 20 Pct. Complete," *Denver Post,* June 24, 1956.

of four senators and four representatives, invited testimony from several state agencies to discuss the shortcomings of the state's employment grades.[59] As the committee wrestled with solutions to increase wages and salaries without having to rewrite its classification system, State Highway Department Personnel Officer John DeVivier offered the clearest evidence of the struggle the state departments faced in hiring and staffing. DeVivier explained, "'we are offering $321 a month and the city of Denver offers $383 for the same employee, while private industry starts them at $400 on up. In 10 western states, we are paying the lowest for that type of employe.'" As an example, he noted, "'Every boy in our drafting department has a Glenn Martin application, and about 20 are ready to leave.'" He worried over the prospect of losing so many engineers because the only applicants to replace these employees were, in his estimation, "'wormy apples.'"[60] Due to its contractual relationship with the federal government and its expected future financial profits, the Martin Company could offer better wages and salaries and attract the best employees in the metropolitan region.

Martin's wage packages were not only attractive enough to take the best talent from other Denver employers, they also convinced jobseekers from across the U.S. to strike out for the Mile High City. While much of the plant's professional and managerial staff relocated from Baltimore because relocation was cheaper than hiring and training new employees, this was not true for those who were new to the Martin Company. A 1960s survey of 2,500 men and women who were laid off from the plant found that for primary earners with fewer than five years' employment with Martin, only 36 percent had lived in the Denver region before joining the

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[59] "Low Pay Bars Competition from Good State Workers, Legislators Told," *Denver Post,* February 26, 1956.

[60] Harmon Kallman, "Martin Plant to Hike Demand for Engineers," *Denver Post,* February 26, 1956.

company, while 47 percent were from Colorado, Montana, Wyoming, Utah, and New Mexico and the remainder from the rest of the continental U.S.[61] During the 1950s, when metropolitan Denver was undergoing rapid population growth, the Martin Company and its plant in Waterton Canyon exerted a centripetal force on the rest of the country, and especially Colorado's neighboring states, by offering better-paying jobs than many could find in their home towns.

Many of these Martin jobs came online before the plant officially opened with its first shift at 7:30 a.m. on Monday, February 4, 1957.[62] By the previous April, the company had rented three separate buildings that served as temporary homes and provided administrative, research, and some manufacturing space, allowing Martin's engineers to begin designing prototypes.[63] In these early pre-production days, engineers accounted for the bulk of the company's Denver-based workforce of 2,000. On December 9, 1956, the first round of employees, about 800 members of the engineering, security, service and test, and mailroom departments, made the transition to the new factory and began readying the plant for the rest of their colleagues. Although the plant officially opened on February 4 when 63 members of the production team started their shifts, Martin officials expected it would take another five months before the facility would be fully ready to begin working in earnest on developing the Titan. While these men and women diligently prepared the factory, employees at the other Martin sites in metropolitan Denver continued their research and development work according to the classified schedule.[64]

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[61] U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, *Reemployment Experiences of Martin Company Workers Released at Denver, Colorado, 1963-1964; Effects of Defense Employment Readjustments* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1966), p. VI-14.

[62] "1st Work Shift Reports at Big Martin Plant," *Denver Post,* February 4, 1957.

[63] "Ease Noticed in Temporary Plant Moves," *Martin Denver Missile,* April 27, 1956.

[64] "1st Work Shift Reports at Big Martin Plant," *Denver Post.*

In July 1956, over 1,400 Martin employees toured the new plant and its grounds with their families. To a person, those interviewed believed the work of Smith, Hinchman & Grylls was first-class and befitted an ICBM production facility. Employees who saw the site for the first time offered praise for Martin officials in selecting a site that was both removed from Denver and near the mountains. Among the benefits of this location in Waterton Canyon was its isolation. With only one entrance to the plant, employees believed it to be safe enough to guard the sensitive work they would be performing.[65] When all Martin employees were on site to begin production the following summer, they were more than ready to continue research and design on the USAF's most advanced ICBM. And, they were eager to do so in a public-private partnership that reproduced industrial capitalism in the Mile High City at a plant with an expected annual payroll of 25 million dollars.[66]

Of Missiles and Profits

Glenn Martin may have predicted the missile business would bring his company incredible profits, but realizing this required more than just a signed contract with the DOD and USAF. Although the contract was worth an initial 358 million dollars, the company did not have a guarantee that the endeavor would be profitable or, for that matter, that it would ever see the day a Titan ICBM rolled off its Denver production line.[67] As Martin executives discovered, the

[65] "Visitors Like Denver Plant," *Martin Denver Missile,* July 6, 1956; "1432 Persons Visit New Plant for Tour," *Martin Denver Missile,* July 6, 1956.

[66] "Martin Plant to Make Mightiest of Missiles," *Rocky Mountain News.*

[67] See Wilson, "Making 'Goop' Out of Lemons," for a discussion of the uncertainty of profits for companies in the military-industrial complex.

state could be just as price-sensitive as any other customer.[68] This produced two outcomes. First, management and labor alike worked within their customer's demands to control production costs and turn manufacturing for the U.S empire into a profitable venture. Second, the contractual relationship between Martin-Denver and the USAF, which allowed for the private accumulation of capital and for Denverites to voluntarily work in the defense industry, made the state's involvement in this market compatible with capitalist production and market-oriented economies, not a contradiction of the free enterprise system the U.S. was fighting to defend. The market may have been a monopsony, but it was one that functioned because Denverites were the engines who powered its operation, securing their own economic fortunes in the process of making money for the Martin Company and ICBMs for the USAF. However, they could not escape market forces that eventually made the labor of many Denverites surplus to requirements.

For all the DOD's commitment to building the country's long-range nuclear arsenal, the Titan's progress remained tied to budgetary decisions made by the U.S. Congress, which led the USAF to examine the need for the entire Titan complex.[69] As a broad policy, the USAF agreed with Navy Rear Admiral R. Bennet, who, in commenting on his branch's relationship with Martin in the Vanguard Project, believed "a prime contractor is paid to run his show, and he must do so. The Government cannot take over."[70] This was true for Convair, the producer of the

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[68] Martin Kenney calls the various federal agencies that purchased goods through the military-industrial complex "price-insensitive lead customers." However, as I explore here, the federal government could be incredibly sensitive to price and this greatly affected some private firms and plants, such as Martin-Denver. For Kenney's assessment, see his "Introduction," in *Understanding Silicon Valley: The Anatomy of an Entrepreneurial Region,* ed. Martin Kenney (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000), pp. 1-12, quoted material on p. 5.

[69] Greene, *The Development of the SM-68 Titan*, p. 40.

[70] *The Ballistic Missile Program: Hearings before the Subcommittee on Department of Defense Appropriations of the Committee on Appropriations*, U.S. House of Representatives, 85th Cong., 1st sess., p. 121 (1957) (statement of U.S. Navy Rear Admiral R. Bennet, Chief of Naval Research).

Atlas ICBM, because it had to prioritize speed over cost so that the USAF could operationalize the complex and begin building the defense network as quickly as possible.[71] Martin-Denver did not have the same task. From 1955 until the autumn of 1957, the USAF, under pressure from legislators, constantly scrutinized the cost of the Titan project and debated the need for a second ICBM complex. Martin-Denver responded by keeping expenses to a minimum, giving the USAF evidence to convince Congress that the Titan could be produced without too heavy a burden on the branch's budget.[72] The entire project, and Martin's profits, hinged on the producer's ability to save money for its customer.

The need to reduce costs only compounded the difficulty of developing and producing the Titan. The USAF divided ICBMs into four different systems—airframe, propulsion, guidance, and nose cone—and the Martin Company was both the prime contractor for the airframe and the systems integrator for the missile.[73] Even for a company steeped in the production of military aircraft and research missiles, the switch to guided weapons required new technologies. Missiles presented three different needs with which Martin engineers had to contend. For one, the Titan had far different structural requirements than an aircraft; on average, an aircraft's empty weight could account for 50 percent of its take-off weight, while for missiles the empty weight could be at most one-tenth its take-off weight. Second, all missile subsystems

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[71] Jacob Neufeld, *The Development of Ballistic Missiles in the United States Airforce* (Washington, DC: Office of Air Force History, 1990), pp. 99, 102-05; Greene, *The Development of the SM-68 Titan*, p. 37. The Air Force designated F.E. Warren Air Force Base, in Cheyenne, Wyoming, as the first base to receive and install Atlas ICBMs. Construction on the launch facilities began in 1958, with all 24 Atlas missiles operational by 1961. Air Force Center for Engineering and the Environment/AC, *The United States Military in Wyoming, 1920-1989 (End of the Cold War)* (Brooks City-Base, TX: Air Force Center for Engineering and the Environment, 2009), p. 28.

[72] Greene, *The Development of the SM-68 Titan*, p. 36, 38-44.

[73] Ibid., p. 19.

had to be controlled remotely, unlike aircraft where onboard operators could make adjustments. And, most crucially, ICBMs were single-use equipment and demanded complete reliability. The failure of a single subsystem, whether mechanical, electrical, structural, or electromechanical, could result in a loss of the missile and abortion of the mission.[74] As the systems integrator, Martin-Denver was the prime contractor for the entire project and had the ultimate responsibility for delivering a functioning ICBM to the USAF.

To translate these requirements into an operational missile without ballooning production costs, the plant needed a capable and educated workforce, and many Denverites embraced the responsibility to meet their employer's needs. Denverites' relatively high level of post-secondary education influenced Martin's decision to expand there.[75] And yet, for all the engineers in Colorado, few, if any, had experience with ICBMs. One way Martin chose to address this was by providing continuing education courses. The earliest Martin-Denver employees, for example, had the opportunity during the summer of 1956 to take courses in "Basic Mathematics, Basic Aerodynamics, Human Factors in Engineering Design, Loads and Structural Analysis, and Measurements," all offered through the Martin Engineering Development Program.[76] Demand for these summer courses was so high that the company offered them again in the autumn as part of an expanded slate of about thirty courses, including new options in management and communications for supervisors. In total, 483 employees, nearly one-quarter of the workforce,

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[74] Kenneth F. Ganz, ed., *The United States Air Force Report on the Ballistic Missile: Its Technology, Logistics, and Strategy* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1958), p. 158.

[75] "94-City Area Examined in Choosing Present Site," *Martin Denver Missile*.

[76] "Engineers Offered Summer Courses," *Martin Denver Missile,* June 8, 1956.

enrolled in Martin's course offerings that autumn.[77] Employees' demand for seats in the courses led Martin to continue to offer options throughout its Titan production days.[78]

Even an act as straightforward as employee education could be shot through with capitalist logic. While Martin employees took the initiative to better themselves for the Cold War effort, their participation served their own ends as well as Martin's. Of course, the company's aim was to improve efficiency in order to decrease operation costs and increase profits. Unlike corporate education programs earlier in the twentieth century, Martin-Denver's evening courses were not required on-the-job training offerings but instead were available to those willing and able to commit extra time for career advancement.[79] In providing these courses, Martin adopted the simple market principle of limiting supply to drive up demand, offering far fewer seats than there were employees to increase competition. Management used the incentive of potential career advancement, and increased wages in the future, as a way to extract a specific form of un-remunerated labor—continuing education—from its employees. Moreover, by offering courses outside contract hours, Martin shifted the opportunity cost onto workers, ensuring that production time would not be lost to these education and training opportunities. The company

[77] "483 Employees on Class Rolls," *Martin Denver Missile,* October 26, 1956.

[78] "Martin Lends Education Assist," *Martin Denver Missile,* August 31, 1956; "Special Course Planned," *Martin Denver Missile,* September 7, 1956; "Serve-Systems Courses Likely," *Martin Denver Missile,* January 3, 1958; "Martin Evening Classes Underway; 1200 Enrolled," *The Missile,* February 5, 1960.

[79] For an analysis of one example of a mandatory corporate education and training program in the early decades of the twentieth century, see Shan Nelson-Rowe, "Corporation Schooling and the Labor Market at General Electric," *History of Education Quarterly* 31, no. 1 (Spring 1991): 27-46. On vocational education more broadly, see Harvey A. Kantor, *Learning to Earn: School, Work, and Vocational Reform in California, 1880-1930* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988); Ivan Greenberg, "Vocational Education, Work Culture, and the Children of Immigrants in 1930s Bridgeport," *Journal of Social History* 41, no. 1 (Fall 2007): 149-60.

acquired an improved workforce while providing an opportunity for betterment to those employees willing to commit their time and energy to outside classwork.

Although Martin-Denver may have placed the onus for continuing education onto its employees, this did not slow down their enthusiasm or participation. In fact, during the early years of the plant, each round of courses attracted more students; by the end of the 1958, the number of employees taking advantage of these opportunities had increased threefold from the very first session.[80] And it was not just engineers or technical workers who jumped at the chance to improve their performance through coursework. The plant's training division even had enough demand from female administrative assistants that it began offering courses designed specifically to help them. Unsurprisingly, the course designers had gendered expectations for these women, with the curriculum covering everything from spelling and handwriting to telephone etiquette to posture and personal grooming.[81] Although the hygiene habits of its secretarial workforce may not have been fundamental to the production of ICBMs, the training division's willingness to offer such instruction is evidence of the demand for continuing education, even from the women whose work was primarily to provide administrative support to those who worked directly on the missiles. While Martin employees' motivation in taking the courses is not known—they may have done so for financial reasons, because they believed their personal improvement necessary to the Cold War effort, or a combination of the two—they committed themselves to taking the opportunities.

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[80] "Evening School Begins Third Year at Martin," *The Missile,* August 29, 1958; "1500 Martin-Denver Employees Enrolled in Voluntary School Activities, Company Courses," *The Missile,* October 24, 1958.

[81] "Clerical Course Designed Here," *Martin Denver Missile,* January 17, 1958.

At the same time, Martin-Denver believed that regional institutions of higher education, especially ones that were becoming important to the production of scientific knowledge for the federal government, should assist in educating its employees. Martin employees who read the *Martin Missile* in 1956 would have seen just this point in an article discussing a recent editorial in the periodical *Planes*. The editorial highlighted several advances made by the U.S.S.R. in its missile program, and the key point, according to the *Missile* editors, was that Soviet advances were due to a network of research and design institutions that worked with producers. As the *Missile* editors stressed, the entire educational system, including universities, played an important role in the Soviet success.[82] They assumed the same should be true in Denver. When Martin first transferred some employees from Baltimore to Denver, the company encouraged families not to purchase homes in any single area of the metropolitan region.[83] The one cluster it did encourage, however, was a group of four families in Westminster.[84] The north Denver suburb was nearly equidistant to Waterton Canyon and the University of Colorado Boulder.[85] The four

[82] "Soviet Education Points Need for R & D Emphasis," *Martin Denver Missile,* August 17, 1956.

[83] The company offered two reasons for wanting to avoid a Martin enclave. The first was a desire to present a positive image of the company and its relocated employees as good neighbors. Al Sondern, Martin Company's housing administrator, told the *Denver Post* that "we hope our people lose their Martin identity as rapidly as possible and become, instead, a part of the community as a whole. So far they have integrated well." Second, the company worried that municipal or county administrators would see a concentration of Martin employees as a wealthy tax base and increase rates to take advantage of the company's good wages. "80 Pct. of Martin Personnel Find Homes," *Denver Post,* April 10, 1956.

[84] Ibid.

[85] By the 1960s, the University of Colorado Boulder had become an important producer of scientific knowledge. It was one of a select group of public and private institutions that, over the course of the decade, received more than six million dollars in science development funds. The private University of Denver also made this list, with its faculty securing nearly ten thousand individual grants during the decade. Roger L. Geiger, *Research and Relevant Knowledge: American Research Universities Since World War II* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 207, table 15. On the growth of universities during this time, see Elizabeth Tandy Shermer, "A Fraught Partnership: Business and the Public University Since the Second World War," in *Capital Gains,* ed. John and Phillips-Fein, pp. 157-79; Rebecca Lowen, *Creating the Cold War University: The Transformation of Stanford* (Berkeley:

husbands of these families split their time between Martin's facility and advanced degree programs in science and engineering in Boulder.[86] In fact, the company used its relationship with the federal government to negotiate a special arrangement with the university to allow its employees to take advanced coursework without enrolling full time.[87]

Although Martin-Denver had a solid partnership with the federal government, the nature of the monopsony meant that the plant, and its workforce, had to be responsive to DOD needs, which were sometimes dictated by the U.S. Congress. In 1957, the USAF and the DOD pushed Martin-Denver to focus on saving money because Congress was once again questioning the need for a secondary ICBM complex. While the DOD initially requested 1.335 billion dollars for its three UASF missile programs in for FY 1958, it ultimately submitted a reduced 1.135-billion-dollar budget, which was approved. With the USAF's constant need to defend the Titan program, and Congress's insistence on cost reduction, USAF Major General Bernard Schriever sent a letter to all missile contractors, including Martin-Denver, impressing upon them the importance of limiting production expenses if they wanted to continue their contracts.[88] As Congress told the DOD to reduce its funding requests, the DOD pushed the military branches to require their prime contractors to control costs.

At Martin-Denver, the responsibility to meet Congress's demands trickled all the way down to those on the shop floor. Denverites, however, were not only capable of reducing

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University of California Press, 1997); Stuart W. Leslie, *The Cold War and American Science: The Military-Industrial Complex at MIT and Stanford* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993); Richard M. Freeland, *Academia's Golden Age: Universities in Massachusetts, 1945-1970* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

[86] "80 Pct. of Martin Personnel Find Homes," *Denver Post,* April 10, 1956.

[87] "Martin to Employ 1000 Engineers," *Rocky Mountain News,* February 24, 1956.

[88] Greene, *The Development of the SM-68 Titan*, pp. 39-41.

productions costs, they welcomed the charge to lessen expenditures, which worked to the benefit of both their employer and the federal government. In response to the USAF's push, Martin-Denver announced a mandatory training session for every new hire that focused on conserving resources and eliminating waste. Henry Gunderjohn, Supervisor of Industrial Engineering, told those enrolled that although this was primarily an engineering concern, "'it is in your interest to make the best top quality product possible, and by conserving materials you can contribute a great deal toward reducing costs and promoting individual job security. Conservation is and must be everybody's business.'"[89] Of course, as Gunderjohn's statement made clear, the men and women at Martin-Denver, as private employees, could lose their jobs if Martin's production costs, whether for materials or labor, ate too much of the company's profits. But for many of them, conservation was more than a personal economic concern; it was directly tied to the efficacy of the defense effort. In the autumn of 1958, Martin ramped up its waste reduction efforts with a new campaign and the creation of "make or buy" committees. Those who joined these committees performed cost-benefit analyses for nearly every part of the Titan to determine which items should be machined in-house and which the company should subcontract to other manufacturers. With a projectile as technologically complex as the Titan, the committee had to consider many factors for each item, including ability to manufacture with present machinery, lost time for retooling, cost of material supplies, and labor, including training. Committee members knew that if they did not take all of these factors into consideration, they threatened to derail the drive for "more Air Force per dollar" at Martin-Denver.[90] Mismanagement in Denver,

[89] "Material Handing Lecture Designed to Help Curb Waste," *Martin Denver Missile,* July 19, 1957.

[90] "Make or Buy Program Established," *The Missile,* September 12, 1958.

as the slogan made clear, had a detrimental effect on the USAF's budget and appropriations to the DOD.

In the autumn of 1957, Martin-Denver and the long-term future of the Titan received a gift from an unlikely source: the Soviet Union. On October 4, the U.S.S.R. put the satellite *Sputnik 1* into orbit, beating the U.S. to a space launch. As historian Peter Hays notes, the Soviet success prompted President Eisenhower to respond with an increased emphasis on space exploration projects, including the creation of new military and civilian agencies to direct the space program.[91] The Titan, although an ICBM, received a boost as well because its multi-stage technology had the potential to be modified into a space launch vehicle. In response to *Sputnik,* Congress reconsidered its appropriations to the DOD, and the USAF, in turn, released the handbrake on the Titan project, directing more money to Martin-Denver to speed production.[92]

The success of Martin-Denver employees in keeping costs under control while meeting the production schedule demanded by the USAF did not go unnoticed. In March 1958, the company had its first successful static test firing of the propulsion system and, over the spring and summer, structural engineers performed laboratory and ground testing to ensure the missiles were safe for transport.[93] By autumn, Martin-Denver was preparing to send several Titan missiles to Cape Canaveral, Florida, for flight tests to be conducted by a team of USAF engineers and Martin employees from the company's Cocoa Beach Division. That September,

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[91] Peter Hays, "NASA and the Department of Defense: Enduring Themes in Three Key Areas," in *Critical Issues in the History of Spaceflight,* ed. Stephen J. Dick and Roger D. Launius (Washington: NASA Office of External Relations, History Division, 2006), pp. 199-238, referenced material on p. 204.

[92] *The Ballistic Missile Program*, p. 67 (testimony of Donald A. Quarles, Deputy Secretary of Defense); Greene, *The Development of the SM-68 Titan*, pp. 44-45.

[93] "Water, Gas Systems Vital to Test Stand D-1," *Martin Denver Missile,* January 31, 1958; William B. Higdon, "Precise Preparations Lead to Test Firing," *Martin Denver Missile,* March 14, 1958.

USAF Major General Ben I. Funk visited Denver to speak to the civilians who were producing ICBMs for his branch. Funk, who was Commander of the Ballistic Missiles Center of Air Materiel Command in Inglewood, California, used the opportunity to praise Denverites for building the weapons defense system. "'Today the TITAN,'" he began, "'is an important article in our intercontinental weapon stable for tomorrow's defense needs, and we need the best defense we can get.'" The Titan was part of that defense. "'I also want to thank all of you for what you have accomplished,'" he continued, because "'you are beginning to deliver the hardware to us for testing and proving. In time, you will be producing more TITANs for training. And soon after that your missiles will be in the hands of operational units.'"[94] The following month, President Eisenhower toured the facility. The president and former U.S. Army general who had made ICBMs a priority for national security praised Martin-Denver's quick and efficient preparation of the Titan.[95]

If those at the plant ever questioned the destructive potential of the product of their labor, the company had a response rooted in American exceptionalism and the denial of imperial impulses.[96] The Christmas 1958 issue of *The Missile* contained an editorial entitled "Deterrent Power and Peace," which framed the U.S. military as a beneficent force for international stability backed by the labor of civilians like those in Denver. The editorial impressed upon employees

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[94] "General Funk Outlines Importance of TITAN to Martin Mg't Group," *The Missile,* October 16, 1958.

[95] Paul N. King, "President Eisenhower Visits Martin Denver," *The Missile,* October 24, 1958.

[96] On American exceptionalism as a denial of the U.S. empire, see Godfrey Hodgson, *The Myth of American Exceptionalism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009); Ian Tyrell, "American Exceptionalism in an Age of International History," *American Historical Review* 96, no. 4 (October 1991): 1031-55; Shelley Streeby, "Empire," in *Keywords for American Cultural Studies,* 2nd ed., ed. Bruce Burgett and Glenn Hendler (2007; New York: New York University Press, 2014), pp. 95-100. For an analysis of American exceptionalism after the Cold War, see Donald A. Pease, *The New American Exceptionalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009).

that "since ours is the defensive posture, our missile installations must be more widely distributed and better protected than theirs simply because it is not our policy, nor in the character of our people, to initiate war any more than it is in our policy or in our character to draw upon superior military might for purposes of conquest or coercion." The editors continued, blurring any distinction between armed forces and civilians in explaining how this defense system came into being. "We should understand that the ballistic missile system does not consist only of the missile itself," they wrote. Instead, it "requires for its operation its own vast support structure—launching pads, gantry cranes, blockhouses, tracing equipment, testing, maintenance, and supply facilities, along with its own production base, the industrial plants of America." The editorial stressed that producing such a system was "the cost of freedom," but added, "we have to pay the price for deterrent power" because it is "indispensable to our survival."[97] At least one Martin employee agreed that the plant was simply making deterrence possible. In a poem submitted to *The Missile,* an anonymous author described the "TITAN's destiny" as protecting the U.S. from its enemies. "Upon you rests the weight/Of the free world's fate/Higher and higher you will go/A limitless guardian of those below," the author wrote. He or she continued, asking "What is the reason for your plan?" The answer, the author asserted, was "to keep our country strong and free/With God and liberty/That is the TITAN's Destiny!"[98] At Martin-Denver, it was not uncommon for employees to believe they were producing the materiel that allowed the U.S. to defend itself, not destructive weapons that allowed the U.S. to maintain a threat posture.

When Denverites spoke of the Titan's "destiny" as one of keeping the country safe, they did so with assurance because they knew the quality of the work they had performed in building

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[97] "Deterrent Power and Peace," *Martin Denver Missile,* December 26, 1958.

[98] "TITAN's Destiny," *The Missile,* June 24, 1960.

the ICBM. On February 6, 1959, they celebrated their output. The first Titan test flight launched from Cape Canaveral three years to the day after construction was started on the plant in Denver. Back in the Mile High City, Martin employees anxiously awaited the launch, with about one hundred people crowding into an engineering office to listen to the final 30 minutes of the countdown, which was relayed to Denver over the telephone. Upon receiving confirmation that the "bird" was off the ground, employees let out screams of delight, with a Martin-Denver spokesperson describing the scene as "'like another New Year Eve around here.'"[99] The test launch was evidence their efforts were contributing to national defense.

Although most viewed success at Cape Canveral as a realization of the goal that thousands had been working towards for several years, some had a unique personal investment in the test launch. While Martin's primary aim to was to keep its customer happy in order to turn profits, certain members of its workforce needed the launch to go well in order to justify their positions at the plant. Even though women like Mae Barnwell, who had served in the U.S. Navy's women's volunteer auxiliary as a radio technician during World War II, used their engineering expertise for the defense effort, their capabilities were still questioned in a field that had long been the province of men. Barnwell took pride in working on ICBMs at Martin-Denver because, like her World War II service, defense projects were "important and constructive work." But she recognized that this "opportunity" was "for the woman who can prove herself in a field which traditionally has been dominated by men." Barnwell, who believed that "engineering is a rewarding profession for women," served as secretary for the Denver Chapter of the American Society for Women Engineers in order to encourage more young women to earn degrees and gain employment in the area. At Martin-Denver though, she, along with colleagues

[99] Henry Still, "Denver Plant Now Mass Producing Martin Co. Titan," *Rocky Mountain News,* February 7, 1959.

like Marian Gysland, a data analyst and math teacher in the evening education program, and Jewel Rich, an air frame engineer, were outliers who belonged to a "special niche" of "women in the professional fields."[100] They not only had to excel in job performance, they had to do so to legitimize their very presence in their departments. For them, the first test vehicle's lift off was validation to the rest of the plant that they belonged in their jobs and women deserved a place in the labor market. Engineering and defense work may have been vocations that paid bills, but this employment also provided an opportunity to open the door for other women to enter into the sciences and technology.

Over the spring, the men and women in Denver continued to watch the USAF perform successful test flights, which marked a turning point at Martin-Denver. Before the tests, employees had worked to refine and perfect the design of the Titan. Now, with the go-ahead from the Air Force, the plant turned to production. And yet, all was not well in Martin-Denver's relationship with the USAF, and the tension resembled moments in World War II when the War and Navy departments seized control of plants in response to industrial strife, although the contours at Martin-Denver differed significantly.[101] The response to *Sputnik* may have led to a loosening of overtime restrictions and an increase in hiring, but the USAF worried that mismanagement in Denver meant the plant was still understaffed. The situation was so dire that

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[100] "Professional Women Like Job-Home Blend," *Martin Denver Missile,* January 3, 1958.

[101] Mark Wilson points out that although the plant seizures during the war were most often in response to industrial actions on the part of labor, the federal government's intervention was prompted by management decisions that flouted federal labor laws. See Mark R. Wilson, *Destructive Creation: American Business and the Winning of World War II* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), chap. 5. For histories of wartime labor policies, see Christopher L. Tomlins, *The State and the Unions: Labor Relations, Law, and the Organized Labor Movement, 1880-1960* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), chaps. 4-6; Howell John Harris, *The Right to Manage: Industrial Relations Policies of American Business in the 1940s* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1982); Sophia Z. Lee, *The Workplace Constitution from the New Deal to the New Right* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), chaps. 1-3.

