

Western Colonialism at the "Razor Edge of Decision":
Anti-Colonial Ideals and Cold War Imperatives in the
Presidential Campaign Rhetoric of John F. Kennedy and
Richard M. Nixon, August -November 1960

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Josh Hager
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Introduction

During the presidential election campaign of the United States after August 1st, colonialism was not mentioned in any substantial manner until September 16th, when Senator John Kennedy finally broached the topic.¹ This is a surprising finding given the tumultuousness of the globe in 1960, with decolonization movements flaring up in occasionally violent ways. The topic finally emerged because the leader of the Soviet Union (USSR), Premier Nikita Khrushchev, was on his way to the United Nations in Manhattan. Kennedy correctly anticipated Khrushchev's call for a "complete and final elimination" of colonialism; this rhetoric framed the USSR as the strongest proponent of urgent decolonization around the world.² Khrushchev also implored all Western states to join the fight against colonialism: "[L]et us unite in action aimed at the elimination of the colonial regime and thus accelerate this commutable historical process, and do our utmost so that the peoples of the colonial and dependent countries become able to decide their own fate."³ In Khrushchev's public rhetoric, the end of colonialism was an urgent necessity which Western states, i.e. the United States and its allies, had to recognize, support, and actively encourage. This formulation required a response from the two men running for president, explaining Kennedy's opening campaign foray into the issue of colonialism.

¹ John Kennedy, Speech, Pikesville Armory, Pikesville, MD, 16 September 1960; United States, John F. Kennedy, and Richard M. Nixon. 1961. *Freedom of communications. Final report of the Committee on Commerce, United States Senate*. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, Part I, 260-261.

² Nikita Khrushchev, "Disarmament, Colonialism, and Other International Problems—Statement in the General Debate at the Fifteenth Session of the United Nations General Assembly," 23 September 1960; Nikita Khrushchev, *Khrushchev in New York: A documentary record of Nikita S. Khrushchev's trip to New York, September 19th to October 13th, 1960, including all his speeches and proposals to the United Nations and major addresses and news conferences* (New York City: Crosscurrents Press, 1960), 27.

³ Nikita Khrushchev, "Disarmament, Colonialism, and Other International Problems—Statement in the General Debate at the Fifteenth Session of the United Nations General Assembly," 23 September 1960; *Ibid*, 38.

This thesis will examine how western colonialism and its connection to the themes of the Cold War figured in the political rhetoric of John F. Kennedy and Richard Nixon in the 1960 American Presidential Election, specifically from August 1st through November 7th, the day before Election Day.⁴ In some cases, other statements and examples from before the specified date range will serve to contextualize the campaign statements; these pieces of evidence include speeches made in Congress (in the case of Kennedy), Vice Presidential statements (in the case of Nixon), and the history of the Eisenhower administration in regard to colonialism. While this analysis will be heavily focused on the public statements of both candidates, it does not presume to know the intentions or private beliefs of John Kennedy or Richard Nixon. Neither is this study concerned with analyzing the layered process of speechwriting in the campaign. For example, regardless if Theodore Sorenson or Arthur Schlesinger wrote or contributed to a Kennedy speech, it was still Kennedy who delivered that message to the public. Ergo, references to the primary texts will be attributed to the proper candidate without a discussion of its complicated provenance background.

This thesis discusses a moment in global history where states were, in Kennedy's terminology, on the "razoredge" of decision. In his rhetoric, that meant that states emerging from colonialism had to declare themselves for one side or another in the East-West Cold War struggle. Yet for these states, the actual "razoredge" was whether or not they could successfully emerge from colonial rule. Certain states, such as India, were still trying to gain their footing on the global stage after only a few years of independence

⁴ Introduction; United States, John Kennedy, and Richard Nixon, *Freedom of communications*, Part I, I.

whilst dealing with internal political integration.⁵ Meanwhile, in the wake of decolonization, Southeast Asia was experiencing often violent internal political disputes; under the leadership of the oppressive Ngo Dinh Diem, South Vietnam was confronting an incursion of Communist rebel forces, or Vietminh, under the auspices of Ho Chi Minh's North Vietnam.⁶ Laos was equally embroiled in a very complicated struggle between three strong factions; in October 1960, the United States issued contradictory statements that declared both that aid was going to the favored Laotian leadership and that said aid had been suspended.⁷ Meanwhile, the Algerian civil war was especially indicative of the urgency of dealing with colonialism; by the end of the Algerian War of Independence in 1962, nearly a million Algerians and approximately 100,000 French had been killed.⁸ Further south in Africa, the Congo was one of the newest states on the world stage. It achieved its independence in June 1960, which was surprising considering that a Belgian official in the previous year had insisted to American leaders that Belgium would never evacuate the Congo because it remained Belgium's "Christian duty" to civilize that state.⁹

Yet how could Kennedy and Nixon deal with colonialism without angering one international audience or another? On the one hand, the United States could have vigorously criticized colonialism in order to garner the support of new member states but

⁵ John J. Paul, "Chapter 1 – Historical Setting: Independent India: Nehru's Legacy," in *A Country Study: India* (Library of Congress, 1995 & 2005), <http://memory.loc.gov/frd/cs/intoc.html>;

⁶ James S. Olson and Randy Roberts, *Where the Domino Fell: America and Vietnam, 1945 to 1995*, 2nd ed. (New York City: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 64-73.

⁷ Bernard B. Fall, *Anatomy of a Crisis: The Laotian Crisis of 1960-61*, ed. Roger M. Smith (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, 1969), 193.

⁸ Anthony Toth, "Chapter 1 - Historical Setting: War of Independence: The Generals' Putsch," in *A Country Study: Algeria* (Library of Congress, 1993 & 2006), <http://lweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/dztoc.html>.

⁹ René Lemarchand, "Chapter 1 – Historical Setting: The Crisis of Decolonization," in *A Country Study: Zaire* (Library of Congress, 1993 & 2005), <http://memory.loc.gov/frd/cs/zrtoc.html>; Theodore H. White, *The Making of the President 1960* (New York City: Pocket Books, 1961), 33.

the Western European colonial powers were key allies of the United States in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). They represented the first line of defense against the Soviet bloc in Eastern Europe and the efforts of the Cold War required solidarity amongst the United States and Western Europe. Despite this, however, the U.S. could not simply support colonialism because of the presence of the anti-colonial ideals in the public rhetoric of the United States whose expression is examined in Chapter One.

This specific problem led to both Senator Kennedy and Vice President Nixon utilizing a specific rhetorical technique, newly coined in this thesis as the *balance maneuver*. This occurred when both the subject of communism (appearing either as an abstract idea, a competing system, or as the Soviet Union or rarely another communist state) and the subject of colonialism (either directly or indirectly through a discussion of non-aligned states that were emerging from colonial rule) appeared together in one speech, statement, or impromptu remark. By combining these two issues, the candidates could speak against colonialism while at the same time making it clear to the Western Europeans and to the U.S. electorate that their actual concern was still the Soviet Union, the specter of communism, and its possible spread. Yet by utilizing the balance maneuver colonial questions were rarely allowed to stand on their own merits. While the detailed description of the balance maneuver in Chapter Two illustrates that it was the manner in which colonialism was most frequently addressed, it also served to place the colonial question into the Cold War context; in other words, the balance maneuver enabled western colonialism to be subsumed into the supposedly more urgent issue of the Cold War. While attempting to mix these two different phenomena into a rhetorical unity, the two candidates simultaneously presented the United States as the ideal example

for post-colonial states in transition. By seizing this example and choosing alignment with the U.S., states could receive development assistance. Conversely, by rejecting the U.S. model and siding with the USSR, states would become colonial subjects in the model of Eastern Europe. This interesting rhetorical combination of the positives and negatives of alignment is described in Chapter Three. The result of all of these machinations was that their rhetoric was rife with complexity, internal inconsistencies, assumed and explicit dichotomies, and an uneasy attempt at reconciling colonialism with the East-West struggle.

Explanation of the Primary Source Material

This project is possible because a comprehensive and almost complete record of what Senator Kennedy and Vice President Nixon were saying during the autumn of 1960 is readily available. In 1961, the Subcommittee of the Freedom of Communications Subcommittee of the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce of the United States Senate compiled all of the campaign speeches, transcripts, public question-and-answer sessions (commonly referred to more recently as “town hall events”) and press conferences. This unique source was part of a six part report from the subcommittee encompassing the campaign texts, the joint appearances of the candidates (from which the debate texts are drawn), news broadcasts, committee hearings, and legislative recommendations in regard to regulations of broadcasting in political campaigns.¹⁰ The intention of this project was to “authorize this subcommittee to examine, investigate, and make a complete study of any and all matters pertaining to (1) Federal policy on uses of Government licensed media for the dissemination of political opinions, news, and

¹⁰ United States, John F. Kennedy, and Richard M. Nixon.. *Freedom of communications*, Preface XVII, XIX.

advertising, and the presentation of political candidates; and (2) a review and examination of information and complaints concerning the dissemination of news by such media.”¹¹

Thus a systematic analysis of how western colonialism was addressed in presidential campaign rhetoric is possible due to an unrelated U.S. legislative goal of evaluating the rule of equal coverage of candidates. The equal time provision had required that “all candidates...be given equal time if any one candidate is given free coverage on television.”¹² The problem therein occurred when the Federal Communications Commission decided that this rule meant that all candidates, major or minor, must be given equal time—meaning that the candidates for President of the United States from such parties as the Vegetarian Party and the Beat Consensus Party would have shared the stage with the Republican and Democratic nominees. In total, fourteen peripheral candidates would have had roles in any possible debates.¹³ The public clamor for debates was substantial; thus Congress suspended Section 315, the equal time provision, so long as a committee acted as a “watchdog” to make sure that the allowance of more coverage was not abused.¹⁴ This thorough compilation is the product of the efforts of that “watchdog,” the Freedom of Communications Subcommittee, which was charged with this work in late 1959, then compiled the texts throughout the next one and a half years, and held hearings on the matter in March 1961.

However, an evaluation of broadcasting law was not the sole purpose for the report, or at least for the existence of the first three parts of the set which record the

¹¹ Ibid, Part I, XIX.

¹² Gary Donaldson, *The First Modern Campaign: Kennedy, Nixon, and the Election of 1960* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2007), 113.

¹³ United States, John F. Kennedy, and Richard M. Nixon, *Freedom of communications*, Part I, XVII, XIX.

¹⁴ Ibid, Part I, XIX.

statements of Kennedy and Nixon individually and in joint appearances. Returning to the preface, one reads that the makers of the report were aware that their effort might also be useful as a “general reference work.”¹⁵ The preface also claims that this collection was the first such grouping of all of the campaign material and that is likely true. This thesis thus benefits directly from their novel and unprecedented efforts in making this “reference work,” regardless of the ostensible rationale for the project.

This compilation left a complete record of the campaign rhetoric during this key period. The text is so comprehensive that it even serves as a guide to the itinerary of the candidates, based on the dates and appearances listed in the first three parts of the set. In fact, when a speech was given but no transcript was available, the text states, for example, “Note—Senator Kennedy spoke briefly at Ilion, Utica, Rome, and Oneida, NY...but the text of his remarks is not available.”¹⁶ The note always lists the location(s) and date(s) of the missing texts and usually there is some indication of the nature of event for which the words are unavailable. In addition, the reaction of the crowd (if the statement was delivered to an audience) is recorded, albeit in a telegraphic fashion. In a humorous example of such a notation, one need only consider a question and answer session that Senator Kennedy conducted in Raleigh, North Carolina in mid-September; when a questioner stated that he was from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, there was a “response from the floor” and not the usual refrain of “applause.” Thus the reader can imagine the particular reaction in question, given that Raleigh’s coliseum

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid, Part I, 408.

was on the campus of North Carolina State University, a great rival of the Chapel Hill school.¹⁷

This analyst finds no reason to doubt the subcommittee's efforts to collect as much of the campaign material as was possible. Seemingly nothing was intentionally omitted or edited so as to alter the meaning of the text. Furthermore, the report used for this study was the final one issued, which included more entries than the initial effort of the subcommittee, which further suggests that the subcommittee's efforts were concentrated and thorough. Perhaps the sole complaint about the text is that the key addresses of the political party conventions do not appear; however, given the strenuous task that the subcommittee had been charged with, one can understand their desire to limit the date range to August through Election Eve.

Method & Historiography

Some may contend that this sort of analysis cannot rely on rhetoric, arguing that the words of candidates are tools of persuasion that are vapid and usually devoid of policy implications. However, this thesis concurs with position set forth by U.S. diplomatic historian Michael Hunt who utilized rhetoric as part of the basis for his book *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy*. He defends using rhetoric for historical analysis by contending that:

Public rhetoric is not simply a screen, tool, or ornament. It is also, perhaps even primarily, a form of communication, rich in symbols and mythology and closely constrained by certain rules. To be effective, public rhetoric must draw on values and concerns widely shared and easily understood by its audience. A rhetoric that ignores or eschews the language of common discourse on the central problems of

¹⁷ Ibid, Part I, 276.

the day closes itself off as a matter of course from any sizable audience, limiting its own influence. If a rhetoric fails to reflect the speaker's genuine views on fundamental issues, it runs the risk over time of creating false public expectations and lays the basis for politically dangerous misunderstanding. If it indulges in blatant inconsistency, it eventually pays the price of diminished force and credibility. Public rhetoric is tainted evidence for the historian seeking a widely shared ideology only when it violates these rules and falls unpersuasively on the ears of its ostensible audience. Indeed, comparisons of public rhetoric with private statements, a sensitive test that cynics might justifiably insist on, suggest that the policy elite do recognize the cost of violating these rules and do generally observe them. Interpretive naiveté may reside not in taking rhetoric seriously but rather in failing to listen carefully for its recurrent themes and values.¹⁸

Although Hunt's contention that rhetoric consistently reflects the actual views of politicians had been deemed by some reviewers as "inauspicious," this thesis heeds Hunt's advice and takes public rhetoric seriously as historical evidence that allows one to detect consistent themes and rhetorical maneuvers in the rhetoric of the 1960 campaign.

¹⁹ This thesis has as one of its goals the task of finding these motifs in presidential campaign rhetoric and showing what they imply about the relationship of political elites in the United States to Western colonialism in the fall of 1960.

In this regard, this study also allows us to examine Hunt's conclusions about American foreign policy during the 20th century. His "penetrating and provocative

¹⁸ Michael H. Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987), 15.

¹⁹ Torbjørn L. Knudsen, "Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy by Michael H. Hunt," *Journal of Peace Research* 24, no. 4 (December 1987): 420, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/424440> (accessed September 17, 2009).

study” concerns a much broader subject, which is the existence of underlying assumptions of American foreign policy from the nation’s beginnings until the time of publication of the book (1987).²⁰ Hunt describes three major assumptions of American foreign policy: a vision of national greatness or strength tied to liberty; a perspective on external peoples based on race and supremacy; and a definition of acceptable change overseas insofar as revolutions may cause beneficial change but often “develop in a dangerous direction.”²¹ Hunt utilizes the overarching term “ideology” to describe the confluence of these three themes, but as Stephen Wrage points out in his review of the work, ideology is “too broad and inexact.”²² Wrage proposes instead the idea of “public myths” based on the work of William H. McNeill as a way to avoid the inexact application of ideology and as a clarifier of the psychological connection of these myths to popular beliefs.²³ This study agrees with Wrage about the use of ideology, but since the psychological aspects of these ideas are not included in this work, the term “core ideas” will substitute Hunt’s notion of “ideology.” “Core ideas” is a term used by Hunt but Richard Welch, in his review of the text, uses it in lieu of ideology, thus avoiding the inherent complications with that term.²⁴

The bulk of Hunt’s analysis explains how the core concepts present themselves throughout the history of American foreign policy. For this study, one particular chapter

²⁰ John D. Martz, “Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy by Michael H. Hunt,” *The Journal of Politics* 50, no.2 (May 1988): 538-539, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2131814> (accessed September 17, 2008).

²¹ Michael H. Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy*, 17-18.

²² Stephen D. Wrage, “Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy by Michael H. Hunt,” *The American Political Science Review* 82, no. 3 (September 1988): 1037-1038, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1962555> (accessed September 17, 2008).

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Richard E. Welch, Jr., “Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy by Michael H. Hunt,” *The Pacific Historical Review* 58, no. 1 (February 1989): 130-132, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3641096> (accessed September 17, 2008).

is crucial: “Ideology in Twentieth-Century Foreign Policy.” Welch claims that Hunt “is particularly effective” in this chapter when discussing the “uninterrupted influence of the three core ideas” in the period of 1901 to 1965.²⁵ This claim indicates that, despite the large change in global circumstances from Theodore Roosevelt’s big stick to the Mutually Assured Destruction of the nuclear Cold War, the core ideas were stable and remained prevalent. This thesis will test whether this is an accurate portrayal by examining a specific issue (western colonialism) about the U.S. relation with the wider world in a specific type of public rhetoric (presidential campaign speeches) at a moment in time when decolonization was of vital global significance.

²⁵ Ibid, 131.

Chapter 1

Let Empires Pass Away: Restating American Ideals in a Period of Decolonization

“My friends, you get a sense of history when you travel...around the world. You get a sense almost of destiny when you see what I have seen—the great flash of ideas going on in the heart of Africa, in Asia, in Latin America. You get a sense that there comes a time in the history of men when great decisions have to be made, and they must be made right.”¹ This excerpt, taken from a speech Vice President Nixon delivered at the Municipal-Baldwin Airport in Quincy, Illinois on October 28th near the end of the campaign, expressed the argument that, according to both candidates, states under colonial rule would inevitably become independent. In this specific case, Nixon described it as “destiny” in the context of a “sense of history.” Nixon’s somewhat vague follow-up to his destiny sentence implied that 1960 was a crucial flashpoint for the states in transition and that it was a time when a “great decision” had to be made. But what exactly was that decision?

A reading of Senator John Kennedy’s rhetoric answers that question. In a policy statement delivered in Sioux City, Iowa, on September 22nd, Kennedy described the “desire to be independent [as] the strongest force for freedom of our security [sic] in the world.” He claimed the United States should be supportive of that cause.² Later in the same speech, Kennedy claimed that the push for independence was “the strong force that I think is going to favor the cause of freedom with which we are intimately associated. I

¹ Richard Nixon, Remarks, Municipal-Baldwin Airport, Quincy, IL, 28 October 1960; United States, John F. Kennedy, and Richard M. Nixon. 1961. *Freedom of communications. Final report of the Committee on Commerce, United States Senate*. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, Part II, 851.

² John Kennedy, Statement, Sioux City, IA, 22 September 1960; Ibid, Part I, 315.

think we need an administration which is alert to these kinds of changes.”³ In a later statement delivered at Howard University on October 7th that largely focused on domestic civil rights issues, Kennedy again emphasized the strength of independence movements: “The fact is they [one-quarter of the nations in Africa who had recently gained independence] are free and independent. They have now won their freedom and they do not choose to lose it, provided they are given an opportunity to develop their resources under a system of freedom. Man’s desire to be free is the strongest force not only in this country but around the world. We should associate ourselves with it.”⁴ In this speech Kennedy linked an ideal of the United States, the pursuit of freedom, with an ideal of colonized peoples coming into independence. As with his quote of September 22nd, the Senator made sure to describe anti-colonialism as the “strongest force” in global politics.

Therefore, the overarching policy of the United States, according to the two candidates, should have acknowledged the destiny of colonial areas and, thus, associated itself with what was going to happen anyway. While this position on its own was not necessarily a strong case for anti-imperialism, it did establish the minimum threshold for United States colonial policy that both men set forth in their campaign rhetoric: Do not impede the inherent flow of history away from colonies, let empires pass away, and jump on the anti-imperial bandwagon if at all politically possible. The need for urgency to spur the process forward, as in Khrushchev’s rhetoric, was not a major concern for Kennedy and Nixon because, according to this broad perspective, the independence process would inevitably happen anyway.

