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Inderjeet Parmar (City University London): “American Power and Philanthropic Warfare: from the war to end all wars to the democratic peace”

“The greatest achievements of the United States have always tended towards peace, even when they have been warlike”¹

This article examines paradoxical and counter-intuitive linkages between the *rise of American power*, increasingly influential *philanthropic foundations*, and *war*, providing concrete evidence of ‘how power works’. In particular, the article shows the close inter-relations and complementarity between ‘soft’ and ‘hard’ power, between elite private foundations and the American state. Considering philanthropic foundations and war together shows the complex means and forms American power took in its rise to globalism and, indeed does today, in an era of ‘humanitarian’ interventionism and the ‘democratic peace’. It is somewhat paradoxical that philanthropic foundations, uniformly committed to peace and peaceful means, not to mention the prosperity they argue peace promotes, should also be strongly and consistently supportive in practice of military interventions and outright warfare to promote their objects. The major American foundations are committed to a strategy of waging war for democracy as the basis of global peace. This article’s two inter-related case-studies furnish historical evidence of foundations’ roles in bolstering the American state’s rationalisations and activities in favour of war – during World War I and after the Cold War. It shows how a relatively vaguely formulated idea, in the early twentieth century, about a link between democracy, international trade and peace, and a consequent link between autocracy and war, and the *inability of the two kinds of system to co-exist* became, after the Cold war’s end and with strong foundation backing, a social scientifically legitimated core of US military and civilian power strategies.

This article also places formally private foundations at the heart of state strategies, and vice versa, rendering untenable several core claims of the Rockefeller, Carnegie and Ford foundations to scientific objectivity, ideo-political neutrality, and independence of the state.² Simultaneously, the article challenges and undermines those theories of the state that posit

¹ NM Butler, *A World in Ferment* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1918), p.59.

² Ford, Carnegie and Rockefeller are, historically, among the largest and oldest foundations and most devoted to international activities and foreign affairs.

either adversarial relations between state and society (such as pluralism and statism) or which otherwise impose a strict separation between them (third sector)³ or which suggest that one section of society (capitalists) tries to ‘colonise’ the state (instrumental Marxism).⁴

The article begins by arguing for the linkage between American philanthropic foundations, the state and war, advancing a conceptualisation of foundation-state relations that was highly cooperative and interpenetrated in nature – particularly favouring a Gramscian approach. It then goes on briefly to consider two case studies – the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and World War I, and the major foundations and the ‘democratic peace’ after the Cold War.

Despite a growing literature critical of US foundations, especially the ‘Big 3’ - Ford, Carnegie and Rockefeller – and even some claims of a neo-Gramscian hegemony in the study of those elite institutions,⁵ it remains the case that approaches that tend to take American foundations’ claims at face value remain in the ascendant: as exemplars of his literature, two recent books will suffice: Helmut Anheier and David Hammack’s *American Foundations* (published by the centrist think tank, Brookings in 2010), and Olivier Zunz’s *Philanthropy in America* (published by Princeton University Press, 2011). Hence, in the mainstream literature on the subject, American foundations are largely seen as non-political, non-ideological, as beyond both the marketplace and the state – part of a ‘third sector’ that hovers somewhere above the fray of elections, party politics, and big business interests. The predominant image portrayed is one of organisations that promote progress, development, modernisation, peace, democracy, and the well-being of mankind. It would clearly be absurd, of course, to deny that

³ MAC Colwell, “The Foundation Connection: Links Among Foundations and Recipient Organizations,” in RF Arnove, ed., *Philanthropy and Cultural Imperialism* (Boston: GK Hall, 1980), pp.413-452.

⁴ For a full discussion, Inderjeet Parmar, “Conceptualising the state-private network in American foreign policy,” in H. Laville and H. Wilford, eds., *The US Government, Citizen Groups and the Cold War* (London: Routledge, 2006), pp.13-28; and Inderjeet Parmar, *Foundations of the American Century: The Ford, Carnegie, and Rockefeller Foundations in the Rise of American Power* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), pp.15-25.

⁵ P.22, James Cotton, “Carnegie, Rockefeller and the role of American soft power in the emergence of international studies in Australia,” *ASSA Carnegie Workshop*, Melbourne University, February 2010; at http://www.edfac.unimelb.edu.au/research/eesi_research_program/assa_conference/Papers/Cotton_ASSA2010.pdf; accessed 23 July 2012; see also, James Cotton, “Rockefeller, Carnegie and the limits of American hegemony in the emergence of Australian international studies,” *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 12 (2012), pp.161-192.

foundations do promote such things at least some of the time. But the main argument pursued here, based on the foundations' own historical records, is that most of the above claims represent a series of fictions to be challenged, specifically in this article via a focus on war.

War and philanthropy are not normally considered bed-fellows. Conventionally, it is states that make war. However, it is principally through philanthropic foundations' links with the American state, i.e., federal executive, that they become embroiled in the politics of warfare. Rather than a fictional state – autonomously determining 'national' interests – which is the corollary of the third sectorist self image of US foundations, it is patently clear that the boundaries of 'state' and 'society' are blurred by innumerable links and overlaps between departments and state agencies – both civilian and military - and the world of foundations, think tanks, major corporations, and elite universities, among others. In that 'state-oriented' sphere, mindsets are shared, as are social and educational backgrounds, and the networks within which people work and circulate.⁶ Consequently, theories of or approaches to state-society relations that emphasise cooperation and consensus building become central, rather than approaches that pit state against society, public versus private, or vice versa. Having considered at length elsewhere a number of such approaches – including Eisenach's 'parastates', arguments about state-private networks, epistemic communities, Hogan et al's corporatist approach to US foreign relations' history, and Hodgson's foreign policy establishment argument⁷ – this article argues that the Gramscian approach takes into account most of what those approaches have to offer but also goes beyond them to provide a more compelling account. A Gramscian account is more critical rather than purely descriptive of elite power; it links political, economic and intellectual power in a systematic theory; offers an agency based approach to the making of history underpinned by the idea of hegemonic projects of historic blocs that consist of far broader sections of society than just elites and the state. Gramscian thought also advances the little known notion of 'state spirit' that prevails among leadership groups whether they are formally 'in' or 'out' of state deployment.⁸ **[Need mre Gramsci here and some critique of others?]**

⁶ Parmar, *Foundations of the American Century*; RJ Barnett, *Roots of War* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1972).