Major General Bernard Schriever, director of the USAF's ballistic program, called a meeting with Martin president George M. Bunker in April 1958. At the meeting, Bunker assuaged the general's concerns, and Martin-Denver began hiring to increase its engineering workforce. This sufficed until October 1959, when Schriever, along with Major Generals Osmond Jay Ritland and Ben I. Funk, met with Bunker, now chair of Martin's board, and William B. Bergen, the company's vice president. At the meeting, Bunker agreed to give Bergen complete oversight of the Titan program. But after only two months the USAF had so little confidence in Bergen's management abilities that Funk convinced Bunker to take control of the Denver plant himself and reorganize the management structure.[102]

The tension came at a precarious moment for the plant and its future, especially because of the control the USAF exerted as the sole purchaser of Martin-Denver's output. Military leaders were now in the market for a new ICBM that could be launched from within its silo and propelled by a more stable solid-and-liquid fuel that could be stored in the missile, two advances that would reduce response time from around thirty minutes to less than a minute. Such advancements were necessary to close the "missile gap," the predicted temporary ballistic superiority of the Soviet Union that would exist in 1963 and 1964 as the U.S.S.R. amassed a large cache of less-reliable liquid-fueled ICBMs while the U.S. worked to operationalize its more stable, solid-fueled rockets.[103] From a technological standpoint, the USAF considered an

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[102] Greene, *The Development of the SM-68 Titan*, pp. 127-31; "Record Set Straight by Chief Executive," *The Missile,* January 22, 1960.

[103] For early scholarship on the missile gap, see Roy E. Licklider, "The Missile Gap Controversy," *Political Science Quarterly* 85, no. 4 (December 1970): 600-15; Edgar M. Bottome, *The Missile Gap: A Study of the Formulation of Military and Political Policy* (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1971); James C. Dick, "The Strategic Arms Race, 1957-61: Who Opened A Missile Gap?" *Journal of Politics* 34, no. 4 (November 1972): 1062-1110; S. Nelson Drew, "Expecting the Approach of Danger: The 'Missile Gap' as a Study of Executive-Congressional Competition in Building Consensus on National Security Issues," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 19, no. 2 (Spring 1989):

improved, second-generation Titan to be a better option than either updating the Atlas or commissioning an entirely new ICBM complex.[104] But the Air Force had reservations about moving forward. Although the USAF did not question the quality of the work of the engineers, designers, fabricators, and assemblers in Denver, the plant's management troubles did not inspire confidence when the Air Force was considering an initial contract worth 400 million dollars to begin research and development of the Titan II. By May 1960, however, George Bunker had proven himself an adept manager at Martin-Denver and the Air Force awarded Martin the contract. With the plant back in the good graces of its customer, the company began expanding its workforce. Between research on the Titan II and efforts to improve production efficiency of the Titan I, around 10,000 Denverites now earned a paycheck from the Martin Company for work performed for the USAF.[105]

The contract for a new project did not diminish Martin-Denver's focus on expense reduction. In fact, employees eagerly participated in the company's quarterly suggestion competition, earning small monetary rewards for proposing effective cost-saving measures. In the first quarter of 1960, for example, more than 180 employees earned awards totaling 10,000 dollars. The four winners of the competition shared a single, 1,500-dollar award, with two men each winning 500 dollars and two other men splitting 500 dollars. While the company did not

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317-35; Robert A. Divine, *The Sputnik Challenge: Eisenhower's Response to the Soviet Satellite* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); Peter Roman, *Eisenhower and the Missile Gap* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995). Recent scholarship has focused less on the existence of a technological disparity and more on how the missile gap became a useful political rhetorical tool wielded by John F. Kennedy on the campaign trail to critique the Eisenhower Administration. See Christopher A. Preble, "Who Ever Believed in the 'Missile Gap': John F. Kennedy and the Politics of National Security," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 33, no. 4 (December 2003): 801-826, and *John F. Kennedy and the Missile Gap* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2004).

[104] Greene, *The Development of the SM-68 Titan*, pp. 72-74; "GE Joins Titan II Team; R&D on Re-entry Vehicle," *The Missile,* August 5, 1960.

[105] "Martin Reduces Costs; 1 Million-Plus Saved in '59," *The Missile,* April 22, 1960.

know at the time the financial benefits of these suggestions, it clearly believed they were worth implementing. For example, Raymond Lowe, who worked in the flight certification department, suggested a device for lowering the Titan's engines for removal, replacement, or visual testing. William L. Whitson, Assistant General Manager, estimated that Lowe's device would save the company over 3,000 man hours each year.[106] After the first competition, employee participation in the contest increased. The total awarded for the final quarter of 1960 more than doubled that of the first quarter, as the company paid out more than 21,000 dollars for what it called "usable ideas."[107] Martin-Denver continued this practice, and employees offered all kinds of recommendations to reduce everything from materials to employee-hours in order to save the company, and the USAF, money.

Employees who read the *Martin Denver Missile* were no doubt aware of the many benefits of the suggestion competition. Beyond the immediate financial gain, they were constantly told by management that not only the plant's long-term viability rested in their hands, but, hyperbolically, the fate of the entire western world. In one editorial, for example, they would have read that increasing the efficient use of resources—materials, energy, time, money—translated into greater company profits, which meant job security. But during the Cold War, the editors anchored their capitalist plea for efficiency in a metaphysical and historical claim about human nature. "History shows," they wrote, "the real basic freedom is the freedom to compete...the basic difference between American economy and economies in many other lands is

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[106] "Employees Receive $10,000 for Suggestions; Four Share $1,500," *Martin Missile,* May 20, 1960.

[107] "$21,337 for Usable Ideas; Top Award Winners Listed," *Martin Mercury,* February 10, 1961, Denver edition.

that here a man has a right to succeed or fail by his own efforts."[108] In this assertion, the editors revived ideas that circulated at the Denver Ordnance Plant fifteen years earlier about the importance of individual responsibility in preserving the U.S. and market economies alike. In this milieu, employees were told, an act as simple as submitting a useful suggestion could mean not only the difference between employment or termination, but also whether or not the plant would continue to produce ICBMS and thus safeguard the U.S. and its economic system.

Whether or not Denverites bought into the charged rhetoric, they certainly performed their jobs well enough to contribute to Denver's economic health. By 1962, seven years after Martin's arrival, the region's manufacturing sector had added almost 22,000 jobs, with Martin now accounting for 13,000 of those, making it the largest private employer in the state. Many of the other manufacturing jobs were related to Martin as well, with new electronics and instrument producers setting up shop in the Mile High region.[109] Across Colorado that year, federal funding for defense industries translated into 439 million dollars of personal income, with Martin employees earning one-quarter of that.[110] The broader effect of the federal money funneled through Martin was difficult to ascertain, but estimates by the Metro Denver Chamber of Commerce placed the service-sector growth over the same time at an increase of 23,000 jobs. Of

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[108] "Our Challenge," *Martin Denver Missile,* March 14, 1958.

[109] Dan Partner, "Martin Missiles Boom Economy of Denver Area," *Denver Post,* March 17, 1963. The same day Martin announced its Denver plant, the Los Angeles-based Ramo-Woolridge Corporation announced that it would build a factory near the Martin facility. The two-year-old company specialized in electronic components for guided missiles and followed Martin to Denver. "Electronics Firm Options Land for $5.5 million Plant," *Rocky Mountain News,* November 29, 1955.

[110] John S. Gilmore, "Proposed State and Local Preparation for Curtailment of Defense Spending in Colorado," (paper presented at Rocky Mountain-Great Plains Peace Research Conference, Denver, CO, October 5, 1963), published in U.S. Congress, *Selected Readings in Employment and Manpower*, vol. 2 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1964), pp. 806-19, referenced material on pp. 807-08.

course not all of these jobs were directly related to Martin-Denver, but according to a common formula utilized the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the total amount of "disposable income" Martin-Denver released into the Denver market through wages and purchase of goods and services amounted to 162 million dollars after taxes in 1962.[111]

Much of what Martin-Denver spent on goods and services locally was through the subcontracts it used to control production costs. In 1959, Martin-Denver let nearly 60 million dollars' worth of contracts for the Titan project, with 45 percent of that total going to small businesses. Although Martin-Denver had contracts with companies in 43 states, Colorado's small manufacturers fared the best, with 7.6 million dollars' worth of contracts in 1959.[112] The next year, when Titan I production was in full-swing, Martin-Denver contracted more than 22 million dollars' worth of business to over 1,200 Colorado firms.[113] By FY 1961, Colorado had become one of the most important states to the military-industrial complex. In the years since the end of the Korean War, Colorado had the third highest increase in percentage share of total funds awarded by the DOD. During the Korean conflict, Colorado companies had contracts accounting for 0.2 percent of all defense spending, but by FY 1961, the state's firms had contracts totaling 2.1 percent of DOD spending. The 1.9 percent increase trailed only California and Massachusetts, and equaled that of Texas. Colorado's 950 percent relative increase in DOD

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[111] Partner, "Martin Missiles Boom Economy of Denver Area." John S. Gilmore estimated that every defense job supported another two jobs, producing a personal income totaling 1.317 billion dollars, about 30 percent of all income earned in the state in 1962. See Gilmore, "Proposed State and Local Preparation for Curtailment of Defense Spending in Colorado," pp. 808-09.

[112] "Martin Emphasizes Contracts with Small Business Firms," *Martin Missile,* May 6, 1960.

[113] "Long Term Stability Indicated in Missile Industry—Whitson," *Martin Mercury,* April 7, 1961, Denver edition.

contract awards trailed only Utah.[114] Martin-Denver's presence as a prime contractor was good for manufacturing across the state.

What is more, in 1961 Martin executives, after assessing the health of the company, to which Denverites had contributed greatly, began to consider ways to grow its share of the consumer goods market. In June 1961, Martin Chair George M. Bunker and Grover M. Hermann, Chair of the Board of Directors of American Marietta, announced that the two companies would consolidate into a single entity: Martin Marietta. In their joint statement, Bunker and Hermann said, "it is anticipated that the new company will be in a position to serve better its government and military customers as well as those areas essential to the construction industry and civilian economy."[115] This vertical merger combined Martin's expertise in aerospace technologies with American Marietta's market share in cement, chemicals, and construction materials. This reduced risk at Martin-Denver by providing the plant's parent company with an influx of revenue not tied to the federal government and its spending decisions.

The merger may have been to the benefit of Martin Marietta, but it did little to protect Martin Denver's workers, who eventually took matters into their own hands. The year 1963 marked a turning point for the plant's production, maintenance, and cafeteria workers when they and their colleagues at Martin's Orlando plant became part of the United Automobile Workers (UAW) bargaining unit that represented employees at the company's two Maryland locations. That year, Martin Marietta entered its first multi-plant agreement. The company had less room to negotiate with the UAW because its contract talks were approximately one year behind the rest of the industry. This meant that when the UAW began its negotiations, it leaned heavily on the

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[114] Office of the Secretary of Defense, *The Changing Patterns of Defense Procurement* (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 1962), pp. 14, 17.

[115] "Companies Announce Merger Plans," *Martin Mercury,* June 30, 1961, Denver edition.

contracts other unions had secured with Boeing, McDonnell-Douglas, and Lockheed to gain wage and benefit increases from Martin Marietta. On October 14, 1963, the UAW began its first negotiations for a consolidated agreement with the company, and those at the Denver plant were more than ready to join their union brethren at the table. The union demanded a list of economic and noneconomic contract terms, including wage increases as well as future guarantees for cost-of-living allowance increases, the creation of a dedicated fund to provide better layoff benefits, and improvements to existing overtime, holiday, vacation, sick leave, and shift-differential provisions. When collective bargaining failed to produce improvement, Denverites joined their Baltimore colleagues and 9,000 men and women walked off the job on November 13. The job action had an immediate effect, and by the end of the day the union had a three-year contract with concessions from Martin Marietta, including wage increases and cost-of-living adjustments every quarter, a reduction in employee contributions to insurance premiums, as well as improvements to their pension plan.[116]

The push by some Denverites to bargain collectively coincided with changes at the plant that were dictated by the DOD and the USAF, which eventually had devastating consequences for nearly 7,000 employees. Despite the success of the Titan I, the project could not continue indefinitely, especially not with the plant moving ahead on the next-generation Titan. Although at the beginning of 1963 the plant was still producing the Titan I, it was transitioning to the Titan

[116] Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Wage Chronology,* pp. 1-4. In 1962, United Automobile Workers officially changed its name to United Automobile, Aerospace, and Agricultural Implement Workers of America to reflect the extent of its organizing. For histories of the union and its powerful leader Walter Reuther, see Nelson Lichtenstein, *The Most Dangerous Man in Detroit: Walter Reuther and the Fate of American Liberalism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995), and "Auto Worker Militancy and the Structure of Factory Life, 1937-1955," *Journal of American History* 67 (1980): 335-53; Kevin Boyle, *The UAW and the Heyday of American Liberalism, 1945-1968* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995); John Barnard, *American Vanguard: The United Auto Workers During the Reuther Years, 1935-1970* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2004).

II as management prepared for the USAF to cancel the Titan I order and elevate the Titan II to the primary missile of the complex.[117] Unsurprisingly, ending the Titan I contract led to a drastic workforce reduction. The layoff situation was made worse by Martin employees' success in designing the Titan II, a technologically more complex projectile that, paradoxically, required far fewer parts and, therefore, fewer employee hours to produce. With the cancellation of the Titan I, the move to producing a less labor-intensive ICBM, and increases in labor costs, Martin-Denver began a sixteen-month period of layoffs in December 1963 that reduced the workforce by 6,800 employees.[118] In March 1965, the plant's workforce stabilized at 6,300 Denverites, where it would remain for the next decade.[119]

As so many Denverites discovered, producing profits for a private company, even one with public contracts, was no guarantee of their own job security. Those who lost their jobs at Martin did not have an easy time getting back into the labor force and they certainly could not command the wages they had at the plant in Waterton Canyon. Although it is not clear how much of an effect the new contract and increased labor costs had on Martin Denver's workforce contraction, the number of layoffs made the month after the contract was agreed is striking. For

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[117] Partner, "Martin Missiles Boom Economy of Denver." The USAF canceled the Titan I order in 1963, but it did not begin to phase out the missiles from deployment until 1965 when the more reliable Titan II was ready to take its place. U.S.A.F. Strategic Air Command, *SAC Missile Chronology,* pp. 46-47.

[118] U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, *Reemployment Experiences of Martin Company Workers,* p. I-1. Other aerospace defense contractors also had large scale layoffs around the same time. At Boeing's Seattle plant, more than 5,000 were laid off over a four-month period beginning in December 1963, while more than 10,000 men and women lost their jobs at the Republic Aviation Company's plant in Farmingdale, New York, over a twenty-one-month period beginning in April 1963. See Leslie Fishman, Jay Allen, Byron Bunger, and Curt Eaton, *Reemployment Experiences of Defense Workers: A Statistical Analysis of the Boeing, Martin, and Republic Layoffs* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1968).

[119] U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, *Reemployment Experiences of Martin Company Workers,* p. II-1, table II-1.

those men and women, losing their jobs at Martin meant weeks of searching for new employment. In a survey of approximately 2,500 who were laid off, nearly half spent between 10 and 30 weeks searching for a new job, while another 15 percent were unemployed for more than 30 weeks. About 60 percent of those surveyed expressed their frustration at not finding jobs commensurate with their skill and experience. Over half of the skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled workers who did find new jobs had to make do with lower wages than they had earned at Martin. For professionals and managers, 60 percent ended up in a lower-paying job, and more than half of those had what they considered a substantial pay decrease. While Martin did provide some reemployment services for those who were laid off, these efforts were most beneficial to salaried professionals or those able to move to another job in the aerospace industry. Hourly employees, on the other hand, found the Colorado State Employment Service more useful than Martin, although many had to resort to their own networks of family, friends, and former colleagues to find new employment.[120] For all their work on behalf of the U.S. empire, these men and women still had to contend with market forces that pushed them out of their jobs and then they had to rely on their own skill to find more work.

The USAF's cancellation of the Titan I contract and the workforce reduction did not mean the end of Martin-Denver and the plant's operations. Of course, by the end of 1963, the plant remained committed to producing the Titan II and delivering that order to the USAF, but management also knew that that order would end by 1965. Behind the scenes, however, company executives and Denver management had spent several years preparing for a drastic change. The development would bolster George Martin's claims that the plant would not be tied to any single defense project and provide further evidence that the U.S. could produce materiel

[120]Ibid., pp. V-8, VI-4-VI-5, VI-8-VI-10.

for the Cold War through monopsonies that avoided centralization. Martin Marietta was preparing to turn its Denver Division into the home of the company's space exploration work.

From Space Work to Spinoffs

Sometime in 1961, Martin Marietta made the decision to alter its Denver Division's business paradigm to continue its relationship with the state. That year, the company hired Carl L. Kober, an Austrian-born physicist, to lead its newly-formed Advanced Projects Division.[121] The plant created the new division to capitalize on the knowledge it had developed in rocketry and pivot towards space exploration. Diversification made sense because it opened the door to other revenue streams beyond the USAF's missile program, allowing Martin-Denver to complement its prime contract work with research, development, testing, and engineering (RDT&E) contracts for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).[122] By adapting and responding to changing national security needs, Martin-Denver furthered its reliance on the federal government as its only customer. This relationship sustained the Denver plant until the mid-1970s, when it finally had spinoff technologies Martin Marietta could sell on the commercial market.

Martin-Denver's decision to expand to space exploration was not only an effort to diversify; it was also a shift in its business model. After its first six years of ICBM work for the DOD, Martin executives discovered that companies with existing RDT&E contracts had a

[121] Carl L. Kober, Resume, 1961, pp. 1-6, folder "Subject Files: Carl Kober resumes and general information," box 3, Carl L. Kober papers, 1938-1993 (accession no. 9998), American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming, Laramie, Wyoming (hereafter Kober Papers).

[122] "Rauth Cites '63 Achievements, Prospects for Coming Year," *M News*, January 17, 1964, Denver edition.

competitive advantage in securing production contracts. The DOD recognized this in 1961 when it reviewed its missile procurement policy, observing that "successful research and design, or development and testing effort, often leads to follow-on production contracts; and, in turn, engineering work on highly complex new weapon systems creates new R&D capability. The process is circular; and it regenerates itself."[123] Martin-Denver's success with the Titan projects, however, did not follow this pattern and was instead based on securing large contracts from the DOD to perform all of the RDT&E work on the airframe as well as production and system integration. Moving forward, the company recognized it had to shift to securing contracts for RDT&E work, especially if it had designs on becoming a prime producer for NASA.[124] Rather than relying solely on large contracts worth hundreds of millions of dollars that spanned years, Martin-Denver's engineers began earning profits for the company by performing short-term research on space exploration projects.

Martin Marietta's move towards space exploration was not a surprise, at least not to those who had paid attention to the Martin Company's ICBM program. As early as January 1958, a little more than three months after the launch of *Sputnik I*, Martin officials proposed leading the way in the space race with the Soviet Union. Howard M. Merrill, General Manager of Martin-Denver and Vice President of the company, told members of the Metro Denver Chamber of Commerce that his company was talking to the federal government about using Titan technology to develop rocket boosters for space exploration. As Merrill explained, because the Titan was the

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[123] Office of the Secretary of Defense, *The Changing Patterns of Defense Procurement*, pp. 1, 8, quoted material on p. 8.

[124] NASA awarded many contracts to private industry to supplement the work of its own science and engineering teams. See Stephen B. Johnson, "The Political Economy of Space Flights," in *The Societal Impact of Spaceflight,* ed. Steven J. Dick and Roger D. Launius (Washington, DC: National Aeronautics and Space Administration Office of External Relations, History Division, 2007), pp. 141-91, referenced material on pp. 165-66.

first true multi-stage ICBM, the engine and propulsion systems were well suited for repurposing as a launch vehicle capable of reaching the moon. "'Initially,'" Merrill told the Chamber, "'such a plan does not even require a major change in design.'"[125] In fact, converting the Titan would not be difficult because the company's Baltimore Division had developed the multi-stage Vanguard Rocket used by the Naval Research Laboratory in its space exploration efforts in the 1950s.[126]

What Merrill did not admit, but company executives knew at the time, was that the storied aircraft producer was struggling to compete with Boeing, Douglas, and Lockheed.[127] Space exploration offered an avenue for expansion, which was necessary because, by 1959, the company had effectively left the aircraft market. In fact, that year the Navy canceled its contract for the SeaMaster float plane and by December, writes historian Charles D. Bright, "Martin was, except as a subcontractor or rebuilder, out of the airplane business."[128] To a certain extent, Martin engineered the contraction of its aircraft production by taking on the military contract for the Titan. Political Scientist Eugene Gholz notes that during the Cold War, staffing a new

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[125] "Co. Proposed Moon Project to Government," *Martin Denver Missile,* January 17, 1958.

[126] On the Vanguard Project, see Constance McLaughlin Green and Milton Lomask, *Vanguard: A History* (Washington, DC: Scientific and Technical Information Division, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, 1970), available online < https://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/pao/History/SP-4202/cover.htm>.

[127] On the success of Boeing, Douglas, and Lockheed in military and civilian aircraft production after World War II, see Roger E. Bilstein, *Flight in America: From the Wrights to the Astronauts*, 3rd ed. (1984; Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), chaps. 5-6; Donald M. Pattillo, *Pushing the Envelope: The American Aircraft Industry* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998), chap. 9.

[128] Charles D. Bright, *The Jet Makers: The Aerospace Industry from 1945 to 1972* (Lawrence: Regents Press of Kansas, 1978), chap. 10, para. 16, consulted online at <http://www.generalatomic.com/jetmakers/chapter10.html> (accessed November 2, 2017); "Quarterly Dividend Listed: Company's Saturn Role and SeaMaster Program Discussed," *The Missile,* September 4, 1959.

military project often made it that much more difficult for a firm to find the requisite resources for other projects.[129] With the Martin Company emphasizing its guided projectile work, it lost its share of the aircraft market and had to look elsewhere to replace the revenue and profits. The shift from missiles to space exploration helped Martin-Denver compensate for losses elsewhere.

Fortunately for the company and its Denver plant, the federal government viewed space exploration as the next important contest with the Soviet Union. In 1954, President Eisenhower commissioned the Technological Capabilities Panel to explore harnessing technology for national security. The panel produced a wide-ranging report that detailed the possibility of developing nuclear arsenals, advanced ballistics like those used in the Atlas and Titan ICBMs, early-warning radars, and intelligence collection methods, including high-altitude reconnaissance flights and space-based satellites. The last use, intelligence gathering, eventually became the impetus for a space program when the National Academy of Sciences and the DOD together supported a proposal for the launch of a research satellite during the July 1957-December 1958 International Geophysical Year.[130] The DOD's involvement led to the drafting of the Eisenhower administration's space policy in NSC-5520, which laid out the reasons for space exploration as intelligence gathering and preventing the Soviet Union from reaching space first and subverting international law regarding the "Freedom of Space."[131] Despite these efforts, the Soviet Union

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[129] Eugene Gholz offers this observation in his evaluation of the relationship between military contracts and commercial spinoffs in the aircraft industry. Although he considers the effects of military projects on a firm's ability to compete in the commercial aircraft market, his observation still holds true for the Martin Company. In fact, this phenomenon was amplified for Martin because its new military projects in self-propelled missiles did not produce technologies capable of sustaining its aircraft production. See Eugene Gholz, "Eisenhower Versus the Spin-off Story: Did the Rise of the Military-Industrial Complex Hurt or Help America's Commercial Aircraft Industry?" *Enterprise & Society* 12, no. 1 (March 2011): 46-95, referenced material on p. 56.

[130] Hays, "NASA and the Department of Defense," pp. 201-02.

[131] On the relationship between the space program and international law," see R. Cargill Hall, "Origins of U.S. Space Policy: Eisenhower, Open Skies, and Freedom of Space," in *Exploring the*

beat the U.S. to a satellite launch, putting *Sputnik I* and *II* into space in the autumn of 1957, leading to intense debates within the Eisenhower administration about whether the space program should fall under military or civilian control. After political debate within the administration, and between it and the military branches, the p resident signed the National Aeronautics and Space Act into law in July 1958 and in October created NASA to oversee civilian space exploration and non-defense missions, while the DOD would continue its space work for defense purposes.[132] With a federal structure now geared toward both military and civilian efforts, prime contractors like Martin-Denver had two separate options for contracts in space work.

Despite what appeared to be a clear delineation between the two agencies, in practice their concerns often overlapped.[133] Martin-Denver began its foray into space exploration with the DOD and its Advanced Projects Research Agency (ARPA). In 1959, the plant secured a contract to work with ARPA on its deep-space exploration efforts in the Saturn project, agreeing to modify the first stage of the Titan's propulsion system into a second-stage booster. ARPA chose the engine from the Centaur, a rocket under collaborative development by Pratt & Whitney and Convair, as the primary propulsion system, and it awarded a contract to Rocketdyne, a division of North American Aviation, for the first-stage booster.[134] In 1960, however, NASA absorbed

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Unknown: Selected Documents in the History of the U.S. Civil Space Program, ed. John M. Logsdon, vol. 1, *Organizing for Exploration* (Washington: NASA History Office, 1995), pp. 213-29.

[132] Hays, "NASA and the Department of Defense," pp. 205-06.

[133] Ibid., p. 213.

[134] In 1967, North American Aviation merged with North American Rockwell, forming Rockwell International. Then, in 1996, Boeing purchased Rockwell's space systems divisions. See Mike Lombardi and Erik Simonsen, "The High and the Mighty," *Boeing Frontiers* 8, no. 7 (December 2009-January 2010): 54-57, cited material on p. 57. On Rockwell's presence in Denver at the Rocky Flats Nuclear Facility, see Chapter Five.

the Saturn program and chose a different launch vehicle with engines built by Martin's competitor, Douglas Aircraft. Although Martin-Denver lost the Saturn contract, it came away with a new contract to perform feasibility studies on manned spaceflight for NASA's Project Apollo.[135]

The feasibility study contract for Project Apollo set Martin-Denver on its way toward RDT&E contracts with NASA. For Martin, a new federal administration with its own funding and a pressing need for rapid technological advancement offered the perfect opportunity. NASA utilized smaller contracts for nearly every step of RDT&E and production rather than offering large contracts like the one Martin-Denver had secured for the Titan in 1955.[136] In 1960, for example, Martin won a 100,000-dollar contract from NASA to study the use of nuclear-powered rockets for space exploration.[137] While NASA did not develop the technology, this mattered little to the company because Martin-Denver had a contract to produce knowledge for NASA, not a fully-operational space vehicle. In 1962 alone, Martin-Denver had over 200 study and design contracts with the NASA.[138]

This did not mean that Martin-Denver gave up the market share it had garnered as a prime contractor with the DOD and USAF. In November 1962, Air Force Secretary Eugene M. Zuckert announced that both the DOD and NASA would turn to the next-generation Titan III to

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[135] David S. Akens, *Saturn Illustrated Chronology* (Huntsville, AL: Historical Office, Marshall Spaceflight Center, 1971), Part 1, consulted online at < https://history.nasa.gov/MHR-5/contents.htm> (accessed on February 25, 2018).

[136] On the Department of Defense's procurement practices in the mid-1950s, see Bright, *Jet Makers,* chap. 6.

[137] "Martin Wins Nuclear Rocket Study Contract," *Martin Mercury,* August 22, 1960.

[138] Martin Marietta Denver Aerospace, *Thirty Years of Progress* (Denver, CO: Martin Marietta, 1986), p. 14.

carry exploration vehicles into space. The Titan III was the first launch vehicle designed specifically for space exploration; all previous vehicles utilized modified ICBM engines. The new rocket generated 2.5 million pounds of thrust, easily enough to take 25,000-pound payloads into orbit. The Titan III was a collaborative project, bringing Martin-Denver together with United Technology Corporation of Sunnyvale, California, and Aerojet-General Corporation of Azusa, California. While the USAF did not disclose the value of the individual contracts, the total project had a price tag north of one billion dollars.[139] The DOD selected Martin-Denver to be the systems integration coordinator, as well as the manufacturer of the fourth stage booster and the control module that housed the guidance system.[140]

Selection of the Titan III illuminated the difference between the needs and goals of the DOD and those of NASA in the space race. As John Krige points out, NASA's space work was far more public than the DOD's, and it was expected to succeed in its missions in part to provide visible evidence of the U.S.'s scientific superiority.[141] When NASA first learned of the DOD's plans for the Titan III in 1961, NASA hoped to use launch vehicle technology from the DOD for its ongoing Mercury Mark II project. The exigencies of the space race meant that NASA needed to get the Mercury capsule into orbit as soon as possible, and it had little patience to wait for development of the Titan III. Instead, NASA hoped the DOD would pour more money into

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[139] "Billion Dollar Development Plan Announced for Titan III," *Rocky Mountain News,* November 17, 1962.