³ John Kennedy, Statement, Sioux City, IA, 22 September 1960; Ibid.

⁴ John Kennedy, Remarks, Howard University, Washington, DC, 7 October 1960; Ibid, Part I, 519.

Thus, the rhetoric of both Nixon and Kennedy assumed that colonialism was obsolete. Yet both men took their rhetoric further, especially in terms of ideals that they associated with the United States. Colonialism was not only passé; it was the antithesis of freedom, independence, and equality. The first goal of this chapter is to establish the particulars of this argument in order to explain how Kennedy and Nixon used their rhetoric to differentiate Western colonialism, and colonial rule more broadly, from the notions that the United States ostensibly supported. In particular, both candidates used the word “freedom” as both a symbol of the future of the colonized peoples around the world and as a trope for the system of the United States.

However, being rhetorically anti-colonial in 1960 carried a hefty penalty for political leaders in Washington. Major Western European powers, such as the United Kingdom and France, still held their empires; in the case of France, Algeria was still a warzone. So harsh an anti-colonial rhetoric coming from Senator Kennedy and Vice President Nixon would have further angered Western European colonial powers. Yet these same states were absolutely critical for the United States in achieving its pre-eminent foreign policy priority: a successful containment of the USSR, especially in Europe *vis à vis* the flashpoint of Berlin and the “Iron Curtain.” This situation created a foreign policy problem wherein the maintenance of Western European alliances stood in contradiction to the rhetorical position staked out by the two United States candidates vying for the presidency. The two candidates did attempt to offer some rhetorical concessions to the Western European colonizing states, but as the next chapter shows, these efforts were paltry at best compared to the effort spent trying to redefine colonialism as an issue of the Cold War.

“Colonialism versus Freedom”?: Western Colonialism and Foreign Policy Goals

Senator John Kennedy utilized several quotes from historical and political luminaries to end his speeches. Occasionally he cited a local hero, such as Henry Clay in Kentucky or Franklin Roosevelt in New York. Yet his favorite quote for ending speeches came from a source from the American Revolution, Thomas Paine. Kennedy quoted Paine’s most famous pamphlet, *Common Sense*, as saying, “The cause of America is the cause of all mankind.”⁵ Kennedy modified the quote, stating that the reciprocal was equally true; “the cause of all mankind is the cause of America.”⁶ While referring to luminaries from the American Revolution is not rare in United States elections, the environment of 1960 lent a different context to Thomas Paine and the American Revolution. That defeat of the British represented the first successful anti-colonial revolution of the modern era; it was the first case of decolonization.⁷ In establishing an implicit parallel between the priorities of the United States and those of the world at large by citing Paine, Kennedy rhetorically established a link between opposing colonial rule in the 1950s and the American Revolution narrative of anti-colonial struggle. Yet, ironically, when Thomas Paine wrote *Common Sense*, what would become the nascent country of the United States was struggling against Great Britain; in 1960, colonized peoples were struggling against Western European imperial powers. Ergo, while the use of Paine was advantageous for making an argument based on ideals, it was not efficacious for dealing with Western Europe.

⁵ John Kennedy, Remarks to Rally at Lawrence Hotel, Erie, PA, 28 September 1960; United States, John F. Kennedy, and Richard M. Nixon. 1961. *Freedom of communications. Final report of the Committee on Commerce, United States Senate*. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, Part I, 382.

⁶ John Kennedy, Remarks to Rally at Lawrence Hotel, Erie, PA, 28 September 1960; Ibid.

⁷ Dietmar Rothermund. *The Routledge Companion to Decolonization* (New York City: Routledge, 2006), xi.

In another connection of American history to the colonial topics of 1960 delivered at the Hotel Theresa in New York City on October 12th, Senator Kennedy stated:

We should not fear the 20th century, for this worldwide revolution which we see all around us is part of the original American Revolution. When the Indonesians revolted after the end of World War II, they scrawled on the walls, ‘Give me liberty or give me death.’ They scrawled on the walls ‘All men are created equal.’ Not Russian slogans but American slogans. When they had a meeting for independence in Northern Rhodesia, they called it a Boston Tea Party. They quoted Jefferson, they quoted Jackson, they quoted Franklin Roosevelt. They don’t quote any American statesmen today. There are children in Africa called George Washington. There are none called Lenin or Trotsky or Stalin in the Congo, or Nixon.⁸

This citation is a good introduction to Kennedy’s philosophy on colonialism. It confirms the argument that Thomas Paine’s quote was a way for Kennedy to make colonialism an important issue in the campaign because, in this case, he made the explicit connection between the American Revolution and decolonization. The reference to a “Boston Tea Party” in Rhodesia was intriguing if only because the original event represented aggressive activity against the British crown, the colonial power, rather than a more passive rhetorical resistance. Kennedy also connected colonialism to the Cold War; in claiming that no Lenins or Trotskys or Stalins existed in the Congo, Kennedy was trying to refute Soviet claims that their government best represented the interests of formerly colonized areas. The attack on Nixon at the end of the quote was a political tactic at best

⁸ John Kennedy, Excerpts of Remarks, Public Rally, Hotel Theresa, New York City, NY, 12 October 1960; Ibid, Part I, 581.

or mudslinging at worst because it tied by association Nixon to Communist leaders. Intriguingly, Kennedy did not quote any other contemporary leaders; this was perhaps an intentional slight of the Eisenhower administration's legacy on colonial questions (he did, at other times, explicitly criticize the Eisenhower colonial record) or perhaps Kennedy wanted to keep the focus on established luminaries so as to link his foreign policy plans to the images of traditional heroes of the United States.

The setting for this statement was crucial. The Hotel Theresa in Harlem was a vibrant center of the African-American community at the time.⁹ Any message that connoted a white superiority over uncivilized peoples as Hunt's second core concept anticipated, no matter how cloaked in diplomatic language, would have been politically untenable. Furthermore, Kennedy had to press the colonial issue at this particular setting because of what had transpired there only a few weeks earlier. The Hotel Theresa was the temporary residence of Cuban leader Fidel Castro during his visit to the United Nations. While he was at the hotel, Castro held a meeting with Nikita Khrushchev.¹⁰ During this visit, Kennedy was much more forcefully critical of Khrushchev than Nixon. Downplaying this intense opposition to Khrushchev's colonial rhetoric at the very site of one of his high-profile meetings would have presented a glaring contrast to the Kennedy of a few days earlier. Such a "flip-flop," to use the more modern term, would not have helped Kennedy to shore up his foreign policy credentials. It also would have been a violation of the balance maneuver, as established in the introduction and explained in detail in the next chapter.

⁹ U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service. "Hotel Theresa." *National Register of Historic Places: African-American History Month*. <http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/feature/afam/2006/theresa.htm>.

¹⁰ Ibid.

Perhaps the most glaring aspect of this citation is Kennedy's reference to idealism and "slogans." Echoing the expectation of Michael Hunt, liberty was the first word that Kennedy utilized. The quote from Patrick Henry as used by the Indonesians after World War II was a battle cry for more liberty for the populace. For Kennedy, liberty in Henry's quote established a dichotomous relationship: liberty was inherently opposed to colonial rule. The second ideal Kennedy invoked was equality, which again was a reverberation of his reciprocity argument. While being at the Hotel Theresa explained partially why Kennedy emphasized a message of equality, its presence coupled with liberty cannot be a straight-forward case of electioneering and pandering to the audience. Kennedy was speaking to a larger sense of idealism in his colonial rhetoric. His basic theme in this citation was that peoples emerging from colonialism shared ideals with the United States founded in the American Revolution; a shared idealism was thus a rationale for supporting the transition from colonialism to independence.

Vice President Nixon spoke to the same shared core concepts in a speech delivered on Kennedy's home turf, Boston, on September 29th. He first claimed that the Cold War was "basically a war of ideals."¹¹ This characterization was another aspect of anti-communist rhetoric in the vein of the balance maneuver. In that context, waging a war of ideals constituted only part of the grander containment strategy of the Cold War. However, when coupled with Kennedy's statement, one sees that this comment linked directly to the colonial question. Yet did Nixon agree with Kennedy on what exactly those shared abstract priorities should have been?

¹¹ Richard Nixon, Speech, Closed Circuit Television, 1960 Campaign Dinner, Boston, MA, 29 September 1960; United States, John Kennedy, and Richard Nixon, *Freedom of communications*, Part II, 360.

Serendipitously, the Vice President provided his listening audience with a succinct list of ideals present in United States foreign policy: “Faith in God; recognition of the dignity of men and women, regardless of their race, creed or color, or their background; recognition of the great principles of freedom for all men, that belong not just to us, but to people everywhere; recognition of the right of all people to be independent, as we are independent.”¹² This statement can be pared down to four key ideals: religiosity, equality, freedom, and independence.

Briefly, the role of religion in the colonial rhetoric merits analysis, even though its role was marginal compared to the other three ideals that Nixon presented. Both men did make the contrast between the United States that stood for religion or “faith in God” and an atheistic Soviet Union. On one particular occasion, Senator Kennedy derided the atheism of the Soviet Union and particularly of Khrushchev: “But the Bible, the one book with which you may not be familiar, warns us against those of whom it may be said, ‘The words of his mouth were as smooth as butter, but war was in his heart.’”¹³ Kennedy’s invocation of a psalm implied that Soviet communist atheism engendered malice and a penchant for lying. Kennedy also criticized the Soviet abolition of religious freedom in its Eastern European colonies.¹⁴ Significant references to religion in a colonial context were sparse; however, its minimal presence indicated a dichotomy wherein newly independent states could decide to maintain their religious traditions only by siding with the United States rather than looking toward a Soviet patronage. Thus, religion, such that it played a role in foreign policy, was another argument against non-

¹² Richard Nixon, Speech, Closed Circuit Television, 1960 Campaign Dinner, Boston, MA, 29 September 1960; Ibid.

¹³ John Kennedy, Speech, Pikesville Armory, Pikesville, MD, 16 September 1960; Ibid, Part I, 260

¹⁴ John Kennedy, Speech, Polish-American Congress, Chicago, IL, 1 October 1960; Ibid, Part I, 420-421.

alignment and Soviet alignment; its presence was actually geopolitical rather than idealistic.

In contrast to religion, equality appeared more often in the rhetoric. In this case, Nixon's reference to dignity represented the equality argument. He indicated a support for ending racial and sexual discrimination in foreign policy; coupled with Kennedy's use of the phrase "All men are created equal," a pattern of ostensibly ignoring racial boundaries emerges. This pattern is in opposition to Michael Hunt, who predicts a policy based on racial superiority and a strict hierarchy of global peoples in a racially motivated scheme.

However, one must consider the political side of this issue; just as Kennedy could not refute equality when speaking in Harlem, Nixon could not really refute it either due to his position as vice president for the past eight years. Race relations had been a prevalent and contentious issue during the Eisenhower administration. First, in 1954, the Supreme Court issued the famous *Brown v. the Board of Education* ruling that made "separate but equal" schooling unconstitutional. The United States Information Agency (USIA) had played up this ruling as "evidence of the American repudiation of racial discrimination" and nearly every publication of the agency discussed the decision.¹⁵ However, the lauding of racial equality in the United States rang hollow amidst a myriad of incidents and riots across the American South such as the Montgomery, Alabama bus boycott of 1955-56 and the violent protests against integrating the University of Alabama in 1956.¹⁶ The situation became worse in 1957 when President Eisenhower had to deploy federal

¹⁵ Kenneth A. Osgood, "Words and Deeds: Race, Colonialism, and Eisenhower's Propaganda War in the Third World," in *The Eisenhower Administration, the Third World, and the Globalization of the Cold War*, ed. Kathryn C. Statler and Andrew L. Johns (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), 3-25, 13.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, 13-14.

troops in order to guarantee the integration of the Little Rock, Arkansas schools. In fact, Eisenhower's decision was heavily influenced by foreign policy concerns. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles had lamented that the situation "was ruining [the United States'] foreign policy" because the violent opposition to racial integration was a much stronger message to onlookers than a rhetoric of equality.¹⁷ After all, the need to use armed soldiers as escorts for children going to school was not a friendly image. However, the USIA tried to spin the presence of the troops in Little Rock as a victory for racial progress because, while the Soviet Union was using forces to harm its citizens, the United States was deploying its army in order to guarantee the basic freedoms of its citizens.¹⁸ Therefore, coming out of this context of a mixed legacy on race, Nixon had to avoid any argument that downplayed equality, especially in a racial sense. Any such rhetoric would have simultaneously undercut the USIA's argument that the Eisenhower administration's record on race was positive and would have further alienated allies who abhorred the status quo of Jim Crow. In addition, insensitive or racist comments would have likely damaged Nixon's stand with moderate voters that he had to court in order to carry the day in November.

Thus, both candidates, due to a combination of political calculus, diplomatic niceties, and rhetorical ideals, advocated equality for all peoples. When Nixon or Kennedy suggested that all peoples deserved basic rights, this was an egalitarian position. When either candidate suggested a plan for development that would elevate the day-to-day standards of impoverished peoples, the implication was that the recipients of the aid should be able to reach the same level of prosperity as Americans; in this formulation,

¹⁷ Ibid, 14.

¹⁸ Ibid.

equality may not have been the reality but it was rather the goal of United States foreign policy. Equality was thus a representative notion of what the world should be like, given the continuation of the global processes in motion such as decolonization, development, and the continued containment of the Soviet Union (which had as its long term goal the collapse of the USSR due to internal causes as per its intellectual origins in George Kennan's "Long Telegram".)

Yet, more so than religion or equality, the concept in Nixon's succinct statement that received the most attention in the campaign rhetoric of both men was freedom and the accompanying ideal of independence. The frequency of the word "freedom" was quite high. This corresponds to Michael Hunt's contention that liberty was one of the core concepts of United States foreign policy over time, although the rhetoric of 1960 used "liberty" only sparsely compared to the oft-invoked "freedom". In counting only uses of "freedom" that connected to discussions of colonial topics, i.e. exclusively in discussions of foreign policy and cases integrating domestic and foreign policy, in not including the use of "freedom" in solely domestic instances, and in not counting repetitions that occurred as a result of reused stump speeches (especially for Nixon, who repeated himself verbatim quite frequently), the word "freedom" appears at least twenty-one times in Kennedy's rhetoric and at least seventeen times in Nixon's rhetoric.¹⁹ When considering that each recorded reference indicated a different usage of the term, thirty-eight occurrences is a high frequency. Such a high number shows that freedom was a constant motif of the campaign rhetoric.

¹⁹ See: United States, John Kennedy, and Richard Nixon, *Freedom of Communications*, Part I, 160, 206, 225, 260-261, 295, 315, 332, 350, 353, 369, 371, 387, 405, 420-421, 519, 617-618, 625, 656, 690, 800, 808-809, 943 & Part II, 7, 8, 9, 36, 80, 224, 248, 269, 360, 443, 461, 497-498, 563-564, 590-44, 820-821, 881, 970.

One caveat must be made, however. “Freedom” is one of those political “buzzwords” that appears in almost any campaign in the United States; any candidate who specifically denies the importance of freedom likely does not have a good chance of winning their respective election. Kennedy and Nixon, as experienced campaigners, were both aware of the need to appeal to this sense of idealism; they first came to political prominence in the wake of the Second World War, when they both used their military service as tributes to their character.²⁰ Therefore, the importance of the use of “freedom” is not the fact that both men used it; that is expected and, in fact, an absence of “freedom” would be more of a surprise than the actual high frequency. The real significance of the term is in *how* the two men used freedom as part of their colonial rhetoric.

Firstly, both candidates established the importance of freedom as a tangible goal of American foreign policy. At a speech given to the Columbian Republican League Luncheon on October 5th, Vice President Nixon made the spread of freedom and other American ideals a policy tenet: “[W]e need new approaches in these fields (exchange, technical assistance, and education)...that will recognize America’s traditional responsibility not just to stand for freedom for ourselves, not just to stand for the right of self-government and independence for ourselves, but to help others around the world to have these same things that we believe in.”²¹ This echoes Nixon’s statement of national ideals, but in this case he added the element of action on behalf of these ideals. In language that could be construed in military or religious terms, Nixon described the

²⁰ Christopher Matthews, *Kennedy and Nixon: The Rivalry That Shaped Postwar America* (New York City: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 17.

²¹ Richard Nixon, Speech, Columbian Republican League Luncheon, Commodore Hotel, New York City, NY, 5 October 1960; United States, John Kennedy, and Richard Nixon, *Freedom of Communications*, Part II, 461.

guaranteeing of freedom, self-government, and independence for all peoples as the “mission” of the United States. Unlike with the Hotel Theresa speech, Nixon’s audience in this case was not a major factor influencing his call for global change: the Columbian Republican League was an organization of Italian Republicans, primarily organized in New York, not an organization espousing republican governments overseas. In fact, Nixon made the same argument for a different audience with no evident organizational connection on a different occasion (in Missouri) during his campaign when he asked, “How do we extend freedom?”²² Nixon actually stated in the same Missouri speech that the “first responsibility of a President of the United States...[was] to provide the leadership that will keep America at peace and will extend freedom throughout the world.”²³ Nixon’s prioritization placed colonial issues at the fore of foreign policy because giving freedom to everyone inherently involved bringing that ideal to colonized and formerly colonized states.

Furthermore, Senator Kennedy made a statement that codified freedom’s role in United States foreign policy much like in Nixon’s formulation. In a speech made in Mansfield, Ohio on September 27th, Kennedy asked the audience, “What contribution can we make to the cause of freedom here in the United States, and the cause of freedom around the world?”²⁴ The use of the word “cause” implied a need for advocacy and activism on behalf of freedom, similarly to Nixon’s use of “mission” construing a military or religious effort to spread freedom to all peoples. Kennedy’s use of the collective pronoun “we” is interesting in this case because Kennedy was not stating what

²² Richard Nixon, Press Conference, Kentwood Arms Hotel, Springfield, MO, 21 September 1960; Ibid, Part II, 221.

²³ Richard Nixon, Press Conference, Kentwood Arms Hotel, Springfield, MO, 21 September 1960; Ibid.

²⁴ John Kennedy, Remarks, Mansfield, OH, 27 September 1960; Ibid, Part I, 371.

he would do as president but rather that all Americans at some level should have been working for the “cause.”

Using Kennedy’s rhetorical definition of the cause as freedom for all man, then the opposition of both candidates to colonialism made perfect sense because colonialism was, under Kennedy’s definition, the rule of one country by another; this arrangement was logically the antithesis of freedom and self-government, another ideal mentioned by Nixon. Yet Senator Kennedy did explicitly establish a dichotomy between colonialism and freedom, which he claimed distinguished his position from that of Nixon. Speaking at Howard University, Kennedy stated, “I have had a basic disagreement not only with the administration’s policy in the past 8 years, but also on the question of colonialism versus freedom.”²⁵ Kennedy was referring largely to the debates about Algeria and Indochina, now in 1960 North and South Vietnam, wherein he took a much stronger stance against France as the colonizing power than the administration advocated. In addition, Kennedy broke with the administration on certain questions regarding development strategies. However, the importance of this statement is not in Kennedy’s attempt at creating a choice between him and Nixon but rather that Kennedy dichotomously placed colonialism as the polar opposite of freedom. While it must be acknowledged that, just as with the Hotel Theresa speech, the likely audience at Howard University was heavily African-American and thus would likely have been receptive to arguments about equality and freedom, Kennedy’s clear dichotomy stands as the best single example of making colonialism an enemy of base ideals of the United States.