⁷ Parmar, *Foundations of the American Century*, pp.15-25.

⁸ Q. Hoare and G. Nowell Smith, eds., *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci* (New York: International Publishers, 1971).

Once it is accepted that ‘state’ and ‘society’, and especially ‘state’ and elite sections of society, are not mutually-exclusive but intertwined, symbiotic, and inseparable, the link between philanthropic foundations and war becomes clearer.⁹ As Charles Tilly argues, “war made the state and the state made war”.¹⁰ American power is seared with the badge of direct and indirect military conflict – its financial role in the Crimean War, the impact of the American Civil War, war against Spain in 1898, the two world wars and the Cold War, not to mention numerous military interventions in the Caribbean and Latin America. Philanthropic foundations – whether as parastates, part of a foreign policy establishment or state-private network, are implicated in very close relations with the American state and must therefore be associated with warfare, in their own way, and the rise and consolidation of US power in the world. And philanthropic foundations are at the strategic centre of close-knit networks that include influential think tanks, universities, and ad hoc groups interested in and involved with warfare.

Comprehension of the role of philanthropic foundations inevitably requires a theory of the state and of state-elite society relations, even though conventional accounts tend to accept at face value claims about foundations’ independence of the state and of politics; indeed, their acceptance of third sectorism appears, by definition, to rule out the state’s role entirely. Yet, the two case studies that follow demonstrate the argument of this article very clearly – that philanthropic foundations, the American state, and war, are intimately related. Indeed, the first case study – set in the First World War - is especially significant because the specific foundation concerned was dedicated to international peace – it was part of its very name - yet declared war as the best path to it just a few short years after its creation. Interestingly, two of its earliest founders and leaders, Elihu Root and Nicholas Murray Butler, were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.¹¹ The second case study, focused on the post-Cold War period,

⁹ Yet, philanthropy has many other linkages with conflict – including class and industrial strife. Ford, Carnegie, and Rockefeller – as industrialists in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries – were mired in violent industrial disputes as well as more routine coercive practices.

¹⁰ Charles Tilly, *The Formation of National States in Western Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), p.42.

¹¹ At that point, the links between democracy and peace, while evident, were less secure in historical or political scientific analysis. The ideas of President Woodrow Wilson, with clear linkages between democracy and peace, remain contested to this day; JA Thompson, “Wilsonianism: the dynamics of a conflicted concept,” *International Affairs* 86:1 (2010), pp.27-48; RW Tucker, “The freedom crusade,” *National Interest* 81, Fall 2005.

demonstrates continued attachment to the same logic: that peace would result from interventionist (military and other) policies by democracies against non-democracies. It shows how a ‘peace’ theory was *securitised/militarised*¹² in practice, transformed into the core legitimising theory for American power after the disappearance of the Soviet Union, its erstwhile global rival, and used to re-launch NATO as a global alliance of democracies, and to justify wars on Iraq and Libya.¹³

Case Study 1: The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (CEIP) and World War I

Peace, and the abolition of international war, lie at the heart of the CEIP’s stated *raison d’être*. Founded in 1911, the Endowment had been germinating for several years in the minds of key individuals, including its benefactor, Andrew Carnegie. Despite its stated aims, however, CEIP never fully rejected war *per se* – it was not, and never became, an anti-war organisation. Despite this, there were early indications of a professed desire to ‘abolish war’ and, once accomplished, rather optimistically, to move on to another blot on civilisation.¹⁴ Yet, the portents were there from the beginning: its president, Elihu Root, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1912, was President Theodore Roosevelt’s close confidant and secretary of war (1899-1904),¹⁵ and a firm supporter of the most ruthless violent methods in putting down the Filipino struggle for independence during and after the removal of Spanish colonial rule in that country. Indeed, Andrew Carnegie, despite his racially-rooted anti-imperialism, was also complicit by refusing to commit resources to investigating American military atrocities during the Filipino uprisings.¹⁶

¹² Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998).

¹³ It should be noted, of course, that there are many other direct and indirect instances of linkages between war and philanthropic foundations, including the promotion of military studies programmes in the 1930s and 1940s, support for real politik and Realist thinking about international politics in the 1940s and 1950s, not to mention support for military-led modernisation strategies in numerous third world countries; D. Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010); B. Simpson, *Economists With Guns* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008).

¹⁴ JB Scott, Speech, “The Possibilities of the CEIP,” 5 May 1911; CEIP Papers, Secretary’s Office and administration, from organization to 31 December 1911; Columbia University, New York.

¹⁵ R. Hofstadter, *The American Political Tradition* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1971).

¹⁶ Richard E. Welch, jr., “American atrocities in the Philippines: The indictment and the response,” *Pacific Historical Review* 43 (2) 1974, pp.233-253.