[140] Martin Company—Denver Division, News Bureau, "Martin Co.'s Denver Division to Execute TITAN III Contract," release no. 360, n.d., folder 7, box 3, Kober Papers.

[141] John Krige notes that NASA's space ventures were not only scientific experiments, but also spectacles intended to highlight the U.S.'s scientific, technological, industrial, and managerial superiority. See Krige, "NASA as an Instrument of Foreign Policy," in *The Societal Impact of Spaceflight,* ed. Dick and Launius, pp. 207-18, cited material on p. 207.

developing a modified Titan II space launch vehicle, which was projected to enter production within the next year. Ultimately, the DOD decided that a new Titan designed specifically for space work with a greater payload capacity would give it more flexibility in future projects, forcing NASA to settle on waiting for the Titan III to go through RDT&E and production.[142]

Company executives and Martin-Denver management celebrated the DOD's decision to support a third-generation Titan because it gave the plant a new foothold in producing for the space race. John Donald Rauth, Vice President of the Denver Division, used a sports metaphor to explain to the *Denver Post* that "'we must score to maintain our vitality and fulfill the Martin Co.'s responsibility to the state and to Denver.'" For the largest private employer in Colorado, the Titan III contract accomplished that goal. Just as important to Rauth, however, was the need to "'find ways to expand and increase our scope of endeavor in Denver.'"[143] Doing so was necessary because the company predicted that its ICBM work would end by 1965, and the Titan III facilitated the plant's transition away from ballistic missiles.[144] In 1964, as Martin-Denver was in the midst of its sixteen-month workforce contraction, the corporate office took a bold step to transform its Denver operation into its primary space work plant by moving the company's charter for space business from Baltimore to Denver. Naming Martin-Denver the home of its space program committed the company to keeping the plant open beyond its ICBM contracts.[145]

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[142] Barton C. Hacker and James M. Grimwood, *On the Shoulders of Titans: A History of Project Gemini* (Washington, DC: Scientific and Technical Information Office, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Scientific and Technical Information Office, 1977), pp. 70-72.

[143] Dan Partner, "Martin Co. Denver Division Chief Demands Only 'True' Facts," *Denver Post,* October 21, 1962.

[144] Martin Company—Denver Division, News Bureau, "Titan III Specifically Designed for Space Work," release no. 361, n.d., folder 7, box 3, Kober Papers.

[145] William B. Harwood, *Raise Heaven and Earth: The Story of Martin Marietta People and Their Pioneering Achievements* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1993), pp. 410-11.

Moving the charter to Denver might have officially made the plant the home of space projects, but Martin-Denver's executives knew they had to make capital improvements designed for space work if they wanted to succeed. By 1965 Rauth headed the Denver Division, and he made the decision to invest five million dollars in a thermal vacuum chamber, which he hoped would lead to an influx of RDT&E contracts with NASA.[146] While Denverites watched with pride as their modified Titan II carried ten separate manned space vehicles into orbit as part of NASA's Gemini Mission from April 1964 through November 1966, Martin-Denver executives wanted to do more than manufacture launch vehicles.[147] When NASA announced in 1965 that it would eventually let a round of RDT&E contracts for its Apollo Mission, the famed manned-spaceflight project that eventually reached the moon in 1969, Martin-Denver placed several bids.[148] In December 1965, the company won two contracts for the upcoming year totaling 645,000 dollars. The first, for 270,000 dollars, funded an eight-month study to develop a protocol for onboard testing of certain electronics systems on the Apollo module. As for the second, Martin was one of four companies to win a concurrent contract for a four-month design study of an experimental pallet to fly aboard the Apollo spacecraft.[149] Within two weeks of beginning testing on the experimental pallet, however, NASA canceled the contract. Although

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[146] "Martin Company Awards Chicago Firm Contract to Build Space Chamber," *M News*, February 18, 1966, Denver edition; "Martin Awards First Construction Contract for Vacuum Chamber to Briscoe Co.," *Martin News,* April 15, 1966, Denver edition; "Thermal Vacuum Building Nears Completion," *Martin News,* September 16, 1966, Denver edition; Harwood, *Raise Heaven and Earth*, pp. 410-11.

[147] DC Able, "Riding the Titan II," *Air & Space Magazine,* September 1998, consulted online at <https://www.airspacemag.com/flight-today/riding-the-titan-ii-223545/> (accessed February 14, 2018).

[148] On the history of Project Apollo, including the politics that influenced the decision to undertake a manned lunar landing, see John M. Logsdon, *The Decision to Go to the Moon: Project Apollo and the National Interest* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1970).

[149] "Martin Awarded Apollo Studies," *M News,* December 17, 1965, Denver edition.

Martin-Denver executives did not know it at the time, NASA made the decision because it was impressed with the plant's testing chamber and procedures. The contract stipulated that its results and data be made public and NASA chose to cancel the contract in order to protect Martin-Denver's chamber for use in future classified projects. Losing the experimental pallet research contract ultimately turned into a boon for Martin-Denver. NASA's decision worked in its favor by protecting the testing technology, allowing Martin-Denver to maintain a competitive advantage in seeking future RDT&E contracts. It also opened the door for Martin-Denver to perform classified studies, what contractors colloquially called "black work," for NASA.[150] This was the result Martin-Denver had been working towards since it hired Carl Kober in 1961 to lead its Advanced Projects division, and now, after making the necessary capital improvements, the plant was ready to broaden its space work beyond launch vehicles.

Kober, the Austrian physicist, had a history of working with weapons technology, especially that used against the Soviet Union. Born in Vienna in 1913, he earned terminal degrees in theoretical and applied physics and electronics in the late 1930s before taking a job with a Berlin-based company partially owned by the Nazi Navy. In Berlin, much of his work focused on radar and sonar development until he began working on the coordinate stabilization system for the V-2 rocket. After the war, he returned to Austria, where he remained until 1949, when he left for the U.S. through Operation Paperclip, a controversial program led by the Office of Strategic Services that brought more than 1,600 Nazi and Nazi-affiliated scientists to the country at the beginning of the arms race with the U.S.S.R.[151] After gaining citizenship and

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[150] Harwood, *Raise Heaven and Earth*, p. 413.

[151] On the history of Operation Paperclip and the contribution of former Nazi party members to science in the U.S., see Annie Jacobsen, *Operation Paperclip: The Secret Intelligence Program to Bring Nazi Scientists to America* (New York: Little, Brown and Co., 2014); Linda Hunt, *Secret Agenda: The United States Government, Nazi Scientists, and Project Paperclip, 1945 to 1990* (New York: St. Martin's

clearance to work on the most sensitive projects, he held several civil-service and private industry jobs until taking the position at Martin-Denver in 1961, ready to help the division move forward with its space exploration efforts.[152]

As early as 1962, well before Martin-Denver had moved into classified RDT&E, Kober predicted that the Denver Division would help make the U.S. safer from the U.S.S.R. In a speech delivered to the Annual State Convention of the Lions Club in Estes Park that year, he listed several space-age weapons his team was considering producing. He believed that Martin-Denver had an obligation to move forward on these projects because failing to do so would give the upper hand in the space race to the Soviet Union. Among the ideas he discussed were unmanned orbital bombardment systems, a manned fleet of nuclear-warhead-bearing spacecraft, and space-based, nuclear-powered defensive lasers capable of destroying an ICBM within seconds of its launch, foreshadowing by two decades parts of the Reagan administration's Strategic Defense Initiative.[153] Ultimately, Kober's grand ideas did not lead to actual projects, but they did signal to

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Press, 1991); Clarence G. Lasby, *Project Paperclip: German Scientists and the Cold War* (New York: Athenaeum, 1971); Monique Laney, *German Rocketeers in the Heart of Dixie: Making Sense of the Nazi Past During the Civil Rights Era* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015). For a personal account written by a scientist who emigrated through Operation Paperclip, see Dieter K. Huzel, *From Peenemünde to Canaveral* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1962).

[152] Carl L. Kober, Resume, pp. 1-6.

[153] Carl L. Kober, "Missile Planning Strategy and World Politics," speech delivered at the Annual State Convention Luncheon of the Lions Club, June 4, 1962, Estes Park, Colorado, pp. 9-12, folder 16, box 1, Kober Papers. On the Strategic Defense Initiative, see William J. Broad, *Star Warriors: A Penetrating Look into the Lives of the Young Scientists Behind our Space Age Weaponry* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1985); Keith Payne, *Strategic Defense: "Star Wars" in Perspective* (Lanham, MD: Hamilton Press, 1986); James H. Hughes, *Warfare in Space: Missile Defense and our Future in* Space (Washington, DC: Council for Social and Economic Studies, 2000); Frances FitzGerald, *Way Out There in the Blue: Reagan, Star Wars, and the End of the Cold War* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001). Martin-Denver did win several research contracts to assist with the development of SDI in 1984. Martin Marietta Denver Aerospace, *Martin Marietta Denver Aerospace*, pp. 54-57.

NASA, the DOD, and Martin Marietta's competitors that the Denver plant had a vision for shaping the future of space technology.

Some of those in Kober's division shared his vision of making a safer world through space work. Al Mosch, who worked on the Gemini project at Martin-Denver for three years before moving to the Beech Aircraft plant in Boulder to work on that company's Apollo contracts during the 1960s, considered the space program a vital component of national security. Between his jobs at Martin and Beech, he garnered multiple awards from both companies as well as the space administration itself, all recognizing his devotion to helping the U.S. reach the moon. Although he eventually worked in Boulder, his hawkish views on how to keep the country safe set him apart from the rest of the community. As he told an interviewer in 2003, the awards he earned at both plants during the 1960s were a direct result of his "patriotism," which propelled him to spend long hours in quality control and inspection on the overnight shift in addition to his daytime work as a gold miner and land broker in Clear Creek County, just west of Jefferson County. For Mosch, pulling double duty at two different jobs was not a sacrifice, not when "we were in this cold war against the Soviet Union and we had to prove our superiority to the Soviet Union, to prove to the world that our system was better." The way he contributed was through space work. Mosch did not have any reservations about working in the space program for a private company with a public contract even though he did "not like our government." In his view, Martin Marietta and the other prime contractors illustrated that public-private organization in the U.S. was more innovative and produced better technology than the Soviet system.[154] Mosch easily drew a connection between aerospace engineering and national security,

[154] Al Mosch, interview by Beth Simmons, 2003, interview OH1116-V, video, Maria Rogers Oral History Project, Carnegie Library for Local History, Boulder Public Library, Boulder, CO, available online at < https://localhistory.boulderlibrary.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A78100 ?solr_nav%5Bid%5D=deb6c539a103edf15fc5&solr_nav%5Bpage%5D=0&solr_nav%5Boffset%5D=0>.

believing that his contributions at Martin and Beech were directly tied to keeping the U.S. safe from the Soviet Union, totalitarianism, and a centralized economy.

Mosch left Martin-Denver sometime in the mid-1960s, but the plant retained 6,800 employees who worked on the Titan III and various research contracts through 1966 and 1967, when the company increased its efforts to become a prime contractor for NASA. With NASA commissioning the Voyager Mission to Mars in 1967, Martin-Denver decided the project provided the perfect opportunity to move from launch to space exploration vehicles. In February 1967, the Denver Division submitted a joint proposal with North American Rockwell and Radio Corporation of America (RCA).[155] In teaming with other contractors, Martin-Denver adapted its bidding process. While the company had found success in winning smaller study contracts, it decided against a piecemeal approach of submitting a bid for each stage of a project. Now, Martin-Denver enlisted other firms to indicate to NASA that it had a complete proposal for Voyager, one beginning with the initial stages of RDT&E, moving all the way through production, and culminating in Martin-Denver's systems integration work.[156] By May, the joint bid had been shortlisted as a finalist for a 500,000-dollar design contract for the project's entry capsule.[157] NASA chose a different prime contractor for Voyager, but Martin-Denver continued to win smaller study contracts associated with the project, such as developing repair techniques for sterilized capsules designed for landing on other planets as well as the parachute used for the

[155] J. Donald Rauth, "1967 Outlook, 1966 Highlights," *Martin News,* December 23, 1966, Denver edition.

[156] "Martin Marietta, No. American, RCA Team to Bid on Voyager," *Martin Marietta News,* February 28, 1967.

[157] "Martin Marietta Enters Voyager Finals," *Martin Marietta News—Denver,* May 1967.

capsule's Martian landing.[158] By winning these contracts, Martin-Denver continued to develop the science and technology necessary for NASA's interplanetary missions.

Because of a rare astronomical occurrence, missing out on the Voyager contract kept the plant's hopes of reaching the Red Planet alive. NASA eventually enlarged Voyager into a deep space probe to perform flybys of Jupiter and Saturn in the late 1970s and early 1980s when those two planets were due to align with Uranus and Neptune.[159] For Martin-Denver, this meant the company continued work on a Mars vehicle, performing a feasibility study for NASA's Langley Research Center. In November 1968, the study team made its presentation to NASA, which included a cost analysis as well as evaluations of all existing and potential designs for the spacecraft and its subsystems.[160] By the following March, Martin-Denver had become the frontrunner in the competition for the prime contract in the newly-formed Viking Program. It held a day-long briefing at its Waterton Canyon campus with more than forty aerospace contractors to discuss Martin Marietta's bid. With RCA already committed to providing the communications subsystem, Martin-Denver's team began looking to bring other subcontractors on board for its proposal to NASA. Doing so was necessary because NASA intended to have the Viking vehicle land on Mars in 1974 to explore for life forms.[161] NASA awarded the Viking contract to the Denver Division in May 1969.[162]

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[158] "Denver Awarded NASA Contract," *Martin Marietta News—Denver,* August 1967; "Ballute, Chute Flights Conclude PEPP Tests," *Martin Marietta News—Denver,* October 1967; "'Chute Will Do For Landing in Mars Wind," *Martin Marietta News—Denver,* April 1968.

[159] N.A.S.A., "Voyage to the Outer Planets and into Interstellar Space," pamphlet JPL 400-1538, September 9, 2013, pp. 1-2, (Pasadena, CA: Jet Propulsion Laboratory and National Aeronautics Space Administration, 2013), available online at https://www.jpl.nasa.gov/news/fact_sheets/voyager.pdf.

[160] "Kullus' Group Delivers Mars '73 Study Results," *Martin Marietta News—Denver,* November 1968.

[161] "Division Hosts Viking Briefing," *Martin Marietta News—Denver,* March 1969.

[162] Martin Marietta Denver Aerospace, *Martin Marietta Denver Aerospace,* p. 20.

Martin-Denver may have been named the prime contractor, but, much as with the Titan program, its mission to Mars still hinged on financial decisions made by the U.S. Congress. Of course, after fifteen years of producing for the federal government, the Denver plant was not unfamiliar with adjusting its projects in response to the needs of its purchaser. But, unlike the early years of the ICBM program, when postwar abundance translated into healthy revenues for the federal government, the Viking Project faced a very different financial landscape, shaped in part by spending on Great Society programs, the continuing conflict in Southeast Asia, and concerns over rising inflation. Congress tightened NASA's purse strings because the federal government moved to reduce its expenditures in 1970 and 1971 in an effort to combat inflation.[163] When Congress elected to decrease the flow of public money to NASA for 1971, it marked the first time since the Space Administration's inception that it could not count on an increased budget for the upcoming year. Denverites working on Viking felt the pinch most acutely, with the project's team leaders referring an unspecified number of employees to the Industrial Relations department for assistance in finding new jobs outside the company in January 1970.[164] That same month, management also explained to remaining employees that the recently-passed Tax Reform Act of 1969 meant that they would be taking home more of their

[163] President Richard Nixon articulated his decision to curb federal spending in a speech to Congress on March 26, 1969. See Richard Nixon, "Special Message to the Congress on Fiscal Policy," March 26, 1969, in *The American Presidency Project,* ed. Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, available online at http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=1978. For an assessment of his economic policy, see Allen J. Matusow, *Nixon's Economy: Booms, Busts, Dollars, and Votes* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998). On the role of the Federal Reserve in enacting Nixon's policy, see Wyatt C. Wells, *Economist in an Uncertain World: Arthur F. Burns and the Federal Reserve, 1970-78* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994). On the economic challenges of the 1970s, see Kim Phillips-Fein, *Fear City: New York City's Fiscal Crisis and the Rise of Austerity Politics* (New York: Henry Holt, 2017): Thomas Borstelmann, *The 1970s: A New Global History from Civil Rights to Economic Inequality* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012); Stein, *Pivotal Decade.*

[164] "Viking Stretch-out has Division-Wide Impact," *Martin Marietta News—Denver,* January 1970.

paychecks by the end of the calendar year because Congress chose to extend a federal payroll surtax for another year, but halved the tax rate and increased deductions for dependents.[165] Martin-Denver had little choice but to work within the constraints imposed by Congress's reduced budget.

This decision did not suspend Viking efforts at Martin-Denver, but it did extend the timeline, with NASA pushing the launch date back to 1975. In February 1971, A.J. Kullas, director of the Viking project at Martin-Denver, finally delivered a full-scale mockup of the Viking lander to James S. Martin Jr., NASA's program manager for the Viking Project, as well as several other key NASA personnel. By this point, Viking had grown into a four-vehicle mission, with two surface landers and two orbiting spacecraft to relay data to Earth. This did not slow Martin-Denver's engineers, and the NASA visitors considered the design and production of the mockup first-rate.[166] By November 1972, the Denver Viking team began to turn the full-scale mockup into a testing model. Once again, this vindicated Rauth's decision to build the thermal vacuum chamber because it was capable of simulating the atmospheric conditions on Mars. The testing was necessary in part because Martin-Denver chose to use an as-yet-untried, specially-

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[165] "Federal Tax Changes Help Fatten Paychecks," *Martin Marietta News—Denver,* no. 1, January 1970. The Tax Reform Act of 1969, signed into law on December 31, was intended to combat two separate problems. First, the act created the alternative minimum tax to address tax inequities that allowed some of the wealthiest individuals and corporations to avoid paying taxes. Second, the continuation of a payroll surtax, while at a lower rate, was intended to combat inflation by maintaining federal revenues so that the government could pay for the Vietnam War without having to borrow more money. See Shu-Chun Susan Yang, "A Chronology of Postwar U.S. Federal Tax Policy," Center for Applied Economics and Policy Research at the University of Indiana, CAEPR working paper #2007-021, October 10, 2007, p. 8, available online at < http://www.iub.edu/~caepr/RePEc/PDF/2007/CAEPR2007-021.pdf> (accessed March 17, 2018); Jerry Tempalski, "Revenue Effects of Major Tax Bills," U.S. Department of Treasury Office of Tax Analysis Working Paper 81, September 2006, p. 11, available online at https://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/tax-policy/tax-analysis/Documents/WP-81.pdf (accessed March 17, 2018).

[166] "Viking Mission Complex, Difficult: NASA's Martin," *Martin Marietta News—Denver,* February 1971.

designed, lightweight magnesium-thorium alloy for the landing vehicle. In April 1973, as the trial vehicle neared completion, Martin-Denver began to receive the subcontracted scientific instruments, and, over the next five months, installed them on the testing vehicles.[167]

By 1973, Martin-Denver focused primarily on the Viking, but engineers had begun to find ways to develop spinoff technologies from the project. Martin-Denver subcontracted the technical equipment and scientific instrumentation, but one of those subcontracts came back to Denver as a sub-subcontract. Martin's engineers designed a photo sensor array for the Viking cameras in development by the Itek Corporation of Burlington, Massachusetts.[168] The company, founded in 1957 by Richard Leghorn, a former USAF reconnaissance expert who had worked at Kodak Eastman, had a history of producing optical components for use by the U.S. intelligence community.[169] Martin-Denver's contribution, an array of twelve pin-head-sized photo diodes about the size of a silver dollar, was a realization of Carl Kober's desire to move the plant into this kind of work. In fact, in 1971 he told the annual Convention of the Colorado Farm Bureau that a team was working on remote-sensing technologies capable of identifying areas of high yield, acquiring run-off data to help reduce irrigation losses and produce better flood control measures, and early detection of diseases such as wheat rust. The advances had the potential to save farmers 1.5 billion dollars per year, a not-insignificant reduction for an industry that spent

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[167] "First Operational Viking Lander to be Completed in SSB," *Martin Marietta News—Denver,* April 1973.

[168] "Viking Camera Eyes Developed by Division," *Martin Marietta News—Denver,* October 1973.

[169] On the connections between Itek and the Central Intelligence Agency, see Jonathan E. Lewis, *Spy Capitalism: Itek and the CIA* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002).

100 billion dollars annually.[170] Although the Viking's photo sensor array did not make Kober's agricultural cost-saving prediction come true, it did prove that Martin-Denver's efforts to expand its research and development to spinoff technologies were not misguided.

Two years after Martin-Denver began assembling the Viking test vehicles, its 6,800 employees finally saw the products of their labor take off. NASA launched Viking 1 into space from the Kennedy Space Center at Cape Canaveral on August 20, 1975. Then, on September 9, NASA launched Viking 2. On July 20, 1976, after a ten-month journey from Earth, the Viking 1 lander touched down on the surface of Mars, followed by Viking 2 on September 3, 1976. When Viking 1 transmitted the first images of Mars to the data-receiving center at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California, Martin-Denver's General Manager, Caleb Hurtt was there to see the first surface-taken pictures of the Red Planet.[171] The Denver plant had realized its dream of putting a space vehicle on Mars.

The Viking mission, ultimately a successful, multiyear project for Martin-Denver, also marked a turning point for the plant. Developing spinoff technologies, whether for different federal projects or the commercial market, had become necessary because the early 1970s continued the contraction of the federal space market. NASA's spending in 1974 was about one-half its peak in 1966.[172] As Congress reduced NASA's budget, it began to exercise more

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[170] Carl L. Kober, "Benefits from the U.S. Space Program to the Farmer," address to the 53rd Annual Convention of the Colorado Farm Bureau, November 16, 1971, Denver, Colorado, pp. 1-6, folder 2, box 1, Kober papers. For a non-technical history of the early years of remote sensing projects for agriculture, see Robert B. McDonald, "A Summary of the History of the Development of Automated Remote Sensing for Agricultural Applications," *IEEE Transactions on Geoscience and Remote Sensing* GE-22, no. 6 (November 1984): 473-82.

[171] Martin Marietta Denver Aerospace, *Martin Marietta Denver Aerospace*, p. 24.

[172] The 1974 allocation of 3.255 billion dollars was about 55 percent of the 1966 allocation of 5.933 billion. In terms of percentage of total federal spending, in 1974 NASA received 1.21 percent of the federal budget while in 1966 NASA funding accounted 4.41 percent of total federal expenditures. Office

oversight of both the Space Administration and its contractors. On November 22, 1974, Lawrence J. Adams, Vice President of Martin Marietta and General Manager of Martin-Denver, appeared before the House Subcommittee on Space Science and Applications for what became a public dressing-down by the subcommittee members. They were unhappy with the Viking mission cost overruns, which by October 1974, stood at 181.2 million dollars over the projected budget.[173] Although Lawrence explained to the subcommittee that many of the project's problems were unforeseen and the result of developing new technologies, members remained skeptical that Martin Marietta effectively managed its in-house and subcontract programs.[174] While the Viking mission was profitable for the company, the increase in oversight from Congress, along with NASA's shrinking budget, signaled to Martin Marietta that it needed to focus more intently on developing its spinoff technologies into salable commodities.

After two decades of producing exclusively for the DOD and NASA, the scientists and engineers finally began to develop spinoffs that Martin Marietta could sell either on the commercial market or to other federal agencies.[175] For example, during the energy crisis of the

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of the Management and Budget, "Historical Tables," Tables 4.1 and 4.2, available online at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/Historicals/> (accessed December 5, 2017).

[173] *Viking Project: Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Space Science and Application of the Committee on Science and Astronautics,* U.S. House of Representatives, 93rd Cong., 2nd sess., p. 264 (1974) (statement of Lawrence J. Adams, Vice President, Martin Marietta).

[174] Ibid., p. 266.

[175] There is a sizable body of literature that explores how the postwar military's needs have driven technological innovation, often leading to spinoff technology that reaches the commercial market. For examples, see Peter J. Dombrowski and Eugene Gholz, *Buying Military Transformation: Technological Innovation and the Defense Industry* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006); Peter J. Dombrowski, Eugene Gholz, and Andrew L. Ross, "Selling Military Transformation: The Defense Industry and Innovation," *Orbis* 46, no. 3 (Summer 2002): 26-49; Michael Brown, *Flying Blind: The Politics of the Strategic Bomber Program* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992); John A. Alic, et al., *Beyond Spinoff: Military and Commercial Technologies in a Changing World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), esp. chs. 4-7. See Jacques S. Gansler, *Defense Conversion: Transforming the Arsenal of Democracy* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995) for an argument that post-

1970s, the federal Energy Research and Development Administration turned to Martin-Denver and two other private companies, along with scientists at Sandia National Laboratory in Albuquerque and Georgia Institute of Technology, to work on a two-year project to develop a ten-million-watt solar energy pilot plant.[176] Martin-Denver made other forays into renewable energy, including solar panels coated with a special absorptive material the plant had developed earlier in the decade for NASA's Skylab space station. The first of these solar panels were sold to a junior high school in Parker, Colorado, in 1975.[177] All of this translated into profits for Martin-Denver and Martin Marietta. The corporation's 1974 ledger book showed evidence of its most successful year ever, with sales revenue at 1.22 billion dollars and profits of over 80.8 million dollars, far outpacing the previous year's record profits of 57.35 million dollars.[178] By 1981, Martin-Denver's solar-power operations were so well-regarded that it won a subcontract to produce crucial components for a 500-kilowatt solar power system in Almeria, Spain, and the next year it installed a 225-kilowatt power system for the Arizona Public Service Company at Phoenix's Sky Harbor International Airport.[179] As the Denver Division's managers surveyed the

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Cold War procurement efforts are highly inefficient and do not produce technologies that are applicable to both military and civilian uses.

[176] "Division to Work on Solar Energy Pilot Plant," *Martin Marietta News—Denver,* June 1975. The Energy Research and Development Administration's decision to fund a solar energy project coincided with the energy crisis of the 1970s. For a history of the energy crisis in the 1970s, see Daniel Yergin, *The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money, and Power* (1991; New York: The Free Press, 2003), chaps. 28-37; Paul Sabin, "Crisis and Continuity in U.S. Oil Politics, 1965-1980," *Journal of American History* 99, no. 1 (June 2012): 177-86. On the domestic effects of the energy crisis of the 1970s, see Meg Jacobs, *Panic at the Pump: The Energy Crisis and the Transformation of American Politics in the 1970s* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2016).

[177] "Division to Build Solar Panels for Parker Junior High," *Martin Marietta News—Denver,* July 1975.

[178] "Corporation Sets Earnings Record," *Martin Marietta News—Denver,* March 1975.

[179] Martin Marietta Denver Aerospace, *Martin Marietta Denver Aerospace*, pp. 43-44.

future landscape of DOD and NASA funding, they recognized that expanding the plant's ability to compete in other markets beyond the monopsonies created by those two agencies was necessary. Moving forward, Martin Marietta's Denver Division would have to expand its offerings of commodities on the commercial market.