²⁵ John Kennedy, Remarks, Howard University, Washington, DC, 7 October 1960; *Ibid*, Part I, 519.

Nixon made a similar point in a speech on the “Occasion of the Dedication of the Boys’ Club of Beloit, Wisconsin” on September 23rd.²⁶ While defending development, Nixon gave a rationale for helping colonial areas that did not rest on Cold War concerns: “If there were no communism in the world there would still be slavery and the denial of freedom.”²⁷ Without the specter of communism as an enemy of freedom (given Nixon’s hypothetical situation), the only other possible impediment to that freedom on a global scale would be colonial rule. Nixon did not state the dichotomy as clearly as Kennedy yet the message of Nixon’s comment was no weaker as a result of its more indirect approach. Furthermore, Nixon gave this speech while Khrushchev was at the United Nations. Nixon recognized the significance of Khrushchev’s presence in the UN General Assembly; he prefaced his development discussion with a reminder that Khrushchev was on that day in New York to discuss the future of Africa, Asia, and Latin America.²⁸ Within this context, the colonial sense of his comment was not likely lost on his listeners.

Thus, both men clearly established that, in their rhetoric, the defense and extension of freedom was their paramount foreign policy goal. A policy in opposition to colonialism, which was the antithesis of that freedom, accorded exactly with what the United States should have been advocating. But what exactly did that freedom entail? Three meanings existed. The first, and most idealistic, sense of the term was that the efforts of the United States should have worked to guarantee civil liberties to all peoples. This was freedom in the sense of an inalienable right, just as it was presented along with

²⁶ Richard Nixon, Remarks on the Occasion of the Dedication of the Boys’ Club of Beloit, WI, 23 September 1960; Ibid, Part II, 248.

²⁷ Richard Nixon, Remarks on the Occasion of the Dedication of the Boys’ Club of Beloit, WI, 23 September 1960; Ibid.

²⁸ Richard Nixon, Remarks on the Occasion of the Dedication of the Boys’ Club of Beloit, WI, 23 September 1960; Ibid.

life and the pursuit of happiness in the United States Declaration of Independence. Yet this inalienable freedom was not a domestic or a solely internal guarantee in the two men's rhetorical formulation. Instead, everyone should have had that inalienable freedom as a part of their daily life, or at least that was the gist of their rhetoric.

Yet the second definition of freedom, while being related to the first, was a much more pragmatic one: Freedom was a trope for a system led by the United States wherein freedom, being the inalienable right, was assured. This corresponds with Michael Hunt's assertion that United States foreign policy rhetoric has traditionally promoted liberty and has placed itself as the global epicenter of that ideal. Thus, when Nixon and Kennedy spoke of extending the area of freedom or of the umbrella of freedom, they were talking about areas being under the sphere of influence of the United States. The Cold War paradigm of East versus West, and of global dichotomies between the upstanding Americans and the tyrannical Soviets, played a role in this definition of freedom.

In fact, both candidates used language that confirmed the existence of this second use of the term. On October 14th, at a speech to the Friends of Nixon in Coconut Grove, California, the Vice President claimed "...that America must simply display to the whole world if she is to be the ideological leader of the world the fact that we really believe in equality, that we believe in the dignity of men, that we do not look down our noses at anybody else, whatever his race, religion, his color. If we can convey that at home by what we do, that will help immensely the next President of the United States in winning the battle of freedom for all men."²⁹ Most of this excerpt reinforces what has already been established about Nixon's anti-colonial rhetoric steeped in ideals, but in this case,

²⁹ Richard Nixon, Partial Transcript of Remarks, Friends of Nixon Breakfast, Coconut Grove, Los Angeles, CA, 14 October 1960; Ibid, Part II, 563-564.

the United States assumed the role of global ideological leader. Therefore, in Nixon's rhetoric, "freedom of all men" actually meant "freedom, as defined by the United States, of all men." While the two were not totally different, the second definition mandated conformity to what the United States' definition of freedom was—this sort of relationship really was not a free one, no matter what language the candidates employed.

Senator Kennedy made a statement with a similar meaning in Schenectady, New York on September 29th. In speaking about the country in general, he said: "We represent, in my judgment, the way of the future. I do not regard us as an extinct flowering of human experience. I regard us as the place where everyone ultimately wants to be."³⁰ In Kennedy's rhetoric, the United States symbolized progress and the goal of all mankind. Considering that the Senator also stated that the United States stood for freedom, Nixon's statement that the United States was the world's ideological leader would not have been out of place in a Kennedy speech.

The Vice President even quoted another world leader in order to make this point. On October 29th, near the end of the campaign, Nixon quoted the leader of Malaya. He failed to give the name of the leader but it was almost certainly Tunku Abdul Rahman, the first prime minister of Malaysia who led the Federation of Malaya from 1957 to 1963 and then led Malaysia from 1963 until 1970.³¹ Why did Nixon not name Prime Minister Rahman? For one, the American public probably would not have recognized his name. Secondly, his name was not important for what Nixon was conveying, nor was his country of origin significant. The quote was important because a leader of a post-

³⁰ John Kennedy, Remarks, Schenectady, NY, 29 September 1960; Ibid, Part I, 405.

³¹ Prime Minister's Office of Malaysia, "Tunku Abdul Rahman," Official Website of the Prime Minister's Office of Malaysia, <http://www3.pmo.gov.my/?menu=page&page=1646> (accessed October 26, 2008).

colonial nation was endorsing Nixon's worldview of the United States as a harbinger for freedom, right in line with the second connotation of the word:

[America] is not only the greatest country in the world, but the champion of democracy, the arsenal of freedom, and the stout defender of the United Nations... We in Malaya have never had any doubt or hesitation as to which bloc to join or in deciding where Malaya would stand in the conflict of ideas... This afternoon at Mount Vernon I stood in the library where... Washington used to spend so much of his time pondering the well-being of his people. I sensed how proud he would be today to see this country of his.³²

Besides the reference to the American Revolution that is now expected, this quote is quite interesting because of its pandering to an image of a benevolent America leading a bloc of free nations. While one understands that any leader in the United States' bloc would not want to offend the sensibilities of the leadership in Washington, it seems like the Malayan leader was extraordinarily complimentary. Yet despite the leader's obvious bias, his use of the phrase "arsenal of freedom" (a vestige of the Second World War) exhibited a worldview wherein the United States would be active in promoting freedom around the world. This squared nicely with the second sense of freedom.

Supporting Independence, Reassuring Western Europe

However, the third and final sense of freedom was largely a contradiction of the second: Independence. In Nixon's ideals statement, he espoused independence along with freedom for all peoples as a basic tenet of his rhetorical formulation of American

³² Richard Nixon, Remarks, Park Forest, IL, 29 October 1960; United States, John Kennedy, and Richard Nixon, *Freedom of Communications*, Part II, 881.

foreign policy.³³ Senator Kennedy also utilized independence as an ideal that coupled with freedom. At a speech given in the Mormon Tabernacle in Salt Lake City, Kennedy stated that the “greatest asset we (as Americans) have is the desire of all these people [currently being courted by Communism] to be free and independent.”³⁴ Later, in the aforementioned speech at Howard University, Kennedy reformulated this point: “We have the desires of these people to be free. If there is any experience that should give us courage, it is not that one-quarter of the nations of Africa are neutral. We were neutral for 125 years in our own history. The fact is they are free and independent. They have now won their freedom and they do not choose to lose it, provided they are given an opportunity to develop their resources under a system of freedom.”³⁵

In both of these formulations, Kennedy grouped freedom and independence together as similar and complementary notions. Yet there was a difference, if one considers the second connotation of freedom. Being a part of a system led by the United States might have allowed for freedom domestically, and even for self-government on a national scale, but this arrangement precluded independence in the diplomatic sense. In fact, in a system led by the United States, formerly colonized states entered into a new quasi-colonial arrangement in which the “independent” state’s foreign policy was largely dictated by the interests of Washington as opposed to their own priorities. Intrinsically, how can a country be independent in the global political environment if their goals are so closely reliant upon those of another state, no matter how powerful that state may be? Yet independence was the inherent end of an anti-colonial policy stance and the ultimate

³³ Richard Nixon, Speech, Closed Circuit Television, 1960 Campaign Dinner, Boston, MA, 29 September 1960; Ibid, Part II, 360.

³⁴ John Kennedy, Question and Answer Period Following Speech, Mormon Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, UT, 23 September 1960; Ibid, Part I, 353.

³⁵ John Kennedy, Remarks, Howard University, Washington, DC, 7 October 1960; Ibid, Part I, 519.

ideal that an anti-colonial rhetoric had to espouse. In fact, the two candidates did utilize either “independence” or “independent” numerous times in their colonial rhetoric.³⁶ This ideal was thus a motif of the rhetoric despite the internal contradiction of encouraging ex-colonial states to try to attain independence at the same time as they enter the United States’ “umbrella of freedom.”

Furthermore, the use of “independence” was not only a connection to or an extension of the freedom arguments. “Independence” connoted a complicated process, as opposed to “freedom” and “equality” which were abstractions rather than events. Both candidates did discuss independence as a process during the campaign. For example, on one occasion, Senator Kennedy referenced a contemporaneous transition from French colonial rule to independence in Guinea.³⁷ The actual process of acquiring independence was twofold: the departure of the Western European imperial powers and the subsequent establishment of a viable state. The rhetorical viability question involved both establishing a strong domestic situation within the new state, which the candidates discussed in terms of development, and preventing Soviet aggression and infiltration. Yet the more prickly part of that equation for both men was the inherent fact that independence, ideal as it was, required a loss in the global zero-sum game on the part of the Western European colonial powers, both in terms of territory and also in terms of international standing due to the brutal wars that had accompanied decolonization in Vietnam, Algeria, and elsewhere.

³⁶ See: *Ibid*, Part I, 260-261, 315, 353, 420-421, 519, 606-607, 653, 733, 800; Part II, 176, 221, 360, 461, 497-498, 563-564.

³⁷ John Kennedy, Remarks, University of Illinois Campus, Champagne-Urbana, IL, 24 October 1960; *Ibid*, Part I, 733.

Thus, both candidates had the problem of addressing independence while placating Western Europe. Furthermore, both Nixon and Kennedy had been involved in cases that caused a further break with Western Europe. For Vice President Nixon, the Suez Canal crisis of 1956 was problematic. Just as in the discussion of race relations in Eisenhower's administration, while Nixon was not always explicitly involved in the Suez negotiations, his position as vice president made him linked by association to whatever the administration did for good or ill.

Why was the Suez incident a problem? In short, the crisis was the first and perhaps most stunning case wherein a president of the United States sided against Western Europe and with a formerly colonized state, Egypt, and the communist enemy, the Soviet Union. Briefly, the crisis began when Egyptian leader Gamel Abdel Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal that had been held by British and French interests. The British and the French urged Washington to intervene and Eisenhower did no such thing. Thus, the British and the French entered into secret negotiations with the Israelis, who agreed to enter into a conflict with Egypt in using questionable pretenses. Then the British and the French would intervene on the side of the Israelis, thus dealing Nasser such a blow that he would have to cede ownership of the canal. When military operations began, the United States came out strongly against the Anglo-Franco-Israeli alliance, going so far as to join with the Soviet Union in the United Nations in opposition to their tactics. Without support from the United States, Great Britain and France could not pull off their ambitious project and were forced to retreat without recapturing the canal.

The effects of this incident were important in both Britain and France. British Prime Minister Anthony Eden came under political pressure and eventually resigned.³⁸ According to John Foster Dulles's biographer Townsend Hoopes, a tragedy of the situation was that the British had a "failure to perceive that ten years after the glorious copartnership [sic] of World War II, Britain was, in relation to the United States, only one among several middle powers in the constellation forming around the Washington superpower, that there was no longer an automatic identity of American and British interest, and that Washington was rather unlikely to support the last convulsive reflex of a spent imperial instinct."³⁹ In other words, the "special relationship" between Great Britain and the United States did not supersede Eisenhower's opposition to imperial gambits. In the French case, the Suez crisis had been a complete disaster: Nasser's position was elevated contrary to what they had wanted, the Soviet Union could claim a diplomatic victory against them, their position in Algeria was weakened, and their alliance with the United States was tenuous at best. Irwin Wall, who has written about the involvement of the United States in the Algerian War of Independence, claims that, "France had no choice but to doubt seriously professions of American solidarity and friendship."⁴⁰ This situation was especially disheartening for France because, according to Wall, its security was dependent on the United States.⁴¹

Thus, the Suez crisis created a break in the "Western Alliance" and a situation where the United States stood by Egypt despite Nasser not being an American ally and despite a diplomatic repudiation of him before the crisis began when the United States

³⁸ Townsend Hoopes, *The Devil and John Foster Dulles* (Boston: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1973), 391-393.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 392.

⁴⁰ Irwin Wall, *France, the United States, and the Algerian War* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001), 59.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

had cut off funding for the construction of the Aswan Dam. Although John Foster Dulles and later Secretary of State Christian Herter, along with President Eisenhower himself, did work to repair the Western Alliance during the remainder of Eisenhower's second term, Suez still placed a bitter taste in the palate of Great Britain and France. During the 1960 campaign, Vice President Nixon used Eisenhower's legacy often on the stump, but he largely avoided the Suez crisis, most likely as a way of not reopening old wounds. Furthermore, a direct discussion of the Suez crisis would have placed Nixon in the rhetorical trap of either angering Western Europe in order to appeal to colonized and post-colonial nations or doing the exact opposite.

Thus, Nixon took a legalistic stance on the broader issue of colonialism in order to avoid this problem: "...as far as U.S. policy toward Africa is concerned until very recently we have [had] very few rights to have policies toward Africa because we had there colonial countries, colonial countries in which the British, the French, the Belgians, and others had the jurisdiction over the territories involved. Now as these countries have acquired their independence, then the United States has acquired a responsibility and a right to deal directly with the individual nations concerned."⁴² Nixon's statement was an acknowledgment that the United States had not actively opposed Western European colonialism regardless of its legality; it was neither a plausible possibility nor an interest of the United States to interject itself in colonial questions until European powers ceded their territory. If taken in the context of the Suez crisis, Nixon was telling the British and the French that his hypothetical administration would not intervene in internal disputes but would get involved if either state was trying to reestablish colonial rule in an

⁴² Richard Nixon, Remarks, "The Open Question," WTMJ-TV, Milwaukee, WI, 8 October 1960; United States, John Kennedy, Richard Nixon, *Freedom of Communications*, Part II, 497-498.

independent state. This was not a rejection of Eisenhower's policy but it did frame the question better for the Europeans because it allowed for latitude, so long as a given colony had not attained recognized independence.

Yet Nixon's statement was not a rejection of the anti-colonial themes of the rest of his rhetoric. Rather, his statement was more of a reassurance to European allies that the United States would not insert itself into what European powers considered to be internal disputes not requiring international attention. It was equally an assurance to colonized states that, if independence came about, the United States would deal with the newly codified states rather than through their former metropolises. Nixon's next point in the speech spoke to this point; he described attending the ceremony granting independence to Ghana in 1957 and how it, along with contemporaneous independence movements, encouraged an augmentation of existing economic assistance programs in Africa.⁴³ Therefore, Nixon's comment was his way of walking a diplomatic tightrope where his balancing pole had at one end total anti-colonialism with recognition of the sovereignty of new states and at the other end a strengthening of the European alliances crucial for fighting the Cold War.

Senator Kennedy had a more personal history in angering French leaders, in particular. During a speech to the Polish-American Congress in Chicago on October 1st, Kennedy used the phrase "the evils of colonialism." He went on to criticize European colonialism: "I have never defended Western colonialism. In fact, I have criticized it when it existed in Indochina or Algeria or any other place in Africa."⁴⁴ Kennedy was referring to speeches he made on the floor of Congress in which he strongly criticized

⁴³ Ibid, 10 & Richard Nixon, Remarks, "The Open Question," WTMJ-TV, Milwaukee, WI, 8 October 1960; Ibid, Part II, 497-498.

⁴⁴ John Kennedy, Speech, Polish-American Congress, Chicago, IL, 1 October 1960; Ibid, Part I, 420-421.

French colonial rule in both Indochina and Algeria. His Algeria speech of July 2, 1957, in particular, caused an “immediate, angry reaction” from Paris.⁴⁵ The content of this speech deserves a detailed analysis because Kennedy referenced it on multiple occasions during the campaign but also because, in 1960, Senator Kennedy, through Harper & Brothers, published an edited anthology of his key speeches made in Congress that included this address. The collection was titled *The Strategy of Peace*, and its introduction by its editor Allan Nevins claimed that the book would provide to readers “instruction and sagacity on our knottier problems” and “a true philosophy of government” based on the Senator’s “own vision and his own system of ideas.”⁴⁶ Given that Kennedy selected his Algeria speech for inclusion in the text, and given Nevins’ declaration that the book was essentially a primer on what Senator Kennedy advocated, then this speech was a crucial backbone of Kennedy’s colonial policy. It also shows why Kennedy had to placate Western Europe in the October 1st, 1960 campaign speech and elsewhere.

In his 1960 preface to the particular speech, Kennedy wrote that he was “criticizing a firmly entrenched policy” after “following and studying for a number of years the sorry latter-day course of Western colonialism, and particularly French colonialism.”⁴⁷ Yet he was quick in 1960 to quote one of his opponents from the primaries, Senator Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota, who stated that Kennedy’s positions on this issue “are expressed not as anti-French, but as a recognition of what is taking

⁴⁵ Irwin M. Wall, *France, the United States, and the Algerian War* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001), 85-86.

⁴⁶ John Kennedy, Speech, United States Senate, 2 July 1957; John F. Kennedy, *The Strategy of Peace*, ed. Allan Nevins (New York City: Harper & Brothers, 1960), xv.

⁴⁷ John Kennedy, Speech, United States Senate, 2 July 1957; *Ibid*, 65.

place in the twentieth century.”⁴⁸ Kennedy’s preface then expressed appreciation for the leadership of Charles de Gaulle on the Algerian question and for de Gaulle’s offering to the Algerian rebels of a choice between independence with partition, equal integration into France, or an association within the French Union.⁴⁹ Yet Kennedy claimed his analysis from 1957 still had “continued pertinence” in 1960 due to both the changes wrought by de Gaulle in 1959 and due to the previous year’s “uprising of the French extremists in Algeria.”⁵⁰ This statement shows that Kennedy was still advocating his original analysis of the Algerian problem and it also shows why Kennedy referred to this speech in his remarks delivered to the Polish-American Congress. It was still his rhetorical position, even if none of his campaign speeches entered into as great a detail on the particular case of Algeria.

Senator Kennedy opened his Congressional floor speech with a blistering statement: “Mr. President [of the Senate], the most powerful single force in the world today is neither Communism nor capitalism, neither the H-bomb nor the guided missile—it is man’s eternal desire to be free and independent. The great enemy of that tremendous force of freedom is called, for want of a more precise term, imperialism—and today that means Soviet imperialism and, whether we like it or not, and though they are not to be equated, Western imperialism.”⁵¹ When Kennedy had to specifically deny that Soviet communism and Western colonialism were not to be considered on equal grounds, a link was ironically established between the two that, even if they were not the same, they certainly had to be related. Therefore, this opening gambit from Senator Kennedy

⁴⁸ John Kennedy, Speech, United States Senate, 2 July 1957; Ibid.

⁴⁹ John Kennedy, Speech, United States Senate, 2 July 1957; Ibid, 65-66.

⁵⁰ John Kennedy, Speech, United States Senate, 2 July 1957; Ibid.

⁵¹ John Kennedy, Speech, United States Senate, 2 July 1957; Ibid, 66.

created a dichotomous conceptualization of the globe wherein imperialism, the blanket term for both Soviet and Western colonialism, was juxtaposed against the ideals of freedom and independence. While Kennedy's 1960 campaign rhetoric was also strongly anti-colonial, this statement was even stronger, mostly because it was a blistering indictment from a figure of power that broke with a more tempered approach to dealing with Europe and instead placed colonialism in the same negative light as communism.