Nevertheless, there is evidence that elements of the Endowment's leadership did initially appear to try to make theirs a peace organisation. Butler, for example noted the need for international arbitration between nations and even a world parliament, as well as an international court of justice and police force. Meanwhile, James Brown Scott, CEIP's secretary, noted the necessity of scientific study of the causes of war,¹⁷ and Root emphasised the role of science in providing "deeper insight into the cause of the disease, or which war is a symptom..."¹⁸ Yet, ambiguities and contradictions were evident: the causes of war appeared already to be known to CEIP men. To Butler, 'education' of the 'masses' via the mass media was essential, indicating that *mass* emotion and passion lay at the core of warlike behaviour and attitudes. Scott argued that primacy should be accorded to conveying the stubborn "facts" about war and peace to influence "strong men and the masses of men which we call nations..." Bad men and ignorant masses, effectively, caused "bad" wars, they argued; the remedy was to teach them "the lessons of the past", particularly to promote the idea that peace brings prosperity, especially in the American case.¹⁹

Of course, Scott conceded, the United States had progressed through a violent anti-colonial revolution and anti-Indian wars. But those were 'good' wars that helped "convert a wilderness into the safe and secure abodes of strong men and brave women..." To Scott, therefore, there were clear dichotomies between 'good' and 'bad' 'strong men', and 'good' progressive wars and 'bad' other wars and violent conflicts. The American revolution, he claimed, made the country strong and united and 'carried' us into "unsuspected and undiscovered worlds",²⁰ suggesting that there was little or no agency involved, just an impersonal historical or natural force that propelled Americans into new territories, their beneficence to bestow, their manifest destiny to realise.²¹ Yet, there had been far too much attention paid in school texts to conflicts that were "accidents of history", and too little on the "essentials", according to Scott.

¹⁷ Scott, "The Possibilities of the CEIP", 1911.

¹⁸ Root cited by Scott, "The Possibilities of the CEIP."

¹⁹ Scott, "The Possibilities of the CEIP."

²⁰ Scott, "The Possibilities of the CEIP."

²¹ A. Stephanson, *Manifest Destiny: American Expansion and the Empire of Right* (New York: Hill and wang, 1995).

An interesting internal paper [1910-11] furthered the peace argument by revisiting the liberal contention of a powerful link between peace and international commerce. While international trade bound nations together, war was a drain on resources and prosperity. There was an ominous tone to other parts of the paper where it declared that isolation – self-imposed or not – was beyond the pale: there could be no isolation from the embrace of “the family of nations... the hermit kingdom,” it argued, “is annexed; China is opened up. If the nation will not meet the conditions of life and growth... it submits to force...”²² This indicates a commercial counterpart to the war for democratic peace argument favoured by democratic peace theory as developed in the 1980s. Further, it emphasised, true national independence is impossible in practice, a message directed at traditional American ‘isolationists’ as much as other parts of the world likely to fall prey to predatory colonial powers. In effect, this paper constitutes an almost ‘natural’ causes-of-war argument – war as something that happens to those who try to ‘go it alone’, almost as a law of nature, a social Darwinism that accepts the survival of the fittest idea.

Despite ambiguities and contradictions, the outbreak and course of World War I brought matters to a head. Endowment staff based in its Paris office more or less uniformly joined the war effort in 1914.²³ Nicholas Murray Butler looked forward to the end of hostilities ahead of which he hoped the Endowment would help prepare the masses for the federal government’s call to help build peace, in line with the Endowment’s spirit. After America’s entry to war, he spoke in the most strident terms about serving “the State and to play a man’s part in the world,”²⁴ but in 1915, Butler was more conciliatory. But other more strident CEIP leaders – such as US General Luke E. Wright retorted that while “The talk of peace is all right”, the Endowment should be assisting the country actively to prepare for war. Trustee US Senator John Williams disagreed, rejecting the view that “you keep peace by being prepared for war.” Furthering and deepening the argument, in line with the thinking of President Woodrow Wilson, Elihu Root argued that American participation in the War would help usher out the forces of the past that had caused the War – “dynastic policies” driven by greed and a lust for

²² Unsigned paper, “The Relation of Commerce to International Peace,” ca 1910-11; CEIP papers, Secretary’s Office and Administration.

²³ CEIP, *Report of the Acting Director of the Division of Intercourse and Education*, 21 April 1916; JRULM archives, University of Manchester, UK.

²⁴ Butler, *A World in Ferment*, p.229.

territory and self-aggrandisement – and usher in a more democratic era, which would require large efforts to educate the masses.²⁵

The final push for determining the Endowment's backing of American entry into WWI came just after 6 April 1917, when the US officially entered the War. Meeting less than a fortnight later, the Endowment's trustees refused to support a resolution to the effect that CEIP do nothing to hinder American war preparations to defend freedom against aggression. Trustees felt this was far too weak and wanted a new resolution that would support accelerated war preparations, proposals for military conscription, and give full-throated backing to the president, government and nation. The redrafted resolution, passed unanimously, declared that "the most effectual means of promoting durable international peace is to prosecute the war against the Imperial Government of Germany to final victory for democracy..."²⁶

Elsewhere, Butler argued that democracy and peace were strongly inter-related,²⁷ that democracy was the pinnacle of civilisation, and that democracy and autocracy could not co-exist, and that war must be waged against Germany. He also emphasised, however, that history was characterised by "the struggle between the principle of good and the principle of evil...", two principles that "cannot live together in this world. And," hence, "that is why this contest must be settled by force of arms." "Democracy," he declared, "must in its way dispose of despotism or despotism will in its way overcome democracy."²⁸

Peace through a war for democracy, a sentiment that fully echoed that expressed by President Wilson to a joint session of Congress, just prior to the official war declaration. Therein, Wilson indicated that it was his "constitutional duty" to prepare the nation for war against autocratic Germany as but a step towards setting up "among the really free and self-governed peoples of the world ... a concert of purpose and of action." Autocratic, imperial Germany was run by "little groups of ambitious men" who paid no heed to their own peoples' wishes or public opinion. Using 'self-governed' and democratic interchangeably, Wilson argued that systems run on those principles were alone capable of building a "concert for

²⁵ CEIP Trustees' annual meeting, 16 April 1915, CEIP papers, box 19, file 1231, Columbia University, New York.