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Denver's Cold War military-industrial complex began a new era of state-supported industrial activity for the U.S. empire in the Mile High City. Just as during World War II, thousands of Denverites went to work in a factory that manufactured defense materiel utilized by the U.S. in its foreign policy and efforts to shape the international community. But, unlike the Denver Ordnance Plant, Martin-Denver was intentionally designed to reproduce industrial capitalism as it produced ICBMs and space exploration vehicles. Even though the federal government and its purchasing power sustained the plant for two decades, the economic relationship between the private company and the state did not resemble those between the Soviet Union and its producers. Rather, the federal government created monopsonies to enfold private businesses into the military-industrial complex, ensuring that defense production for the state would not undermine capitalism and a market-oriented domestic economy.

Although in these monopsonies the state held an incredible demand power over producers, the contracts continued industrial capitalism. For one, the state used the contracts to spur private, not public, investment of capital in the very durable goods necessary for industrial capitalism to function. When the Martin Company won the contract for the Titan ICBM, it had to draw from its own financial resources to acquire land, illiquid factors of production, and labor. Of course, the Martin Company viewed its contract with the federal government as evidence that

it would eventually see a sizeable return on its investments. And, in 1955, when the company won the Titan contract, the DOD and the USAF were on course to increase their annual spending on ICBMs as U.S. foreign policy came increasingly to rely on an arsenal of nuclear-weapon-carrying ballistic missiles. The Martin Company, in betting on a future of profits from engaging in this manufacturing work, was more than happy to make investments that would lead to future private capital accumulation.

At the same time, the rise of Denver's aerospace industry was inextricably linked to the activity of the postwar state. The federal government was the only legitimate purchaser of ICBMs and, initially, the technologies developed in space work. For two decades, Martin-Denver did not have a commercial market for its output. Furthermore, with the state as a guaranteed purchaser of its efforts, the Denver Division overcame the city's isolation, which posed such a distribution problem to other firms competing in a commercial market. Ultimately, however, the state's demand for aerospace products turned into a boon for Martin-Denver. As the plant and its engineering team learned to commodify their technical ability and generate revenue through small-scale testing contracts with NASA, the plant also engaged in developing spinoff technologies that had uses beyond the space administration's efforts. This worked to the plant's advantage because, by the mid 1970s, the U.S. Congress began reducing NASA's budget while simultaneously exercising more oversight of the administration and its private contractors. While the DOD and NASA had provided the demand that sustained Martin-Denver for two decades, the shift to developing and selling spinoff technologies to other federal agencies and private customers cemented Denver's status as an important center of the aerospace industry, and Denverites became further enmeshed in the production of the materiel use to defend and expand the U.S. capitalist empire.

Chapter Five

Nuclear Divisions:
Constructing and Contesting the Empire at Rocky Flats Nuclear Facility

"You know, when we came to work here in 1952, '53, we thought we were maybe part of the Cold War, that we were fighting a battle. You know, we won that battle," Chuck Bogard told Hannah Nordhaus in 2004. Bogard, a native Coloradan with a degree in mechanical engineering, worked at the federally-funded, privately-run Rocky Flats Nuclear Facility from 1955 until his retirement in 1995. He elaborated on his feelings about the necessity of building and stockpiling nuclear weapons: "that's pretty much what I feel. I think the people that are anti-nukes and so forth, that's fine. I would like to live in a perfect world, too. But I think we kept the Russians from doing anything drastic because they knew we were stronger."[671] Other employees shared Bogard's sentiments about the vital importance of the work done at Rocky Flats to ensure the security of the United States. According to Jerry Felknor, "the average Rocky Flats employee felt that they were doing their patriotic duty. I think they were almost always conscious of the fact that they were acting in the interest of national defense."[672]

As the pair's patriotic bravado suggests, employees at Rocky Flats believed they were every bit as much the Cold War warriors as the men and women who served in the armed forces. And, much like their neighbors to the south at Martin Marietta who built missiles that carried

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[671] Chuck (Charles F.) Bogard, interview by Hannah Nordhaus, October 25, 2004, interview OH1281-V, transcript, audio, and video, Maria Rodgers Oral History Program (hereafter MROHP), Carnegie Branch Library for Local History, Boulder Public Library, Boulder, CO, available online at <https://localhistory.boulderlibrary.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A26950?solr_nav%5Bid%5D=decc33ac5ba00c30afb0&solr_nav%5Bpage%5D=0&solr_nav%5Boffset%5D=0>.

[672] Jerry E. Felknor, interview by Dorothy D. Ciarlo, March 9, 1999, interview OH0952-V, transcript and audio, MROHP, available online at <https://localhistory.boulderlibrary.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A22005?solr_nav%5Bid%5D=73e67430af107a2cbaac&solr_nav%5Bpage%5D=0&solr_nav%5Boffset%5D=1>.

nuclear warheads, these civilians labored in the service of the federal government by working for a private corporation. They did so by producing nuclear pits, the enriched-plutonium triggers that detonated the warheads placed atop missiles like the Titan I and II built at Martin-Denver. At the height of the arms race with the U.S.S.R., what better way to prove the superiority of the U.S. and of capitalism than by using private corporations to build the very material necessary to secure the nation against the threat of communism? What better place than Denver—the "little capital of the United States"—to locate a plant that would be a linchpin in the process of manufacturing the material used to articulate U.S. hegemony?[673] Who better than Denverites, residents of a nascent imperial metropole, to provide the labor necessary to produce and reproduce a capitalist empire?

These questions are rhetorical, but they recall the linkage between the solidification of a U.S.-led capitalist order and the development of Denver as a metropolitan region. As I have argued in earlier chapters, Denverites easily drew a straight line from their labor to the reproduction of capitalism at home and abroad. For these westerners, state involvement in the economy in effort to spur its growth was not a repudiation of the tenets of free enterprise; rather, state intervention at home to protect capitalism and ward off totalitarianism was necessary and welcome, especially if it improved their economic livelihoods.[674] Denverites, intimately familiar with the benefits of working with and for the state, embraced the opportunity to bring the military-industrial complex to their city, in the process concretizing its status as a metropole. As this chapter explores, the material infrastructure to protect an international capitalist order relied

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[673] "We Have Another Job to Do," *Rocky Mountain News,* March 24, 1951.

[674] My thinking here is influenced by Wendy L. Wall, *Inventing the "American Way": The Politics of Consensus from the New Deal to the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

upon the labor of thousands of Denverites who worked at Rocky Flats. Denver, as much as Washington, DC, was critical to this expansion of U.S. imperialism.

The federal government moved to create Rocky Flats after the success of the U.S. Army's Manhattan Engineering District, more commonly known as the Manhattan Project. But Rocky Flats was a different facility than the Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee or the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico.[675] Unlike those two installations, which were U.S. Army sites until President Truman created the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) in 1946 to oversee atomic science during peacetime, the AEC designed Rocky Flats to be a public-private initiative from the beginning, akin to the Hanford Engineer Works in Hanford, Washington.[676]

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[675] On the history of the Manhattan Project and the military's efforts to create an atomic bomb, see Frank A. Settle, *General George C. Marshall and the Atomic Bomb* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2016); Robert S. Norris, *Racing for the Bomb: General Leslie R. Groves, the Manhattan Project's Indispensable Man* (South Royalton, VT: Steerforth Press, 2002); George Francis Gosling, *The Manhattan Project: Making the Atomic Bomb* (Washington, DC: United States Department of Energy, History Division, 1994); Vincent C. Jones, *Manhattan: The Army and the Atomic Bomb* (Washington, DC: United States Army Center of Military History, 1985); Richard Rhodes, *The Making of the Atomic Bomb* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1986); Priscilla Johnson McMillan, *The Ruin of J. Robert Oppenheimer and the Birth of the Modern Arms Race* (New York: Viking, 2005). On the role of women in the Manhattan Project, see Ruth H. Howes and Caroline L. Herzenberg, *Their Day in the Sun: Women of the Manhattan Project* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999); Mary Anne Schofield, "Lost Almost and Caught between the Fences: The Women of Los Alamos, 1943-1945 and Later," in *The Atomic Bomb and American Society: New Perspectives,* ed. Rosemary B. Mariner and Kurt G. Piehler (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2008), pp. 65-88. For published oral histories of the Manhattan Project, see Hans A. Bethe, *The Road from Los Alamos* (New York: American Institute of Physics, 1991); Arthur Compton, *Atomic Quest* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956); Leslie R. Groves, *Now It Can Be Told: The Story of the Manhattan Project* (New York: Harper & Row, 1962); David Kenneth Nichols, *The Road to Trinity: A Personal Account of How America's Nuclear Policies Were Made* (New York: William Morrow, 1987). On Oak Ridge National Laboratory and life in the city, see Russell B. Olwell, *At Work in the Atomic City: A Labor and Social History of Oak Ridge, Tennessee* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2004); Charles W. Johnson and Charles O. Jackson, *City Behind a Fence: Oak Ridge, Tennessee, 1942-1946* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1981); Lindsay A. Freeman, *Longing for the Bomb: Oak Ridge and Atomic Nostalgia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015). On Los Alamos National Laboratory and the closely allied Sandia National Laboratory in Albuquerque, see Jon Hunner, *Inventing Los Alamos: The Growth of an Atomic Community* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004); Necah Stewart Furman, *Sandia National Laboratories: The Postwar Decade* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1990).

[676] For an early history of the creation of the Atomic Energy Commission, see Richard G. Hewlett and Duncan Francis, *Atomic Shield: A History of the United States Atomic Energy Commission: Volume*

Rocky Flats remained under the AEC's control until 1977, when the U.S. Congress created the Department of Energy (DOE) to oversee nuclear research for both defense and domestic energy.[677] The relationship between public funding and private management created a special world at Rocky Flats, one in which employees worked at the behest of the federal government, but they did so under the watchful eye of profit-seeking corporations—first Dow Chemical from 1953 until 1975, then Rockwell International until 1989, and finally EG&G until production stopped in 1992. But more than simply creating a public-private enterprise, Rocky Flats was a site where privately-employed Denverites committed themselves to a project of national security. In the process, they transformed their hometown into an increasingly important urban piece within the fabric of the empire.

Rocky Flats may not have been the only postwar site within the metropolitan region that connected Denver to a world beyond the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains, but it had an outsized importance, even to those who did not work there. Historian Maria Montoya recalls that Rocky Flats did much to expose Denver's global connections. As a young girl, she moved there from the San Luis Valley of southern Colorado with her parents when her father got a job at the plant. With Rocky Flats never far from her view—she could see it from her bedroom window—

II, 1947-1952 (Washington, DC: U.S. Atomic Energy Commission, 1972). On life in Richland, Washington, a publically funded "company town" that appeared to offer all the benefits of American capitalism, see Kate Brown, *Plutopia: Nuclear Families, Atomic Cities, and the Great Soviet and American Plutonium Disasters* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 37-43. For a collection of oral histories on life at Hanford, see S.L. Sanger, *Working on the Bomb: An Oral History of WWII Hanford,* ed. Craig Wollner (Portland, OR: Portland State University, 1995). On the E. I. du Pont de Nemours and Company's role in the scientific advancements at Hanford, see Harry Thayer, *Management of the Hanford Engineer Works in World War II: How the Corps, DuPont, and the Metallurgical Laboratory Fast Tracked the Original Plutonium Works* (New York: American Society of Civil Engineers Press, 1986).

[677] Department of Energy, "A Brief History of the Department of Energy," <https://www.energy.gov/management/office-management/operational-management/history /brief-history-department-energy> (accessed November 7, 2017).

its mere existence reminded her that "my landscape, unlike that of the insular world of my parents' childhood, did not offer isolation from the outside world but instead tied me and my life to worlds far away."[678] Indeed, with Rocky Flats a crucial nodal point in a vast assemblage of nuclear technology sites that stretched across the U.S. West, Denver became integral to the construction of the U.S. empire. At the plant, multiple networks converged. The federal government, with its hopes of building a nuclear arsenal for national defense; the private businesses that profited from the construction of the plant; the corporations earning profits from administering Rocky Flats; and the bodies of civilian men and women—all met in a project designed to bolster the U.S. in its struggle against communism.[679]

At the same time, Denver's metropole status was not only the product of the labor of those who worked at Rocky Flats but also those who contested the site's very existence.[680] As a site, the plant provided the literal and rhetorical terrain upon which many people articulated

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[678] Maria Montoya, "Landscapes of the Cold War West," in *The Cold War West,1945-1989,* ed. Kevin J. Fernlund (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1998), pp. 9-28, quoted material on p. 11.

[679] Conservative political scientist Peter Feaver offers a critique of the policy of including civilians in the nuclear assemblage, especially with respect to nuclear command and control, during the Truman, Eisenhower, and Kennedy administrations in *Guarding the Guardians: Civilian Control of Nuclear Weapons in the United States* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992). For a contemporary analysis of how private corporations reap financial rewards from building nuclear weapons, see Richard Krushnic and Jonathan Alan King, "Privatizing the Apocalypse: How Nuclear Weapons Companies Commandeer Your Tax Dollars," *TomDispatch.com,* September 22, 2015, available online at <http://www.tomdispatch.com/blog/176047/tomgram%3A_krushnic_and_king%2C_the_corporate_nuclear_complex> (accessed August 7, 2017).

[680] Historians of Europe have analyzed how metropoles are also constructed and produced through anti-imperial politics. For examples, see Frederik Petersson, "Hub of the Anti-Imperialist Movement: The League against Imperialism and Berlin, 1927-1933," *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies* 16, no. 1 (2014): 49-71; Jonathan Schneer, "Anti-Imperial London: The Pan-African Conference of 1900," in *Imperial Cities: Landscape, Display and Identity,* ed. Felix Driver and David Gilbert (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1999), 254-68; Jennifer Anne Boittin, *Colonial Metropolis: The Urban Grounds of Anti-Imperialism and Feminism in Interwar Paris* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010).

protest positions against all that the plant stood for: imperial expansion, nuclear technology, environmental harm, public health hazard. In the 1970s and 1980s, metropolitan Denver hosted many demonstrations, including a major protest in 1978, against the existence of the plant. These protests could not close Rocky Flats, but they did expose the costs of constructing a nuclear arsenal for U.S. foreign policy and the complicity of Denverites in the threat posture of the U.S. Eventually, Rocky Flats suspended plutonium work indefinitely in 1989, but not until an employee cooperated in a federal investigation that saw the Environmental Protection Agency partner with the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Justice to take the Department of Energy and its private contractors to court. The trajectory of Rocky Flats, from a vital component of national defense to a site generative of a politics of resistance, tracks a broader shift in the ideological struggle with totalitarianism. Although Denver, and Denverites, did much to protect the U.S. for nearly four decades, by the early 1990s the needs of the U.S. had changed and so too had Denverites' relationship with the plant. With the Cold War coming to an end, they were at the forefront of a national debate about the continued need for nuclear weapons even as they wrestled with the prospect of losing their economic livelihoods. In the end, Denverites' role in contesting nuclear weapons contributed to its metropole status as much as the labor of those who built them.[681]

Scholars of the West have long paid attention to Rocky Flats and the nuclear assemblage. Len Ackland has written the most comprehensive history of Rocky Flats, a study of the health

[681] My claim that Rocky Flats was a site of contestation over imperial politics is influenced by historian Paul A. Kramer, who implores historians of U.S. imperialism to resist the urge to see empire as a signifier of totalizing, top-down, coercive power. If historians are not careful, he notes, it is possible to "derive a vision of power that empire-builders could only have dreamed of." See Kramer, "Power and Connection: Imperial Histories of the United States in the World," *American Historical Review* 116, no. 5 (December 2011): 1348-91, quoted material on p. 1380.

and environmental consequences of the plant.[682] More broadly, several historians have highlighted the role of the federal government in spurring economic development throughout the region through the influx of monies earmarked for the construction and maintenance of nuclear facilities.[683] Others have analyzed the ways in which federal bureaucracies, particularly the AEC and the DOE, shaped the cities intimately tied to the nuclear industry.[684] A third strand also exists, one that examines the local responses to broader national and international trends in nuclear development, often telling a story of resistance.[685] Implicit in these anti-nuclear narratives is the assumption that westerners stood outside and against the imperial project, recipients of unwanted extra-local infringements who mobilized against such intrusions. Here, I weave all three of these analytical strands together. Rather than retracing the work of Ackland, I explore how Rocky Flats functioned as a site that produced multiple subjectivities related to

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[682] Len Ackland, *Making a Real Killing: Rocky Flats and the Nuclear West* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1999).

[683] For examples, see Robert E. Ficken, "Grand Coulee and Hanford: The Atomic Bomb and the Development of the Columbia River," in *The Atomic West,* ed. Bruce Hevly and John M. Findlay (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1998), pp. 21-38; Carl Abbott, "Building the Atomic Cities: Richland, Los Alamos, and the American Planning Language," in *The Atomic West,* ed. Hevly and Findlay, pp. 90-115.

[684] Barton C. Hacker, "'Hotter Than a $2 Pistol': Fallout, Sheep, and the Atomic Energy Commission," in *The Atomic West,* eds. Hevly and Findlay, pp. 157-75.

[685] Daniel Pope, "Antinuclear Activism in the Pacific Northwest: WPPSS and Its Enemies," in *The Atomic West,* ed. Hevly and Findlay, pp. 236-54; Steve Fox, "From the Beat Generation to the Sanctuary Movement: Cold War Resistance Cultures in the American West," in *The Cold War American West,* ed. Fernlund, pp. 139-66. For examples of work on nuclear protests, both within the U.S. and without, see Thomas R. Wellock, *Critical Masses: Opposition to Nuclear Power in California, 1958-1978* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998); Philip L. Fradkin, *Fallout: An American Nuclear Tragedy* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1989); Robert Surbrug, *Beyond Vietnam: The Politics of Protest in Massachusetts, 1974-1990* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2009); Jim Falk, *Global Fission: The Battle Over Nuclear Power* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982); Christian Peterson, *Ronald Reagan and Antinuclear Movements in the United States and Western Europe, 1981-1987* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2003); Wolfgang Rudig, *Anti-nuclear Movements: A World Survey of Opposition to Nuclear Energy* (Harlow, UK: Longman Current Affairs, 1990).

national defense. In doing so, I do not assume a resistance narratives for Denverites. As I argue, residents of metropolitan Denver both embraced the production of nuclear weapons and pushed back against their use in U.S. foreign policy. Ultimately, the contestations over Rocky Flats opened chasms that could not be papered over by the politics of national defense.

This chapter explores Rocky Flats as a site that served as the nexus for multiple networks, a world that came into being as systems of capital, knowledge, radioactive materials, and human bodies converged. I begin by exploring the flows of capital that funded the creation and building of Rocky Flats, especially as that process laid the groundwork for a corporate-capitalist structure in which private enterprise was best placed to build weapons for national security. I next consider the world of secrecy and security at the plant, exploring the one-way flow of information into, but not out of, Rocky Flats. I then look at the interaction of human bodies and radioactive materials in order to explore how laboring at Rocky Flats produced imperial subjects who supported the defense of the U.S. And yet, sites are generative of multiple, sometimes conflicting and contradictory, worlds and spaces where a politics of resistance can emerge. This chapter, therefore, turns finally to the anti-imperialist protests at Rocky Flats and then concludes with the ending of production at the plant in 1992 in order to explore the variety of ways Denverites produced a metropole in the Centennial State.

Flows of Capital

On the morning of March 23, 1951, Denver residents awoke to read the headline, "There's Good News Today." As the *Rocky Mountain News* proudly boasted on its front page, the AEC had announced that Denver would be the home of a new, 45 million-dollar atomic

weapons plant.[686] Not surprisingly, the paper claimed the plant for the city, failing to mention just how close the announced location was to Boulder. The *Boulder Daily Camera,* on the other hand, did not miss a beat in asserting that the top-secret plant was coming to its community. "Boulder Gets $45,000,000 Atomic Plant," wrote the editors on the front page of the paper, noting the location was only eight miles south of the city, straddling the Boulder-Jefferson county line.[687] Despite the disagreement over which community would lay claim to the plant, the outcome remained: the same metropolitan region that had done so much for the war effort during World War II would once again offer its resources and labor for national defense and security. And, much as during mobilization at the Denver Ordnance Plant, Denverites would do so within a public-private, corporate-capitalist venture funded by the federal government.

The announcement of the plant brought largely positive reactions from Denverites. George Kelly of the *Rocky Mountain News* conducted an informal poll in downtown Denver the day of the announcement. According to Kelly, Denverites mostly agreed that the plant would be beneficial to the economy, but they had some concern over Denver becoming a target for enemy missiles through its involvement in the defense industry. However, the desire to manufacture atomic materials for the defense of the empire outweighed any fears. Marie Ward told Kelly, "I think it's wonderful. Anything that can be done for the defense effort should be done. These people who get frightened over such things give me a pain in the neck." Others concurred with Ward, especially because they expected the plant to contribute to Denver's industrial output. Lee Ramsel said he was "very much in favor of anything that will bring business to Denver," noting that "this project certainly should." Similarly, Ruth Yost felt that "we need more industry in

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[686] Barnet Nover, "U.S. To Build $45 Million A-Plant Near Denver," *Rocky Mountain News,* March 23, 1951.

[687] "Boulder Gets $45,000,000 Atomic Plant," *Boulder Daily Camera,* March 23, 1951.

Denver. I'm very much in favor of the plan and I'm sure it will mean much to the state." George Orrino, however, had less to say about the economic benefits of the plant even if he was enthusiastic about its arrival. Orrino believed "a town as dull as this one could stand a few split atoms."[688] Denverites, although unsure about what the plant would mean for the safety of the city, supported its arrival. Their eagerness to see Rocky Flats constructed in the region contributed to the conditions that made Denver a sound choice for the location of the plant.

Metropolitan Denver offered several other key resources. The AEC's initial announcement failed to mention why it chose Denver, but, when pressed at a later news conference, it conceded that "'factors in the selection of the site…included operations requirements, military considerations (vulnerability to attack), low production land and no residents to be displaced, the proximity of living facilities, the proximity of colleges (University of Colorado, Colorado School of Mines, University of Denver), and weather and meteorological conditions.'"[689] Gordon Dean, chair of the AEC, pointed out that "'the general location and living conditions are conducive to establishment and maintenance of a stable working force.'"[690] With its estimated cost of 45 million dollars, Rocky Flats would be not only the area's most expensive federal facility, outstripping both the Denver Ordnance Plant and the Rocky Mountain Arsenal, but the most expensive industrial project in the region.[691] According to Len Ackland, Denver provided several key features that set it apart from other potential sites, including access

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[688] George Kelly, "Atomic Plant Fine for Denver, Most Agree," *Rocky Mountain News,* March 24, 1951.

[689] "Boulder Gets $45,000,000 Atomic Plant," *Boulder Daily Camera.*

[690] "We Have Another Job to Do," *Rocky Mountain News,* March 24, 1951.

[691] Robert L. Perkin, "Denver Gets Atom Plant: $45,000,000 Project to be Rushed," *Rocky Mountain News,* March 24, 1951.

to electrical power, water, and gas. Additionally, the AEC had learned from Oak Ridge and Hanford that it did not want to run a "company town" as it had in those isolated communities.[692] By relying on existing infrastructure and housing, the AEC limited the financial costs of Rocky Flats.

The location of the four-square-mile tract of land fit the AEC's needs perfectly. Robert C. Looney, news editor of the *Boulder Daily Camera,* claimed the land held little value on the open market, and there was little chance for developers to profit from the plant's construction by erecting stores and restaurants because of the proximity of the existing communities of Boulder, Arvada, Lakewood, and Golden.[693] Neither of Looney's assertions proved to be entirely accurate. Although he believed that the unnamed landowners had no choice but to cede their land to the federal government, the owners did put up a fight.[694] For one particular parcel, the AEC maintained the land was worth between 12,000 and 20,000 dollars, while the landowners, Frank A. and Carrie M. Rodgers, contended that the land should be valued at 132,000 dollars. Eventually, the AEC acquired the land in a broad condemnation suit, paying Frank and Carrie Rodgers 42,219 dollars for four hundred acres of land, plus 6,997 dollars in damages.[695] As for

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[692] Ackland, *Making a Real Killing,* p. 52.

[693] Robert C. Looney to Bill Harris, March 29, 1951, Rocky Flats Vertical File Folder, Carnegie Branch for Local History, Boulder Public Library, Boulder, Colorado (hereafter, Rocky Flats vertical file folder).

[694] The owners of the land were eventually named as George Lindsey of Denver, Katherine E. Church of Broomfield, and Frank A. Rodgers of Arvada. Federal Judge William Kee Knous granted possession to the Atomic Energy Commission in a broad condemnation suit that awarded the land and mineral rights to the commission. The mineral rights had been owned by the Union Pacific Railroad. Associated Press press release, July 10, 1951, Rocky Flats vertical file folder.

[695] The other landowners were not part of the taking and the sale price for their land was not disclosed. "Government Files Condemnation Suit for A-Plant Land," *Boulder Daily Camera,* July 10, 1951; "Court Awards $42,219 for Rocky Flats Land Condemned for A-Plant," *Boulder Daily Camera,* March 25, 1953.

Looney's second claim, that developers would not be able to profit, he failed to mention that private firms had already made plans to construct housing for employees. For example, Charles Gracier of Boulder promoted a project to build 210 houses between the plant and Louisville, with the neighborhood to be annexed by that city.[696] Because the construction of housing was not under the remit of the AEC, Denver firms capitalized on the need that the plant's arrival spurred. In fact, new construction was the way forward for the western suburbs located next to Rocky Flats, which increased in population by over 700 percent during the 1950s.[697] By selecting land near municipalities capable of providing infrastructure and populous enough for private developers to undertake residential construction, the AEC did not have to provide housing and infrastructure as it had done at Oak Ridge and Hanford.[698]

The AEC had also learned from the Army installation at Oak Ridge that contracting private companies to build and run Rocky Flats was in its best interest. During the early years of the Manhattan Project, the Army quickly decided it did not have the capacity to create plants of the scale needed for atomic technology, so it turned to private corporations already versed in designing and constructing highly technical plants.[699] And, at Oak Ridge, the Army also discovered that its institutional hierarchy did not translate into effective management of a civilian workforce. Especially during construction, the Oak Ridge facility was beset with labor strife.[700]

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[696] "210 Homes Planned At Rocky Flats Plant," *Rocky Mountain News,* January 28, 1952.

[697] Montoya, "Landscapes of the Cold War West," p. 11.

[698] On life and labor at Oak Ridge National Laboratory, including the trials faced by the Army in running a nuclear facility and a community, especially during the early years of the Manhattan Project, see Olwell, *At Work in the Atomic City,* chaps. 1-4, 6; Johnson and Jackson, *City Behind a Fence,* chap. 1. For a history of life at Hanford Engineering Works, see Brown, *Plutopia,* chaps. 1-9.

[699] Sanger, *Working on the Bomb*, pp. 29-30.

[700] Olwell, *At Work in the Atomic City,* pp. 27-40.

The AEC, in an effort to avoid repeating the Army's experience at Oak Ridge, turned to the Austin Company of Cleveland, Ohio, to design and build Rocky Flats. At the same time, it awarded the operating contract to the Dow Chemical Corporation of Midland, Michigan.[701] In the creation of Rocky Flats, the AEC heeded the warnings of the Army and sought a private corporation to manage the plant and labor. Dow responded because the company had been angling for several years to move into nuclear production to meet its immense energy demands. Although it lost out to Du Pont in its bid to build the plutonium reactors at Savannah River, South Carolina, Dow, which already milled uranium on the Colorado Plateau, was in prime position to win the contract for Rocky Flats. The awards to Austin and Dow for Rocky Flats allowed the AEC to continue to oversee nuclear science in the U.S. without having to be directly responsible for building the plant and managing the civilian labor.[702]

Denver construction firms were the first to profit from this decision. Initially, Austin did not know how many contracts it would award to local firms, and, subsequently, how many residents would be involved in the construction of the plant.[703] Although Austin awarded the contracts on the open market and had no intentions of giving local builders preferential treatment, the company did offer some pertinent advice: "'we urge that Colorado contractors keep themselves closely advised on the developments, keep their qualifications before the appropriate persons and advise as to any threat of discrimination.'"[704] Furthermore, both U.S. Senators Edwin C. Johnson and Eugene D. Millikin, as well as Representative William S. Hill,

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[701] "Boulder Gets $45,000,000 Atomic Plant," *Boulder Daily Camera*.

[702] Ackland, *Making a Real Killing*, p. 57.