Kennedy then established that the "challenge of imperialism" was the "single most important test of American foreign policy."⁵² Kennedy stated that the goals of this speech, along with those of a later address concerning Poland, were to avoid "partisan criticisms" and instead to offer "constructive solutions" for this most crucial question.⁵³ This tempered the Cold War narrative's domination of foreign policy prioritization. Curbing global communism was not the be all and end all of the national interest of the United States but rather was one aspect of the broader struggle against all forms of imperialism. Kennedy should not, however, be seen as any less of an anti-communist figure due to this phraseology; instead, the goal of his prioritization was to prevent a foreign policy myopia that ignored everything but anti-communist positions. However, this statement was a precursor of the idealistic notions of the 1960 rhetoric. Kennedy did, in fact, rationalize the timing of this speech on July 2nd because the nation was "prepar(ing) to commemorate the 181st anniversary of man's noblest expression against political repression," the signing of the Declaration of Independence.⁵⁴ While the reference to the Declaration was normal, the implication that the fight against

⁵² John Kennedy, Speech, United States Senate, 2 July 1957; Ibid.

⁵³ John Kennedy, Speech, United States Senate, 2 July 1957; Ibid.

⁵⁴ John Kennedy, Speech, United States Senate, 2 July 1957; Ibid.

imperialism was a fight against “political repression” could not have been welcomed by Western European colonial powers.

Then the Senator claimed that Algeria presented the largest “diplomatic impasse” since another case revolving around French colonialism, Indochina.⁵⁵ It seemed as if Kennedy was particularly targeting France, so his next step in the speech was to elevate the importance of France for the United States: “I am even more reluctant to appear critical of our oldest and first ally, whose assistance in our own war for independence will never be forgotten and whose role in the course of world events had traditionally been one of constructive leadership and co-operation.”⁵⁶ While both of these points were positive for the French, they were nothing more than mere lip service when one considers the rest of Kennedy’s remarks.

Kennedy proceeded to discuss, in depth, the reasons why the United States should be concerned with the Algerian question. He provided a litany of reasons, including the reduction of NATO’s forces in continental Europe, damage to the American position in the United Nations due to the continued American rejection of consideration of the Algerian question, further damage in the diplomatic relations with Tunisia and Morocco, a lowering of America’s “standing in the eyes of the Free World [and its] leadership in the fight to keep that world free”, and the complicating of the transition to independence of African states that now could not trust the United States to help them.⁵⁷ Kennedy then stated his *coup de grace*; he was most concerned about the well-being of France itself, which was being drained of “manpower, resources, and [its] spirit.”⁵⁸ Kennedy’s reasons

⁵⁵ John Kennedy, Speech, United States Senate, 2 July 1957; Ibid, 67.

⁵⁶ John Kennedy, Speech, United States Senate, 2 July 1957; Ibid, 67-68.

⁵⁷ John Kennedy, Speech, United States Senate, 2 July 1957; Ibid, 68-69.

⁵⁸ John Kennedy, Speech, United States Senate, 2 July 1957; Ibid, 69.

for addressing the problem were factually valid, but that does not change the fact that, for France, Algeria was part of their state and not a colonial possession. Even a suggestion on the floor of the American Senate that Algeria was an issue of international concern would not have been received well at the diplomatic offices in the Quai d'Orsay.

Senator Kennedy then criticized the persistent American policy of covering up its traditional anti-colonial stances with diplomatic niceties and stalling tactics in the United Nations General Assembly. He summarized his critique by claiming, “No matter how complex the problems posed by the Algerian issue may be, the record of the United States in this case is, as elsewhere, a retreat from the principles of independence and anticolonialism [sic], regardless of what diplomatic niceties, legal technicalities, or even strategic considerations are offered in its defense.”⁵⁹ There was no give in this statement. In a way, this statement was a rejection of the concept of Michael Hunt that claimed that the United States, while being an anti-colonial power, traditionally feared revolutionary movements. There was no fear of change in this statement; if anything, Kennedy's statement was more fearful of a perpetuation of the status quo rather than strong support for anti-colonialism regardless of the locale.

Then Senator Kennedy debunked the four major objectives that had curtailed American action. He claimed that: Algeria was not just a French issue; the *pied-noirs*, the French living in Algeria, would have actually benefited from a solution more than from prolonged violence; reprehensible actions by Algerian nationalists did not invalidate the legitimacy of their goals; and the lack of a centralized nationalist leader was not a problem but was rather indicative of deliberate French policies designed to stifle the

⁵⁹ John Kennedy, Speech, United States Senate, 2 July 1957; Ibid, 70.

emergence of educated Algerian leadership.⁶⁰ As if these points were not enough of a critique against France, Kennedy then quoted a French leader as saying, “Colonies are like fruit which cling to the tree only till they ripen.”⁶¹ The implication of this quote was made clear by Kennedy’s following point, wherein he claimed that the only way to maintain French influence in North Africa was to enact Algerian independence.⁶²

Kennedy then spoke for a few more minutes and provided various policy recommendations that, at their core, advocated using Algerian independence as the basis of further negotiations so as to ameliorate the situation.⁶³ However, the damage in France had been done. The French government contacted Secretary of State Dulles and demanded a repudiation of what Kennedy had said. While Dulles assured a French official that he would try to prevent passage of a Senate resolution that Kennedy had introduced about the Algerian question, it is possible the administration was “privately pleased” because Kennedy’s speech reflected the changing landscape of public opinion on Algeria.⁶⁴

Thus, by the time of the 1960 campaign, Senator Kennedy had previously spoken in such a way as to antagonize the French. The Senate speech was a detailed indictment of a closely held perception within the French government. Its strong opposition to colonialism more broadly was a repudiation of more of Western Europe. As if Kennedy needed to add any more fuel to the rhetorical fire, he had used France negatively during the 1960 campaign as an example of a state whose economy was growing at a 5% per year rate, faster than that of the United States; he claimed that this French lead, along

⁶⁰ John Kennedy, Speech, United States Senate, 2 July 1957; Ibid, 71-72.

⁶¹ John Kennedy, Speech, United States Senate, 2 July 1957; Ibid, 72.

⁶² John Kennedy, Speech, United States Senate, 2 July 1957; Ibid, 73.

⁶³ John Kennedy, Speech, United States Senate, 2 July 1957; Ibid, 74-80.

⁶⁴ Irwin Wall, *France, the United States, and the Algerian War*, 85-86.

with that of other states like West Germany, should not have existed and that the United States needed to reclaim the fastest growing economy in the world.⁶⁵ Furthermore, twice in the campaign he quoted Vichy France leader Marshal Pétain who stated: “Our spirit of enjoyment was greater than our spirit of sacrifice. We wanted to have more than we wanted to give. We spared effort and we met disaster.”⁶⁶ While the quote itself was not particularly inflammatory, the very usage of Pétain, who headed the government that collaborated with the Nazis, would have been a controversial move at best. Intriguingly, the audience that heard this reference applauded it, likely not realizing or not caring about the implications of quoting a leader complicit in Nazi collaboration. A French audience would not have reacted so nicely.

Given all of the strong anti-colonial messages in Kennedy’s record, the economic argument and the Pétain citations were more items added to the slate that the senator had to overcome in order to successfully placate Western Europe. This presented a formidable challenge and, solely on the issue of Western European colonialism, Kennedy did not successfully reconcile his anti-colonial message with European diplomacy. His attempt came later in the Polish-American Congress speech; Kennedy said that the Western European powers’ colonial holdings were moving into the “sunlight of freedom”.⁶⁷ His effort at placating Western Europe in this case was to acknowledge that the Western European powers were not, for the most part, holding on to their colonial possessions. This was a weak reassurance for Western European allies. For one, this message maintained that Western European colonialism was antithetical to freedom.

⁶⁵ John Kennedy, Speech, Civic Auditorium, Seattle, WA, 6 September 1960; United States, John Kennedy, *Freedom of Communications*, Part I, 139 (See also: Part I, 237, 251, 602)

⁶⁶ John Kennedy, Remarks, War Memorial Building, Rochester, NY, 28 September 1960; Ibid, Part I, 395.

⁶⁷ John Kennedy, Speech, Polish-American Congress, 1 October 1960; Ibid, Part I, 420-421.

Even if the Western European colonial powers were pleased to see Kennedy give credit to them for helping their colonial possessions transition into independence, this satisfaction still did not change the fact in Kennedy's rhetoric that they were standing against freedom. In addition, in contrast to the message of the Vice President, Kennedy offered no legalistic guarantee that the United States would not interject itself into colonial problems given the opportunity. Thus, Kennedy's effort at placating Western Europe was incredibly weak.

Yet perhaps this was Kennedy's goal, because on the other side of the issue were the colonized areas fighting for and celebrating their liberation. Kennedy was appealing to those peoples with his remarks and not to the Western Europeans. Within the boundaries of the Western colonialism debate, both candidates gave preference to the colonized areas rather than Western Europe and neither candidate reconciled their positions with Western European diplomatic concerns. In fact, their need to strongly state anti-colonial ideals trumped rhetorical efforts intended to salve Western Europe due to the priority of gaining new allies in the Cold War; being anti-colonial gave the United States a fighting chance at convincing neutral states to swing their support toward the Western bloc.

Chapter 2

Reframing Western Colonialism as a Question of the Cold War:

The Balance Maneuver

Only a few days after Nikita Khrushchev proclaimed his boisterous and forceful anti-colonial message at the United Nations General Assembly, all political eyes turned to a television studio in downtown Chicago. With an audience of between seventy and eighty million people watching him deliver the opening statement of the first televised presidential debate in United States history, Senator John Kennedy double-crossed Vice President Richard Nixon.¹ Despite an agreement with Nixon to solely discuss domestic affairs, Senator Kennedy's opening statement of September 26th, 1960 unexpectedly shifted the debate to foreign affairs. He stated: "In the election of 1960, and with the world around us, the question is whether the world will exist half slave or half free, whether it will move in the direction of freedom..."²

Considering the strong statements, grounded in ideal-based arguments, which both candidates had made against colonial rule, Kennedy's half-slave and half-free characterization of the world squared with a broader anti-colonial framework. After all, his definition of colonialism (provided a few days later) was "the rule of one country by another..."³ In fact, Kennedy's rhetorical framework placed colonialism as the literal opposite of freedom. Yet Kennedy's opening statement, as much as it spoke to the same anti-colonial ideals that had been invoked before, was not at its core a discussion of

¹ Theodore Otto Windt, Jr., "The 1960 Kennedy-Nixon Presidential Debates," in *Rhetorical Studies of National Political Debates, 1960-1992 (2nd Edition)*, ed. Robert V. Friedenberg (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1994), 1-27, 24.

² *Ibid.*, 9.

³ John Kennedy, Speech to Polish-American Congress, Chicago, IL, 1 October 1960; United States, John F. Kennedy, and Richard M. Nixon. 1961. *Freedom of communications. Final report of the Committee on Commerce, United States Senate*. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, Part I, 420-421.

colonialism as an issue that the United States' foreign policy had to address. Rather, Kennedy clarified that his subject was the East-West bipolarized struggle of the Cold War. The peoples of the world faced a choice to move “in the direction of the road that we are taking...[or]...in the direction of slavery.”⁴ Although the language in this case was ideals-based, presenting a dichotomy between slavery and the United States' path (identified with freedom in U.S. rhetoric), the argument was alignment-based. Stripping away the ideals from this text, what Kennedy actually presented was a case of *realpolitik*: Non-aligned states had to decide whether or not to join the United States bloc or the Soviet bloc. The implied message was that there was no “third way” to speak of, that the choice was irrevocably dichotomous, and that the decision was urgent. This provides a classic example of what this thesis deems the *balance maneuver*.

This chapter concerns the interaction of colonialism and communism in Kennedy's and Nixon's rhetoric. As the first debate shows, these two issues each became so important that neither could have been ignored. However, the way that the two men integrated colonialism into a pre-existing Cold War paradigm of East versus West is important. By making colonialism a Cold War issue, both candidates sought to deflect criticism away from Western European colonialism by focusing instead on the Soviet Union. The balance maneuver was the device used to redefine the colonial question in terms of communism, and the candidates used it in both an ideals-based technique and one based on alignment arguments. The ideals-based approach connected the United States to a laudable ideal, i.e. freedom, while showing the downside of the Soviet Union on issues relating to the same ideal. In contrast, the alignment-based technique featured explicit references to alliances and blocs; ideals were either not present in these

⁴ Theodore Otto Windt, Jr., “The 1960 Kennedy-Nixon Presidential Debates,” 10.

arguments or they were used solely as supporting evidence for the greater question of alignment.

While examining this rhetorical strategy, the fact that Khrushchev brought colonialism to the foreground of the foreign policy debate cannot be ignored or minimized. Since it was the Soviet leader who put the issue on the agenda, the anti-communist response that Kennedy and Nixon utilized fit into the polemic that Khrushchev had himself established. In this context, the balance maneuver was not simply a way for both candidates to prevent infuriating Western European allies such as Belgium and France; instead, it presented both candidates with the opportunity to be simultaneously anti-colonial and anti-communist. That *mélange* of rhetorical goals became a key theme of the campaign given the preeminence of the Cold War in U.S. political rhetoric of the late 1950s. Placing colonialism in that context was the best manner for Nixon and Kennedy to delve into that topic without angering allies or veering too far off of their key foreign policy arguments. Therefore, the balance maneuver made colonialism secondary to the Cold War, but given the political conditions of the United States in 1960, colonialism would not have even been on the agenda without its connection to the fight against communism. After all, as of 1959, “the lack of interest in Africa [and in other developing areas] in the U.S. Congress was legendary” and even John Kennedy, who lauded himself for chairing the Senate Subcommittee on Africa, had only taken the job because he was forced to given his low seniority, and only after he was told that he had the authority to hold no meetings of the subcommittee he ostensibly chaired.⁵ Thus, in an ironic twist, Khrushchev achieved his stated goal of placing his

⁵ Piero Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa, 1959-1976* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 382.

“freedom-loving” proposals onto the world stage; these policies, from the most important communist leader in the world, allowed Kennedy and Nixon to make colonialism an issue of the Cold War through implementing the balance maneuver.⁶

The Balance Maneuver: The Ideals-based Version

The balance maneuver was a prevalent rhetorical strategy that both candidates implemented frequently throughout the selected time period.⁷ The exact machinations of the balance maneuver were malleable depending on the circumstances but there were characteristics common to each case. At its core, a balance maneuver occurred when both the subject of communism (appearing either as an abstract idea, a competing system, or as the Soviet Union or rarely another communist state) and the subject of colonialism (either directly or indirectly through a discussion of non-aligned states that were emerging from colonial rule) appeared together in one speech, statement, or impromptu remark. Invoking communism without colonialism, which was done quite often, does not fit the balance maneuver criteria; these cases are not included in this study. Conversely, invoking colonialism without communism does not fit the specifications, but these cases were few and fleeting in number. Communism was almost always the background issue that made the colonial policies of the United States more important, especially to the electorate for whom the Soviet Union represented an “other” that both candidates had to oppose strongly.

⁶ Nikita Khrushchev, “Disarmament, Colonialism, and Other International Problems—Statement in the General Debate at the Fifteenth Session of the United Nations General Assembly,” 23 September 1960; Nikita Khrushchev. *Khrushchev in New York: A documentary record of Nikita S. Khrushchev's trip to New York, September 19th to October 13th, 1960, including all his speeches and proposals to the United Nations and major addresses and news conferences* (New York City: Crosscurrents Press, 1960), 29.

⁷ See: United States, John Kennedy, and Richard Nixon, *Freedom of Communications*, Part I, 179, 206, 220, 224-225, 227, 245, 296-297, 315, 353, 369, 371, 387, 405, 410, 420-421, 526, 573, 606-607, 614, 617-618, 625, 630, 645-646, 648, 652-653, 690, 707, 800, 808-809, 845, 882, 919, 943 & Part II, 6-8, 9, 29, 74-75, 171, 173, 176, 221, 224, 248, 443, 471-472, 516-517, 588, 695, 881, 970, 1102.

Within the text, the interval between the discussions of the two issues is immaterial so long as they appear in the same text; if the text was especially long, the balance maneuver occurred so long as the two subjects did not appear so far apart as to avoid a connection between them. Since text length varied, no discrete maximum paragraph distance between colonialism and communism can be provided. However, both subjects normally were placed together within a paragraph or a group of consecutive paragraphs. Occasionally they even appeared in the same sentence. The order of the appearances was also irrelevant; the candidates could invoke communism then turn to colonial questions or vice versa, and both strategies were used at different times.

The ideals-based technique of the balance maneuver occurred when both men established a dichotomy between the United States which stood for freedom and the Soviet Union as a symbol for communism, tyranny, or some other negative abstract quality. This sort of dichotomy was tied to colonialism through establishing an arrangement wherein the United States, as the protector of freedom, would fight for that ideal in all parts of the world, including in the fight against colonial rule. It is important to remember, however, that while the language of ideals may have been employed, the actual thrust was an implicit appeal to non-aligned states. By citing the Soviet example as one that was opposed to freedom and independence, Kennedy and Nixon could argue that the United States, as the superpower in the right on these questions, was the proper ally in the Cold War. Non-alignment was unacceptable because it would leave states open to Soviet incursion, or at the very least it would deprive a state of the guarantees that the United States was offering. Thus, the ideals-based balance maneuver had to invoke the anti-colonial ideals that both candidates espoused strongly; ergo, most of the

examples from the prior chapter fit into this category of the balance maneuver so long as a contrast was made between the upside of the United States' example and the downside of that of the USSR.

An example of the ideals-based balance maneuver came on the last day of campaigning, November 7th, when Senator Kennedy appeared on a television program recorded in Manchester, New Hampshire that was broadcast to various other parts of the country as his last minute appeal for votes. In this most crucial speech, Kennedy utilized an ideals-based argument when he, for the first time in a pre-written speech, described his concept of the Peace Corps. In fact, before setting the groundwork for that organization, Kennedy used ideals-based terminology to establish the dichotomous choice of non-aligned states:

Well, the big responsibility of checking the advance of the Communists and for really advancing the cause of freedom depends on the United States. We are really the only hope for freedom. If the United States should fail, or if our strength should diminish, or if our military defenses become lessened, or if we cease to speak with vigor, then, of course, the Communists would have a free road, Africa, Asia, Latin America. That is going to be the great challenge of the sixties. ¶ I think on our side is the fact most people do want to be free. The whole experience of Eastern Germany, Hungary, and Poland shows that people do want to be free and independent. The whole movement in Africa against the colonialism showed the people desired to be free. Therefore, if we associate ourselves

with freedom, if we maintain our strength, in my judgment [they] will choose our road rather than that of the Communists.⁸

Kennedy's message can be boiled down to abstractions: The United States must vigorously defend "freedom" so as to maintain "strength" and allow for people in Africa, Asia, and Latin America to choose the "free road." In other more concrete words, the goal of United States foreign policy was to attract non-aligned states into an American alliance, thus damaging the Soviet Union in a zero-sum game. In order to achieve this end, the United States had to maintain military positions in key areas where containment was required. Using propaganda techniques that associated the priorities of non-aligned peoples with those of the United States, focusing both on Soviet abuses in Eastern Europe and on opposing Western European colonialism in Africa and elsewhere, also served this end. The difference between the ostensible ideals-based meaning and the alignment-based undercurrent is quite stark, yet both interpretations were equally present in Kennedy's rhetoric.