²⁶ Board of Trustees, special meeting, 19 April 1915, box 19, file 1223; CEIP papers.

²⁷ Butler, *A World in Ferment*, p.52.

²⁸ Butler, *A World in Ferment*, pp.223-224.

peace” and noted how Russia after its February 1917 revolution had finally manifested its true character. The war would be one for “democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own governments...” It would be a war “for the principles that gave [America] birth and happiness and peace...”, a world “made safe for democracy”.²⁹ In the end, for Endowment and President, the higher goal was *a particular kind of peace* – a ‘*democratic*’ peace – which meant that it was right and proper that war be waged to secure it. Indeed, the CEIP had fully supported “active and relentless prosecution of the war...”³⁰ The war, Butler indicated, “is essentially for a new international world, and a war for a new intranational world.”³¹ A world made safe for democracy, it was thought, required engineering regime change.

Recent work in this area, however, has shifted attention away from the deeper interrogation of democracy promotion and a concert of democracies towards dissecting the tensions between the demands of the former and their impacts on the latter.³² Despite that, there is widespread agreement that Wilson, and by extension organisations like the CEIP, were animated by informal but deeply held ideas about the link between democracy and peace. Yet, there was also a belief that American power and democracy were synonymous and that a more powerful America would necessarily promote peace in the world. As Butler noted, as the United States “are destined to play an increasingly influential part in world organization and world policies”, its people needed to develop “a sense of responsibility for the part to be played by a great democracy in developing world civilization.”³³ One way to facilitate that, he suggested, was by re-dedicating American elites to promoting US values and achievements: “I would make a world figure of Washington... of Hamilton and Jefferson, of

²⁹ 65th Congress, 1 Session, 2 April 1917.

³⁰ CEIP, *Epitome of the Purpose, Plans and Methods of the CEIP* (Washington DC: CEIP, 1919), p.8.

³¹ Butler, *A World in Ferment*, p.5.

³² Thompson; T. Throntveit, “The Fable of the Fourteen Points: Woodrow Wilson and National Self-Determination,” *Diplomatic History* 35:3 (June 2011), pp.445-481.

³³ CEIP, *Report of the Acting Director*, 1916, p.38. Butler had noted the same thing at the trustees’ annual meeting, 16 April 1915, pp.6-7; CEIP papers, Columbia University, New York. On the eve of WWII, Butler again looked forward to proclaiming the triumph of American civilization which, he argued, would lead the battle “between the Bill of Rights and those who do not believe in the fundamental principles of... liberty.... The choice... is between the Bill of Rights and despotism...”; NM Butler, Address to The Pilgrims, 25 January 1939; Butler papers, GB-I 57 – Bound Addresses, 1887-1946; Columbia University.

Marshall and Webster.. of Lincoln. I would make their names... and institutions... the property of the whole civilized world for the benefit of mankind...” America’s policy had to be to be “a model nation abroad,” undergirded by “the supremacy in the world of the rule of law...”³⁴

Conversely, Butler lamented the rise of popular belief in ‘self-determination’ for certain peoples – especially those who were “dependent” and likely to remain so for many centuries due to their “limitations in respect of the march of civilization”.³⁵ According to Root, the fledgling League of Nations required American guidance based on America’s historical experience in solving the problem of representation of small and large states via federalism. The League, he argued, is an organization of “a civilized minority” of white nations “against a vast, semi-barbarous majority...”³⁶ As the desire for self-determination among colonies increased, the more the Endowment complained about the consequences for integrative “nation-building”, “strategic security” and stability.³⁷ The fault-lines in the concept of ‘democracy’ were increasingly apparent: Butler’s was, as was President Wilson administration’s, a *herrenvolk* democracy in which blatant racial oppression – at home and abroad – was deemed compatible with democracy and egalitarianism: “ ‘democratic for the master race but tyrannical for the subordinate groups...’ ”³⁸ It would be for American elites to define American interests at home and abroad and determine what kind of democracy would be promoted and where.

As a result of CEIP’s wholehearted backing for Wilson, its Division of International Law was incorporated into the official machinery of the State Department – as its Bureau of International Law. This meant that the Endowment transferred to the American state its legal division’s personnel and equipment, and paid for an expansion of staff numbers to aid the war effort. The Division’s spending increased from \$63,000 in 1915 to over \$233, 000 in 1917 and 1918. Scott was appointed Technical Adviser to US representatives at the Paris Peace

³⁴ Butler, *A World in Ferment*, p.109, p.186, pp. 198-199.

³⁵ CEIP, *Problems Confronting the CEIP: Statements by Elihu Root and Nicholas Murray Butler* (CEIP, 1920), p.9.

³⁶ CEIP, *Problems Confronting the CEIP*, 1920, p.14).

³⁷ CEIP, *Problems Confronting the CEIP*, 1920, p.9.

³⁸ Pierre Van den Burghe quoted in KP Vickery, “ ‘Herrenvolk’ Democracy and Egalitarianism in South Africa and the U.S. South,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 16, 3 (June 1974), p. 309.