[703] "$6,000,000 in Contracts Awarded to Private Firms on Atomic Plant," *Boulder Daily Camera,* January 29, 1952.

[704] "Contractors Set for A-Plant Building Jobs," *Denver Post,* March 30, 1951.

supported local business in the bidding process. The three petitioned AEC chair Gordon Dean "'not to exclude Colorado contractors and subcontractors from this area of business.'"[705] As it turned out, Colorado firms did, at times, enjoy competitive advantages over those from other locations, in part because the contracts were opened to bidding in Denver. There, the Austin Company awarded its first subcontract to Hinman Brothers Construction of Denver for 50,000 dollars for excavation work on July 27, 1951.[706]

Local businesses had other advantages beyond proximity to Austin's local headquarters. For some of the more capital intensive building projects, local concerns that had already-existing infrastructure were in good stead to offer the most competitive bids. For example, Austin awarded a subcontract for a railroad spur to the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad after the railroad bid 225,000 dollars. Because the railroad already owned and operated a track line from Denver to Salt Lake City that ran near the plant site, the necessary spur was only four miles in length. As part of the contract, the railroad built the spur, but the line itself remained the property of the federal government, with the AEC obtaining and controlling all rights-of-way.[707]

Other Denver businesses capitalized on the construction at Rocky Flats. Because of the security measures required by a nuclear production plant, the AEC ordered two separate fences, each to encircle the entire plant. While the commission awarded a contract for a chain-link fence to the Chain Link Fence Corporation of Chicago, Denver's Western Engineering Company won

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[705] Ibid.

[706] "Subcontract on Atom Plant Let," *Boulder Daily Camera,* July 27, 1951.

[707] United States Atomic Energy Commission press release, February 12, 1952, Rocky Flats vertical file folder; "Railroad Will Build $225,000 Spur Line to Rocky Flats Plant," *Boulder Daily Camera,* February 13, 1951. On the history of the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad, see Robert G. Athearn, *The Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad: Rebel of the Rockies,* 5th ed. (1962; Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1977).

a bid to erect a barbed-wire fence. The federal government estimated that the fence would cost 29,479 dollars, but Western Engineering provided the lowest estimate at 19,661 dollars, earning the company the contract.[708] Similarly, the Collier Company won a bid for nearly one million dollars' worth of electrical work at the plant. The AEC announced that "'selection of the Collier company conformed with a general policy which the Atomic Energy Commission announced in Denver on June 14 that…due consideration,'" would be given '"to contractors in the Denver and Colorado area who are qualified for the job.'"[709]

Despite the wishes of the AEC to leave construction to private firms, some projects required the involvement of the federal government. The railroad spur was not the only necessary transportation link to the plant. The AEC also required seventeen miles of paved roads. Although state highways 72 and 93 connected Arvada and Boulder, respectively, with the plant, both highways were in rough shape. Construction workers derisively referred to Highway 72 as "that road" and rejoiced when, after two years of traveling on the washboard, the announcement came that it would finally be paved. The *Boulder Daily Camera* described Highway 72's defining features as "chuckholes, ruptured shoulders, and rippling centers," while Highway 93, known locally as "Rocky Flats Road," was widely detested because "although it isn't flat, it is rocky."[710] Like all other building projects at Rocky Flats, private corporations performed the reconstruction of these roads. The process, however, was more complicated than other projects because the federal government looked to the Colorado State Highway Advisory Board and

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[708] "Fence Contracts for Rocky Flats A-Plant Awarded," *Boulder Daily Camera,* November 10, 1951.

[709] "Denver Firm Gets Large Electrical Job at Atom Plant," *Boulder Daily Camera,* August 30, 1951.

[710] "Pledge of Road Cheers Workers at Rocky Flats," *Denver Post*, April 26, 1953.

Jefferson County for funding, even as both those entities had been petitioning for several years to have the highways designated federal aid roads.[711] Although those requests had been denied, the Advisory Board and Jefferson County both hoped that with the roads now crucial to the completion of Rocky Flats, federal aid would be granted. Eventually, assistance for the 430,000-dollar project did come in the form of a 170,000-dollar grant from the U.S. Bureau of Public Roads, which appropriated for roads necessary to national defense. The state highway department contributed another 175,000 dollars, while Boulder County and Jefferson County put forth 50,000 and 35,000 dollars, respectively.[712] When necessary, the federal government gave financial support to the project to ensure defense efforts did not run into problems.

Although the AEC initially estimated that the building project would call for 1,100 workers, the actual number spiked to 2,800 in July 1952, before tapering off to the original estimate. Coloradans reaped much of the profits from construction. By August of that year, the Austin Company had awarded nearly 40 million dollars' worth of contracts, with three-fourths going to firms in the state.[713] Furthermore, of the nearly 14 million-dollar construction payroll, Colorado laborers earned an estimated 13 million dollars of that total.[714] Despite the disparity between the estimated and actual number of workers, and the increased payroll wages, Austin completed the plant under budget. As the plant neared completion, the AEC revised the cost

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[711] "Rocky Flats Road Improvement Aid Sought From State, Federal Sources," *Boulder Daily Camera,* March 29, 1951.

[712] "Rocky Flats Road Project From Marshall to Arvada Set," *Boulder Daily Camera,* April 24, 1953.

[713] "Rocky Flats to Run Ahead of Schedule," *Denver Post,* August 28, 1952.

[714] Ibid.

down to a total of 43,739,000 dollars.[715] The cost savings justified the AEC's decision to allow a private company to oversee the construction.

By July 1953, Dow had moved into the plant with a workforce of 1,000 men and 200 women. Due to national security concerns, local press did not learn the official date of completion, but the more perceptive journalists in Boulder found signs of progress in other ways. For one, the Austin Company had stopped letting construction contracts. And, they could see how Dow's arrival reshaped Boulder's housing market. The *Daily Camera* reported that between Dow and the AEC, 266 high-ranking officials had relocated to the city, including F.H. Langell, Dow's plant manager.[716] Although Boulder attracted some of Dow's highest-paid managers, the economic benefits of the operation did not flow just toward the foothills of the Flatirons. The total payroll for the entire workforce was budgeted at 5.618 million dollars for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1953.[717] That summer, Denver's nuclear age began.

Secrets and Security

Public money may have been necessary for the construction of Rocky Flats, but once the plant was built, scientific knowledge became an important currency among employees. However, they made sure this information did not leave the plant. This was by design because the AEC invoked the veil of national security to shroud the plant in secrecy.[718] For the employees who

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[715] "Atomic Plant Nearly Done; Cost Drops," *Boulder Daily Camera, S*eptember 2, 1953.

[716] "Dow's Staff at Rocky Flats Atomic Plant Nearly Complete; Payroll is $5,618,000," *Boulder Daily Camera,* July 3, 1953.

[717] Ibid.

[718] As Gary Gerstle explores, protecting national security became an important function of the federal government in the postwar world and it gave the state incredible powers over the lives and rights of the U.S. public. See Gerstle, *Liberty and Coercion: The Paradox of American Government from the*

worked there, learning how to perform their jobs with these hindrances in place was part of the defense effort. Moreover, they guaranteed that knowledge did not go beyond the fences encircling the plant. While the AEC and Dow crafted operations and policies to limit the dissemination of information, employees had to put these procedures into place.

Unsurprisingly, the entire project at Rocky Flats was a secretive one. The Boulder Chamber of Commerce was as surprised as anyone the day the AEC announced the plant. As the *Daily Camera* reported, "a full-fledged atomic bomb of news hit Boulder," catching all in the community off guard.[719] In fact, the plans for the plant materialized in only five months, with the AEC first conceiving the idea in October 1950 and not visiting the site until February 1951, at which point two secret operatives of the Army Corps of Engineers Missouri River Division began acquiring the four-square-mile tract of land.[720] Because of the AEC's presence from the beginning, residents learned early on that the project would involve working with atomic energy. However, few knew for sure that the plant would manufacture weapons. In fact, the AEC pointedly insisted that the plant would not make armaments in its announcement in 1951, although journalists surmised that the plant's activities would be related to weapons production.[721] A year later, skepticism in the press remained about the exact nature of the work at the plant, in part because so little was known about Rocky Flats. As one lede in the *Rocky*

Founding to the Present (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015), pp. 251-74. On the rise of bureaucracies invoking "national security" and the expansion of their powers to protect the U.S. public, see the essays in Robert Dean, ed. "Special Forum: Cultures of Secrecy in Postwar America," *Diplomatic History* 35, no. 4 (September 2011): 611-705. For a detailed account of state secrecy, see Daniel Patrick Moynihan, *Secrecy: The American Experience* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998).

[719] "Engineers are Already at Work on A-Plant Site Near Boulder," *Boulder Daily Camera,* March 24, 1951.

[720] Ibid.; Perkin, "Denver Gets Atom Plant."

[721] "New Bomb-Making Technique Hinted For Denver A-Plant," *Rocky Mountain News,* March 24, 1951.

Mountain News read, the plant "will start producing—whatever it will produce—shortly after it is completed—whenever that is."[722] The secrecy of the AEC did not stop conjecture. Don Sterling surmised in the *Denver Post* that the plant would build atomic weapons. Sterling deduced this from several facts leaked by the AEC:

> 1—It will be a production plant using a secret process and will have 1,000 men and 200 women on its payroll. 2—It will handle radioactive materials. 3—It will be unlike any other plant in the AEC's system. 4—It will be administered as part of the commission's Santa Fe operations office, described as "the AEC field organization responsible for the research, development, production and testing of atomic weapons."[723]

For Sterling and others in Denver, the AEC's reluctance to divulge information about the plant produced a culture of speculation in metropolitan Denver.[724]

This secrecy informed the security procedures at the plant and shaped the lives of employees who found themselves enmeshed in this world from the very beginning. Chuck Bogard applied to work there in 1955, two years after production began, while he was serving in the U.S. Army as a weapons engineer at Edgewood Arsenal, north of Baltimore, Maryland. After two years as a private with an engineering degree, he began to tire of the assignment and sought a position outside the armed services. He interviewed with several companies before meeting with a representative from Rocky Flats. Initially, he jumped at the chance to take a job in his home state, especially one that offered a "reasonable salary."[725] He did not know what exactly he would be doing at the plant other than working with nuclear energy. He quickly learned that he

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[722] "Secrets Well-Guarded at Rocky Flats Plant," *Rocky Mountain News,* January 28, 1952.

[723] Don Sterling, "Rocky Flats Plant to Build Weapons, Officials Indicate," *Denver Post,* October 12, 1951.

[724] Paul Boyer explores the societal effects of secrecy, especially when the state engages in deception, which often leads to the proliferation of conspiracy theories. See Boyer, "I've Got a Secret: The Social Cost of Official Deception," *Diplomatic History* 35, no. 4 (September 2011): 695-99.

[725] Bogard, interview.

would be working with classified material because he had to wait over four months while the federal government performed a background check. For those four months, he worked on a crew surveying for Building 447, one of the few on-site jobs he could take until he received his "Q-clearance," the requisite badge that proved he could work with classified and radioactive material on the "hot side" of the plant.[726] The Atomic Energy Act of 1947 authorized the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to conduct a thorough and complete investigation on the "character, associations, and loyalty" to determine "that permitting such person to have access to restricted data will not endanger the common defense or security."[727] According to Donald Kava, the background surveillance of employees continued after hiring, when even a speeding ticket could be grounds for dismissal from the plant.[728] Although both Bogard and Kava were initially unaware of the exact nature of their jobs, they learned from the rigorous, four-month-long process of securing their Q-clearance that they would be working with classified material.

Once employees secured the green-colored badge allowing them entrance to production buildings, they found that security measures permeated everyday life. But rather than complain about the secrecy, they adapted to the constraints it imposed. Ken Calkins, a chemical engineer, recalls that the internal security procedures often hampered the efficiency of the production process. A key component of the plant's security was its compartmentalization. Rocky Flats was composed of four different plants, each with its own team of engineers, designers, and

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[726] Ibid.

[727] *Atomic Energy Act of 1946*, Public Law 585, *U.S. Statutes at Large* 60 (1946): 755-75.

[728] Donald J. Kava, interview by Dorothy D. Ciarlo, February 19, 1997, interview OH0886, transcript and audio, MROHP, available online at <https://localhistory.boulderlibrary.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A19700?solr_nav%5Bid%5D=6efe43969a5ab5d5d8b7&solr_nav%5Bpage%5D=0&solr_nav%5Boffset%5D=0>. For an analysis of how contemporary security measures influence life at Los Alamos, see Joseph Masco, "Lie Detectors: On Secrets and Hypersecurity in Los Alamos," *Public Culture* 14, no. 3 (Fall 2002): 441-67.

production crew charged with developing a different part of the process of creating weapons triggers. According to Calkins, this not only limited the spreading of information, it also fomented a sense of secrecy between the different plants. In effect, the AEC's need to protect state secrets created an atmosphere in which all employees guarded the details of their work. Calkins, who was supposed to have access to each of the four plants, noted that "they each had their own development and testing people anyway, and they really didn't particularly welcome our presence and they kind of treated us as outsiders. Especially if they learned that the day before we had been in one of the other plants, they were afraid we might tell their secrets or something."[729] As Calkin's memories point out, employees were reticent to share work knowledge with colleagues from outside departments because secrecy was so fundamental to working at Rocky Flats.[730]

Employees accepted other security measures as well. By 1958, Dow employed over 1,500 men and women at Rocky Flats and moving that many employees into the plant through a single entrance with security checkpoints often tested the patience of those who queued to have their vehicles searched.[731] When Iletta Teague arrived at the plant, she had to go through two different stations every day where security combed through the contents of her purse, lunch, and

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[729] Kenneth W. Calkins, interview by Hannah Nordhaus, February 2, 2005, interview OH1315-V, transcript, audio, and video, MROHP, available online at <https://localhistory.boulderlibrary.org /islandora/object/islandora%3A26350?solr_nav%5Bid%5D=9d63cd98818f57f17e31&solr_nav%5Bpage %5D=0&solr_nav%5Boffset%5D=4>.

[730] All nuclear facilities were compartmentalized, with access to each section limited to those with the proper security clearance. On compartmentalization and security at Oak Ridge National Laboratory, see Olwell, *At Work in the Atomic City,* pp. 42-45. On the same security measures at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, see Hugh Gusterson, "Secrecy, Authorship, and Nuclear Weapons Scientists," in *Secrecy and Knowledge Production,* ed. Judith Reppy (Cornell University Peace Studies Program, Occasional Paper #23, October 1999), pp. 57-75.

[731] Dow's 1,575 Rocky Flats employees took home 9.5 million dollars in salaries and wages in 1958. Ackland, *Making a Real Killing,* p. 125.

any other bags. Everything she carried "had to be completely inspected by the guards."[732] When asked to compare this procedure to going through airport security today, she noted that at Rocky Flats "it was tougher" than the similar process at Transportation Security Administration checkpoints at airports. However stringent the security process may have been, employees learned to live with it. Jerry Felknor, for example, "never had the attitude or the inclination to fight this at all, object to it or anything."[733] He further elaborated that "[the security] was ever-present. It doesn't take you very long to really kind of get immersed into it, to the point where you feel—I mean it just becomes a part of you."[734] As Felknor's words evince, employees at Rocky Flats became habituated to security routines. They did so because they understood the importance of stopping the circulation of state secrets.

This level of secrecy, a result of the classified nature of their jobs, even influenced the lives of employees and their families when they were not on the clock. They could not discuss their jobs with their family or friends. Robert DelPizzo, a laboratory technician who worked with uranium, took his dedication to security seriously. Even though his wife also worked at Rocky Flats, he refused to discuss his work with her. Instead, the job took precedence because he had the all-important Q-clearance. As he remembered, "I never discussed it. That was part of the code, when you go in there with that Q-clearance, and that's why you have that Q-clearance. Because it's for people that they can trust."[735] To DelPizzo, having Q-clearance was a badge of

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[732] Illetta Teague, interview by Nancy Nachman-Hunt, December 7, 2004, interview OH1295-V, transcript and audio, MROHP, available online at <https://localhistory.boulderlibrary.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A26122?solr_nav%5Bid%5D=55908ed4191323dc64d2&solr_nav%5Bpage%5D=0&solr_nav%5Boffset%5D=1>.

[733] Felknor, interview.

[734] Ibid.

honor, a recognition that he could be trusted to work with classified information and not disseminate it in any way. He took this so seriously that he even held this confidentiality when away from the plant.

At times, the secrecy did cause hardships for employees, but they found ways to work around the limitations. Edward Vejvoda's wife complained to him that he lived in two worlds, one cloaked in secrecy and the other with his family.[736] According to Vejvoda, most of the people at Rocky Flats accepted the division between work and home, even if it occasionally strained relationships with their family members.[737] This division also meant that employees could not fully express themselves to their partners. If one had a particularly tough day on the job, comfort and solace could come only from colleagues. Fortunately, they found this in spades.

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[735] Robert R. DelPizzo, interview by Carol Byerly, July 29, 2004, interview OH1254-V, transcript, audio, and video, MROHP, available online at <https://localhistory.boulderlibrary.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A26203?solr_nav%5Bid%5D=cade2f288721eaff27c3&solr_nav%5Bpage%5D=0&solr_nav%5Boffset%5D=16>.

[736] Those who worked for corporations with Atomic Energy Commission contracts were not the only imperial subjects who wrestled with compartmentalizing work life from home life. Agents of the Central Intelligence Agency, for example, faced similar struggles. See Andrew Friedman, *Covert Capital: Landscapes of Denial and the Making of U.S. Empire in the Suburbs of Northern Virginia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013), pp. 83-121. During the Cold War, the home became a site of defense even for civilians not tied to the defense industry. Laura McEnaney explores how homes and families became more militarized in preparation for defense against a bomb attack, leading to contestations over the extent to which the Federal Civil Defense Administration should lead private preparedness initiatives. See McEnaney, *Civilian Defense Begins at Home: Militarization Meets Everyday Life in the Fifties* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000). For other histories of civil defense, see Andrew D. Grossman, *Neither Dead Nor Red: Civilian Defense and American Political Development during the Early Cold War* (New York: Routledge, 2001); Tracy C. Davis, *Stages of Emergency: Cold War Nuclear Civil Defense* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007); Guy Oakes, *The Imaginary War: Civil Defense and American Cold War Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).

[737] Edward Vejvoda, interview by Hannah Nordhaus, September 23, 2003, interview OH1165-V, transcript, audio, and video, MROHP, available online at < https://localhistory.boulderlibrary.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A24767?solr_nav%5Bid%5D=1b348c618fb964d671ac&solr_nav%5Bpage%5D=0&solr_nav%5Boffset%5D=0>. On the importance of the family as an institution believed to provide comfort amid Cold War anxieties, see Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era,* Twentieth-Anniversary ed. (1988; New York: Basic Books, 2008).

Jerry Felknor fondly recalled that by 1975, a "community" made up of many who had worked at Rocky Flats since its inception had fostered "a certain loyalty and allegiance to each other."[738] This loyalty and allegiance made it all the more possible for workers to continue at Rocky Flats even in the face of reservations about their work. Alfonso Cardenas, for example, "felt kind of bad at times" about the work he did, but, through the collaborative efforts of the employees, he overcame those reservations.[739] For Vejvoda and Cardenas, the spirit and camaraderie of the job allowed them to continue during difficult times.

The employees at Rocky Flats ensured that the world of secrecy extended into spaces not immediately within the purview of the federal agencies or their contractors. The same subjects whose quotidian practices bore the imprint of nuclear secrecy participated in creating different worlds. In one, the information and knowledge of nuclear energy and weapons circulated, albeit not without impediments. In the other world, however, employees made the decision to stanch the flow of knowledge, ensuring that those in metropolitan Denver, including friends and family, knew very little about the kind of work done at the plant. Kristen Iversen, who grew up in Arvada, recalls that even though she could see Rocky Flats from her home, the secret nature of the work led her to believe, even in early adulthood in the 1970s, that the plant produced cleaning solutions because that was one of the products Dow produced.[740] While Dow and the

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[738] Felknor, interview.

[739] Alfonso L. Cardenas, interview by Dorothy D. Ciarlo, May 27, 2004, interview OH1212-V, transcript, audio, and video, MROHP, available online at < https://localhistory.boulderlibrary.org /islandora/object/islandora%3A25945?solr_nav%5Bid%5D=9812e49200eb262c9aef&solr_nav%5Bpage %5D=0&solr_nav%5Boffset%5D=0>.

[740] Kristen Iversen, interview by Greg Harman, *San Antonio Current,* September 2, 2012, available online at <http://www.sacurrent.com/sanantonio/an-interview-with-full-body-burden-author-kristen-iversen/Content?oid=2245810> (accessed October 1, 2015).

AEC might not have perpetuated this misinformation, they certainly did little to correct misperceptions of their work.

Imperial Agents, Imperial Benefits

The process of machining plutonium-239, uranium-235, and beryllium into pits did more than create dangerous weapons. It also drew those at Rocky Flats into a world where nuclear materials, human bodies, and the U.S. empire collided. Moreover, this dynamic process became foundational to the formation of an imperial subjectivity for those at the plant. This certainly seemed to be the case for Norman Warling, a second-generation employee at Rocky Flats who worked there from 1974 through closure and clean up in the 1990s. "At the time, we were doing a service for this country, too. Nuclear weapons—we were in a Cold War. We did our jobs. I didn't ever go to the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines. But I did my job protecting this country in another way," he told Hannah Nordhaus in 2005. He further elaborated on his feelings about the necessity of stockpiling nuclear weapons: "I still believe that we're going to continue to have them. I mean, it'd be a perfect world if nobody had them. But since we do, we do. If we gotta have them, we gotta have them."[741] Warling drew a direct line from his labor with radioactive materials to the continued supremacy of the U.S.

Even those who did not directly handle nuclear material echoed Warling in situating their labor squarely within efforts to protect the U.S. Iletta Teague, who worked as a secretary for sixteen years beginning in 1963, felt it "an honor to be a part of what was taking care of my

[741] Norman R. Warling, interview by Hannah Nordhaus, December 20, 2005, interview OH1400-V, transcript and audio, MROHP, available online at <https://localhistory.boulderlibrary.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A28829?solr_nav%5Bid%5D=9aac687894c187bd3cdc&solr_nav%5Bpage%5D=0&solr_nav%5Boffset%5D=2>.

country and our freedom."[742] For the thousands of employees who worked at the plant, Rocky Flats offered more than a paycheck; it offered a vocation from which their subjectivities emerged. From administrative and clerical workers to engineers and firefighters and all other jobs in between, the subjectivities of Rocky Flats employees like Warling and Teague were rooted in work they performed for the good of the empire. All workers, whether on the hot side or not, understood that their efforts bolstered the U.S. empire.

One way to make sense of subjectivity formation at Rocky Flats is to consider what Sara Ahmed calls the "orientations" of employees. Ahmed writes that "orientations shape how the world coheres around me. Orientations affect what is near or proximate to the body, those objects that we do things with." Through actions, people continually situate themselves in close proximity to certain objects. These objects, however, do not have to be strictly material but can be "objects of thought, feeling, and judgment, or objects in the sense of aims, aspirations, and objectives."[743] The desire to preserve and protect the U.S. from outside nuclear threats was an object, one towards which thousands in Denver were oriented.[744] And, as anthropologist Joseph Masco argues, "how individuals engage the nuclear complex puts them in a tactile experience not only with the technology of the bomb, but also with the nation-state that controls it, making

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[742] Teague, interview.

[743] Sara Ahmed, "Orientations Matter," in *New Materialities: Ontology, Agency, and Politics,* ed. Diana Coole and Samantha Frost (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), pp. 234-57, quoted material on p. 246.

[744] Those at Rocky Flats were not the only ones during the Cold War to blur the lines between the material and the ideological in their understanding of what they were defending. As Matthew Farish explores in his history of the Ground Observer Corps, a member was "defending not only a physical space but also a 'moral and ideological entity.'" Matthew Farish, "The Ordinary Cold War: The Ground Observer Corps and Midcentury Militarization in the United States," *Journal of American History* 103, no. 3 (December 2016): 629-55, quoted material on p. 644. On the U.S. as a "moral and ideological entity," see Richard M. Fried, *The Russians are Coming! The Russians are Coming!: Pageantry and Patriotism in Cold-War America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 46.

the interrelationship between the human body and nuclear technologies a powerful site of intersection in which to explore questions of national belonging, justice, and everyday life."[745] At Rocky Flats, the practices of everyday life were intertwined with the empire's existence. There, workers physically situated their bodies near hazardous materials not only because they were earning a paycheck but also because they had a much larger goal in view: continuing the nuclear supremacy of the U.S. to defend the empire against the threat of communism. As Teague and Warling suggest, repeatedly inserting their bodies into such a space was necessary.

Many Coloradans used non-technical, entry-level positions as a springboard into the world of nuclear materials. Richard Franchini's father started his career at the plant during construction. He happily took a job on a construction crew at Rocky Flats after years of working as a miner around Louisville and witnessing the closure of the Centennial Mine, the last working coal mine in the area. After building was complete and production began, the elder Franchini got hired on as a janitor in 1953, by which time his son had begun working at the plant as a laboratory technician.[746] Donald Sabec began his career at Rocky Flats on the janitorial staff before advancing to positions as a process technician and, later, a radiation monitor.[747] Non-technical jobs provided an entry into the plant and onto Dow's payroll for Denverites without nuclear experience.

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[745] Joseph Masco, *The Nuclear Borderlands: The Manhattan Project in Post-Cold War New Mexico* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), p. 12.

[746] Richard C. Franchini, interview by Dorothy D. Ciarlo, July 1, 1997, interview OH0909, transcript and audio, MROHP, available online at <https://localhistory.boulderlibrary.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A20161?solr_nav%5Bid%5D=c1e43a4f189e7212ddbb&solr_nav%5Bpage%5D=0&solr_nav%5Boffset%5D=0>.

[747] Donald L. Sabec, interview by Hannah Nordhaus, January 3, 2006, interview OH1401-V, transcript and audio, MROHP, available online at <https://localhistory.boulderlibrary.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A29382?solr_nav%5Bid%5D=cb93e3670363a293c81b&solr_nav%5Bpage%5D=0&solr_nav%5Boffset%5D=0>.

For those like Sabec who were unfamiliar with working in a nuclear plant, the proximity of radioactive material intimately shaped them. When he first stepped into the plant he was surprised to learn that as a janitor he would have to wear special clothing; Dow provided everything from coveralls to socks and underwear, and he had to change into these clothes every day. This was necessary because he worked in Building 881, where the handling of highly enriched uranium-235 took place.[748] Sabec immediately developed "very high respect for" uranium because of the imposed limitations on the amount of liquid or metal uranium he could have at any one time. Paradoxically, knowing "the limits by heart" and how dangerous a criticality—an untended nuclear fission—of uranium was actually allowed him to feel safer in his job. When asked if he was ever afraid of working with uranium, he said that he was only once, a time when he thought a criticality had been reached. Other than that one time, he held very few, if any, fears about working with uranium. In fact, he rarely even thought about the potential danger of the material. Instead, Sabec and others minimized that fear. As he later said, "it's always in the back of your mind, but you just sort of set it back there."[749] In order to have a lasting career at Rocky Flats, Denverites had to become comfortable with hazardous materials in their workspace.

Those who worked in Building 771, where plutonium was handled, knew all too well the need to sublimate their fear so that they could perform their labor. There, workers encountered an intricate system designed to protect their bodies from the dangers of plutonium. To work with such an unstable material, they had to use glove boxes, large, stainless-steel containers with portholes and attached rubber gloves.[750] They also lived in a state of constant preparedness for

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[748] Sabec, interview; Ackland, *Making a Real Killing,* p. 75.

[749] Sabec, interview.

contamination. However, because they worked so closely with plutonium, they learned not to fear the material. For example, Kenneth Freiberg, a radiation monitor, experienced contamination numerous times, so often that he guessed he had been contaminated "hundreds and hundreds of times over the years."[751] Because contamination was an almost daily occurrence, overcoming fears associated with radiation exposure became an important aspect of their subjectivity as imperial agents. Freiberg said radiation exposure "was just the normal daily routine." That daily routine involved getting undressed and showering in the very room where the contamination occurred. However, doing so did not always ensure that the contamination would be contained solely in that room; at times employees were even sent home with parts of their bodies still "hot." Freiberg remembers going home one evening with a glove on his hand because it still contained nuclear particles.[752] Becoming inured to the hazards of handling plutonium was a requirement of working in Building 771 and defending the U.S.