After that strong preface, Kennedy suggested the formation of the Peace Corps: "I have suggested having a peace corps of young men and women who will be willing to spend 2 or 3 years of their lives as teachers and nurses, working in different countries which are backward and which are just beginning to develop, spreading the cause of freedom."⁹ This citation was not ostensibly anti-communist because Kennedy's stated goal of the Peace Corps was to help "backward" states, a reference to the poorest states that were at some point in their history colonized by Western Europe. However, knowing the second definition of freedom as a symbol for being in the bloc of the United States,

⁸ John Kennedy, Television Program, Manchester, NH, 7 November 1960; Ibid, Part I, 943.

⁹ John Kennedy, Television Program, Manchester, NH, 7 November 1960; Ibid.

this statement was, in fact, a refutation of communist incursion into post-colonial states and a continuation of his preceding statement. The Peace Corps, in this sense, was another arm of containment rather than a purely humanitarian organization. Furthermore, Kennedy confirmed that the anti-communist goal of this program: “Maintain our strength here, maintain our military defenses, speak quietly, associate ourselves with peace, try to distribute our food and other benefits we have to less fortunate people so that they know we are interested in them, and I believe if we do those things communism can be checked, but more important, freedom can begin to grow back of the Communist curtain.”¹⁰ The policy recommendations that Kennedy provided in this case were not necessarily ideals-based: maintaining a strong defense and distributing food, for example, were more concrete notions than spreading freedom. However, the goal as Kennedy framed it was both idealistic (grow freedom behind the Iron Curtain) and tangibly focused on the brinkmanship of the Cold War (check the expansion of communism). This *mélange* of alignment-based ends with ideals-based terminology was the hallmark of an ideals-based balance maneuver.

In Kennedy’s particular example of the ideals-based balance maneuver, colonialism was more of an undercurrent, squeezed into a call for people to reject communism. However, in one example from Vice President Nixon, colonialism took center stage whereas communism was an implied negative alternative. This does not reflect a general trend, as both candidates utilized both methods of placing colonialism and communism into a relationship, but Nixon’s example of placing colonialism at the fore is particularly insightful. At a “Friends of Nixon Breakfast” in Coconut Grove, California, the Vice President claimed that “America can’t practice one thing at home and

¹⁰ John Kennedy, Television Program, Manchester, NH, 7 November 1960; Ibid.

preach something else abroad.”¹¹ With that overarching statement, he entered into one of the campaign’s longest discussions of colonialism:

I recall an incident occurring in a British colony—I will leave it unnamed—in 1953—a magnificent city, very prosperous, clean, fine water supply, and in Asia in 1953 that was very unusual, British colony, nevertheless, and the British, incidentally, do one of the best jobs of training people for independence of any, but this colony was not yet ready for independence or was not yet ready to give it. I was talking to a Chinese friend of mine who was in the colony, and he was saying—I said, “How are things here?” ¶ He says, “Oh, it’s much better than in the mainland of China.” He says, “We have the best life perhaps of any city in Asia.” ¶ And I said, “Well, tell me, however, if the people had a chance to vote would they vote to continue their colonial status?” ¶ He smiled; he said, “They should, for their own good, because materially and otherwise they’re better off, but,” he said, “they’d vote 90 percent against continuing it.”¹²

Nixon’s unnamed colony, which was likely Hong Kong, showcased the ideals-based aspect of the balance maneuver because, despite the claims of Nixon’s “Chinese friend” that British colonialism was materially beneficial for the colony, the colonized would take independence given the chance to do so. Their reasoning must be ideals-based because, for those living under the colonial rule with the conditions that Nixon described,

¹¹ Richard Nixon, Partial Transcript of Remarks, Friends of Nixon Breakfast, Coconut Grove, Los Angeles, CA, 14 October 1960; Ibid, Part II, 563-564.

¹² Richard Nixon, Partial Transcript of Remarks, Friends of Nixon Breakfast, Coconut Grove, Los Angeles, CA, 14 October 1960; Ibid.

no alignment-based reason existed that would have encouraged independence. Yet this statement on its own right was an appeal for the alliance of colonized persons. Nixon's text was a signal that the United States recognized that independence was a goal of colonized persons no matter their day-to-day conditions. In recognizing this fact, Nixon joined with Kennedy in acknowledging the strength of independence movements and, in so doing, opened the door to a defense of alignment with the United States. If these states could see that the United States would not oppose their independence and instead would act according to their best wishes, then alignment just might have been possible, or at least that was likely Nixon's goal in telling the first part of this anecdote.

The balance maneuver itself, more so than just the discussion of colonialism on its own, comes into this text when the colonized friend claimed that life on the island was much better than in mainland China; the implication was that the Red Chinese government was not beneficial for the Chinese people. The jab at communism was much more indirect in this case than in Kennedy's excerpted passage; Nixon allowed the listeners to put two and two together and realize that, if the mainland Chinese government was not guaranteeing a good life of the people over which it ruled, then the communist system at the heart of Chairman Mao's government was probably the reason for this malfeasance. Interestingly, Nixon also engaged in the placation of Western Europe when he complimented the British for their efficacious manner of running the island and for their good record of training people for independence. This rhetorical tactic makes sense within an ideals-based balance maneuver because, just as Kennedy and Nixon could use the Soviet example in order to garner post-colonial states into the United States' bloc, they could also use communism as a distraction from Western

European colonialism itself. Invoking the British in this case was likely a reminder to them and to other Western European colonial powers that, amidst the decolonization process going on throughout the world, the Western bloc could not turn away from its alliance, especially in the face of communist aggression. By shoring up that alliance, Nixon was implying that his focus on Europe and its security concerns was not waning at all by focusing on colonial questions.

Yet in this particular example Nixon was not solely interested in shoring up the Western European alliance with the United States. He also had to butter the colonial powers up in anticipation of his next paragraph. When he asked his friend why his island compatriots would choose independence over material well-being, given the dichotomous choice, the answer he proscribed to his friend was biting:

He said, "Let me tell you a story." He said, "It goes all around Asia." He said, "When the British come in or the Dutch or the French or any other group, they usually build three buildings, three institutions in this order." He said, "First, they build a racetrack, and then, second, they build a church, and third, they build a club to which orientals [sic] cannot belong."¹³

This statement was, perhaps, the single strongest indictment of colonialism and its cultural effects in either Kennedy or Nixon's rhetoric. While both did refer to colonialism as slavery and tyranny, this statement is the only case where a candidate described the process by which Western European colonialism subsumed the cultures of colonized peoples.

¹³ Richard Nixon, Partial Transcript of Remarks, Friends of Nixon Breakfast, Coconut Grove, Los Angeles, CA, 14 October 1960; Ibid, Part II, 563-564.

Why, in particular, was this statement so damning against the Western Europeans? Firstly, Nixon made no distinctions between Western European countries. All of the colonial powers were equally indicted in this example. Secondly, the manner in which the introduction of colonialism to a new area was characterized was not flattering at all. If the “racetrack”, a symbol of leisure and recreation or of rampant capitalism (considering the *raison d’être* of the racetrack is as a place of gambling), preceded the church, then the traditional and antiquated defense of colonialism as a force for cultural improvement was null in void. How, in Nixon’s description, could missionary work, as symbolized by the church, be the key to colonial rule when the gambling establishment came first? This critique was especially harsh given Nixon’s declaration that “faith in God” was a fundamental ideal of the United States. Whereas the very presence of the church in the colonial formula would trouble some observers, in Nixon’s rhetoric the fact that the racetrack superseded the religious building would have been an even more pressing attack. Thirdly, Nixon was calling Western European colonial powers racist entities by referencing the establishment of clubs to which colonized peoples could not belong. His vociferous defense of equality elsewhere served as a stark contrast to this implicit racism in the colonial system. Finally, although this is an indirect attack, the fact that there was no difference between how the Western Europeans colonized one area or another could have been grounds for criticism because such uniformity reflected little appreciation for the cultures being subsumed and for the differences between them that created a unique situation in each colonial case. Thus, in this relatively short passage, Nixon rhetorically erased the legitimacy of colonial rule,

established its racist pretense, and thusly criticized all Western European colonial powers.

Therefore, given such a harsh critique, Nixon had to do something in order to soften the blow. The ideals-based balance maneuver that preceded this passage was part of his placation attempt. Following this biting excerpt, Nixon attempted further to salve Western European allies and to shift the question back to the Cold War:

Now, I would be less than candid if I were not to say that we in this country all have the problem of equality and prejudice and the like. We can say it is a problem of far-off Washington. Why don't these characters pass better laws, but it's got to be decided here. We all have our faults. We must all work together, but I can assure you that if there were no other reason...that America must simply display to the whole world if she is to be the ideological leader of the world [is] the fact that we really believe in equality, that we believe in the dignity of men, that we do not look down our noses at anybody else, whatever his race, religion, his color. If we can convey that at home by what we do, this will help immensely the next President of the United States in winning the battle of freedom for all men.¹⁴

Although there was no ostensible defense of Western Europe in this closing excerpt, Nixon actually provided two distinct arguments that would have pleased the Western European colonial powers. Firstly, the Vice President admitted that the United States still had to work on guaranteeing the promise of his ideals, especially the rights of equality, to

¹⁴ Richard Nixon, Partial Transcript of Remarks, Friends of Nixon Breakfast, Coconut Grove, Los Angeles, CA, 14 October 1960; Ibid.

all of its citizens. In making this caveat, he established that he was not criticizing the colonial powers from a lofty rhetorical platform where racial and prejudicial strife did not exist. He was instead arguing that all peoples regardless of their colonial rule or lack thereof, had to work to remedy the status quo in order to guarantee equal treatment for all. This position led to his second argument: The reason Nixon was criticizing colonialism was because he wanted to win “the battle of freedom for all men” which was, given the second definition of freedom, a case for Western alignment in the Cold War. Ending colonial injustices was therefore not simply a humanitarian issue, although that element was present, especially in his harsh critique of colonial installation, but rather a Cold War issue; the termination of the colonial system would, according to Nixon, greatly improve the chances of gaining non-aligned states into the American/Western European bloc against the Soviet Union and “Red” China. This alignment-based argument, couched in ideals-based language, told Western Europeans that it was ironically in *their* best interest for Nixon (and Kennedy, for that matter) to criticize the colonial system. In this example, the ideals-based balance maneuver was therefore an effective device that enabled Nixon’s simultaneous criticism of colonialism and acknowledgment of the importance of the Cold War to the Western European bloc and, in his paradigm, to non-aligned states.

The Balance Maneuver: The Alignment-based Version

While the ideals-based version of the balance maneuver used abstractions to discuss states choosing sides in the Cold , both candidates also provided numerous examples wherein the language itself was indicative of an alignment-based argument. The most prevalent function of this variety of the balance maneuver was to explicitly ask

for the alliance of non-aligned (and post-colonial) states in the Cold War struggle against the Soviet Union and its bloc, which rhetorically included Red China.

The language of the alignment-based version usually indicated urgency in the decision of these states while explicitly differentiating between the system of the United States and that of the USSR. In fact, both candidates invoked the word “system” on multiple occasions in their rhetoric to refer to the question of alignment of neutral states.¹⁵ For example, Senator Kennedy provided a succinct example of the alignment-based variety of the balance maneuver when he spoke in Fresno, California on September 9th:

[T]he great struggle in foreign policy in the next decade will not take place in Western Europe, and will not be directly between the Soviet Union and the United States. The great test will be which system travels better, which system solves the problems of the people of Latin America, to Africa and Asia, it is only by that means that we can persuade those people to travel the same road that we are traveling. They stand today on the razoredge [sic] of decision. They look to Moscow and Peking and they look to us. I think we must demonstrate sufficient vigor, sufficient friendship for them, that they will follow the road that we follow, the road of peace.¹⁶

Kennedy was asking which system would best assist non-aligned peoples in the three post-colonial regions of Latin America, Africa, and Asia; he did not specifically postulate an ideals-based difference between the two choices. Rather, Kennedy placed the onus of

¹⁵ Ibid, Part I, 179, 220, 295, 365, 369, 606-607, 617-618; Part II, 461.

¹⁶ John Kennedy, Rear Platform Remarks, Fresno, CA, 9 September 1960; Ibid, Part I, 179.

effort on actions of the United States insofar as national leaders had to express “friendship” to the nations making their alliance decisions and “vigor” to all so as to appear worthy of a leadership role. While “friendship” and “vigor” were somewhat ambiguous and abstract, they have a more concrete connection to global *realpolitik* than “freedom” and “equality”. “Friendship” implied an aligned partnership wherein post-colonial states, if they decided to join the Western bloc, would have a role to play in the relationship. “Friendship” dissuaded the notion that these states would function only as Cold War pawns. “Vigor”, a favorite term of Kennedy in all facets of his rhetoric, was a reference to strength, and in this case that strength was related to the Cold War position of the United States relative to the USSR. What Kennedy was referencing here was the political adage that everyone wants to be with a winner. If the United States was going to win the Cold War, then it behooved the non-aligned states to choose the Western bloc; choosing the Soviet bloc would only cause problems in the long-term.

Kennedy’s statement also made the decision of non-aligned states more urgent by characterizing the non-aligned states as being on the razor’s edge. They had to decide quickly, according to Kennedy, so as to avoid the figurative cut of the blade, i.e. Soviet alignment. However, this urgency must not be confused with the sort that Khrushchev expressed at the United Nations: “Is it not time to mount the final offensive against colonialism as a century or more ago civilized mankind launched an offensive against the slave trade and slave-driving, and buried them, thus opening up ample scope not only for the political but also for the economic development of society.”¹⁷ Khrushchev’s call was for the urgent end of the colonial system; Kennedy’s urgency was for post-colonial states

¹⁷ Nikita Khrushchev, “Disarmament, Colonialism, and Other International Problems—Statement in the General Debate at the Fifteenth Session of the United Nations General Assembly,” 23 September 1960; Nikita Khrushchev, *Khrushchev in New York*, 28.

which, according to his rhetorical formulation, had to decide one path or the other in the Cold War struggle. Recalling that Kennedy had characterized the colonial system as being against the historical trend and that it would eventually cease to exist, the senator likely did not have to advocate for a policy of action against the perpetuation of colonialism. In addition, by not stating, in this excerpt or elsewhere, that the United States would call for action against colonialism as Khrushchev advocated, Kennedy was also engaging in placating Western European colonizing states.

In addition, Kennedy made the alignment question more important for the people of the United States insofar as the United States had to act quickly to ameliorate its lack of “vigor” at home:

Today [the Soviets] produce about 44 percent of what we produce, and yet they maintain a Communist defensive, a great military power, and increasing their power in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. I come as a citizen of the United States and say that what we are doing is not good enough. It is my responsibility as leader of the opposition party in 1960 to state that the decision which the American people will make in 1960 is between a political party which looking at the world around us and at our country says it is good enough, and a political party looking at the world around us and our own country which says it is not good enough. Our effort is not good enough. We are not moving fast enough. We are not building our strength in relation to that of the Communists with sufficient vigor.¹⁸

¹⁸ John Kennedy, Speech, City Hall Square, Bowling Green, KY, 8 October 1960; United States, John Kennedy, and Richard Nixon, *Freedom of Communications*, Part I, 526.

Kennedy's call to action for his audience was important because it directly placed the action of the United States and of its citizens as the key for deciding the alignment of the neutral states. Given Kennedy's characterization of the "razoredge" for non-aligned states, forcing the citizens of the United States to act faster in building up domestic resources and subsequently allocating more of those resources to defense and foreign-based projects was a logical concept.

The underlining concept of this policy was that outward strength would appeal to neutral states; this assumption was not necessarily true, considering that when non-aligned states met at a conference in the following year they lamented the nuclear build-up of both superpowers: "The participating countries consider that under such conditions the principles of peaceful coexistence are the only alternative to the "cold war" and to a possible general nuclear catastrophe."¹⁹ This theme would not have been alien to observers in 1960; Indonesian President Sukarno had also lamented the military dangers of the decolonizing world in his opening statement to the Bandung Conference.²⁰ Yet Kennedy's encouraging of a strong position made sense given the structure of his appeal to non-aligned states. Invoking the Soviet Union as a threat was the "stick" in the persuasion technique; the strength of the United States against this communist force was a guarantee to all potential allies that their joining of the Western bloc would provide them with more security. If this persuasion technique was too harsh or stark, then Kennedy and Nixon both provided development as a proverbial "carrot" that showed the

¹⁹ First Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, Belgrade, September 1-6, 1961. *The Five Summit Conferences of the Non-Aligned Countries: Documents* (Havana, Cuba: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1979), 10.

²⁰ Paul Halsall, "Modern History Sourcebook: President Sukarno of Indonesia: Speech at the Opening of the Bandung Conference, April 18 1955," from *Africa-Asia Speaks from Bandung* (Jakarta: Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1955), 19-29, Internet Modern History Sourcebook, <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1955sukarno-bandong.html>.

purely positive benefits of alignment with the United States. Given this overarching purpose of the balance maneuver and the rest of the rhetoric aimed at the post-colonial states, showing off the force of the United States and its domestic support was a logical decision, even if it contradicted the message coming out of the neutral states.

Kennedy was not alone in utilizing the alignment-based balance maneuver for much the same means, yet intriguingly, for the Nixon campaign, it suddenly became prevalent during the final days of the campaign; previously, its presence was somewhat less crucial than in Kennedy's early rhetoric. After a few weeks where the economy had taken center stage, a string of examples from Nixon and his running mate, Henry Cabot Lodge, exhibit how they used the alignment-based balance maneuver. First, on Halloween, Nixon spoke about peoples falling under communist rule and his language was more *realpolitik* than idealistic:

Six hundred million people went under communism [during Truman's administration]. At the end of that administration we were in a war, a war which it was necessary to go in at the time we went in, but a war which, without question, was brought on because of diplomatic policies which failed to recognize...a fundamental truth that when you deal with dictators, be they of any kind, Nazi or Communist, or whatever they may be, that the greatest mistake you can make is to draw a line and say: 'Come on in: you can have this, assuming you want no more.' That was tried in Korea. That was why President Eisenhower refused to follow that

line on Quemoy and Matsu. That's why he was right on that and Senator Kennedy was wrong...²¹

Nixon was implying that the Cold War struggle gave two options to all nations: They could either fall under communist domination or stay afloat in an alliance with the United States. This definition of the global status quo was quite similar to what Kennedy was offering in his alignment-based examples of the balance maneuver. Thus, Nixon's attempts at drawing a contrast between his position and Kennedy's on this issue were not warranted; they were in fact echoing one another in their drive for gaining new allies.

Then, on November 2nd, Nixon twice referenced President Eisenhower's record on Vietnam as one of his successes.²² Without having to use many words, this was an alignment-based balance maneuver due to Eisenhower's mixed record in Southeast Asia. On the one hand, Eisenhower had tried to find a way to support the French forces fighting to retain control in Indochina early in his administration. He had asked his advisers if the United States could intervene in order to prevent "the fall of Indochina" if the French lost at the stronghold of Dienbienphu.²³ He had additionally decided to garner NATO support for action in Indochina to bolster the French position.²⁴ Furthermore, Vice President Nixon had come out strongly in favor of defending the French position, claiming that there was "no reason why the French forces should not remain in Indochina and win. They have greater manpower, and a tremendous advantage over their

²¹ Richard Nixon, Partial Transcript, Sussex Avenue Armory, Newark NJ, 31 October 1960; United States, John Kennedy, and Richard Nixon, *Freedom of Communications*, Part II, 913.

²² Richard Nixon, Remarks, St. George Hotel, Breakfast, Brooklyn, NY, 2 November 1960, and Richard Nixon, Speech, "Nixon Tonight", CBS-TV, New York City, NY, 2 November 1960; *Ibid*, Part II, 945, 963.