Conference, along with several other Endowment's legal experts.³⁹ Former secretary of state Robert Lansing, after the war, became a trustee of the Endowment.⁴⁰

President Wilson requested the Endowment to promote the League of Nations "to prepare the public's mind... for a concert of nations" for peace, security and democracy after the war. There was broad support among Endowment leaders, such as Scott, for an international concert of peace, even if there were reservations about the precise form of the League of Nations. In 1916, for example, Scott republished under Endowment auspices a book entitled *An Essay on a Congress of Nations*, in which he retraced the historical roots of calls for international pacific unions, including the ideas of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Immanuel Kant. Though acknowledging that Kant did not argue that democracy necessarily leads to peaceful relations, Scott agreed that only a confederation of "free states" could truly deal reasonably with issues of war and peace.⁴¹ It is evident that Endowment figures sought in the deeper past sustenance for international cooperation schemes – centred on US power - of more immediate relevance, just as did more recent proponents of democratic peace theory.

More controversially, however, the Endowment, whose Washington DC headquarters faced the White House and the State, War and Navy Building, donated use of one of its buildings to the Wilson administration's notorious war propaganda agency, the Committee on Public Information (CPI).⁴² The CPI, as did the CEIP, endorsed the idea that American democratic principles were ready for application worldwide.⁴³ The Endowment, and its leading figures, were nationalistic supporters of America's prosecution of the war to end all wars, and played a key role in stifling anti-war dissent in the United States.⁴⁴ President Wilson appointed

³⁹ CEIP, *Epitome of the Purpose, Plans and Methods of the CEIP* (Washington DC: CEIP, 1919), pp.10-14; p.19.

⁴⁰ CEIP, *Problems Confronting the CEIP*, 1920, p.13.

⁴¹ William Ladd, *An Essay on a Congress of Nations* (New York: OUP, 1916; original edition, 1840); quotation is from the Introduction by Scott, p.xxxvi.

⁴² CEIP: *Epitome of the Purpose, Plans and Methods*, 1919, p.11.

⁴³ S. Vaughn, *Holding Fast the Inner Lines: Democracy, nationalism, and the Committee on Public Information* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1980), p.83.

⁴⁴ S. Vaughn; DM Kennedy, *Over Here: The First World War and American Society* (New York: OUP, 2004); RA Wells, "Mobilizing Support for war: An analysis of American propaganda during World War I," paper presented at ISA convention, New Orleans, 2002.

George Creel, a progressive publicist for war, to “sell the war” to the American people, which he did with considerable zeal, welding together official and unofficial organisations into a powerful force that crystallised pro-war opinion and led to the harassment and persecution of dissenters. It is estimated that CPI lecturers gave over 750,000 speeches to audiences totalling over 300,000,000 by the end of the War.⁴⁵ Even before that, however, the Endowment had organised summer schools, national lecture programmes, teaching materials for the public school systems, to ‘educate’ people on issues related to the war.⁴⁶

Endowment figures, despite their scholarly credentials were heavily involved in both promoting support for the war and in stifling dissent. Columbia history professor, James T. Shotwell,⁴⁷ for example, a CEIP trustee, was closely involved with the Carnegie Institution of Washington-funded and inspired National Board for Historical Service (NBHS)⁴⁸ which collaborated with the CPI, promoting curricular reform and helping develop literature for schools and the public that promoted “patriotism, heroism, and sacrifice”, as well as the fundamental differences between German autocracy and American democracy. Shotwell, who effectively took leave from Columbia to set up and run the NBHS, self-consciously and deliberately placed *scholarship at the service of the state*, using it for “‘patriotic and educational ends’”, as if there were no tension, let alone contradiction, between the two. In that spirit, Shotwell consulted several state agencies, including the State Department, and the departments of Navy and Interior, who concluded that NBHS work closely with Creel’s CPI, which it duly did, setting up the CPI’s Division of Civic and Educational Cooperation, with Shotwell securing appointment as historical adviser to Creel’s Committee.⁴⁹ Although Shotwell was formally committed to supplying ‘objective’ historical information to educate the people, and conducting no anti-German propaganda, it is clear that the opposite was the case. According to Josephson, many of the NBHS’ publications revealed “biased slant...

⁴⁵ Wells.

⁴⁶ CEIP, *Report of the Acting Director*, 1916, p.14.

⁴⁷ Shotwell was associated with other, more subtle propaganda initiatives too, such as promoting Anglo-American cooperation; CS Gruber, *Mars and Minerva. World War I and the Uses of the Higher Learning in America* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1975), p.84.

⁴⁸ Gruber, p.121, fn 121.

⁴⁹ H. Josephson, *James T. Shotwell and the Rise of Internationalism in America* (London: Associated University Presses, 1975), p.52.

violated numerous scholarly rules. Quotations were often incorrect, sentences were changed and shifted to convey meanings other than those intended in the original documents, and points of history and international law were often misstated and incorrect.” Protests against such violations of scholarly rigour were suppressed by NBHS and its influential allies who edited key historical publications. In his enthusiasm for political influence, Shotwell adopted the propaganda methods of the Creel Committee which provided the latter “an air of [scholarly] authenticity which it might never have achieved” without the help of NBHS and its illustrious historians, whose number included Harvard’s Frederick Jackson Turner.⁵⁰ The Division of Civic and Educational Cooperation, with Shotwell’s active assistance, published almost fifty pamphlets with a combined circulation of around 75 million copies.⁵¹ Despite the rather obviously “jingoistic” character of the NBHS and its publications, Shotwell, according to his biographer, “never made any direct attempt to restrain” his fellow historians, “and once even went so far as to encourage it,” accepting “the legitimacy of subordinating the past to the present” in order to remain near “the sources of power”.⁵² This he continued to do before, during and after the Paris Peace conferences as member of President Wilson’s Inquiry group of post-war planners.⁵³

Kennedy argues that “Nothing could be allowed to obscure the theme of autocracy *versus* democracy,” while discussion about imperialism and nationalism, which might diffuse responsibility for the war, was prohibited.⁵⁴ The universities, including Shotwell’s Columbia, participated in army training programmes and were issued by NBHS with a “War Issues Course” which, again, reinforced the idea of the war as an existential struggle between ‘decent’ democracy and ‘evil’ autocracy, perfectly logical for students being trained for

⁵⁰ Josephson, pp.54-59.