At the same time, Rocky Flats employees did exercise some control over their working conditions; they organized in an effort make their jobs safer. In 1964, they voted to leave Chemical Workers Local 543 and instead join District 50 of the United Mine Workers of America because they believed the Mine Workers to be stronger and more receptive to concerns about occupational safety. Under Mine Workers' guidance, the union organized two separate strikes, one in 1961 for twenty-four days and the second one in 1970 lasting seventy-one days. While the union did demand better wages, the main point of disagreement was labor's lack of

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[750] Ackland, *Making a Real Killing,* p. 74-75.

[751] Kenneth J. Freiberg, interview by Dorothy D. Ciarlo, January 5 and 11, 2011, interview OH1700-V, transcript and audio, MROHP, available online at <https://localhistory.boulderlibrary.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A35877?solr_nav%5Bid%5D=fa437b1c8e88b2b6cb7c&solr_nav%5Bpage%5D=0&solr_nav%5Boffset%5D=1>.

[752] Ibid.

influence in the joint union-company safety committee. The union wanted more control over safety procedures and Dow, as the operating company, focused on production output, often requiring employees to ignore safety protocols. According to Donald Sabec, after Dow settled both strikes by making concessions, safety protocols became standard, even if they slowed production.[753]

For employees at Rocky Flats, fear shaped their subjectivities.[754] To be sure, working with plutonium, beryllium, and uranium every day posed a real threat that employees had to navigate. But it was another fear that took precedence, one that led them to continue working at Rocky Flats despite the hazards: the U.S.S.R.'s possession of nuclear arms. For Bob DeGrazio, it was precisely the potential for a Soviet attack that inspired him to work at the plant. As he noted, having intimate knowledge of these weapons placed him in a privileged position because "the average citizen didn't know. They really didn't know" just how close the U.S. was to a nuclear war.[755] This knowledge, rather than deterring DeGrazio, propelled him in his job. As he told Dorothy Ciarlo, Soviet possession of nuclear arms "was scary, so we really put our hearts into

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[753] Sabec, interview; Ackland, *Making a Real Killing,* pp. 132-35.

[754] On the affect of fear and its relationship to politics and social action, see Brian Massumi, "The Future Birth of the Affective Fact: The Political Ontology of Threat," in *The Affect Theory Reader,* eds. Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), pp. 52-70; Samantha Frost, "Fear and the Illusion of Autonomy," in *New Materialisms,* eds. Coole and Frost, pp. 158-77.

[755] On the relationship between fear and nuclear technology, see Spencer R. Weart, *The Rise of Nuclear Fear* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012).

it."[756] The threat of a nuclear war so colored the worldview of employees that they continued to work with radioactive materials despite the immediate dangers.[757]

If the threat of Soviet weapons drove employees during the Cold War, the end of the conflict only further cemented their belief in the necessity of the plant. For example, Alfonso Cardenas believed "as long as we [the U.S.] were making them [nuclear weapons]," the Soviet Union "would always hold back because they knew we had a lot of them, a lot of submarines had them."[758] And, as Chuck Bogard asserted, his work kept "the Russians from doing anything drastic because they knew we were stronger." But, when asked about his feelings on working at the plant, Bogard paraphrased Director of Finance Mike Shannon, stating, "we thought we were maybe part of the Cold War, that we were fighting a battle. You know, we won that battle."[759] Ultimately, for people like Bogard, the ends did justify the means.

Even though working at Rocky Flats was a job, most men and women, according to Ken Calkins, showed up every day for reasons beyond economic security. True, the jobs were well

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[756] Robert P. DeGrazio, interview by Dorothy D. Ciarlo, September 30, 2004, interview OH1286-V, transcript, audio, and video, MROHP, available online at <https://localhistory.boulderlibrary.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A26102?solr_nav%5Bid%5D=2c9ed686166e2890c420&solr_nav%5Bpage%5D=0&solr_nav%5Boffset%5D=1>.

[757] Stephen J. Collier explores the closely-related affect of vulnerability and how civil preparedness planners invented the "vulnerable society" in the early years of the Cold War as nuclear weapons first proliferated and the U.S. public began planning for an outside attack. He argues that this moment, which coincided with a rise in systems theory, produced a knowledge regime whereby society was knowable through statistics that allowed for a particular form of biopolitics to emerge. Much of political life in this moment revolved around reducing vulnerability, especially with respect to a nuclear attack. See Collier, "The Political Ontology of Catastrophe: Inventing the Vulnerable Society, 1953-1958," October 2011, International Affairs Working Paper 2011-09, The New School, available online at < https://stephenjcollier.files.wordpress.com/2012/07/ontology-catastrophe.pdf> (accessed August 8, 2017). On the rise of statistics and the creation of mass society through such knowledge techniques, see Sarah Igo, *The Averaged American: Surveys, Citizens, and the Making of a Mass Public* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007).

[758] Cardenas, interview.

[759] Bogard, interview.

paying and the men and women who worked there supported themselves and their families with the incomes they earned, but there was something else about life at Rocky Flats. As he noted, "the rewards of working there were rather intangible."[760] One of those intangible rewards was the feeling of defending their country during the height of U.S.-Soviet tensions. Recall Jerry Felknor's belief that Rocky Flats employees believed they were performing service in the interest of national defense.[761] This feeling of service for the good of the nation became an integral part of their subjectivity. For many employees, Rocky Flats, while it had drawbacks, was still a good place to work, and the costs of working with nuclear materials were not too great. Chuck Bogard summed up the feeling of many of his colleagues when he said, "I like Rocky Flats. Period."[762]

Local Hazard, Global Threat

If laboring for the empire produced subjects committed to the expansion of U.S. hegemony, what of those who lived in metropolitan Denver but did not work there? Although employees felt safe and secure in their work at the plant, the wider public was not so sanguine about Rocky Flats. In part, this public sentiment stemmed from two major fires, one in 1957 and the other in 1969. To outsiders, these two fires served as evidence that the plant produced something other than cleaning solutions. More important, residents became aware of potential radiation contamination.[763] The 1969 Mother's Day fire galvanized a movement of anti-nuclear

[760] Calkins, interview.

[761] Felknor, interview.

[762] Bogard, interview.

[763] Ackland, *Making a Real Killing,* p. 120.

activists and public health officials who worked in concert to protest the sheer existence of Rocky Flats. In the process, these Denverites, who initially worried over the health concerns related to living so close to a nuclear facility, eventually linked their cause to that of opposing the use of nuclear weapons in U.S. foreign policy. Even if they did not use the word "empire," these protesters viewed these weapons as part of U.S. attempts to bend the international community to its will. Rocky Flats not only produced imperial subjects who supported nuclear arms, it was a site of contestation over the very existence of the U.S. empire.

Ellen Klaver, a transplant from Long Island, New York, was one of those involved in anti-nuclear, anti-imperial protests. Born in 1955, she attended high school during the height of several different social movements and this politicized her. Although she often traveled into New York City as a high school student to attend various rallies, she became involved in the environmental movement as the discourse of environmentalism became more prominent in the late 1960s and early 1970s.[764] Her environmental politics continued to develop when she moved to Arizona as an undergraduate to attend an institution she described as "an alternative school"

[764] On the radicalism of environmentalism in the 1960s, see Keith M. Woodhouse, "The Politics of Ecology: Environmentalism and Liberalism in the 1960s," *Journal for the Study of Radicalism* 2, no. 2 (2008): 53-84. Woodhouse offers an extended analysis of radicalism within environmentalism in "A Subversive Nature: Radical Environmentalism in the Twentieth-Century United States" (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2010). For other histories of the rise of environmentalism as a political movement in the postwar world, see Cody Ferguson, *This is Our Land: Grassroots Environmentalism in the Late Twentieth Century* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2015); Christopher C. Sellers, *Crabgrass Crucible: Suburban Nature and the Rise of Environmentalism in Twentieth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012); Adam Rome, *The Bulldozer in the Countryside: Suburban Sprawl and the Rise of American Environmentalism* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Paul Sutter, *Driven Wild: How the Fight Against Automobiles Launched the Modern Wilderness Movement* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002); Eileen McGurty, *Transforming Environmentalism: Warren County, PCBs, and the Origins of Environmental Justice* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2007); James Morton Turner, *The Promise of Wilderness: American Environmental Politics since 1964* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2012); Brian Allen Drake, *Loving Nature, Fearing the State: Environmentalism and Antigovernment Politics before Reagan* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2013). For a global history of environmentalism, see Ramachandra Guha, *Environmentalism: A Global History* (New York: Longman, 2000).

that had "a kind of environmental focus."[765] While in Arizona she met a man from Boulder and eventually moved there in 1976. For someone with an awareness of environmental hazards, her timing could not have been better because environmentalism was becoming a factor in Colorado politics. In 1972, Denver voters rejected the opportunity to host the 1976 Winter Olympic Games on the grounds that doing so would lead to greater population growth and more metropolitan sprawl.[766] For politically active Coloradans, Rocky Flats became a lightning rod for a movement that drew connections between the use of nuclear technology and environmental degradation.

Sister Pam Solo and the pacifist Religious Society of Friends group the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) started the campaign against Rocky Flats.[767] Solo was born in Englewood, Colorado, in 1946 to a family with a solid working-class consciousness. She recalls learning at an early age the history of the labor movement in Colorado, and especially about the infamous 1914 Ludlow Massacre, which happened not far from Englewood. At Ludlow, the Colorado National Guard and Colorado Fuel and Iron Company guards attacked 1,200 striking miners and their families, killing about two dozen men, women, and children on April 20, 1914.[768] After attending Catholic schools from kindergarten through high school, she joined the

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[765] Ellen Holly Klaver, interview by Dorothy D. Ciarlo, April 1, 2002, interview OH1079, transcript and audio, MROHP, available online at <https://localhistory.boulderlibrary.org /islandora/object/islandora%3A23696?solr_nav%5Bid%5D=533f1858ad470c58559a&solr_nav%5Bpage %5D=0&solr_nav%5Boffset%5D=1>.

[766] Ackland, *Making a Real Killing,* pp. 170-71.

[767] The American Friends Service Committee formed in 1917 in opposition to the Great War. Since then, the group has continued its peace- and community-building endeavors both in the U.S. and abroad. The independent scholar Gregory A. Barnes has written an extensive history of the AFSC. See Barnes, *A Centennial History of the American Friends Service Committee* (Philadelphia: Friends Press, 2016).

[768] On the Ludlow Massacre, see Thomas Andrews, *Killing for Coal: America's Deadliest Labor War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008); Ronald L. Lewis, *Welsh Americans: A History of Assimilation in the* Coalfields (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), pp. 283-306; George S. McGovern and Leonard F. Guttridge, *The Great Coalfield War,* rev. ed. (Boston: Houghton

politically liberal Sisters of Loretto Community while enrolled at Loretto Heights College.[769] Her interests in theology, philosophy, and social justice accorded with the mission of the community, and she went on to earn a graduate degree in the sociology of conflict from Goddard College in Vermont. Solo combined her background in conflict studies with anti-Vietnam War activities, eventually teaming up with the AFSC in 1970 in Denver.[770]

Through her work with the American Friends, Solo focused her efforts on combating the military-industrial complex. In her estimation, the local economy had become so tied to military spending that "it had become a permanent feature of life in Colorado."[771] Much of Denver's economy relied on defense spending, and the military-industrial complex had environmental implications for Colorado because the AEC was considering using nuclear technologies to aid

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Mifflin, 1972; repr., Niwot: University Press of Colorado, 1996); Zeese Papanikolas, *Buried Unsung: Louis Tikas and the Ludlow Massacre* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1982). On the Cripple Creek miners' strike of 1894 and the Colorado Labor Wars of 1903-1904, see Elizabeth Jameson, *All that Glitters: Class, Conflict, and Community in Cripple Creek* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998); George G. Suggs Jr., *Colorado's War on Militant Unionism: James H. Peabody and the Western Federation of Miners* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1972); Tim Blevins, Chris Nichol, and Calvin P. Otto, eds., *The Colorado Labor Wars: Cripple Creek, 1903-1904* (Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Library District, 2006). For accounts of the labor wars, see William D. Haywood, *Bill Haywood's Book: The Autobiography of William D. Haywood* (New York: International Publishers, 1929); Emma Florence Langdon, *The Cripple Creek Strike: A History of Industrial War in Colorado, 1903-4-5: Being a Complete and Concise History of the Efforts of Organized Capital to Crush Unionism* (Denver: Great Western Publishing, 1905).

[769] Loretto Heights College closed in 1988. After closure, the Teikyo University Group of Japan purchased the school and renamed it Colorado Heights University. The school, which is currently in the process of closing again, specialized in international business and English Language courses. Colorado Heights University, "Colorado Heights University Announces Pending Closure," <http://chu.edu/colorado-heights-university-announces-pending-closure/> (accessed August 8, 2017) (web page discontinued).

[770] Pam Solo, interview by LeRoy Moore, September 23, 1996, interview OH1528, transcript and audio, MROHP, available online at <https://localhistory.boulderlibrary.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A33446?solr_nav%5Bid%5D=94aa0087545192ffd37c&solr_nav%5Bpage%5D=0&solr_nav%5Boffset%5D=0>. On the military-industrial complex in Colorado, see Gerald D. Nash, *The Federal Landscape: An Economic History of the Twentieth-Century West* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1999), pp. 91-93.

[771] Solo, interview.

the recovery of natural gas. According to Solo, some "40,000 nuclear explosions in the mountains to stimulate natural gas" had been planned during the early 1970s, an operation known as the Rio Blanco Project.[772] Those working in the AFSC became aware of this project and began to draw connections between the military-industrial complex in Colorado and the environmental threat posed by nuclear technology. "Some of us were organizing against that [Rio Blanco Project] and also looking at other very harmful sites where military activity in Colorado is endangering—not only playing a major role in the threat posture of the United States, but playing a role in undermining the health and safety of citizens in the greater metropolitan area," she said.[773] Solo and the AFSC identified Rocky Flats as one of the sites that required investigation.

The group collaborated with Dr. John C. Cobb, a professor of preventative medicine at the University of Colorado Boulder. Cobb, who had studied astronomy and physics at Harvard University just as the Manhattan Project was beginning to take shape, was a conscientious objector during World War II, a product of his work with Quaker relief service organizations.[774]

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[772] The use of nuclear weapons to free natural gas was part of the Plowshare Program, a joint government-industry initiative to stimulate natural gas. The 1973 Rio Blanco Project consisted of three explosive tests, each a thirty-three kiloton detonation. The project took place near Rifle, Colorado, in Rio Blanco County. U.S. Department of Energy Office of Legacy Management, *Rio Blanco, Colorado, Site, Factsheet* (Washington, DC: United States Department of Energy, 2009), available online at <http://www.lm.doe.gov/Rio_Blanco/Documents.aspx> (accessed July 21, 2017). In 1974, Coloradans approved a ballot measure to halt the Rio Blanco Project and ban any further nuclear detonations for energy projects. See Ackland, *Making a Real Killing,* p. 171. For a broader history of the use of nuclear technology for resource extraction, see Scott Kaufman, *Project Plowshare: The Peaceful Use of Nuclear Explosives in Cold War America* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013).

[773] Solo, interview.

[774] Cobb did not identify as a Quaker, so his pacifism was most likely linked to his political position rather than his faith. Prior to World War I, pacifism was largely a religious belief, not a political one. During the Great War and the Great Depression, a new wave of radical politics politicized pacifism, moving it beyond religious communities. During World War II, those who resisted war service for pacifist reasons were incarcerated. On conscientious objectors, including radical pacifists, during World War II, see Mark Matthews, *Smoke Jumping on the Western Fire Line: Conscientious Objectors during*

Before he arrived in Colorado in the 1950s, Cobb had traced the movement of radioactive iodine in the thyroid, acquiring an understanding of the dangers of radioactive isotopes in the human body. While working at the University of Colorado, he became further interested in the dangers of atomic energy to human life. As Cobb learned of the two fires and the potential for plutonium contamination, he took an interest in studying the effects of Rocky Flats on Dow's employees and the residents of metropolitan Denver. At the same time he began his work with the AFSC, he became chairman of the Rocky Flats Action Group (RFAG), a collective within the AFSC that focused specifically on the dangers of Rocky Flats and that organized protests against the plant. Cobb said that RFAG's position against the plant stemmed "from our concern of what the bomb could do. We knew that. I felt that mankind wasn't sufficiently mature mentally to handle something like that."[775] With his scientific expertise, Cobb communicated the dangers of Rocky Flats.

Cobb's knowledge led the AFSC to begin pressuring public officials. In fact, Solo's understanding of the dangers at Rocky Flats came from Cobb. Armed with his knowledge, Solo and others at the AFSC began asking various public safety departments for information about the plant. They started with the Jefferson County Department of Health and the local fire departments that had responded to the 1969 Mother's Day fire, which at the time was the largest

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World War II (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2006); Scott H. Bennett, *Radical Pacifism: The War Resisters League and Gandhian Nonviolence in America, 1915-1963* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2003), pp. 69-97; Marian Mollin, *Radical Pacifism in Modern America: Egalitarianism and Protest* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), pp. 8-43; James Tracy, *Direct Action: Radical Pacifism from the Union Eight to the Chicago Seven* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), pp. 12-46.

[775] Dr. John (Jock) Cobb, interview by Hannah Nordhaus, December 24, 2003, interview OH1180-V, transcript, audio, and video, MROHP, available online at <https://localhistory.boulderlibrary.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A25115?solr_nav%5Bid%5D=6a6da306e62d15113ad4&solr_nav%5Bpage%5D=0&solr_nav%5Boffset%5D=1>.

industrial fire in U.S. history.[776] They eventually turned their focus to state agencies, working with liberal Democrats Governor Richard Lamm and U.S. Representative Timothy Wirth, who together in 1974 created the Lamm-Wirth Task Force, a committee appointed to develop options, alternatives, and recommendations for Rocky Flats.[777] Solo and the AFSC coordinated with Cobb, an appointed member of the task force, and attended public hearings in April 1975 where they voiced their concern over the environmental hazards of the plant. Solo believed that the public pressure coming not only from the AFSC but also the wider public, especially the resistance to the Rio Blanco Project, forced Lamm and Wirth to address the issue of the plant and the environmental threat it posed.[778] The task force established the Rocky Flats Monitoring Committee, to which Solo was appointed. However, she feared that the committee would be able to accomplish little other than to "study this to death—or study it until we were all dead." In part this was because the committee and the task force's final report lacked "real political teeth" and it required no "action on the part of Lamm or Wirth" even though it called for the eventual phasing out of the plant.[779]

When Solo realized that the committee would have little effect, she and the AFSC adopted different tactics. Although protestors had staged small demonstrations throughout the 1970s, 1978 proved to be a turning point for the movement against the plant. That year the AFSC

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[776] Solo, interview. The Atomic Energy Commission estimated that the fire cost a total of 71.1 million dollars, with 48.8 million dollars in damages and 22.3 million dollars in lost plutonium. Ackland, *Making a Real Killing,* pp. 156-57.

[777] Lamm-Wirth Task Force, "Documentary Report on Rocky Flats" (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Energy, August 15, 1975), available online at <http://www.lm.doe.gov/land/sites/co /rocky_flats/closure/references/150-Lamm-Wirth%20Task%20Force%20on%20RF.pdf> (accessed July 19, 2014).

[778] Solo, interview.

[779] Ibid.

decided to capitalize on growing national dissent against the use of nuclear technology for energy production by linking nuclear power to nuclear weapons. Solo and the AFSC organized with other localized groups around the country to expose the broader nuclear complex, highlighting Rocky Flats as the most prominent nodal point in that network. By doing so, the Denver office of the AFSC became a leading group in the campaign for disarmament. Solo and the AFSC teamed with Michael Jendrzejczyk of the Fellowship of Reconciliation to plan a national demonstration against nuclear technology at Rocky Flats in late April.[780] If the organizers hoped to gain national attention for the 1978 protest, then surely they succeeded. One estimate placed the number of demonstrators between 5,000 and 6,000, with one-third of those coming from beyond Colorado to voice their opposition to nuclear weapons production.[781]

The unfolding of the gathering, which transformed from a symbolic demonstration against nuclear technology into mass acts of civil disobedience, demonstrates the ways in which Rocky Flats was not only a site of contestation over the use of nuclear weapons, but a stage for different strands of protest politics. Solo, even as the de facto leader, had to alter her plans in response to the politics that developed. In the months before the gathering, notable activists and celebrities endorsed the cause, including Daniel Ellsberg, known for releasing the Pentagon Papers, civil rights activist Stokely Carmichael, anti-nuclear activist Helen Caldicott, and musicians Jackson Browne and Bonnie Raitt, who all appeared at Rocky Flats.[782] Ellsberg

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[780] Ibid.

[781] Solo, interview; Molly Wins, "5,000 in Colorado Protest a Nuclear Weapons Plant," *New York Times,* April 30, 1978.

[782] Klaver, interview; Solo, interview; Wins, "5000 in Colorado Protest a Nuclear Weapons Plant." On Ellsberg's relationship with the RAND Corporation, the leaking of the Pentagon Papers, and the culture of secrecy at the think tank, see Janet Farrell Brodie, "Learning Secrecy in the Early Cold War: The RAND Corporation," *Diplomatic History* 35, no. 4 (September 2011): 643-70, esp. pp. 668-70.

proved to be influential in shaping the direction of the protests because he spearheaded the acts of civil disobedience that drew local residents like Ellen Klaver, the transplanted Long Islander living in Boulder. Despite Solo's desire for national notoriety, she did not appreciate Ellsberg's presence, in part because his tactics upset the relationships she had forged with city and county officials and with Rockwell, which had taken over operations less than three years earlier. Solo took her inspiration from Mahatma Gandhi's nonviolent civil disobedience, and operated under a model in which one "give[s] your adversary a chance to do it differently and make clear what your plans will be."[783] Klaver recalls that much of their work after November 1977 in preparation for the 1978 event did not meet Solo's vision, which included communicating with the Jefferson County Sheriff's Department about staging a peaceful gathering. Instead, Klaver says, they focused on non-violent direct-action tactics and consensus-building—how to interact in small "affinity" groups and come to decisions so that the groups could move forward with their plans.[784] Eventually, those who agitated for direct-action rejected Solo's plans to negotiate with her opponents.

Ellen Klaver's account of civil disobedience at the plant evinces how the environmental concerns of protestors converged with an anti-imperialist politics rooted in ending the use of nuclear force. For her, there was little distinction between the local and the global. As she remembers, a small group, which called itself the Monday Morning Breakfast Club, began to form at the AFSC-led training programs in the months before the April demonstration. The group decided to participate in the demonstration by occupying the railroad spur over the

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[783] Solo, interview. On Mahatma Gandhi's nonviolence, see Mithi Mukherjee, "Transcending Identity: Gandhi, Nonviolence, and the Pursuit of a 'Different' Freedom in Modern India," *American Historical Review* 115, no. 2 (April 2010): 453-73. On his influence in the U.S., see Bennett, *Radical Pacifism.*

[784] Klaver, interview.

weekend and dispersing on Monday morning. On Friday, April 28, approximately eighty people banded together to build temporary tent structures that were anchored to the railroad ties to stop incoming trains from reaching the plant. Klaver said of the process of occupying the tracks,

> it was very, very, very profound and as everybody kind of shared his or her story, it was a real coming together…. And really, at first, we didn't know how long we were going to stay. We didn't know if we were going to stay until the train came. We hadn't formulated a clear plan yet, we just knew that we were in the right place to be able to make something happen….

That something she referred to was a future in which nuclear weapons were neither wielded by the U.S. nor produced in her backyard. She continued, describing an unnamed "force" that made her feel as if "we're acting for the truth, we're acting to bring about a better world, we're acting to stop something that is harming the earth, that is harming this particular piece of land, and that is harming the future of humanity, the future of the planet."[785] In that moment, Klaver recognized that the environmental damages taking place in metropolitan Denver were both a cause and an effect of the U.S.'s threat posture towards the U.S.S.R and the rest of the international community.

Even as Rocky Flats contained the seeds of anti-imperial protests, it also hosted expressions of state power. The collection of bodies bound together by a politics of hope and resistance did not remain indefinitely. The railroad occupation lasted only as long as the state allowed it to persist. According to Klaver, the group chose not to disband after the weekend, and instead stayed until they were forced to leave. Two rounds of arrests, one on May 5, when Klaver was removed, and a second on May 8, ended the acts of civil disobedience.[786] The use of state force quelled the protest. During the 1970s, Rocky Flats was clearly a contested space. By 1978,

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[785] Ibid.

[786] Ibid; Ackland, *Making a Real Killing,* pp. 186-87.

the state had witnessed nearly a decade of protests and demonstrations from the left, and it clamped down on domestic agitation in order to protect a production process it deemed necessary for national security.

The protests also exposed divisions among residents in metropolitan Denver, with the working-class men and women who worked at Rocky Flats largely supporting the use of nuclear technology to secure national defense. James De Andrea, who worked there throughout the 1970s and 1980s, had little appreciation for the protestors. In his conspiratorial assessment, they were a mix of known communist sympathizers from the college town of Boulder and national political activists paid by an unknown, shadow organization. To De Andrea, a factory worker who risked his health every day in exchange for wages that allowed him to pay his bills, labeling the protestors as communist sympathizers from Boulder was more than a critique of their politics, although it certainly was that; it was also a recognition of the growing chasm in the 1970s between blue-collar workers like himself and the elitism of those involved in the protest movements that threatened to end his ability to provide for himself. During the decade, some of the unions, which represented working-class men like De Andrea, began to move rightward, away from the New Left and the various protest movements.[787] Moreover, as far as he was concerned, the U.S. could not protect itself without nuclear weapons, so the protesters essentially supported the nation's downfall.[788] De Andrea's United Mine Workers brothers agreed with him on the importance of protesting the protestors and promoting nuclear weapons. In early 1979,

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[787] On the tensions between working-class Americans and political activists in the 1970s, including the rightward shift of the working class, see Jefferson Cowie, *Stayin' Alive: The Last Days of the Working Class* (New York: New Press, 2010).

[788] James De Andrea, interview by Dorothy D. Ciarlo, June 2, 1998, interview OH0928, transcript and audio, MROHP, available online at <https://localhistory.boulderlibrary.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A20503?solr_nav%5Bid%5D=40808592337f8802cdcc&solr_nav%5Bpage%5D=0&solr_nav%5Boffset%5D=0>; Vejvoda, interview.

they voted to allocate 20,000 dollars to a fund for rallies and created their own activist group, Citizens for Energy and Freedom, in order to stand against the agitators attacking them and their economic livelihoods. The group hosted a small rally in June 1979, then, on August 26, it held a major gathering at Rocky Flats, drawing an estimated 16,000 people who supported their efforts to protect the U.S. through producing nuclear weapons. They even handed out t-shirts that read "power for the people," a mocking jab at their detractors that appropriated a common protest slogan into one of support for nuclear energy.[789] For all the national attention and support the anti-nuclear protesters garnered, they did not have support from those who relied on Rocky Flats for their economic livelihoods.

Not only did the protesters fail to convince Rocky Flats employees of the harm caused by their work, their presence even contributed to unlikely alliances within the plant's workforce. James De Andrea's colleague Ed Vejvoda was a research chemist, a salaried position exempt from collective bargaining, and he was often frustrated by having to manage union employees according to the terms of the bargaining agreement. Despite his distaste for the union and the difficulties it caused him on the job, he had no reservation about teaming with them in the rallies to support Rocky Flats. And, much like De Andrea, he considered himself quite unlike the men and women who protested. Vejvoda, who was born in 1924 and had served in World War II, drew a distinction between those at Rocky Flats who were "just doing our job," while for the protestors "it was a big lark" to demonstrate "without any consequences at all." The consequences for those who worked at the plant should it close were twofold. Of course, thousands would lose employment, but even more threatening to Vejvoda was the possibility of

[789] Ackland, *Making a Real Killing,* p. 188; Vejvoda, interview.

the U.S.S.R. defeating the U.S. if Rocky Flats did not continue building the nuclear arsenal.[790] With these potential costs, he had no reservations about putting aside his differences with the union in order to support the plant.