²³ James S. Olson and Randy Roberts, *Where the Domino Fell: America and Vietnam, 1945 to 1995*, Second Edition (New York City: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 45.

²⁴ *Ibid*.

adversaries, particularly air power.”²⁵ These stances were decidedly not anti-colonial but they were anti-communist; the forces fighting against the French in 1954, the Viet-minh, and their leader Ho Chi Minh had a history of espousing communist viewpoints. Thus, in their defense of the French, Eisenhower and Nixon (both in 1954 and in 1960) were opposing communist infiltration into a non-communist state (a common policy given the brinksmanship of the Cold War) rather than supporting a naked attempt to perpetuate colonial rule. In fact, the other side of Eisenhower’s record was explicitly anti-colonial. He staked his NATO proposal on a position that France, in exchange for support, eventually would grant independence in Indochina.²⁶ Furthermore, President Eisenhower had publicly stated that the United States would not get involved in the conflict on behalf of the French, saying that he “could conceive of no greater tragedy” than that possibility.²⁷ Even in his private dealings with the French Eisenhower became frustrated with the French “weasel words” in support of independence.²⁸ Thus, while Eisenhower may have wanted to help the French, he was not in favor of a long duration of colonial rule. This interesting mix of anti-communism in favor of France and anti-colonial is what made Nixon’s reference to Vietnam another example of the alignment-based balance maneuver. Both required subjects of the balance maneuver were present within that one word, “Vietnam.”

Then, the next day, Richard Nixon attacked Kennedy in Columbia, South Carolina by claiming that his policies meddled in the affairs of sovereign states: “The South cannot support a candidate who would hand over to Communists any of freedom’s

²⁵ Ibid, 44.

²⁶ Ibid, 45.

²⁷ Ibid, 44.

²⁸ Ibid, 46.

outposts—who would bumblingly [sic] intervene in the internal affairs of our Latin American neighbors—who would discontinue the gathering of intelligence information whenever Communists might agree to hold a meeting.”²⁹ “Intelligence” in this case referred to Eisenhower’s public relations disaster when a U-2 spy plane piloted by Gary Powers crashed in the Soviet Union; this snafu derailed a summit that Khrushchev and Eisenhower held in Paris. Nixon had referred to this incident during the campaign before; on September 12th, he claimed that Eisenhower’s reaction to the incident, successfully mixing diplomacy with belligerence without heaping personal insults at Khrushchev, characterized the President as acting “confidently and maturely.”³⁰ Kennedy did not, on his part, often criticize Eisenhower’s record on the U-2 incident, yet Nixon was attempting to sneak in an attack on Kennedy through invoking the positives of this event. Typically, any attacks that Kennedy made were done so indirectly, such as when he said, “For I am not satisfied when the President of the United States is insulted by a dictator in Paris...”³¹ For the keyed-in observer, the reference to Eisenhower’s U-2 mistake would have been obvious in this seemingly non-partisan defense of the sitting president against a common enemy. Due to criticisms like this, Nixon could get away with leveling his attack against Kennedy and, thus, could provide the anti-communist side of this alignment-based balance maneuver.

Yet the reference to the internal affairs in Latin America provided the anti-colonial side of the equation. While Nixon did claim, in an ideals-based vein, that

²⁹ Richard Nixon, Statement on Topics to be Discussed in TV Speech Upon Arrival in Columbia, SC, 3 November 1960; United States, John Kennedy, and Richard Nixon, *Freedom of Communications*, Part II, 970.

³⁰ Richard Nixon, Remarks, Monument Circle, Indianapolis, IN, 12 September 1960 & Richard Nixon, Remarks, Union Square, San Francisco, CA, 12 September 1960; *Ibid*, Part II, 74-75.

³¹ John Kennedy, Remarks, Sheraton Park Hotel, Washington, DC, 20 September 1960; *Ibid*, Part I, 296.

Kennedy would cede territories to the Communists in “freedom’s outposts,” his actual criticism had nothing directly to do with communism. What he was actually advocating for was not interfering in the domestic politics and policies of Latin American states; the surrounding text indicated that Nixon would defend their right to be “free” in both senses of the term but he explicitly barred the intervention of the United States into internal issues. This statement was anti-colonial because he was denying the feasibility of influencing a nation from afar, which was the inherent purpose of a colonial system. Nixon was also defending, in a way, the more established United States policy of the Monroe Doctrine, mandating that the United States would not allow any interference of the European powers into Latin America. In fact, Kennedy would have agreed with that position; he had referred on the campaign trail to “hemispheric solidarity” amongst all states in the Western Hemisphere, which was both a Cold War concept (Kennedy claimed that the Communists, through taking Cuba, were attacking this solidarity) but also was a reiteration of the Monroe Doctrine.³² Yet Nixon went the step further of opposing any interference, of the Europeans or the Americans or anyone else. This strict defense of autonomy and sovereignty was an anti-colonial position, even if Nixon did not characterize it as such. It also appealed strongly to the neutral and post-colonial states by assuring that their sovereignty would not become subservient to the priorities of the United States within a prospective alliance.

A few days later, on November 6th, Nixon once again returned to his theme of non-aligned states being the battleground of the Cold War. This idea was a key of the alignment-based balance maneuver because it placed post-colonial states in the crosshairs

³² John Kennedy, Speech, Democratic Fund-Raising Dinner, Syracuse, NY, 29 September 1960; Ibid, Part I, 411.

of the Cold War struggle; it subsumed the issue of colonialism under the overwhelming paradigm of East versus West, of communism versus freedom and democracy.

Intriguingly, Nixon offered a distinct policy position that was intended to garner more allies to the United States under his broader worldview. He called for the invitation of leaders of satellite states of the Soviet Union and also of other foreign leaders from non-aligned states to visit Washington, DC and meet with the president. He also called for high-level emissaries of the United States to visit these states, naming as possible examples Presidents Eisenhower, Truman, and Hoover.³³

This theme of reaching out to non-aligned states as diplomatic powers in their own right continued on the next day, the last of the campaign, when running mate Henry Cabot Lodge spoke on a nationally broadcast television program: “I think we’ve got to recognize that the world is a very diverse place. Each nation is really a separate proposition. You can’t broadly divide the world into your opponents and your allies and the neutrals. It isn’t that simple.”³⁴ This statement was contradictory to the alignment-based balance maneuvers employed by Kennedy and Nixon elsewhere insofar as it explicitly rejected the notion of states having to ally themselves one way or another in the Cold War conflict. Cabot Lodge was attempting to assert the worth of other states without invoking the Cold War; this diplomatic maneuver was indirectly anti-colonial because of its rejection of subsuming the world into what the United States perceived it to be. Post-colonial states, under Cabot Lodge’s formula, did not have to concern themselves with Cold War alignment as their primary issue; this stance would have been

³³ Richard Nixon, Nationwide Television Speech, Los Angeles, CA, 6 November 1960; Ibid, Part II, 1053-1061.

³⁴ Henry Cabot Lodge, Remarks, National Telethon, ABC, Southfield, MI, 7 November 1960; Ibid, Part II, 1102.

refreshing to post-colonial states, such as those at the Bandung Conference, that were looking to focus on their domestic agendas without getting embroiled in the Cold War. Furthermore, Cabot Lodge prefaced his comment with this blatant contradiction of his patron Nixon: “I would say that there’s nothing inconsistent with the best interests of the United States in countries not wishing to get committed in the struggle which the Soviet Union forces on us.”³⁵ The urgency with which Kennedy and Nixon had spoken about the need for countries to join the United States against the communist bloc was outright rejected by Cabot Lodge. There was an explanation for this, however: Cabot Lodge’s position before being tapped as Nixon’s running mate was as Ambassador to the United Nations, and he had therefore had exposure to representatives from the non-aligned, post-colonial states to which he was referring. Nixon and Kennedy had had far less direct exposure to representatives from those states, and they more ably integrated those states into the Cold War paradigm of ally, enemy, and neutral, where a neutral was a state to be won into allied camp or lost into the enemy tally.

Yet, it must be said, Nixon did explicitly reject the notion that the neutral states were pawns in a greater struggle: “...our concern for [the people of Asia, Africa, and Latin America] is not simply because we’re trying to save our own bacon, but because we really want to help them so that they can help themselves, that we want the whole world to progress with us.”³⁶ Kennedy had made a similar statement as well, claiming that helping those states in question was not from the position of a “paternalistic country that desires to use them in a world war struggle.”³⁷ These two examples were another kind of

³⁵ Henry Cabot Lodge, Remarks, National Telethon, ABC, Southfield, MI, 7 November 1960; Ibid.

³⁶ Richard Nixon, Speech, Columbian Republican League Luncheon, Commodore Hotel, New York City, NY, 5 October 1960; Ibid, Part II, 462.

³⁷ John Kennedy, Speech, Portland, OR, 7 September 1960; Ibid, Part I, 160.

alignment-based balance maneuver in which both candidates downplayed the importance of the Cold War in the formation and codification of strong diplomatic ties between the United States and non-aligned, post-colonial states. Yet the very denial of the Cold War as the genesis for those relationships placed that paradigm in the foreground; if neither man truly wanted to emphasize its role in these emerging relationships, then neither would have had to explicitly deny its influence and importance. Furthermore, what the candidates were saying did not correlate with Cabot Lodge's Election Eve statement because, while the candidates were denying that they were seeking diplomatic ties due to the Cold War, Cabot Lodge was denying that states had to choose a side in that struggle. Kennedy and Nixon never denied the existence and the urgency of that decision, even if diplomatic links were not dependent on that decision being made. The distinction between the two arguments is crucial because Cabot Lodge's statement was the only one that completely subsumed the Cold War paradigm into the actual status quo of the rest of the world. Kennedy and Nixon were, as in prior examples, trying to integrate post-colonial positions, even in the realm of diplomatic niceties, into their pre-existing conception of the globe as a struggle between the superpowers.

Therein one found the crux of the balance maneuver in both of its manifestations: Nixon proposed a rhetorical solution for the Cold War wherein decolonized states, as the actors making the alignment decision, were the crucial factor for success. In such a formulation, the Western European powers could not oppose Nixon's argument without acquiescing to a stronger Soviet presence, post-colonial states theoretically could not oppose the guarantee of domestic sovereignty and international protection at the price of an alliance, and the Soviet Union could not successfully claim that the United States was

a colonial power so long as the post-colonial states were entering voluntarily into the proposed diplomatic network of the U.S. Therefore, Nixon in this case, as well as Kennedy elsewhere, achieved with the balance maneuver what rhetoric rarely can: *a fait accompli*.

Chapter 3

Taking the Offensive: How Kennedy and Nixon Targeted "Red Colonialism"

While Offering the Promise of Development

As harsh as some of the rhetoric in the balance maneuver was, it was inherently passive. Kennedy and Nixon connected colonialism to communism to achieve a variety of ends but directly engaging the Soviets or non-aligned peoples was not usually one of them. However, Kennedy and Nixon did take the offensive and create a more active rhetoric that at once attacked the Soviet Union on their own turf, in Eastern Europe, while promising development to those states who chose to align with the United States. The threat of Soviet domination, especially for states coming out of colonialism, was a source of negative reinforcements, or the “stick” that strongly reinforced the Cold War priorities that the balance maneuver exhibited. Development for aligned states was, in contrast, a positive future, the “carrot” that displayed a material gain from making the “right” decision, according to Kennedy and Nixon’s rhetoric.

“Isolated in its Tyranny”: Soviet Colonialism in Eastern Europe

If the balance maneuver was a *fait accompli* that changed the ground rules of the colonial debate into a Cold War question, then using a colonial-based rhetoric to attack the Soviet position in Eastern Europe changed the ground rules of what exactly colonialism was and where it played a role. Instead of subsuming discussion of Western European colonialism into the Cold War paradigm, sometimes the candidates decided to directly attack the lofty position of the Soviet Union on the issue of colonialism. In so doing, they were following in the footsteps of the Eisenhower administration in redefining colonialism to include the Soviet satellites in Eastern Europe. Once those

areas could be included in the debate, harsh critiques against Western European colonialism such as the ones that Khrushchev was making at the United Nations were no longer impervious to counterattacks.

Yet simply invoking the Soviet Union along with the concept of colonialism without providing a rationale for that maneuver would have rang hollow, especially given the lack of success of that strategy during the Eisenhower years. Therefore, both candidates had to provide an argument that proved their point. The first such line of reasoning was the ideals-based tact that corresponded with the characterization of the United States as the representative of freedom; the Soviet Union was instead depicted as a tyrant and an enslaver of nations. Richard Nixon made this reasoning distinct when, at a dinner of the American Nationalities Committee for Nixon and Lodge, he claimed that “[the Soviets] do not bring independence, they do not bring the opposition to colonialism which they say they stand for. They impose upon the countries who [sic] are taken in by their propaganda a colonialism far more lasting and a colonialism far worse than any people ever dreamed of before.”¹ In this case Nixon was engaging in electioneering in much the same way that Kennedy was at the Hotel Theresa; a committee of nationalities would have likely wanted to hear Nixon’s plan for the different peoples of the world, and if they were already supporters of Nixon, then a strong anti-communist appeal as part of that message would have been expected and desired. However, Nixon’s statement could have referred easily to both the Soviet incursion into former colonial territories of Western Europe and the Soviet rule over Eastern Europe. In both cases, “a colonialism far worse than any people ever dreamed of before” would have been present, according to

¹ Richard Nixon, Remarks, Meeting of the American Nationalities Committee for Nixon-Lodge, Washington Hotel, Washington, D.C., 19 September 1960; United States, John Kennedy, and Richard Nixon, *Freedom of Communications*, Part II, 176.

the candidates. Yet, in this example, Nixon did not specify that Eastern Europe was a colonial topic. His attack was more general and spoke to Soviet involvement in all possible locations; thus, Nixon's appeal was more so a defense of containment than a critique of Soviet imperialism.

On the other hand, Nixon did turn to Soviet involvement in Eastern Europe, and in the tradition established by propaganda efforts during the Eisenhower years, this discussion was tied to civil rights. Nixon told his audience in Tennessee that the reason to solve the "difficult and complex problem" of civil rights was to prevent Khrushchev from having a pedestal from which to criticize the United States:

Let's get a solution so that we cannot have a man like Mr. Khrushchev, who has enslaved millions, and I have seen them, who has slaughtered thousands; and I have seen Hungarians come across the line, getting away from the tyranny of Khrushchev in Budapest—this enslaver of millions must not be able to come into the United States and point the finger at us and say, "You're the ones who are denying the right of people."²

Just as the balance maneuver changed the question from Western European colonialism to communism, and just as Kennedy has made a domestic debate turn to foreign policy, this example changed the question of civil rights; it was no longer one of morality or legality at home but rather it turned to the threat of communism, even in a rhetorical manner.

The language used by Nixon in this case was quite strong. Considering the overarching discussion was on a racial question, invoking the term "enslaver" would

² Richard Nixon, Excerpts of Remarks, War Memorial Square, Nashville, TN, 6 October 2008; Ibid, Part II, 471-472.

have resonated quite strongly with the crowd, who would have then connected the Soviet enemy to yet another moral issue on which the United States held the higher ground. In fact, establishing a hierarchy of race was seemingly the intent of Nixon using Eastern Europe in this case. While the audience did not receive any details about the “Hungarians” aside from their numbers and their desire to flee Soviet domination, the theme that the United States was superior even on the question of race was implicit throughout. Segregation engendered many injustices, but it was not a system of slavery—therein was the crux of Nixon’s argument against the Soviet Union and against Khrushchev personally.

Therefore, Nixon did invoke Eastern Europe, but not so much to highlight the strife of its peoples but rather as a manner of deflecting criticism away from racial injustices of the United States. Aside from the examples listed, Nixon rarely if ever turned to Eastern Europe. John Kennedy, on the other hand, invoked Eastern Europe much more often, with at least eight instances during the campaign. There are some possible explanations for this discrepancy: Whereas Kennedy, as the Democratic candidate, had been charged as being soft on communism, Nixon had not received such criticism, especially considering his personal connection to anti-communist efforts at home as a prominent member of the quintessential Red Scare governmental body, the House Un-American Activities Committee. Ergo, while Nixon did not have to regularly show off his anti-communist credentials, Kennedy did have to prove them to an electorate apprehensive of electing anyone who was not seen as viscerally anti-communist. However, Kennedy’s strong anti-communist rhetoric throughout the campaign shows that he did not have to focus on Eastern Europe in order to achieve this end. In fact, he

consciously wanted to evade the “beautiful loser” example of former presidential nominee Adlai Stevenson, who had been seen as much more of an intellectual who spoke elegantly but coldly even on questions of anti-communism.³ Given this mindset, Kennedy likely did not have to strain himself in order to criticize the USSR. A second possible explanation relies on the explanation by Osgood that the concept of “Red Colonialism” had gotten nowhere in diplomatic and propaganda efforts. Nixon, as part of the Eisenhower administration, may have been more aware of the ineffectiveness of this tactic and decided to focus his foreign policy discussions elsewhere; however, the fact that Kennedy was on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and thus was likely shown similar evidence that Nixon would have seen, makes this explanation less valid. A third explanation hinges on the balance maneuver; as the examples showed, Nixon’s strong criticisms of the Soviet Union in his usage of the balance maneuver were slightly more prevalent than those of Kennedy. If this explanation is correct, both candidates showed off anti-communist credentials but Kennedy decided to make Eastern Europe a more central point of contention with the Soviets whereas Nixon decided to focus on other lines of reasoning. It was not, therefore, a discrepancy of rhetorical strength but rather a divergence of campaign tactics.

Kennedy’s discussions of Eastern Europe occurred throughout the campaign, but the greatest concentration of them happened in anticipation of and during Khrushchev’s visit to Manhattan. Taking four examples in chronological succession, from September 16th until September 27th, shows how Kennedy turned Eastern Europe into a colonial question. First, on the 16th, Kennedy spoke in Maryland in a speech where

³ David Talbot. *Brothers: The Hidden History of the Kennedy Years* (New York City: Free Press, 2007), 36.

he, in his own words, spoke to Khrushchev not as a candidate but as an American citizen. His first decision was to conduct a character attack on Khrushchev, attacking his lack of knowledge of the Bible and also his intelligence: "...Mr. Khrushchev himself, it is said, told the story a few years ago about the Russian who began to run through the Kremlin, shouting, 'Khrushchev is a fool. Khrushchev is a fool.' He was sentenced, the Premier said, to 23 years in prison, '3 for insulting the party secretary, and 20 for revealing a state secret.'"⁴ The joke may have been quite funny for Kennedy's audience but it did not establish a diplomatic tact; the tone was at best confrontational and at worst explicitly inflammatory.

Then Kennedy turned to the question of Western European colonialism. After claiming that the West was "not wholly prepared or united" on the issue and focusing particularly on the Algerian problem's "fester[ing] too long without a solution," Kennedy then defended Western Europe as aiding the creation of "economic independence" for their former colonies.⁵ Showing the positive side of the Western European colonial record was not surprising, given Kennedy's desire to placate Western Europe through using a alignment-based argument. In fact, Kennedy adeptly acknowledged his established position on Algeria while not being too rough against crucial allies. This argument also established the first portion of a balance maneuver based on Eastern Europe. Kennedy closed the paragraph on Western European colonialism by directly chastising the Soviet Union as "the most ruthless colonial power in the history of the world."⁶ Yet again Kennedy's lack of diplomatic tact was striking, but such intense

⁴ John Kennedy, Speech, Pikesville Armory, Pikesville, MD, 16 September 1960; United States, John Kennedy, and Richard Nixon, *Freedom of Communications*, Part I, 259.

⁵ John Kennedy, Speech, Pikesville Armory, Pikesville, MD, 16 September 1960; *Ibid*, Part I, 260.