⁵¹ Josephson, p.57.

⁵² Josephson, pp.63-64.

⁵³ Josephson; Gelfand.

⁵⁴ Kennedy, pp.55-56; emphasis in original.

military combat, but problematic in institutions of higher learning,⁵⁵ let alone a political order promoting itself as a model for global emulation.

As Kennedy contends, seemingly sober scholars were as culpable in stifling dissent as their more populist pro-war fellow citizens of the National Security League (NSL). Yet, Kennedy omits mention of the numerous overlaps between the bellicose NSL and Carnegie philanthropy, including the Endowment. The NSL's first president, Robert Bacon, was a CEIP trustee, as was the League's honorary president, Joseph H. Choate. Elihu Root was also an NSL leader after the War.⁵⁶ Even more significant was the fact that the Carnegie Corporation(CC) – a sister foundation of the Endowment – was the NSL's largest single source of funds – gifting it \$150,000. Although turned down for funding by the Rockefeller Foundation, NSL received \$35,000 from John D. Rockefeller.⁵⁷ The CC's gift was in violation of its charter commitment to steer clear of 'politics'. The NSL was an anti-labour and anti-socialist organisation committed to the protection of private property, 100% Americanism, and stifling anti-war dissent.⁵⁸

Nicholas Murray Butler, Endowment director and Columbia University president, betrayed the “brittleness” of academic “decorum and rationality” in June 1917, when he announced that dissenting voices in wartime were intolerable and seditious. Any faculty members, Butler warned, echoing President Wilson, “who are not with whole heart and mind and strength committed to fight with us to make the world safe for democracy,” would speedily be ousted⁵⁹ and, true to his word, Butler dismissed Columbia scholars who advocated peace or opposed conscription.⁶⁰ Even before America's entry to war, however, Columbia had pledged its loyalty “to the Government of the United States in all measures of national defense”, as

⁵⁵ Kennedy, p.57. Shotwell also suggested to George Creel the person most suited to head the CPI's proposed Division of Civic and Educational Cooperation, the link between CPI and the educational system; Shotwell also contributed pamphlets for this aspect of CPI's work; Gruber, p.140; p.145.

⁵⁶ Other CEIP trustees who overlapped with NSL leadership include David Jayne Hill; Elihu Root was also a trustee of the Carnegie Corporation; RD Ward, “The Origin and Activities of the National Security League, 1914-1919,” *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 47, 1 (June 1960), pp.51-56.

⁵⁷ Ward, p.64.

⁵⁸ Ward, p.60.

⁵⁹ Gruber, p.199.

⁶⁰ Kennedy, pp.73-74.

did Harvard, Chicago and many others.⁶¹ Butler demanded that Columbia students and faculty ask themselves: “Can I serve anywhere in the great army of peace-loving Americans who would only use force in order that right may speedily come to rule?”⁶² Knowledge mobilisation for a war for democracy to ensure peace, but intolerant of dissenters at home.

It is appropriate that the idea of the democratic peace links both Wilson and the Endowment, purveyors of ‘hard’ and ‘soft’, ‘public’ and ‘private’, power. Yet the link between democracy and peace in 1914-18, however well made, was largely rhetorical. The second case study shows how the link became underwritten and legitimised by democratic peace theory, social science’s only claim to a scientific law and, therefore, more powerful in rationalising continued US global activism in the absence of the “Soviet threat”.

Case Study 2: Making a Peace Theory Fit for War: The securitisation of democratic peace theory

Despite criticism, democratic peace theory (DPT) is widely held to be political science’s only scientific law, sometimes referred to as “Doyle’s Law”, after Michael Doyle, the Princeton scholar.⁶³ The rise of DPT, however, is a case study of how ideas and catalytic events can combine to produce new mindsets and new rationales for national security strategies, how an old idea – that democracies tend not to fight wars against one another – was resurrected, repackaged and advanced as a new strategic rationale after the Cold War’s end. It began with the Clinton administration’s embrace of democratic enlargement and engagement programmes, undergirded George W. Bush’s ‘freedom agenda’ and the war on Iraq, and remained embedded within the democracy promotion and ‘dignity’ agendas of the Barack Obama administration.

Immanuel Kant’s ‘pacific union’ of republics has developed through the idea of a federal Union of Democracies of the 1930s⁶⁴ to the Community of Democracies of the 1990s,⁶⁵ the

⁶¹ Gruber, pp.96-97. In September, 1917, Butler assured US Secretary of War, Newton Baker, long associated with Carnegie philanthropy, that it was “a privilege and an honor” for Columbia students and faculty to “strengthen the hands of the government...”; Gruber, p.100.

⁶² Butler, *A World in Ferment*, p.149.

⁶³ JS Levy, “Domestic Politics and War,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 18 (1988), pp.653-673.

⁶⁴ Clarence Streit, *Union Now: a proposal for the federal union of the democracies of the North Atlantic* (London: Right Book Club, 1939).