The protests and counter-protests of 1978-1979 did not mark the end of mobilization against Rocky Flats, but as the 1970s gave way to the 1980s, those who opposed Rocky Flats focused less on environmental issues and more on nuclear disarmament. With Ronald Reagan's election to the presidency in 1980 came a shift in foreign policy and a renewed belief in the symbolic power of arsenal building as a deterrent. The Reagan administration believed that the U.S.S.R. could not afford to enter into another arms race with the U.S., but would attempt to do so and eventually overspend itself. To capitalize on Soviet financial instability, the hawkish administration directed the DOE to increase the output of nuclear weapons.[791] Pam Solo responded to Reagan's call for an arms buildup by joining the national office of the AFSC in Philadelphia and leading the group's National Nuclear Freeze campaign. Without her leadership, other groups took the place of the AFSC and RFAG in organizing opposition in Denver. Tom Rauch, a laicized Jesuit who directed the campus ministry program at the University of Colorado Denver in the mid-1980s and was involved in Clerity and Laity Concerned about Vietnam, became one of the leading voices. In the spring of 1983, he asked a group of about forty other

[790] Vejvoda, interview.

[791] Judith Miller, "Reagan Plans Rise in Materials Used for Nuclear Arms," *New York Times,* February 28, 1982. See also David E. Hoffman, *The Dead Hand: The Untold Story of the Cold War Arms Race and its Dangerous Legacy* (New York: Doubleday, 2009). Mike Davis makes the argument that stockpiling in the early 1980s was a response to the economic crises of the 1970s and an American attempt to restructure the global economy. See Mike Davis, "Nuclear Imperialism and Extended Deterrence," in *Exterminism and the Cold War,* ed. Edward Thompson (London: Verso, 1987), full-text consulted online at <https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/3350-nuclear-imperialism-and-extended-deterrence> (accessed August 11, 2017).

people, "isn't time to do something again at Rocky Flats?"[792] Within the context of Reagan's arms buildup, the group felt it could gain the most political traction by allying itself with the broader nuclear disarmament campaign, so it decided to encircle Rocky Flats, an idea adopted from the Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp in Great Britain.[793] On October 15, 1983, over 15,000 people congregated at Rocky Flats, encircling all but a couple miles of the seventeen-mile perimeter. Despite the impressive display, the encirclement did little to slow the production of plutonium pits at Rocky Flats. In part, the urgency of the 1970s protests no longer existed among those who gathered at the plant. Rauch later told Len Ackland that at the encirclement, "'the focus was on the arms race, not health and safety. There was not so much focus on the plant's local threat as earlier.'"[794] Where Rocky Flats had once drawn protestors who opposed the production of nuclear weapons for a variety of reasons, by the mid-1980s, opposition coalesced around ending the use of nuclear weapons in U.S. foreign policy.

The protests against the plant in the 1970s and 1980s did not lead to the closing of Rocky Flats, but they are representative of a certain kind of politics often found in metropoles: a politics of resistance to the structures of empire. Rocky Flats was a key site that reproduced many of those imperial structures; at the same time, it presented a space around which an anti-imperialist politics emerged. Part of Denver's story as a metropole, therefore, is that it contained contested

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[792] Thomas McQuie Rauch, interview by Dorothy D. Ciarlo, June 18, 1997, interview OH1509, transcript and audio, MROHP, available online at <https://localhistory.boulderlibrary.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A32993?solr_nav%5Bid%5D=4505d55e34104d5dc314&solr_nav%5Bpage%5D=0&solr_nav%5Boffset%5D=0>.

[793] On the feminist politics at the Greenham Common camp, see Sue Finch, "Socialist-Feminists and Greenham," *Feminist Review,* no. 23 (Summer 1986): 93-100; Margaret L. Laware, "Circling the Missiles and Staining Them Red: Feminist Rhetorical Invention and Strategies of Resistance at the Women's Peace Camp at Greenham Common," *NWSA Journal* 16, no. 3 (Autumn 2004): 18-41.

[794] Ackland, *Making a Real Killing,* p. 193.

spaces where anti-imperialist politics arose. At Rocky Flats, Denverites witnessed the intimate relationship between nuclear weapons and imperialist expansion, and the protests did succeed in increasing awareness about Rocky Flats, the nuclear complex, imperial politics, and Denver's role in bolstering national defense. However, these moments of resistance, numerous though they were, did not move the state to end the process of plutonium milling at Rocky Flats. That happened only when the imperial subjects laboring at Rocky Flats collaborated with other state institutions to expose the costs of nuclear production.

Closure

As much as the anti-imperialist politics of the protesters did to shed light on the hazardous activities taking place at Rocky Flats, their actions alone could not end the production of plutonium pits. That drawn-out process began when the FBI raided Rocky Flats on June 6, 1989, at the request of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) so that it could file a lawsuit against Rockwell and the DOE for violations of environmental regulations. This marked the first time one federal agency asked the Department of Justice (DOJ) to intervene on its behalf against another federal agency.[795] What on the surface appears to be a strange and unexpected ending to the production of nuclear weapons in Denver—two federal bureaucracies facing each other in court—exposes just how complex and, at times, conflicting the underpinning structures of the empire truly were within metropolitan Denver as the Cold War neared its end.

For Rockwell and the DOE, it was not the products made, but the remnants of the process, the waste to be disposed, that became such a problem. In 1980, the EPA declared that the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) of 1976 required operators of all facilities

[795] The expansion of federal bureaucracies in Denver is explored in chap. 2, "Red, White, and Blue Tape: Federal Bureaucracy, the Politics of Economic Security, and Preserving Capitalism."

handling hazardous waste to obtain a permit to do so by November 19 of that year.[796] Congress also created an "interim status" designation to allow facilities with such waste to continue operations without halting production while the permits were pending. However, neither Rockwell nor the DOE applied for the necessary permit. Nor did they gain interim status for Rocky Flats. Rockwell and the DOE offered several explanations for why they did not comply with the RCRA. On one hand, they claimed that the RCRA did not apply to the hazardous waste because it was "mixed," meaning it combined hazardous, radioactive, and non-hazardous materials. On the other hand, they asserted that because the waste contained plutonium to be recovered from incinerated ash at a later date, the RCRA also did not apply.[797] But in 1988, Rockwell agreed to shut down an incinerator in Building 771 from November 30 until February 28, 1989, while it waited for either the EPA or the Colorado Department of Health to issue a final RCRA permit for the incineration of mixed waste.[798] Despite the agreement, Rockwell continued to incinerate waste in Building 771 and did so during the dates it had agreed not to operate the incinerator. This illegal act had lasting consequences for the plant and its workforce, which had grown to six thousand by the 1980s.

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[796] The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 was passed as an amendment to the Solid Waste Disposal Act, 42 U.S.C. 3251. *Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976*, Public Law 94-580, *U.S. Statutes at Large* 90 (1976): 2795-2841.

[797] Jacque Brever claims that the plutonium in the ash that remained after incineration was never recovered because the technology to do so was not cost-effective in the 1980s. In her estimation, this was an outright lie by Rockwell. Jacque (Jacqueline) Brever, interview by Dorothy D. Ciarlo, April 9, 2004, interview OH1210-V, transcript, audio, and video, MROHP, available online at <https://localhistory .boulderlibrary.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A26131?solr_nav%5Bid%5D=11ba3182f099323596dc& solr_nav%5Bpage%5D=0&solr_nav%5Boffset%5D=2>.

[798] Sierra Club v. United States Department of Energy and Rockwell International Corporation, Civil Action No. 89-B-181, 734 F. Supp. 946, 1990 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 4147 (D. Colo. Apr. 12, 1990). The DOE ordered the shutdown of the incinerator after a DOE official toured the plant earlier in the fall and became contaminated upon entering a room that was not marked as unsafe. See Ackland, *Making a Real Killing,* p. 212.

Unbeknownst to Rockwell, the EPA had enlisted the FBI to help gather evidence of malfeasance so it could have the DOJ prosecute the corporation and the DOE for violations of the RCRA. During those three months when the incinerator was supposed to be down, the FBI performed flyovers with infrared heat-sensing cameras. The pictures they collected showed evidence of thermal activity in Building 771, an indication that the incinerator was still running. Then, on June 6, 1989, the FBI raided the plant, hoping to find confirmation of its suspicion that illegal waste disposal had taken place.[799] After the raid, federal prosecutors from the DOJ took the FBI's findings to a grand jury in Denver, a process that Denverites watched unfold over three years.

What they read in the newspapers and saw on local television news stations must surely have perplexed them. Told most thoroughly in Wes McKinley and Caron Balkany's *Ambushed Grand Jury: How the Justice Department Covered Up Government Nuclear Crimes and How We Caught Them Red Handed* (2004), the story of the grand jury proceedings goes like this: DOJ prosecutors and federal judge Sherman Finesilver impaneled a twenty-three member Special Grand Jury on August 1, 1989. This grand jury, unlike others, heard only the Rocky Flats case. The hearings dragged on, not ending until March 26, 1992, when the DOJ announced a plea agreement had been reached. Despite an abundance of evidence that pointed toward criminal activity, the DOJ opted not to pursue an indictment and instead imposed fines of 18.5 million dollars on Rockwell for minor infractions.[800] At the plant, the DOE suspended production in the

[799] Jon S. Lipsky, Application and Affidavit for Search Warrant, Case No. 89-730M, United States District Court, District of Colorado, June 6, 1989, available online at < https://rockyflatsambushed grandjury.com/wp-content/uploads/19890606-Rocky-Flats-Applicaton-and-Aff-for-SW-89-730M.pdf> (accessed August 9, 2017).

[800] Wes McKinley served as the foreman of the Special Grand Jury for the duration of its impaneling. Wes McKinley and Caron Balkany, *The Ambushed Grand Jury: How the Justice Department*

autumn of 1989, and the department opted not to renew Rockwell's contract. In its stead came EG&G, which continued non-plutonium work at the plant until 1992, when President George H.W. Bush and the DOE ordered all production stopped and cleanup to begin.[801] EG&G then turned its focus to cleaning Rocky Flats, now an EPA superfund site.[802]

But this retelling of the institutional, bureaucratic, and corporate machinations surrounding the ending of production at Rocky Flats elides more than it illuminates. As a production facility, Rocky Flats could not function without those who labored on the shop floor. Plutonium, for all its power, could not mill itself into a pit; that transformative process required human hands and knowledge of a specific form of metallurgy. And yet, as those on the floor came to recognize themselves as constructors of the empire, the imperial ideology and its attendant material practices could not fully contain the multiple subject positions it produced.[803] At Rocky Flats, the radioactive building-blocks employees transmogrified into detonators transformed them because those particles contaminated their skin and lungs. Those whose bodies literally contained traces of the empire questioned the costs associated with their imperial subjectivity. In fact, the range of subjectivities that emerged at Rocky Flats exposed the limits of imperial ideology.

Covered Up Government Nuclear Crimes and How We Caught Them Red Handed (New York: The Apex Press, 2004), esp. chs. 3-4.

[801] Ackland, *Making a Real Killing,* pp. 226-27.

[802] On the history of Rocky Flats as a superfund site, see the Environmental Protection Agency's website on Rocky Flats, which includes numerous documents and reports relating to the cleanup process. E.P.A, "Superfund Site: Rocky Flats Plant (USDOE) Golden, CO," available online at <http://www2.epa.gov/region8/rocky-flats-plant-usdoe> (accessed October 28, 2014).

[803] My thinking here is informed by Rey Chow's reading of Louis Althusser and the process of subject-formation through material practices in "Elusive Material: What the Dog Doesn't Understand," in *New Materialities,* eds. Coole and Frost, pp. 221-33. See also Paul Robbins, *Lawn People: How Grasses, Weeds, and Chemicals Make Us Who We Are* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2007), esp. pp. 14-17.

Jacque Brever's ambivalence about the costs of working for the DOE and Rockwell is indicative of how employees could stand outside imperial ideology. She occupied a precarious position vis-à-vis her employer, a position that required an intricate calculus to judge what was best for her: an unskilled but educated single mother who desperately needed the well-paying job, yet one who, time and again, questioned the sacrifices she had to make in her employment. Of course, Brever was not alone in worrying about the economic consequences of closing Rocky Flats. By 1990, EG&G employed over 7,000 men and women at the plant, and their wages supported an estimated 19,000 jobs in Colorado. Furthermore, the company spent over 220 million dollars on supplies, service, and equipment that year, with 216 million dollars spent locally.[804] A 1987 study conducted by the University of Colorado Denver estimated the plant's total economic contribution to be over 640 million dollars to the regional economy.[805] But, in 1989, as many in metropolitan Denver worried over the economic consequences of closing the plant, Brever wrestled with the hazards she and her colleagues were continually asked to ignore for the sake of producing nuclear weapons to defend the U.S.

In fact, Brever was unsure about working at Rocky Flats from the moment she first arrived at the plant. She applied in 1982 to work as a chemical operator, but spent almost two years serving food in the cafeteria while she waited to receive her Q-clearance. She used this time to earn an Associate of Fine Arts degree at Front Range Community College, taking the requisite science classes to prepare herself for a job as a chemical operator. She finally moved

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[804] Department of Energy, *A Closer Look at Rocky Flats* (Washington, DC: United States Department of Energy, 1991), p.19.

[805] When news of the FBI raid first circulated in 1989, many in Denver feared the closure of the plant. Jefferson County Commissioner John Stone was one who worried over the potential loss of jobs, comparing Rocky Flats to other large local employers Coors and Martin Marietta. Kevin Simpson, "Residents of Jefferson County Faced with a Catch-22 over Federal Probe," *Denver Post,* June 11, 1989.

from food service into chemical operations in January 1984, but only after a protracted clash with the union. In the 1980s, ARA Services managed food service workers, and many employees worked the food line for ARA while they waited for their Q-clearance to come through. As a remedy to high turnover, ARA convinced United Steelworkers of America Local 8031, which had become the bargaining unit for Rocky Flats employees in 1972, not to accept any more food service workers. When she received her badge, Brever could not move into production because of the agreement, so she and the union president's son, Jim Kelly Jr., confronted his father, Jim Kelly Sr. After filing a grievance against the union, Brever finally moved into the production side and onto Rockwell's books, but only after ARA cancelled her union number in early December, ensuring that they would not have to pay her during the two-week Christmas holiday.[806] From the moment of her hiring, she questioned the practices taking place at the plant.

When Brever finally moved to the hot side, she entered a production process that was at once thirty years in the making and, to her eye, thirty years outdated. Although she had learned the most current practices in her training, she constantly faced opprobrium from her male

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[806] Jacque Brever, interview by LeRoy Moore, June 4, 19991, interview OH1498, transcript and audio, MROHP, available online at <https://localhistory.boulderlibrary.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A33081?solr_nav%5Bid%5D=06f3d657347346d7b523&solr_nav%5Bpage%5D=0&solr_nav%5Boffset%5D=0>. The relationship between women and organized unions was a difficult one, even after World War II. On the postwar struggles of women workers and trade unions in the U.S., see Dorothy Sue Cobble, "Recapturing Working-Class Feminism: Union Women in the Postwar Era," in *Not June Cleaver: Women and Gender in Postwar America, 1945-1960,* ed. Joanne Meyerowitz (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994), pp. 57-83; Daniel Horowitz, "Rethinking Betty Friedan and *The Feminine Mystique:* Labor Union Radicalism and Feminism in Cold War America," *American Quarterly* 48, no. 1 (March 1996): 1-42; Alice Kessler Harris, *Out to Work: A History of Wage-Earning Women in the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982); Ruth Milkman, "Women Workers, Feminism, and the Labor Movement since the 1960s," in *Women, Work, and Protest: A Century of U.S. Women's Labor History,* ed. Ruth Milkman (New York: Routledge, 1985), pp. 300-22; Nancy F. Gabin, *Feminism in the Labor Movement: Women and the United Auto Workers, 1935-1970* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990); Nancy MacLean, "The Hidden History of Affirmative Action: Working Women's Struggles in the 1970s and the Gender of Class," in *No Permanent Waves: Recasting Histories of U.S. Feminism,* ed. Nancy A. Hewitt (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2010), pp. 356-78.

colleagues for attempting to follow protocol because, as one man said to her, "'that's not how it is in the real world.'" Unsurprisingly, she could not please the men alongside whom she labored; they refused to teach her "real world" procedures because she had attended chemical operations training, and they castigated her for implementing those time-consuming practices. Despite the gains of the union in the previous decade over the implementation of safety protocols, by the 1980s, Rockwell employees chose to forego those measures in the interest of speed. Brever responded by pushing back against the workplace culture that dominated life at the plant, hoping to make the job safer for all her colleagues.[807]

The world Brever entered at Rocky Flats under Rockwell in the 1980s differed from that under Dow in the previous decades. In Brever's estimation, the work culture at Rocky Flats under Rockwell, a response to the renewed emphasis on stockpiling under the Reagan administration, was one entirely of maximizing production and profits. As she saw it, the DOE rewarded Rockwell for increases in production, but those financial bonuses rarely, if ever, trickled down to the factory floor. Under the corporate-capitalist model, she recalls, the DOE exercised little oversight. The DOE happily rewarded Rockwell as long as production quotas were met or exceeded. And Rockwell management gladly accepted the financial payouts.[808]

Despite Rockwell's financial success, fault lines existed within the rank-and-file and between labor and management, who often found themselves at cross-purposes over health and

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[807] Brever, interview OH1498.

[808] Ibid; Brever, interview OH1210-V. A 1989 report by the U.S. General Accountability Office confirms Brever's statement about Rockwell's financial awards. The office found that the Department of Energy awarded a total of 26.8 million dollars to Rockwell from 1986 through 1988 as performance bonuses, but the DOE neglected the environmental and health risks at the plant when making the awards. United States General Accounting Office, "DOE's Award Fee at Rocky Flats Do Not Adequately Reflect Environmental, Safety, and Health Problems," report T-RCED-90-7, October 24, 1989, pp. 1-3, available online at https://www.gao.gov/assets/110/102854.pdf.

safety. A pair of 1987 incidents involving Brever brought into stark relief the reality of working at the plant under Rockwell: worker safety was secondary to production output.[809] Although unsure of the exact date, she recalls vividly the morning she and two co-workers began a shift and, due to poor recordkeeping by the previous crew, found themselves completely contaminated. They were so contaminated that the dosimeter simply read "infinity" when it was passed near their bodies. In the following days, Rockwell health officers monitored the three for internal contamination through both urine and fecal sampling. However, according to Brever, when one of her female colleague's samples came back positive for uranium and her own positive for americium, Rockwell told them that the readings were false positives, not evidence of internal radiation.[810] If she thought to question whether multiple errors were in fact evidence of a pattern of denial is unknown, but it is highly likely that her concerns would have fallen on deaf ears. A 1991 study conducted by EG&G and the DOE on the potential of returning to plutonium production identified 2,805 separate environment, safety, and health concerns. Of these, 1,573 were so severe the EG&G could not even consider resuming operations until they were addressed.[811] Rocky Flats employees, whether they knew it or not, had been working in dangerous conditions.

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[809] Employees at Rocky Flats were not the only ones troubled by hazardous working conditions. For examples of histories of contests over workplace safety in the twentieth century, see Claudia Clark, *Radium Girls: Women and Industrial Health Reform, 1910-1935* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997); David Rosner and Gerald Markowitz, *Deadly Dust: Silicosis and the Politics of Occupational Disease in Twentieth-Century America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991); Linda Nash, "The Fruits of Ill Health: Pesticides and Workers' Bodies in Post-World War II California," *Osiris* 19 (2004): 203-19; Christopher C. Sellers, *Hazards of the Job: From Industrial Disease to Environmental Health Science* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997); Michelle Murphy, *Sick Building Syndrome and the Problem of Uncertainty: Environmental Politics, Technoscience, and Women Workers* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006); Josiah Rector, "Environmental Justice at Work: The UAW, the War on Cancer, and the Right to Equal Protection from Toxic Hazards in Postwar America," *Journal of American History* 101, no. 2 (September 2014): 480-502.

[810] Brever, interview OH1210-V.

Brever's concerns did not lead to change at Rocky Flats. Ever the dedicated employee, she returned to work straight away and encountered another unsafe situation caused by a previous crew. As she came onto the floor to begin her midnight shift, she found an unattended plutonium fluoride line. The line, carrying a mixture of nitric acid, caustic materials, and steam, ran directly above the glove boxes and was dripping onto a box containing a mass of plutonium. Worried that the combination of heat and mass might be enough to cause a criticality, she shut down the line and called her manager, who happened to be her intimate partner at the time, into the room. After informing him that she planned to file a "628 Concern," a safety complaint that would bypass plant management and go straight to the DOE, the two began shouting at each other. They ended their relationship that night. Brever filed her report and, after a month of battling with management and facing threats from union president Jim Kelly Sr., she eventually saw her complaint lead to a review of the incident. The inquiry, to her, amounted to little more than "a phony-baloney bullshit investigation," and her claim was summarily dismissed on the grounds that sexual harassment had occurred.[812] However, the union judged that Brever was not the victim of harassment; instead, she was the harasser whose advances had been denied by her supervisor and former partner.[813] This led management to reassign Brever to a different crew in Building 371.[814] Around the same time, she recalls, the DOE paid Rockwell an 8.7 million dollar

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[811] General Accounting Office, *Nuclear Weapons Complex: Status of Restart Issues at the Rocky Flats Plant* (Washington, DC: U.S. General Accounting Office, 1992), pp. 1-2.

[812] Brever, interview OH1210-V.

[813] In fact, as Brever notes in her interview, she had been the victim of innumerable incidents of sexual harassment while on the job. This was a response from the men to allowing women on the floor, and both the union and Rockwell turned a blind eye to such behavior when it occurred. Brever, interview OH1210; Ackland, *Making a Real Killing,* pp. 194-97

[814] Building 371 opened in 1982 and was designed to introduce robotics into the process of recovery and to replace Building 771. However, construction time far exceeded the plan and the building came in over budget. In a rush to get the building live, many safety precautions were cut short during

bonus for "'safety and management excellence.'"[815] To Rockwell, the financial rewards for increased production output justified slack safety protocols.

Brever responded to management's indifference by choosing to be selective in what she shared with her superiors. Concurrent with her reassignment to Building 371 was an intentional decision by managers to keep her isolated from more critical aspects of production. They removed her from her team and gave her tasks that she described as "BS jobs."[816] In one case, they asked her to analyze a twenty-year-old product, the result of experiments run in the 1960s designed to shortcut the process of purifying plutonium. Although the scientists two decades earlier had failed in their attempts, she identified the necessary steps to the process. But at this point, her relationship with management had soured so much that she purposely withheld her discovery. She decided not to disclose to Rockwell or the DOE the process she had identified, instead retaining possession of her knowledge. This decision not to share with managers would have damaging consequences for all involved. What Brever did not know in 1988, after her reassignment to Building 371, was that a simple act of covering several overtime shifts in Building 771 during December would provide her with knowledge capable of upsetting the entire production process at Rocky Flats.

In the months after February 28, 1989, questions surfaced about the use of the incinerator in Building 771 during the three-month period Rockwell agreed not to operate it. When the FBI arrived at Rocky Flats that June afternoon in 1989, Brever happened to be at a dental appointment in Boulder. Although the local television media reported the event that evening, and

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construction and the building became contaminated almost immediately after it was opened. Brever, interview, OH1498.

[815] Brever, interview OH1498.

[816] Ibid.

the next morning the story was above the fold in the local newspapers and covered nationally, she did not know why the FBI had raided the plant until a member of her crew stole a copy of the affidavit from their manager's office the day after the raid. Brever and her colleagues read that the FBI believed the incinerator had been used during the past winter.[817] They also read about the flyovers that occurred on the nights of December 9, 10, and 15, 1988.[818] Although she had been reassigned to Building 371, the overtime shifts she covered in Building 771 during that winter coincided with the flyovers and she vividly recalled that the incinerators were running because the building was so hot.[819] On June 12, once management in Building 371 became aware that crews from that building had worked in Building 771 during those three months, they instructed those crews, including Brever, not to speak to the FBI. Brever told her managers "'I'm not lying for anybody. I'm not going to JAIL for anybody.'"[820] She threatened to break rank over the use of the incinerator.

Her words precipitated a series of actions by management. Dee Sherrill, the building manager for Building 371, spent the night of June 12 meeting with managers from Building 771 and then instructed his assistant, Doug Smith, to meet with Brever on the afternoon of June 13. At the meeting, Brever asked to see the documents—time cards, Material Balance Accountability

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[817] Lipsky, Affidavit, Attachment 3 at ¶2.14.

[818] Kristen Iversen, *Full Body Burden: Growing up in the Nuclear Shadow of Rocky Flats* (New York: Crown, 2012), pp. 210-12.

[819] She specifically remembers working on December 12, 1988, because Ron Avery, her ex-partner, was not managing that day in Building 771. She learned from the covering manager that Ron took the day off to celebrate his birthday and the pair joked that he was most likely beginning a three-day drinking binge that would end on his birthday, December 15. Brever, interview OH1210-V.

[820] Quoted material from Brever, interview OH1498, emphasis in original; Jacqueline Margaret Brever and Karen Alane Pitts v. Rockwell International Corporation, et. al., No. 92-1290, 40 F.3d 1119, 1994 U.S. App. LEXIS 33137 (10th Cir. Nov. 22, 1994).

sheets, and other legal forms—she produced during those December shifts. When they eventually went to human resources, Brever learned that all the material from her crew's shifts were missing. The next day, June 14, Rockwell's legal department summoned her to a meeting, but she refused to speak with anyone.[821] Fearing that she would be prosecuted for the illegal incineration, she phoned an FBI hotline that evening and agents came to her house to interview her. She disclosed everything she knew in that initial interview, which led to another ninety-four separate meetings between Brever and the FBI. Many of those interviews took place at work, in full view of her colleagues, and word spread throughout the plant that she was talking to the FBI.[822] Her managers' fears, it turns out, were well-founded.

However, her managers were not the only ones concerned about a whistleblower; her colleagues at the plant reacted with venom to what they saw as a threat to their livelihood. While workers at Rocky Flats could easily dismiss the protests of anti-nuclear activists as misguided, naive idealism, as many had done during their tenure, they could not abide Brever's cooperation with the federal officials. The most vitriolic of her colleagues was the father of her daughter, who worked at the plant but had had little contact with Brever since their daughter's birth.[823] Once news spread that she was speaking with the FBI, he began a pattern of sustained harassment of both Brever and their daughter, Jessica. At times, he would park his truck in front of her house

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[821] Brever and Pitts v. Rockwell, et. al.

[822] Brever, interview OH1498; Brever, interview OH1210-V.

[823] Ibid. Brever and Pitts alleged in court that a pattern of condoned harassment against them occurred at Rocky Flats, with numerous employees involved in the campaign. The litany of alleged offenses committed against them includes: harassment, intimidation, terror, physical attack upon their persons and property, repeated assignment to onerous or excessively hazardous work duties, intentional bypassing of required safety procedures, intentional delay in responding to incidents in which the pair were contaminated with radioactive material, sexually explicit and insulting remarks, and sexually harassing bodily conduct. Brever and Pitts v. Rockwell, et. al.

and throw objects from the safety of his vehicle. Other days, he engaged the two, making sure his eight-year-old daughter knew how much he detested her mother. To further compound Brever's troubles, Jessica's father, with legal support from Rockwell, took her to court several times over issues relating to their daughter.[824] Brever's cooperation with federal agents rent apart the community that so many employees had built.

As her relationships with her colleagues further deteriorated, Brever hoped to find relief from federal prosecutors. Unfortunately for her, none was forthcoming. She feared she would be unable to support her daughter without her paycheck from the plant, so she soldiered on through the summer, her stance equal parts defiance and unflagging commitment to her job. But once marked as a whistleblower, she could not shed that label, especially after the circulation of a company memo naming her as one of the witnesses called by the DOJ to testify in front of the grand jury.[825] To make matters worse, the FBI threatened to prosecute her if she did not appear as a state's witness. The DOJ had granted her immunity in exchange for her cooperation, and the FBI made it clear they would recommend revoking that immunity if she did not comply. Furthermore, she had knowledge federal prosecutors wanted to introduce to the grand jury, so they threatened to have her jailed for contempt of court for the duration of the grand jury hearing if she did not testify. Feeling she had no other option, she agreed to testify, finally appearing on October 23 and 24, 1989. She was the first Rockwell employee called to the witness stand.[826]

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[824] Brever, interview OH1498.