⁶ John Kennedy, Speech, Pikesville Armory, Pikesville, MD, 16 September 1960; *Ibid*.

language served two ends: It distracted attention away from Western European colonialism because the hyperbole of the Soviet example demanded that people listen, and it shored up Kennedy's anti-communist credentials by showing an ostensible disregard for the concerns of the Soviet Union.

Kennedy subsequently entered into a scathing indictment of why he characterized the USSR as a ruthless colonial power: "To rail against colonialism while holding an iron empire in your grasp, all the way from East Berlin to Vietnam in the half circle, is to achieve new heights of hypocrisy."⁷ There was both an ideals-based and a alignment-based element to this criticism. For the former, Kennedy established that the Soviet Union was holding an empire in all areas that were under communist rule. By using East Berlin and Vietnam as the two bookends of the communist map, Kennedy was presenting a monolithic vision of what the Soviet Union held in its empire. Eastern Europe was not the only focus but was rather one portion of the larger bloc. This presentation of the facts was inherently flawed due to the divergence between the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China and the fact that not every communist state ruled at the behest of directives from Moscow. Still, using alignment-based hyperbole was a continuation of Kennedy's language from earlier in the speech and it established to the audience that the Soviet Union was indeed a far worse colonial entity than Western Europe, who was encouraging development and independence for its colonies, according to Kennedy. The ideals-based facet of this argument was that the Soviet Union was hypocritical for criticizing Western colonialism while holding onto such a large empire. The implication was that the United States did not exhibit such hypocrisy; it claimed to be anti-colonial in word and deed and there was no problem, despite the obvious problem inherent in being

⁷ John Kennedy, Speech, Pikesville Armory, Pikesville, MD, 16 September 1960; Ibid.

allied with European colonizers. Kennedy was thus glossing over the nuances of the colonial issue and instead was focusing on the simplistic dichotomy of “bad” colonialism with the Soviet Union and “not as bad” colonialism from Western Europe.

Kennedy then continued his critical analysis: “To bring with you your puppet rulers of your satellite states only indicates to us that while there may be satellite rules, there are never satellite peoples.”⁸ His rhetorical goal here was to separate the puppet leadership of Soviet controlled territory, most specifically Eastern Europe, from the people living in those nations. Even if the rulers wanted to be part of the Soviet bloc, Kennedy claimed that the residents of those states would not necessarily choose that path. In fact, by making the distinction so clear, Kennedy was nearly assuring his audience that, given the opportunity, Eastern Europeans would join the bloc of the United States. Then Kennedy provided a clear reason why they would make this decision: “And any U.N. debate on the subject of colonialism should bring out the subject of the Soviet Union’s butchery in Budapest.”⁹ Kennedy was referencing the events of fall 1956 in Hungary wherein a new leader, Imre Nagy, established a government that wanted to reform the country and negotiate with the Soviets as opposed to receiving orders from them. Nagy established a cease-fire but his lieutenants could not maintain it; the Soviet army stormed into Budapest on November 4th, 1956 and violently crushed the new reformist force in Hungary. Intriguingly, when it had seemed like Hungary would become an example of the success of the United States in courting peoples behind the Iron Curtain, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles had claimed to his staff that the idea

⁸ John Kennedy, Speech, Pikesville Armory, Pikesville, MD, 16 September 1960; Ibid.

⁹ John Kennedy, Speech, Pikesville Armory, Pikesville, MD, 16 September 1960; Ibid.

of liberation had been vindicated by Nagy's leadership.¹⁰ Although this event did draw some attention, it happened concurrently with the Suez crisis, thus giving the Soviets the ability to deflect attention from their efforts by implicating the British, the French, and the Israelis in Egypt. Yet four years later Dulles's sentiment was echoed by Kennedy, who in mentioning the Soviet record in Hungary was trying to demonstrate the Soviet ruthlessness to which he had referred earlier in the speech. This choice was likely efficacious, because Kennedy had to provide at least one example that could compare, even at an ostensible level, with the brutal violence that was occurring in Algeria and that had been present in the French war in Indochina.

Kennedy then closed his point by changing the focus back to the periphery of the communist bloc by claiming that the Soviet Union would not, in the long term, make gains in Cuba and in the Congo. His reasoning was ideals-based rather than alignment-based; he referred expectedly to the dichotomy between the "dictatorship" of the Soviet Union and the "road to freedom" offered by the United States.¹¹ He also made a domestic connection by claiming that the United States would regain allies because these prospective friendly states would "admire [the] example" provided at home; the implication was that, as part of Kennedy's foreign policy, efforts would be undertaken to ameliorate civil rights difficulties. This closing statement of the colonial argument was intriguing because it established the Soviet domination over Eastern Europe as part of the broader theme of the negative characteristics of the Soviet model. The need to oppose that system connected to other colonial questions, Cold War priorities, and Kennedy's

¹⁰ Townsend Hoopes. *The Devil and John Foster Dulles* (Boston, MA: Atlantic Monthly Press Book, 1973, 372-374.

¹¹ John Kennedy, Speech, Pikesville Armory, Pikesville, MD, 16 September 1960; United States, John Kennedy, and Richard Nixon, *Freedom of communication*, Part I, 261.

domestic agenda. This closing also explains why Kennedy took such a harsh stance against Khrushchev in this speech; he had to establish the Soviet specter in order to support all of his other policy positions.

Thus, in this first appearance, Eastern Europe was important but was not the central focus. This changed in the next case, a speech at the Sheraton Park Hotel in the nation's capital on September 20th. This speech was a long discussion of foreign affairs, including colonialism, as part of Kennedy's outline of his priorities abroad. Intriguingly, just as Nixon would later discuss a personal visit to Hong Kong as a way of criticizing Western European colonialism, Kennedy spoke of two visits he had made to Eastern Europe, one in 1939 and another in 1955. The language that Kennedy invoked humanized the colonial issue:

On my way to visit Russia in 1939, I passed through Poland and Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Czechoslovakia and Hungary. They were free and independent nations, while the Soviet Union was isolated in its tyranny. But in 1955, I saw the people of Eastern Europe again. Their freedom was gone and in its place was the most cruel change that one nation ever had applied to another. No man could speak his mind. No home was safe and there was no freedom of religious worship.¹²

The problem of Soviet colonial rule in Eastern Europe, according to Kennedy, was one of individualized domination; the question was about the rights of each person for religious and other freedoms, not necessarily about the independence of the state itself. Therein Kennedy could imply the hierarchy of making Soviet colonialism worse than the Western European variety: whereas the Western European colonialism was abating and allowing

¹² John Kennedy, Remarks, Sheraton Park Hotel, Washington, DC, 20 September 1960; Ibid, Part I, 295.

for more and more individual liberties (after all, France had given Algerians certain ostensible political rights including representation in Paris), the Soviet version would do no such thing. The USSR, and Khrushchev as its leader, demanded domination of the person, which in Kennedy's rhetoric was a far worse version of colonialism. Thus, by invoking the human side of Soviet rule, Kennedy adeptly established the hierarchy of moral decrepitude in colonialism in all its forms. Western European colonialism was not a positive force but the Soviet variety was worse due to the human element.

Therefore, with the criticism of Khrushchev and the Soviet Union strongly invoked through strikingly undiplomatic language and a humanized example, Kennedy then turned on September 22nd to establishing continuity between all forms of colonialism. In citing the "basic, strong passion running through the world to be free and independent," Kennedy linked the struggle of Eastern Europeans against Communists to that of Africans and Latin Americans against colonizers.¹³ This maneuver was ideals-based because it placed freedom, the symbol of the United States, as the dichotomous opposite of any form of one country ruling another, be it colonialism in the traditional sense or the Soviet model in Eastern Europe. Even though Kennedy established that the Soviet version was worse, neither could be tolerated by the United States. Establishing that colonialism in all its forms was not acceptable was a strategy for reinforcing the connection that the balance maneuver established, namely that colonialism was linked with the Cold War and thus with the foreign policy and security of the United States. In fact, this line of three speeches was a balance maneuver of sorts over multiple speeches wherein Kennedy invoked the Communist enemy, maligned it, but then reminded his audience that it could not ignore the other colonial problems of the world.

¹³ John Kennedy, Sioux City, IA, 22 September 1960; Ibid, Part I, 315.

This led to the fourth statement in which Kennedy explicitly cautioned his listeners against focusing solely on Eastern Europe and the fight against communism: “...one of our difficulties has been that we have talked about enslavement of Eastern Europe and never said a word about Africa for the last 10 years.”¹⁴ It is interesting that Kennedy’s statement was extemporaneous; the speech preceding the question and answer session that produced this quote had very little if anything to do with colonialism. Thus, Kennedy’s declaration that African issues needed more attention was not a calculated effort but was rather a possible reflection of his own prioritization. It also confirms that Kennedy’s invoking of Eastern Europe was, in part, an effort to attack the Soviet Union without delving into the complexities of that region’s issues and problems. It was also a route that Kennedy took to reintroduce the broader question of colonialism within the explicitly delineated lines of the Cold War conflict.

Ergo, for both candidates, then the discussion of Eastern Europe served to characterize the Soviet Union as the worst colonial power. However, this amounted to little more than finger-pointing by claiming that Khrushchev standing was worse than that of the Western European allies of the United States. Eastern Europe therefore served as a placating device for those very allies, as a catalyst for fomenting anti-Soviet opinions and for shoring up anti-communist credentials, and as a method for discussion colonialism within a context that made it salient, the Cold War. Yet its perhaps more important function was only implicit: Eastern Europe showed neutral states what their future could entail if they aligned with the Soviet Union. Invoking Eastern Europe was

¹⁴ John Kennedy, Question and Answer Period Following Speech to Mormon Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, UT, 23 September 1960; Ibid, Part I, 353.

therefore effective for achieving all of the candidates' rhetorical goals—placating Western Europe, attracting the non-aligned nations, and attacking the Soviet Union.

Yet discussing Eastern Europe as a colonial issue was not a new strategy in 1960. The notion of changing the boundaries of colonialism was born from the propaganda warfare of the United States Information Agency in the 1950s. Cold War historian Kenneth Osgood postulates that the Eisenhower administration was faced with “an impossible position” of trying to retain a positive image in Africa whilst reassuring Europeans who were suspicious of the United States on the question of colonialism.¹⁵ The solution was to describe the Soviet Union in imperialist terms. Under the banner theme of “Exposing Red Colonialism” administration officials made the case the Soviet Union represented a new and more virulent colonial threat.¹⁶ However, these efforts were, by their own admission, not successful; most states dealing with colonialism were much more concerned with the Western European variety than with communist incursion. The National Security Council went so far as to admit, “Western attempts to picture Soviet Russia as a colonial power itself have simply not been believed.”¹⁷ Racial strife in the American South only worsened these propaganda efforts because the ostensible argument for equality could not stand up against the harsh reality of riots, segregation, and the injustices of the Jim Crow system.

Despite the lack of success, Kennedy and Nixon both turned to the notion of the Soviet Union as an imperial state. This likely occurred for two reasons: On the one

¹⁵ Kenneth Osgood, “Words and Deeds: Race, Colonialism, and Eisenhower’s Propaganda War in the Third World,” in *The Eisenhower Administration, the Third World, and the Globalization of the Cold War*, ed. Kathryn C. Statler and Andrew L. Johns (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 3-25, 11.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

hand, Osgood is correct in claiming that no viable solution existed for the problem of reconciling the conflicting priorities of anti-colonialism with European alliance and with the containment of the Cold War without changing and broadening the scope of colonial arguments. Combining the “red colonialism” argument with the balance maneuver created a stronger case for neutral states in favor of alignment with the United States against the communist bloc. In addition, utilizing development as a counterweight to the fear-mongering anti-Soviet rhetoric was a much more effective appeal that did not rely at all upon characterizations of the USSR.

Intriguingly, in the face of all of this criticism, Khrushchev offered a short retort: “It could be said that it is easy for the Soviet Union to speak for the elimination of the colonial regime since the Soviet Union has no colonies. Yes, this is so. We have neither colonies nor capital in other countries.”¹⁸ Clearly both sides’ leaders wanted to deflect attention to the negativities of the “other” rather than dealing with their own problems. Yet for all three leaders, development provided another rhetorical route wherein a positive future could become manifest without addressing their own colonial quandaries.

Turning to the Positives: The Promise of Development

In the diplomatic chess game of 1960, development was the “carrot”. It was the promise to post-colonial states: If you align with the United States, you will receive material aid that will improve the lives of everyone within your boundaries. Non-alignment was, in this vein, nothing better than the rejection of this aid and a statement in favor of the alternative—an abstract middle ground yielding no benefits to the populace and, possibly, a perceived creeping toward the Soviet column of the Cold War. This

¹⁸ Nikita Khrushchev, “Disarmament, Colonialism, and Other International Problems—Statement in the General Debate at the Fifteenth Session of the United Nations General Assembly”, 23 September 1960; Nikita Khrushchev, *Khrushchev in New York*, 31.

portion of the chapter will look at the complexities of the development rhetoric in the campaign and how both candidates simultaneously used development for humanitarian sake and to achieve the Cold War aim of alignment. Furthermore, Nixon continually discussed conditions on which development depended; these conditions reveal a preference for these states to develop within the framework established by the United States, thus returning to the notion of the United States as the ideals-based, and otherwise, leader of the world that infused the anti-colonial rhetoric discussed in the first chapter. Yet first, in order to show that development has a strong political side, the rhetoric of Nikita Khrushchev on this very subject deserves an analysis.

While Chairman Khrushchev was speaking at the United Nations, attacking Western colonialism and the failure of the United States and others to effectively oppose that system, he also turned to the question of development. His words on this subject are particularly interesting because, on this occasion, he was speaking about exactly the same issue as Kennedy and Nixon. On other subject matters, one side was always on the defensive; in this case, both sides took a forward-looking approach even if their methods of getting to a similar end were entirely different.

However, the two sides did have one major difference in regard to the context of development: While Kennedy and Nixon did not explicitly tie colonialism to development, Khrushchev established that link as early as he could during his address to the General Assembly: “One of the chief features of this epoch and its very essence is, however, the awakening of the erstwhile backward, downtrodden, and oppressed peoples... We know indeed, that tens of millions of people are still languishing in

colonial bondage, and are experiencing cruel deprivations.”¹⁹ This citation established a clear connection between colonialism and development. The people under colonial rule were simultaneously “oppressed” and “backward”, colonized and under-developed. Being “downtrodden” was the result of these two characteristics, because the combination of not having political rights and not having material well-being created conditions that could only lead to a downtrodden culture. Khrushchev described a second analogous condition by connecting “colonial bondage” and “cruel deprivations.” By saying that “tens of millions of people” lived under these conditions, Khrushchev established that both colonialism and underdevelopment were problems for a vast proportion of the world’s population and that they coincided. It is true that “cruel deprivations” could have a primarily political meaning, indicating the deprivation of the rights of governance in the face of colonization, but considering that this phrase followed the use of “backward” and “downtrodden”, Khrushchev was likely referring to both the colonial context and to development.

Later in the same address, Khrushchev turned to development more explicitly. First he ruled out the possibility that areas could successfully develop while under colonial rule. Citing India, Indonesia, Burma, and Afghanistan, Khrushchev claimed that post-colonial states were improving vastly. These states’ development projects included new buildings, roads, dams, and universities—thus, infrastructural and educational

¹⁹ Nikita Khrushchev, “Disarmament, Colonialism, and Other International Problems—Statement in the General Debate at the Fifteenth Session of the United Nations General Assembly”, 23 September 1960; Nikita Khrushchev. *Khrushchev in New York: A documentary record of Nikita S. Khrushchev’s trip to New York, September 19th to October 13th, 1960, including all his speeches and proposals to the United Nations and major addresses and news conferences* (New York City: Crosscurrents Press, 1960), 12.

improvements were, in Khrushchev's definition, the bellwether of development.²⁰ Why could these projects not work in colonized areas? Khrushchev explained thusly:

Can such a picture be seen in the colonies? Such things do not and cannot exist there. There the complete arbitrary rule of the foreigners reigns supreme. Peoples of the colonial countries have not only been deprived of the right to independence and self-government, but their national and human feelings and dignity are insulted and flouted at every step. The foreign monopolies pump out of the colonies all that is of value, they barbarically plunder the wealth by means of merciless exploitation.²¹

Once again, the link between colonial exploitation and impairments to development was made manifest by the Chairman. This connection was not inherent, however. His alleged fact, that the “complete arbitrary rule of the foreigners reign[ed] supreme”, was not necessarily a restriction on development, assuming that those foreign powers were investing in infrastructure within the state in order to improve their own assets. However, Khrushchev claimed that these colonizers, beyond disregarding the wealth of the individuals under their rule, were only looking out for their domestic economies. What Khrushchev described was not simply colonial rule wherein one state ruled over another through political and military means; his delineated system was mercantilism wherein the colonizing states seized all marketable assets from the colonies for their own usage at home without regard to the welfare of the areas being exploited. Thus, in this system

²⁰ Nikita Khrushchev, “Disarmament, Colonialism, and Other International Problems—Statement in the General Debate at the Fifteenth Session of the United Nations General Assembly”, 23 September 1960; Nikita Khrushchev. *Khrushchev in New York*, 24-25.

²¹ Nikita Khrushchev, “Disarmament, Colonialism, and Other International Problems—Statement in the General Debate at the Fifteenth Session of the United Nations General Assembly”, 23 September 1960; Ibid.

according to Khrushchev, colonized territories could not develop because the capital needed for that process would never be available so long as the colonizing powers took all that they fancied.

Then Khrushchev criticized the notion that ending colonialism would impair the economic well-being of colonies that had experienced some degree of development. Here the Chairman invoked a Marxist disdain for the ruling classes, referred to as “millionaires and billionaires,” who monopolized the resources of colonized states even if those areas had been developed by the metropole.²² He claimed that neither the people in the exploited territory nor the majority of the people in the colonizing state receive the benefits of this monopolization of wealth. The implicit message in this case was a utilitarian concept that the welfare of the many in both states would be improved by ending a system that inherently advantaged a privileged few. Therefore, even in “developed” colonies, ending the colonial system would yield many more benefits for many more people than the continuation of the status quo. Then Khrushchev ended his development discussion by claiming that ending colonial rule would allow for increased trade revenues. According to this hypothesis, a developing state could fortify its internal economy to such a robust level that more goods, both raw and manufactured, could become available for commerce.²³ Yet again the concept of equality and fairness was Khrushchev’s ideals-based defense of this policy recommendation; he claimed that,

²² Nikita Khrushchev, “Disarmament, Colonialism, and Other International Problems—Statement in the General Debate at the Fifteenth Session of the United Nations General Assembly”, 23 September 1960; *Ibid.*, 37.

²³ Nikita Khrushchev, “Disarmament, Colonialism, and Other International Problems—Statement in the General Debate at the Fifteenth Session of the United Nations General Assembly”, 23 September 1960; *Ibid.*

through establishing trade relationships, developing and post-colonial states could form “a more progressive” system of relations with already developed, i.e. colonizing, states.²⁴

Throughout this rhetoric, the notion of development and the criticism of colonialism were wedded together. In a condensed formula, one could boil down Khrushchev’s discussion of the relationship of these two issues to the postulate that, so long as colonial rule exists, a given area will not successfully develop. Conversely, the absence of a colonial yoke, and the liberation of the colonized peoples, allowed for massive gains in the internal economy in the sectors of infrastructure, education, and interstate commerce. While one can debate the validity of Khrushchev’s claims, the important fact for this study is that the political element to the development equation is ubiquitous. Development’s success relied upon the termination of colonialism; the link was causal, definitive, and implicitly irrevocable. Therefore, when examining what Kennedy and Nixon had to say about development, the political aspects must remain prevalent in the analysis even when the two candidates downplay or ignore them. Furthermore, Khrushchev’s continual emphasis on equality amongst the nations was an indirect critique of the capitalist system and an affirmation of the Marxist conception of a classless society, even on a global scale. The implied message was thus one of alignment with the Soviet Union so as to best achieve that end. Non-alignment would also be efficacious if for no other reason than it significantly opposed the augmentation of the power of the capitalist Western nations through refusing to add even more resources to an already powerful bloc. Conversely, in the rhetoric of Kennedy and Nixon, development was an argument for alignment with the Western bloc, i.e. that of the United States. In

²⁴ Nikita Khrushchev, “Disarmament, Colonialism, and Other International Problems—Statement in the General Debate at the Fifteenth Session of the United Nations General Assembly”, 23 September 1960; Ibid.

response to Khrushchev's harsh criticisms of colonialism and the West, both candidates had to explain just how the development process would work for nations aligned with the United States.