Princeton Project on National Security's Concert of Democracies in the early 2000s, to the idea of NATO as the true embodiment of a global alliance of democracies.⁶⁶ Knowledge networks centred on US philanthropic foundations, this case study argues, have been pivotal to both DPT's resurrection and subsequent development and transformation. What might have been considered a 'soft' or 'idealistic' theory of democratic pacifism has been transformed into 'hard' Wilsonianism, or Wilsonianism with 'teeth'.⁶⁷

The Ford Foundation and Carnegie Corporation played significant roles in the rise and development of DPT as policy technology. Ford funded Michael Doyle's initial research and publication during the early 1980s with a grant of \$90,000 on a project to consider the impact of domestic ideology and regime type on international economic behaviour.⁶⁸ Doyle was also testing different theories of international politics focusing on impacts on policy outcomes of state-society relations. Working in the broader political context of the rise of Reaganomics and of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), Doyle's work emphasised the traditional liberal view that free markets promote peace while, significantly, also pointing out the dangers of liberal-state imperialism and military aggression. The latter point is important because it was largely 'forgotten' by policymakers eager to exploit the potential of DPT in rationalising a new, more aggressive and interventionist post-Cold War strategy.⁶⁹

⁶⁵ <http://www.ccd21.org/>. One of its current projects, under the direction of Admiral Denis Blair, is the role of western militaries in transitions to democracy; http://ccd21.org/military_handbook/index.html; accessed 7 August 2012. Blair was President Obama's director of national intelligence, 2009-2010.

⁶⁶ T. Carothers, "Examining the Clinton Record on Democracy Promotion," *Report of a Symposium at CEIP*, 12 September, 2000; at <http://carnegieendowment.org/events/fa=eventDetail&id+197>; Carothers, "A League of Their Own," *Foreign Policy* July-August 2008; I. Daalder and J. Goldgeier, "For global security, expand the alliance," *International Herald Tribune*, 12 October 2006; W. Marshall, "Taking NATO Global," January 15 2009; <http://www.ppionline.org>; accessed 8 June 2009; S. Talbot, "Why NATO Should Grow," *The New York Review of Books* 10 August 1995; Inderjeet Parmar, "Foreign Policy Fusion: Liberal Interventionists, Conservative Nationalists and Neo-Conservatives, the New Alliance Dominating the US Foreign Policy Establishment," *International Politics* 46 (2009), pp.177-209.

⁶⁷ Joshua Muravchik, "The Future is Neocon," *The National Interest* September-October 2008; <http://nationalinterest.org/greatdebate/neocons-realists/future-neocon-3803?page=show>; accessed 7 August 2012.

⁶⁸ Grant number 07990618; reels 3038; 5376-78; Ford Foundation archives, New York.

⁶⁹ MW Doyle, "Liberalism and World Politics," *American Political Science Review* 80: (1986), pp.1151-1169; Doyle, "Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 12 (4) 1983.

Ford Foundation also funded Harvard's Belfer Center on Science and International Affairs,⁷⁰ as well as its house journal, *International Security*, which performed a major role in refining DPT via publishing the empirical results of a series of tests of the theory, using large data sets. With Carnegie Corporation support, *International Security* published a DPT "Reader" in 1996.⁷¹ The following year, Carnegie gifted \$700,000 to Belfer specifically to develop and explore DPT's policy implications and significantly to test the hypothesis that democratising states tend to favour militarism and war, especially during the first decade of democratisation, suggesting that the process had to be 'handled with care'.⁷²

Carnegie philanthropy also played a key role in bringing greater attention and prominence to the work of arch democracy promoter, Larry Diamond.⁷³ Diamond had, in the early 1990s, exercised considerable influence within the Democratic Party's Progressive Policy Institute (PPI) think tank, linked with Bill Clinton's Democratic Leadership Council. He was the policy entrepreneur, a bridge between academia and state, who translated DPT to the Clinton White House in the early 1990s. Diamond was responsible for converting a peace theory into 'hard' power technology. In 1991, Diamond issued a report for PPI, "An American Foreign Policy for Democracy", which recast DPT as the ideal rationalisation to grasp the opportunity offered to American power by the collapse of the Soviet bloc. It was, he noted, an historic opportunity "to reshape the world" and "to shape the political character of the entire world for generations.." Diamond's report rejected traditional ideas about the 'balance of power', stability, order and the status quo. He also argued for the necessity of redefining national sovereignty to permit external intervention to promote democracy and spread freedom.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ <http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu>.

⁷¹ ME Brown, SM Lynn-Jones, and SE Miller, eds., *Debating the Democratic Peace* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996).

⁷² Carnegie Corporation, *Annual Report*, 2007; ED Mansfield and J. Snyder, "Democratization and the danger of War," *International Security* 20 (1995), pp.5-38; Mansfield and Snyder, *From Voting to Violence* (New York: WW Norton, 2000).

⁷³ Larry Diamond is a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution, and founding editor of the NED's *Journal of Democracy*; in 2006, he served as adviser to Paul Bremer, head of the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq, 2003-04.

⁷⁴ L. Diamond, *An American Foreign Policy for Democracy*, Progressive Policy Institute Report; http://www.ppionline.org/ppi_ci.cfm?knlgAreaID=450004&subsecID=900020&contentID=2044; accessed 16 May 2007.