[825] Brever also suffered in her relationship with her legal counsel. Her union representation told her he needed help with a case of this magnitude and brought in another attorney. Brever said she learned years later that Rockwell had hired the outside counsel, a clear conflict of interest, and she believed that privileged information was shared with the company. Brever, interview OH1210-V.

[826] Brever, interview OH1210-V; Brever and Pitts v. Rockwell et. al.

To her surprise, federal prosecutors asked few questions about the running of the incinerator. A diligent note taker whose journals covered nearly five years, she had prepared for intense questioning about the use of the incinerator during that three-month window. And yet, once she finally took the stand, federal prosecutors appeared to care little about the allegations of RCRA violations. In her estimation, over the course of two full days of questioning, she discussed the Building 771 incinerator for, at most, thirty minutes. And, almost immediately after her testimony, the federal prosecutors began work to discredit her as a witness.[827] She was incredulous and dismayed. Why would the prosecution discredit the first witness it placed on the stand?

What she learned three years later was that U.S. attorney Mike Norton, in collaboration with the DOE, Rockwell, and now EG&G, was working to find an end to this ordeal. The grand jury, led by foreman Wes McKinley, voted to indict the corporation, five of its employees, and three others who worked for the DOE. Norton chose a very different option. The solution they produced included the 18.5 million-dollar fine to be paid by Rockwell. Although the company pleaded guilty to a total of ten violations of the RCRA and the Clean Water Act, the allegations of illegal incineration were not part of the plea. The nature of the agreement between the federal government and its private contractors indemnified them against further criminal charges or civil suits. Furthermore, the DOJ even permitted Rockwell to file for a reimbursement of 7.9 million dollars from the federal government for costs related to the grand jury proceedings.[828] While the agreement ensured nuclear production at Rocky Flats was over, criminal indictments for those responsible were effectively buried, just as the radioactive waste had been.

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[827] Brever, interview OH1210-V.

[828] Iversen, *Full Body Burden,* pp. 232-37.

Despite what appeared to be clear evidence of legal violations by the DOE's private contractor, ending the production of nuclear pits at Rocky Flats was anything but straightforward. Nor, for that matter, was it universally supported even by those who directly bore the health costs of milling plutonium and uranium. The vituperation Jacque Brever faced from colleagues who believed her to be a whistleblower evinces just how complicated the world of work at Rocky Flats was for those whose economic livelihoods depended on producing for the empire. For many of those employees, men like Chuck Bogard and Jerry Felknor, the end justified the means; as a result of the Cold War, the U.S. emerged as the dominant global power in the early 1990s. As imperial subjects, they willingly sacrificed their bodies to build a nuclear arsenal to protect the U.S. At the same time, Rocky Flats, as an imperial space, also produced a politics that protested the plant's very existence. This anti-nuclear, anti-imperial politics enfolded both the wider Denver public as well as some Rockwell employees. And although criminal charges did not materialize, the process of ending production eventually saw different agencies of the state working against each other. Rocky Flats may have produced imperial subjects of those who labored there, but it also produced the seeds of its own demise.

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Over the course of its forty-year history, Rocky Flats exerted a centripetal force that affected nearly everyone in the metropolitan region and many in its hinterland. The vast nuclear assemblage that covered the U.S. West emanated through the labor of Denverites who developed and produced a crucial component of the nuclear weapons arsenal used by the U.S. to articulate its international power. And yet, the plant's story illuminates much more. Excavating that story exposes how much of Denver's postwar history unfolded in a single space: public funding of

corporate profits; the creation and transmission of scientific knowledge; the circulation of bodies and nuclear particles into and through the metropolitan region; a discourse of imperial defense; a politics situated in rejecting the technology and its use in U.S. foreign policy; and contests over the power of the state bureaucratic apparatus to control the military-industrial complex.

Rocky Flats was neither the first nor the only imperial space in Denver, but it was perhaps the most explicitly so. There, Denverites cemented their city's metropole status within an empire striving to bend the international community to its capitalist will. The very nature of the plant, in which the state and its publicly-funded private contractors hailed Denverites as imperial subjects, reproduced the relations of capitalism as U.S. foreign policy sought the same abroad. Just as during Denver's World War II mobilization efforts, the Cold War continued an era in which the state enlisted private producers and their civilian workforce to provide national security.

And yet, Denver's metropole status also generated the very conditions that led to the ending of the imperial defense system. Imperial structures, for all the power they exert, can never fully limit their subjects and their agency. This is even less surprising for an empire predicated on capitalism, in which the costs and benefits are, by design, unevenly distributed. The environmental hazards of the plant, a cost many in metropolitan Denver were unwilling to continue to bear, produced an anti-imperialist politics organized around protesting the production of nuclear weapons at Rocky Flats. Furthermore, some of the same subjects who constructed the imperial defense materials questioned the need to sacrifice their bodies to nuclear hazards for the financial benefit of private contractors. Ultimately, Denverites, whether those who supported Rocky Flats or strove to end its existence, created an imperial metropole at the foot of the Rocky Mountains.

Conclusion

In 1993, when the Department of Energy (DOE) officially ended production at Rocky Flats, Denverites' relationship with the plant, and a capitalist empire, appeared to be over. For one, the thawing of U.S.-Russia relations after the dissolution of the Soviet Union reduced the need for continued nuclear arms production. Furthermore, as most Americans believed, the outcome of the Cold War had proved the superiority of western capitalism and market economies. As the global economy more fully resembled the market-oriented system of free trade that the U.S. had been working towards since the end of World War II, closure looked like the end of Rocky Flats and Denver's state-funded reproduction of industrial capitalism. But CH2M Hill, an engineering firm in the Denver suburb of Englewood, and ICF Kaiser International, of Alexandria, Virginia, had other ideas. In a decidedly capitalist maneuver, the newly-formed Kaiser-Hill completely disrupted the federal monopsony in the nuclear defense industry. The Cold War may have been over, but Denverites, now firmly entrenched in the national defense economy, were not done shaping the relationship between the state and its contractors. Indeed, residents of the imperial metropole in the Intermountain West completely transformed the DOE's contracting process in the post-Cold War world.

At issue was the cleanup of Rocky Flats. Shutting down pit production may have limited exposure to radioactive material for those who worked there, but mothballing the plant did not erase the traces of empire, industrial capitalism, and nuclear weapons left behind in the ground. How to neutralize the plutonium and plutonium-contaminated materials left on the grounds of Rocky Flats posed a substantial problem. When the DOE surveyed what became the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) largest Superfund site, the department struggled with

the scale of the cleanup. The DOE estimated cleanup would cost 37 billion dollars and take until 2065.[1] The reason for such a lengthy and expensive process was the department's bureaucratic approach, with rules and procedures so regimented that there was little room for efficiency. Furthermore, the question of who would carry out remediation was a vexing one. Because of the profile of Rocky Flats—its contamination had become a national story—defense contractors were wary of taking on the risks associated with such a complicated and public project. Should a company struggle, its reputation could be ruined despite the complexity of the remediation project. To convince a prime defense contractor, like those who had succeeded in Denver during the Cold War, the DOE would need to guarantee financial profits, something it could do through expensive cost-plus-fixed-fee contracts.[2] The cleanup contract was sure to cost the federal government a pretty penny.

The DOE's outlook began to change in November 1994, when Robert Card, Chief Executive Officer of Kaiser-Hill, first toured the plant with energy officials and other potential bidders. The businessman was appalled by what he witnessed, but he also recognized an opportunity. Over the three days he spent at Rocky Flats, he saw many idle EG&G employees. As he soon discovered, the DOE's contract with EG&G guaranteed payments regardless of the work the company performed. At that moment, EG&G's work was suspended because of a safety incident in September and, according to Card, DOE's bureaucracy halted all activity without a plan to resume operations. This meant that EG&G employees showed up every morning and

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[1] David Clark, David Janecky, and Leonard J. Lane, "Science-Based Cleanup of Rocky Flats," *Physics Today* 59, no. 9 (September 2006): 34-40, referenced material on pp. 34.

[2] Robert Card, interview by Hannah Nordhaus, December 8, 2005, interview OH1393-V, transcript and audio, MROHP, <https://localhistory.boulderlibrary.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A28302?solr_nav%5Bid%5D=b5edc5f312a7931a87de&solr_nav%5Bpage%5D=0&solr_nav%5Boffset%5D=0>.

earned wages without accomplishing anything. When Card eventually looked at the financials for the plant, he discovered that since the FBI raid in 1989, DOE had allocated between 700 million and one billion dollars a year for the plant's budget, with little output. In his words, the financial waste and inefficiency "was totally outrageous."[3] He and several other executives at Kaiser-Hill began developing a radical plan to undercut every other prime contractor's bid.

The plan that Card and his team members created involved negotiating a performance-based, incentive-laden contract with the DOE rather than a standard cost-plus contract. The team dubbed it "the un-Manhattan Project" because, rather than the long process of safely developing a nuclear weapon, their aim was to address the environmental hazards at Rocky Flats in "the fastest, cheapest way—not the safest, but the fastest, cheapest way."[4] The drastic cost savings were fundamental to Kaiser-Hill's bid because the firm was proposing a contract structure that was not only unheard of in the DOE, it was also not possible under existing regulations. Prior to Kaiser-Hill's bid, the DOE had only secured services with private companies through the federal government's standard cost-plus contract; it had never signed a contract with financial incentives for speedy work. This was partly because the U.S. Congress had not authorized DOE to use incentives in that way, so Kaiser-Hill's lead attorney, Melinda Kassen, who was very familiar with Rocky Flats from her work as counsel for Earth Defense Fund in the 1980s, teamed with ICF Kaiser's and CH2M Hill's lobbyists in Washington, DC, to convince legislators to give the energy department the ability to negotiate the contract.[5] Once the DOE received permission, it

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[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Melinda Kassen, interview by Hannah Nordhaus, May 24, 2006, interview OH1422V, transcript and audio, Maria Rogers Oral History Program, Carnegie Branch Library for Local History, Boulder Public Library, Boulder, Colorado, <https://oralhistory.boulderlibrary.org/transcript/oh1422t.pdf>

began talks with Kaiser-Hill and, on April 4, 1995, the firm inked a five-year, 3.5 billion dollar contract for cleanup at Rocky Flats.[6]

Kaiser-Hill was successful in securing the contract because its bid upended the DOE's contracting practices in one other way: the firm welcomed federal oversight. As a contractor performing cleanup at a DOE site, Kaiser-Hill was subject to the requirements of the Price-Anderson Amendment Act of 1988, which updated and continued the Price-Anderson Nuclear Industries Indemnity Act of 1957. The primary intent of the act was to address risk and liability for private companies in the nuclear industry, especially those contracted by the federal government, but the most relevant part for Kaiser-Hill and Robert Card was the imposition of civil fines by the DOE for safety violations. Because of the history of community opposition to Rocky Flats, Card believed federal oversight would give credibility to Kaiser-Hill's efforts and assuage some of the concerns raised by local groups over the cleanup. But Card also earned the ire of many of his contractor brethren by supporting the DOE's fine structure for violating safety requirements. Under the 1988 amendment, contractors, subcontractors, or suppliers covered by Price-Anderson could be fined up to 100,000 dollars per violation per day.[7] In Card's words, this was necessary "because we need[ed] that to give us the discipline and the community comfort that somebody is watching and is going to beat the daylights out of us if we do something wrong."[8] With Kaiser-Hill's acceptance of federal oversight, it succeeded in convincing the DOE

[6] "Kaiser-Hill Gets $3.5 Billion Job," *New York Times,* April 5, 1995.

[7] U.S. Department of Energy, *Report to Congress on the Price-Anderson Act* (Washington, DC: United States Department of Energy, 1999), available online at <https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/gcprod/documents/paa-rep.pdf> (accessed January 18, 2019).

[8] Card, interview.

that its contract bid would not result in the company cutting corners and putting Denverites at risk during environmental remediation.

Ultimately, the firm provided incontrovertible proof that the federal government could use incentives instead of cost-plus contracts. Despite DOE's initial worst-case predictions for cleanup, Kaiser-Hill reduced all potential hazards from plutonium, uranium, and americium to acceptable levels by December 2006 at a cost of 7 billion dollars. It could do so in part because the award structure incentivized innovation and flexibility in a way that a cost-plus arrangement did not. Kaiser-Hill's efforts followed the Rocky Flats Cleanup Agreement, a plan it negotiated with the DOE, the EPA, and the State of Colorado. The firm had to balance the interests of the other stakeholders with its own concerns about speed and profit maximization. This led Kaiser-Hill to search continually for more efficient methods to perform remediation.[9] From the DOE's perspective, Kaiser-Hill's approach and success changed how the department approached cleanup at its other sites. In fact, by 1998, it had incentive-based contracts in place at Hanford, Washington; Idaho Falls, Idaho; and Savannah River, South Carolina; in addition to Rocky Flats.[10] Robert Card was so influential to this development that he eventually left Kaiser-Hill in 2001 to become Undersecretary of Energy at the DOE where he brought insights from Rocky Flats and knowledge of how contractors could speed up their efforts while decreasing costs for the federal government. Although the Cold War had ended, Denverites continued to find ways to shape the federal government and relations of capitalism.

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[9] Clark, Janecky, and Lane, "Science-Based Cleanup of Rocky Flats," pp. 34-35.

[10] United States Accounting Office, *Department of Energy: Lessons Learned Incorporated into Performance-Based Incentive Contracts*, report to the Chairman, Committee on Commerce, House of Representatives (Washington, DC: U.S. General Accounting Office, 1998), p. 1, available online at <https://www.gao.gov/assets/230/226152.pdf>.

Kaiser-Hill and its employees were not the only Denverites reaping the economic rewards of the previous five decades of working with the federal government. The latter years of the 1980s had brought some difficulties for the region when a downturn in oil prices hit the energy sector just as the real estate market collapsed after years of speculative development that far outpaced demand. But market corrections in response to the slowdown meant that, by 1990, labor and real estate were cheaper throughout Colorado than in much of the U.S., giving firms a price advantage over competitors in other states. The firms best able to take advantage of this were in advanced technology, some of which had grown out of the region's aerospace industry in earlier decades. During the 1990s and 2000s, Denver companies that specialized in wireless and fiberoptic transmission systems enjoyed years of success meeting Americans' appetite for high-speed data delivery, a crucial part of the infrastructure for the booming internet economy of the late twentieth century. Furthermore, manufacturers of computers, hardware components, and software proliferated across the Front Range, and by 1999 Boulder County's population had the highest percentage of software employees in the country while Denver Country ranked ninth.[11] And of course, the aerospace and engineering sector continued to provide thousands of high-paying jobs to the region. By the end of the 1990s, the average Coloradan's personal income was roughly 9 percent higher than the national average.[12] All of this meant that at the close of the twentieth century, Denver's economy was as healthy as it had ever been.

The effects of the economic boom in the 1990s could be felt across Denver and the rest of Colorado. Over the decade, the state had an average net population increase of 70,000 people per year, and Colorado's 30.6 percent growth over the decade trailed only Nevada and Arizona. In

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[11] Wilson D. Kendall, "An Economic History of Colorado" (Denver: Center for Business and Economic Forecasting, 2002), pp. 15-21.

[12] Ibid., p. 22.

addition, Douglas County, south of Arapahoe County, had the largest county population growth rate in the country at 191 percent, as the towns of Highlands Ranch, a twenty-two-hundred-acre master-planned community, Parker, and Castle Rock became exurbs of Denver.[13] From 1990 to 2000, the city of Denver grew by 18.6 percent, becoming home to 554,000 residents, but the metropolitan region's population, which was under one million in 1960, stood at more than 2.1 million residents in 2000.[14] The growth even forced changes to municipal governments. The City of Broomfield, which had been part of Boulder County, had grown so much through annexations that, by the mid-1990s, the city was stretched across four different counties. Municipal and state officials, tired of the inefficiencies of caused by one city having four different court systems, county seats, and sales tax districts, pushed for separation from Boulder County. In 1998, the Colorado State Constitution was amended to create a consolidated city and county government in Broomfield, and after a three-year transition period, Broomfield County became the newest and smallest county in Colorado.[15] The 2000 U.S. Census even showed evidence of the region's changes. The Census Bureau no longer considered Boulder part of the Denver metropolitan area, but instead established the new Boulder Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The bureau also renamed the Denver MSA as Denver-Aurora-Lakewood MSA to recognize the importance of Aurora and Lakewood to Denver's economy.[16]

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[13] Marc J. Perry and Paul J. Mackun, *Population Change and Distribution, 1990 to 2000,* Census 2000 Brief C2KBR/01-2 (Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau, 2001), pp. 2, 5, available online at <https://www.census.gov/prod/2001pubs/c2kbr01-2.pdf> (accessed January 29, 2019); Andrew R. Goetz and E. Eric Broschmann, *Metropolitan Denver: Growth and Change in the Mile High City* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018), p. 84.

[14] Goetz and Broschmann, *Metropolitan Denver,* p. 71.

[15] City and County of Broomfield, "History of Broomfield," <https://www.broomfield.org /386/History-of-Broomfield> (accessed January 29, 2019).

[16] Goetz and Broschmann, *Metropolitan Denver,* p. 80;

Denver's economic boom helped make the region's residents more diverse, a furtherance of the federal efforts of the 1950s and 1960s to expand access to the labor markets. The expansion of jobs in the technology sector drew young adults to the region. From 1995 to 2000, the city had a net migration gain of nearly 11,000 adults aged 20 to 29, and during the first decade of the 2000s, the same demographic grew by nearly 50,000.[17] Today, more than one-third of the city's population is aged 22 to 39, making Denver one of the youngest cities in the U.S.[18] Moreover, population growth has made Denver a more diverse place. By 2010, metropolitan Denver was 65.8 percent white, 22.5 percent Latinx, 5.3 percent black, and 3.6 percent Asian, with the remaining 2.1 percent identifying with two or more races. Denver itself was even more diverse, with whites accounting for only 52.2 percent and nearly one-third—31.8 percent—of all residents were members of the Latinx community. And in the suburb of Aurora, a minority of the population, 47.3 percent, identify as white.[19] This represents a sizeable increase since 1960 when official surveys identified 6.7 percent of metropolitan Denver as Latinx and 3.7 percent as black.[20] At the beginning of the 2000s, Denver's residents were far less homogenous than they had been at the beginning of the Cold War.

Denver's growth not only reshaped the region, but it also moved Colorado politics to the left. Although traditionally Colorado has been a swing state in national elections and neither

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[17] State of Colorado, "State Demography Office—Net Migration by Age Comparison," <https://gis.dola.colorado.gov/apps/netmigration_dashboard/> (accessed January 30, 2019).

[18] Statistical Atlas, "Age and Sex in Denver, Colorado," available at <https://statisticalatlas.com/place/Colorado/Denver/Age-and-Sex> (accessed January 29, 2019).

[19] Goetz and Broschmann, *Metropolitan Denver,* p. 88.

[20] Mountain States Telephone, "A Profile of Denver and the Denver Metropolitan Region," special report prepared for Denver Chamber of Commerce and Denver Committee on Human Relations and Full Employment, 1967, p. 2, Western History Collection, Western History and Genealogy Department, Denver Public Library, Denver, CO.

party enjoyed overwhelming dominance in the postwar years, the early 2000s brought first a rightward shift. Coloradans elected Republican Bill Owens to the governor's office with 65 percent of the vote and the state went for George W. Bush in both the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections after supporting Republican Bob Dole in 1996. In 2000, the voting registration rolls showed 160,000 more Coloradans identified as Republican than Democrat.[21] But conservative dominance was not to last. Democratic gubernatorial candidates have won the last four elections, including Jared Polis in 2018, the nation's first openly gay male gubernatorial candidate to win an election. Since 2008, Coloradans have sent their nine Electoral College votes to the Democratic candidate in each election. Additionally, Coloradans have since voted several liberal measures into law through popular initiatives, while defeating some conservative ones. In 2012, they voted 55 percent to 45 percent to decriminalize recreational use of marijuana and to regulate its commercial sale. In 2014, they defeated a measure to officially recognize an unborn child as a person in the state criminal code. In 2016, Coloradans voted to begin a yearly increase of the minimum wage that would see it set at 12 dollars per hour by 2020.

The popular support of such measures and the newfound strength of the Democratic Party in Colorado is largely a result of the population boom along the Front Range. But this growth has also fractured Coloradans, with many long-time residents and those in the rest of the state resenting the influence of the urban corridor.[22] Like other metropolitan regions, Denver's

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[21] Floyd Ciruli, "Colorado Politics Could Be Shaken to Its Core This November," *Denver Post,* September 14, 2018, <https://www.denverpost.com/2018/09/14/colorado-politics-could-be-shaken-to-its-core-this-november/> (accessed January 30, 2019).

[22] Colorado Springs and El Paso County are outliers in the politics of the Front Range. Local politics are dominated by a large number of active and retired military members as well as the national, evangelical Christian organizations that are headquartered there, and these two constituencies have given the city a conservative bent. On the rise of conservative, evangelical politics in the sunbelt, see Darren Dochuk, *From Biblebelt to Sunbelt: Plain-Folk Religion, Grassroots Politics, and the Rise of Evangelical Conservatism* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2010).

influence extends beyond its boundaries and this has become more true as urban residents have exerted greater influence on state politics. At the same time, the tension between rural and urban residents has intensified in part because of the economic success of the Front Range. While Denverites have benefitted from a half century of federal efforts to expand the metropolitan economy, those in much of the state have not received the same attention or enjoyed similar success. The urban-rural divide has made state politics in the twenty-first century far more contentious than they had been in the twentieth century. [23]

While it is easy to see Denver's twenty-first-century health as an inevitable outcome of its postwar relationship with the federal government, such an assessment elides far too much about how and why that relationship developed, as well as how influential Denverites were in making the state function in its efforts to expand U.S. hegemony. As I argue in this dissertation, Denver's postwar development was linked to a U.S. imperial project to extend capitalism, with public money flowing to Denver through various channels and facilitating an impressive expansion of the region's economy. The federal government directed funds to Denver to construct the domestic structures necessary to carry out its capitalist imperialism, which had the added benefit of contributing to the private accumulation of capital. But Denverites were not unwilling participants in this imperialism, nor were they without the ability to shape the state as either agents or resisters of empire. The interplay between Denverites and the federal government, in which the state enlisted them in a national project and Denverites used state power for their own economic gains, is evidence of the agency of all involved in the reproduction of capitalism and capitalist relations. It was Denverites' involvement and their decisions that created an imperial metropole in the Intermountain West.

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[23] Peter Hessler, "How Trump is Transforming Rural America," *New Yorker,* July 24, 2017.

When Denverites mobilized for World War II, they did so not only because of the financial benefits, though they were many, but also because they believed that manufacturing ships and ammunition was essential to the protection of the "American Way." And even though these men and women produced goods that were not commodities for the open market, but rather materiel for the armed forces, they ensured that the contractual relationships between private producers and the state continued free enterprise. For the companies that fabricated parts in the war effort, their participation did not undermine their ability to continue to accumulate capital. The men and women who worked on the shop floors did so as wage laborers even though they knew their employment was not guaranteed beyond the end of their wartime contracts. In continuing market relationships even during conflict, Denverites helped reproduce industrial capitalism as they worked for private companies to earn public money. In the process, they also set Denver on its way to postwar growth.

During the Cold War, Denver's efforts to manufacture materiel for U.S. imperialism, and to reproduce industrial capitalism, became even more pronounced. Between Martin Marietta and Rocky Flats, Denverites cemented the region as an integral node of the military-industrial complex. In producing triggers for nuclear bombs as well as the intercontinental ballistic missiles to carry the warheads, Denverites recognized that they were working to make U.S. foreign policy possible. They were also continuing some of the fundamental tenets of capitalism. They worked for private companies, not the federal government. In order to manufacture in Denver and carry out their government contracts, these companies had to invest in durable goods and labor. Denverites exchanged their labor for wages without a guarantee of permanent employment. Martin Marietta, Dow, Rockwell, and EG&G, the private manufacturers, each turned impressive profits, allowing them to accumulate more capital, invest in new durable goods, and secure more

defense contracts. During the Cold War, producing weapons and reproducing industrial capitalism were two sides of the same coin. Denverites manufactured the empire as they manufactured arms.

Denver's connections to the imperial project stretched to building the bureaucratic apparatus and expanding the state, activities that also contributed to the region's economic development. As the U.S. became embroiled in its ideological conflict with the Soviet Union, proving the superiority of capitalism gained greater importance. At home, this meant adopting Keynesian management of the economy, attempting to encourage growth and efficiency while using public money wisely to smooth out distortions in market practices. To oversee the economy, the federal government assembled an impressive bureaucratic apparatus to carry out policy prescriptions. In the West, Denver was the center of state power, with thousands of bureaucrats and civil servants implementing policies intended to protect the economic security of their western neighbors within a market economy. With the federal government one of the largest postwar employers in the metropolitan region, Denverites could not ignore the importance of public money paid out as wages. And they embraced their efforts as agents of empire who constructed the bureaucratic structures necessary to carry out imperialism.

But as Denverites discovered, policy prescriptions sometimes had unintended consequences; so did efforts to reverse those trends. For all its faith in capitalism and markets of exchange to distribute and allocate wealth and resources, the federal government had to confront a very real reality: not every American benefitted equally. This proved especially troubling to the federal government because people of color struggled most during postwar abundance, which was not lost on detractors of western democracy and capitalism. When the federal government adopted antipoverty measures, Denver was central to these programs. In both the Bureau of

Indian Affairs' urban relocation program and the Johnson administration's War on Poverty, Denverites played an important role in carrying out programs designed to assist the neediest earn their way out of poverty. From the federal government's perspective, those on the economic margins needed a nudge into the labor market, where they could acquire skills and knowledge to support themselves through wage labor. However, the country's appetite for federal spending in programs designed to provide social services to the poor and people of color only lasted so long. While Denver's municipal government had been eager to participate in the War on Poverty, after several years, conservative white voters helped usher in a new approach to fighting poverty. The Model Cities Program focused more on the distribution of federal block grants, which came with far less oversight, for the funding of urban renewal projects than direct economic uplift. In the poverty war of the 1960s and early 1970s, Denver's relationship with the state helped define the role of the bureaucracy within the reproduction of industrial capitalism.

Of course, Denver's emergence as an imperial metropole was not always seamless. When Denver struggled to meet federal requirements and guidelines tied to War on Poverty funding or when the region's indigenous community protested the BIA's hiring practices, these moments of conflict did not radically undermine capitalism. They might have made changes at the margins, such as when Indians protested for, and won, preferential hiring treatment within the BIA, but industrial capitalism remained central to the United States and its market economy. Even the years of protests at Rocky Flats, perhaps the most imperial space in the region, did not erode the power of the military-industrial complex. The federal government continued to acquire nuclear weapons without turning to nationalization, private corporations continued to accumulate capital, and Denverites earned nice wages manufacturing the very materiel that supported the U.S. threat posture. Industrial capitalism remained the economic system for the United States.

More often than not, Denverites embraced their roles as producers of the U.S. empire. They may not have called themselves agents of empire, but the work they performed made it possible for the U.S. to expand capitalism and free trade while halting the spread of centralized economies. Even though they did not use the language of empire, they drew connections between their work in the Mile High City and the implementation of U.S. foreign policy prescriptions and efforts to assert U.S hegemony. And, crucially, they knew that reproducing capitalism and the social relations embedded in the economic system was fundamental to the long-term health of the United States. This is why, when the Cold War ended, so many who had worked at Rocky Flats identified the success of the U.S. as the outcome that made working with radioactive materials worthwhile. To these men and women, and many other across metropolitan Denver, their efforts over the previous five decades not only contributed to the dissolution of the Soviet Union, they also preserved capitalist production and market economies. They truly were imperial agents.

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