By 1995, Diamond published *Promoting Democracy in the 1990s*, as part of the work of the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Violence. In it, he married the value of spreading democracy with a new idea – that transitions to democracy abroad could be carried out relatively simply and straight-forwardly and were not reliant on historical factors of societal pre-conditions. In the main, all that was required was willing political leaders to effect democratic transformations.⁷⁵

For Tony Smith, a combination of ideas – the alleged peaceful character of democracy, the ease with which democratic transitions could occur, and diminution of national sovereignty on which external interventions depended, helped push an aggressive/coercive version of DPT to the fore. Proving influential in both the Democratic and Republican political parties, the combination was to have lethal consequences after 9-11. It was a peace theory that was “born fighting”, according to Smith.⁷⁶

Democratic peace theory helped rationalise an active US foreign and national security strategy after the Cold war: under Tony Lake’s guidance,⁷⁷ it effectively divided the world into ‘red’ and ‘blue’ zones, zones to be expanded or diminished, zones of peace or of turmoil, a world of democracies and non-democracies in tension.⁷⁸ The theory was, it was claimed, based on science rather than ideology. In the hands of President George W. Bush and his neoconservative allies, democratic peace theory proved anything but peaceful.⁷⁹

Conclusion

Somewhat counter-intuitively, philanthropic foundations are immersed in a complex relationship with war, and its primary instrument, the state, despite their fictional self-conceptualisation as above and beyond the real world of politics and government, the market

⁷⁵ L. Diamond, *Promoting Democracy in the 1990s*, December 1995; <http://wwics.si.edu/subsites/ccpdc/pubs/di/di.htm>; accessed 16 May 2008.

⁷⁶ Tony Smith, *A Pact With the Devil* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

⁷⁷ Tony Lake, “From Containment to Enlargement,” Remarks at Johns Hopkins University, 21 September 1993; at <http://www.fas.org/news/usa/1993/usa-930921.htm>; accessed 7 August 2012.

⁷⁸ C. Buger and T. Villumsen, “beyond the gap: relevance, fields of practice and the securitizing consequences of (democratic peace) theory,” *Journal of International Relations and Development* 10 (2007), pp.417-448.

⁷⁹ B. Russett, “Bushwhacking the Democratic Peace,” *International Studies Perspectives* 6:4 (2005), pp.395-408; JM Owen IV, “Iraq and the Democratic Peace,” *Foreign Affairs* 84 (2005), pp.122-127.

and big business. Their image remains associated with ‘soft’ power, even among many of its critics,⁸⁰ operating as Joseph Nye argues through the power of attraction, i.e., philanthropy’s self-evident goodness and unconditional love of humanity.⁸¹ However, as the two case discussed above show, the Big 3 foundations are key moving forces in the elite networks that dominate the US foreign policy establishment whose mindsets are four-square behind American global preponderance that is heavily reliant on its coercive power.

To the major foundations – Ford, Carnegie and Rockefeller – the words of Nicholas Murray Butler back in 1918 remain true: that fighting for peace is not a contradiction. This is because, as Butler noted, “peace is not an ideal at all; it is a state attendant upon the achievement of an ideal. The ideal itself is human liberty, justice, and the honourable conduct of an orderly and humane society. Given this, a durable peace follows naturally as a matter of course.”⁸²

Market-based democracies cannot indefinitely live side by side at peace with non-market democracies, socialist democracies or non-democracies, as defined by US elites. By definition, societies not ordered in the way considered humane and just by US elite standards incubate and invite hostility and war. As Butler opined, “The greatest achievements of the United States have always tended towards peace, even when they have been warlike,”⁸³ a highly instructive comment from a time when the USA had yet to take up the mantle of global leadership, but indicative of a deeply-held conviction in the rightness of its mission. Presciently, Butler also anticipated post-Cold war ‘humanitarian’ interventionism: in relation to the 1912 Mexican revolution, he asked: “Is it quite clear that the people of the United States have no duty whatever in regard to this matter, but should merely stand aside and let the various armed bands of Mexicans kill each other indefinitely...?”⁸⁴ To anyone who perceives US power as an unadulterated good, there could only be a negative response.

⁸⁰ Michael Barker, On Corporate Power: Foundations for Empire: Corporate Philanthropy and US Foreign Policy,” *Ceasefire* 20 May 2012; at <http://ceasefiremagazine.co.uk/corporate-power-8-foundations-empire/>.

⁸¹ S. Stannard-Stockton, “Philanthropists’ ‘soft power’ may trump the hard pull of purse strings,” *The Chronicle of Philanthropy* 7 August 2012; at <http://philanthropy.com/article/article-content/65080/>; accessed 7 August 2012.

⁸² NM Butler, *A World in Ferment* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1918), p.8.

⁸³ Butler, *A World in Ferment*, p.59.

⁸⁴ Butler, *A World in Ferment*, p.61.

While the connection between democracy and peace was principally rhetorical and insecure before the 1980s and 1990s, it was also argued that it was unfit for practical policy application due to the existential threat from Soviet imperialism. Only after the collapse of communism, the argument goes, could democracy promotion truly come to the fore as authentic US foreign policy and national security strategy. However, the ‘democracy’ in democratic peace theory and democracy promotion was always subordinated to the perceived needs of US power as defined by leading elements of an enduring foreign policy establishment. Consequently, democracy meant market democracy organised around ‘free’ markets, a limited state, and fundamental protection of private property rights. Democracy also varied in definition from peoples to peoples – frowned upon as a right of the American masses as much as it was among those who did not fit their definition of civilised or advanced people.

By the end of the Cold War, what began life as a relatively vague idea linking democracy and peace, had become enshrined as social scientific law legitimating a more or less aggressive national power strategy to replace the obsolete rationale of ‘containment’. The major American foundations played a fundamental and long-term role, in close collaboration with state agencies, in bringing about this state of affairs. They remain central to American power.