Surprisingly, Kennedy's response to this strongly articulated position was based, in part, on a discussion of dry milk. Senator Kennedy found occasion to criticize the Eisenhower record through invoking that very specific foodstuff. He claimed that Eisenhower's maligned Secretary of Agriculture had grossly erred in the distribution of the nonfat dry milk that the United States government possessed. The Secretary had sold the milk at bottom-of-the-barrel prices to animal feed manufacturers with the proviso that it not be used for human consumption. Senator Kennedy strongly attacked this decision, claiming that instead the milk should have been given to millions of children in impoverished areas, especially in Africa, for whom the milk could have prevented the contraction of the deadly ailment kwashiorkor disease. While the Secretary had claimed that "too many difficulties" existed to allow for that humanitarian usage of the milk, Kennedy implied that the United States had failed at its moral obligation to give aid whenever possible.²⁵

While an ideals-based tone in the discussion of colonialism is expected, this version of an imperative was different insofar as it was not in opposition to an antithetical system, be it colonial or communist. Rather, in this case Kennedy was advocating for a policy of aid to individuals to improve their quotidian lives. Battling kwashiorkor disease was not ostensibly a political issue; it was one of saving lives. Therein was the crux of development: It was a rhetoric designed to appeal to a desire to improve the human

²⁵ John Kennedy, Remarks, La Crosse, WI, 23 October 1960; United States, John F. Kennedy, and Richard M. Nixon. 1961. *Freedom of communications. Final report of the Committee on Commerce, United States Senate*. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, Part I, 720-721.

condition in states poorer than the United States, i.e. the non-aligned and post-colonial states that were being cajoled through the use of the balance maneuver and the invoking of Eastern Europe as a colonized region. The electorate listening to the candidates could feel satisfaction at helping the less fortunate while the recipients of the assistance could feasibly experience the improvements of which Kennedy and Nixon spoke. Thus, seemingly, development rhetoric was not political and, even though it was speaking to post-colonial states, was not looking at that history; the future of these states was the paramount concern and colonialism was nowhere to be found in discussions of development.

For his part, Vice President Nixon utterly dismissed the alignment-based side of the development equation. In a speech where he criticized living conditions within the Soviet Union, he also claimed that the United States helped developing states because it “was the right thing to do, because if there were no communism in the world there would still be hungry people. If there were no communism in the world there would still be slavery and the denial of freedom. And if there were no communism in the world, with these things existing, we could care, as a people, as a nation.”²⁶ This justification for aiding development contrasted with the perceived rationale which he rejected: “We sometimes perhaps get the idea that [development] is just a context in which [the United States and the Soviet Union are] trying to outbid the other, in Africa, in Asia, in Latin America, for the support of these peoples...”²⁷ This rationale was summarily rejected by Nixon’s claim that the real reason was more idealistic, more humanitarian, being that

²⁶ Richard Nixon, Remarks on the Occasion of the Dedication of the Boys’ Club of Beloit, WI, 23 September 1960; United States, John Kennedy, and Richard Nixon, *Freedom of Communications*, Part II, 248.

²⁷ Richard Nixon, Remarks on the Occasion of the Dedication of the Boys’ Club of Beloit, WI, 23 September 1960; *Ibid.*

development was an implicit moral imperative. This sort of rhetoric echoed Kennedy's call for dry milk insofar as the question was not one of political alignment but was rather one of helping people improve their daily lives. Fighting hunger and political oppression was the goal of the United States, Nixon said, instead of using these states in a alignment-based chess game. Yet, as the many examples of the alignment-based balance maneuver exhibit, both candidates placed non-aligned states into a situation wherein a decision on alignment had to be made with all deliberate speed. Therefore, Nixon made a contrast with own rhetoric elsewhere in claiming that the United States was only concerned about the well-being of the states themselves without caring about the Cold War context into which both candidates were placing the foreign policy issues of the day.

Kennedy was just as guilty of self-contradiction on this issue. Early in the campaign, the Senator made a strong statement in support of assistance programs: “[W]e must have an administration that holds out a helping hand to all those who desire to be independent, that assists them in meeting their own problems, assists them on the road to freedom as a friend, not as a paternalistic country that desires to use them in a world war struggle.”²⁸ At face value, this statement was just as strong as Nixon's in implying that a moral imperative existed to help these states without exploiting them for the United States' own benefit. This notion mixed well with the anti-colonial ideals discussed in the first chapter; the United States, being an anti-colonial state, could not in due conscience use a state for ulterior motives as that strategy would be a re-establishment of a sort of colonial order. In fact, in two statements made on the previous day (September 6th), Kennedy discussed specific strategies for assistance including given food to impoverished states and increasing funding for education in the Congo. Kennedy did

²⁸ John Kennedy, Speech, Portland, OR, 7 September 1960; Ibid, Part I, 160.

imply that the reason that the people of the Congo were flirting with communism was due to an ill-educated populace and that assistance in this sector would ameliorate this concern, but this aspect of the assistance policy was expectedly not explicitly stated.²⁹

This compendium of specific recommendations and a negation of paternalism was an apparent rejection of a link between development and alignment. Yet, in the very speech where Kennedy advocated for assistance in foodstuffs and education, he still connected it to the larger Cold War context "...[A]nd [the American people] want us moving again abroad in order to stem the Communist advance."³⁰ The presence of this line in the speech makes Kennedy's later calls for development the rhetorical completion of a alignment-based balance maneuver wherein the fight against Communism would be waged through assisting post-colonial states toward a brighter economic future. Despite Kennedy's claims to the contrary, assistance programs were part of a diplomatic effort in the Cold War context and his very wordage proves this self-contradiction. Thus, both candidates blatantly advocated two divergent strategies, one inherently apolitical and another with a globally political goal.

This does not mean, however, that there a humanitarian side of Kennedy and Nixon's rhetoric did not exist. When Nixon made the claim that "our concern for [Asia, Africa, and Latin America] is not simply because we're trying to save our own bacon, but because we really want to help them so that they can help themselves," his concept of assistance was progressive and helpful, despite the fact that many Muslim nations

²⁹ John Kennedy, Speech, Civic Auditorium, Seattle, WA, 6 September 1960 & John Kennedy, Statement on African Affairs, 6 September 1960; Ibid, Part I, 138-141.

³⁰ John Kennedy, Speech, Civic Auditorium, Seattle, WA, 6 September 1960; Ibid, Part I, 134.

receiving aid may not have liked his analogy to a banned food.³¹ The beneficiaries of these aid programs were more impoverished than the United States; resources from the United States for providing more foodstuffs, better health services and medicines, and more opportunities for education even at an advanced level were positive additions to these states. When Kennedy lamented the lack of scholarships that the Eisenhower administration had allocated to African students, particularly in French and Belgian colonies, his criticism was well-founded as an attack on placing the needs of Western European colonial powers over those of the individuals in their colonies. The assistance mechanisms that Nixon and Kennedy were arguing for were not, therefore, only a force for Cold War machinations. To a certain extent their rhetoric was as they claimed in the development arena—a step toward improvement for people in post-colonial states whose material well-being was by no means assured and was more often than not deficient. Thus, criticizing both candidates simply for being self-contradictory misses this crucial point and it would significantly decrease the actual apolitical side of the equation. Their claim that these recommendations were devoid of benefit to the United States was, however, worthy of being critiqued; this was blatantly wrong, given the rest of the rhetoric that they were using. This should not devalue the effort to help impoverished areas, but it should be evidence that, no matter what Kennedy and Nixon tried to claim in regard to the colonial and alignment-based aspects of development, those factors were present in the discussion and were always on the agenda, if only implicitly thanks to the balance maneuver and the promise of development to aligned states.

³¹ Richard Nixon, Speech, Columbian Republican League Luncheon, Commodore Hotel, New York City, NY, 5 October 1960; *Ibid*, Part II, 462.

While Senator Kennedy for the most part favored more programs in non-aligned and post-colonial states without providing much in the way of conditions which had to be met in order for the meting of said aid, the Vice President took a more measured view. Given his party's traditional advocacy of fiscal conservatism, making huge aid programs rely on conditions for distribution was not unexpected. However, the manner in which Nixon made these conditions exhibits a tendency to encourage non-aligned states to match their internal institutions with those of the United States. One particularly enlightening example of this conditional development rhetoric appeared on October 5th in the speech to the Columbian Republican League Luncheon. This speech has appeared before in the analysis because it speaks to so many aspects of colonialism and global affairs; development is no exception. First he prefaced his remarks by discussing the interdependence of the world, specifically refuting the idea that people could think of themselves in their own small social grouping of choice. He provided the example of Nigeria, a state that he claimed was wealthy due to adequate preparations for independence on the part of its former colonial power, Great Britain.³² By pairing the example of Nigeria with the concept of interdependence, Nixon established that it was a concern of the United States that post-colonial nations emerge with the proper training into the global milieu.

Then Nixon entered the crux of his conditional development argument:

Now, I'm not going to suggest to you, however, that I have a plan in which we're going to pour billions of dollars into Africa, Asia, and Latin America, and we can forget the whole situation and think it's going to

³² Richard Nixon, Speech, Columbian Republican League Luncheon, Commodore Hotel, New York City, NY, 5 October 1960; Ibid, Part II, 460.

work out. It isn't. That would be just as irresponsible as to send nothing abroad, because you cannot take these newly developing countries, give them tremendous amounts of money, and not at the same time prepare them with the leadership that knows how to run an economy, run a government, and this brings us again to our responsibility in the field of exchange, in the field of technical assistance, in the field of helping in education.³³

Intriguingly, Nixon echoed many of the same themes as Khrushchev, being that development had to include improvements in the internal economy, the government infrastructure, and exchange. However, in Nixon's formulation, the newly independent states are not ready to work on these areas on their own while haphazardly controlling billions of United States' dollars during the trial and error process. If he were to agree to any development package, it would not be in the form of a blank check putting an investment at risk. Instead, the United States would engage itself in teaching the beneficiaries how to operate. This arrangement inherently meant that development would have a significant echo to what the United States already possessed: capitalism in the economy and representative democracy in government.

Then Nixon acknowledged that, despite difficulties with the democratic system at home, it still had to be spread to developing areas:

If we are going to help these people with our loans and our grants, we doubly must help them in developing the ability to run the show in those countries. We have enough trouble here running 180 million people with

³³ Richard Nixon, Speech, Columbian Republican League Luncheon, Commodore Hotel, New York City, NY, 5 October 1960; Ibid, Part II, 461.

a very advanced so-called democratic system—small “D”—we have this trouble. But I can say this that on the other hand we find that in these countries it is irresponsible and it is wrong to send them money without recognizing that we have to help them as well.

In this case, “help” meant the formation of a system that reflected the democratic version particular to the United States. This statement is crucial because it makes the alignment argument as explicit as it can get: non-alignment or Soviet alignment will not work because a state must have a system based on that of the United States in order to successfully utilize the development that is the incentive for a Western alliance. Failure to maintain such a system not only would mean that less aid would arrive but that any that was sent would inevitably be squandered by ill-prepared local leaders or would be ill-allocated by foreign, i.e. Soviet, leaders with their own priorities divorced from those of the beneficiary nation.

In fact, such a conditional strategy is anticipated by the literature on development. Both Michael Hunt, whose defense of using rhetoric, as quoted in the introduction, provides a methodological underpinning of this study, and John Girling, a scholar focusing more on security studies in the Third World, agree that security was an utmost priority for the United States in their development strategies. From Hunt’s perspective, development falls into one of his core concepts of United States foreign policy: the encouragement of gradual positive change around the world without encouraging dangerous revolutionary movements. Hunt claims that “development was the younger sibling of containment” insofar as both policies were intended to significantly decrease

the reach of the Soviet Union and the perceived communist monolithic bloc.³⁴ Hunt further claims an ethnic aspect to development wherein the United States possessed an innate sense of racial superiority over the peoples receiving assistance; while the rhetoric of the two candidates was not explicitly racist, one could make the case that, since colonialism and development were only raised as central issues thanks to Khrushchev, the United States was only concerned about colonized peoples due to their own Cold War priorities. However, since colonialism and development did appear outside of the Khrushchev visit even if they were not the focus of either candidate, this study is reluctant to describe the development agenda of the United States in ethnocentric terms.

Thus, for Hunt, development was both an arm of containment and a force for acceptable social change, even if that change did connote an ethnic superiority. For Girling, development was solely a question of security. He cites Secretary of Defense Robert Strange McNamara who stated that, “development provides security; but in the immediate situation of stress, ‘security means development...’”³⁵ The two notions were two sides of the same coin because development meant more states existing under the model of the United States. In Girling’s view, therefore, security trumped every other priority in development, be they humanitarian or otherwise. Combining Hunt and Girling creates a prediction: Nixon and Kennedy would have supported development as a manner of securing the United States and of encouraging progress while preventing dangerous revolutions occurring as a result of non-alignment or Soviet alignment.

³⁴ Michael H Hunt. *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987), 159-160.

³⁵ John L. S. Girling. *America and the Third World: Revolution and Intervention* (London & Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980), 110.

Kennedy's development strategy was not conditional like Nixon's but the undercurrent of the balance maneuver shows that the Cold War and its security concerns were present in the development rhetoric. Nixon's conditional development made this prediction real through his demanding that states become more like the United States in order to receive assistance. The United States, according to Nixon, could not simply throw money at a possibly combustible situation without insuring that domestic interests were considered and guaranteed.

Indeed, in another example Nixon established that it was the United States' priority to condition beneficiaries of aid to be able to "handle [their] independence."³⁶ Nixon listed the same list of development policies as in the aforementioned example (this particular case actually came first, but these priorities were listed throughout the campaign); however, the second portion of his development argument established a clear ultimatum on this front: "It just doesn't make sense to turn these countries loose, to provide money for them, without also giving them the opportunity to develop the trained people who can use the funds and also can handle the independence, and on these scores the United States must assume a unilateral responsibility as well as supporting multilateral action through the United Nations."³⁷ This statement is a strong endorsement of what Girling and Hunt anticipate because Nixon was requiring the involvement of the United States, even on a unilateral basis, in order to guarantee that development occurred in a way that was advantageous to the interests of the United States. Including the United Nations was an important marker that global diplomacy would still be crucial, but so long

³⁶ Richard Nixon, Press Conference, Kentwood Arms Hotel, Springfield, MO, 21 September 1960; United States, John Kennedy, and Richard Nixon, *Freedom of Communications*, Part II, 221.

³⁷ Richard Nixon, Press Conference, Kentwood Arms Hotel, Springfield, MO, 21 September 1960; *Ibid.*

as a unilateral entry into the problem was a possibility success in the United Nations was not necessary.

Thus, Nixon's rhetorical formulation narrowed development down into a two-way street wherein a beneficiary state works closely with the United States in order to establish the institutions of capitalism and of representative democracy—other parties were peripheral and did not warrant a mention aside from the lip service paid to the United Nations. The Soviet Union was not mentioned because it was not a viable partner for the non-aligned states. Other non-aligned states, i.e. the attendees of the Bandung Conference, were not mentioned because they would encourage a state receiving aid to maintain its neutrality, which in Nixon's formulation was nearly as negative as a Communist alliance. Interestingly, Western Europe was not mentioned; this can be explained by the anti-colonial ideals discussed in the first chapter, seeing as Nixon likely could not afford to remind these states of their colonial heritage. After all, development was a forward-looking strategy, and through all of its alignment-based undertones it did not look to the past colonial situation.

Thus, through Nixon's specific formula, development was definitively encouragement for alignment with the United States. Even Kennedy's continual appeal for more assistance in health programs and education were, at least in part, designed to attract non-aligned and post-colonial states into the Western bloc. Ironically, demanding alignment with the United States established a notion of patronage wherein the United States held a "neocolonial" sway over recipient states. Both candidates would have denied the presence of anything colonial in their development strategies but economic dependence contingent upon a political alliance fits the criteria for the neocolonial label.

Yet the irony persists: While both men were strongly anti-colonial in their rhetoric on primarily ideals-based grounds, the combination of the need to placate Western Europe, the demand of containment to thwart the Soviet Union in colonial territories, and the incentive of development led the United States to enter into a sort of colonial arrangement. That was the price that the candidates paid for entering into the colonial debate with Khrushchev and finding the middle ground amongst all of the competing factors.

We Must Not "Draw Within Our Shell":

The Anti-Isolationist Appeal to U.S. Voters

Nixon and Kennedy shared a common foreign policy terrain during the 1960 presidential campaign shaped, in part, by a fear of what was believed to be U.S. isolationist sentiment. They believed a case had to be made to the American people in terms of self-interest not the specifics of complicated foreign policy issues. This can be seen in an early Nixon speech before Khrushchev's visit. In a speech made in Greensboro, North Carolina on August 17, Nixon laid out a long-range vision of what the United States needed to do in both domestic and foreign policy. Intriguingly, he ascribed all that he had done in the past and all that he "may do in the future" to Duke University, which would be "responsible one way or the other."³⁸ While a statement like this can be explained by electioneering in the grand tradition of flattering the hometown crowd with laudatory statements about a local institution, sports team, or celebrity, the rest of Nixon's address was not geared toward a specifically North Carolinian or southern audience. In fact, this speech was a complete example of the balance maneuver in action.

³⁸ Richard Nixon, "The Need for Leadership", Greensboro, NC, 17 August 1960; Ibid, Part II, 2.

Nixon opened his balance maneuver with an ideals-based appeal: “The only effective answer to those who are working for the victory of communism is to work for the victory of freedom throughout the world. This is what we stand for in this campaign and in the years ahead.”³⁹ This is an example of the second interpretation of the term “freedom” as a symbol of alignment with the United States. In this specific quotation, Nixon’s rhetoric was anti-communist and did not directly reference the issue of western colonialism; colonized and post-colonial states were only important insofar as the ideals-based struggle between freedom in the United States’ bloc and communism could be fought over how they aligned in the international East-West struggle.

However, immediately following this statement, Nixon shifted gears and achieved an ideals-based balance maneuver: “We must recognize that we live in a changing world. In Asia, in Africa, in Latin America, the people are determined to have a better way of life. We might like, I am sure, to be able to draw within our shell and not be concerned about their problems.”⁴⁰ Nixon’s statement might seem like an innocuous characterization of the world because any casual observer of world affairs in the late 1950s would have agreed with him that, indeed, change was occurring. However, Nixon was connecting the United States to this change by using the collective pronoun “we”: Americans themselves were a part of this changing world. Thus, the United States could not sit idly by and watch as this change happened. This explains Nixon’s need to counter isolationist arguments by claiming that “we might like...to draw within our shell.” Nixon’s rhetoric established that such an option was not viable given the conditions of the world. Finally, he claimed in the second sentence of the excerpt that the people of

³⁹ Richard Nixon, “The Need for Leadership”, Greensboro, NC, 17 August 1960; Ibid, Part II, 6-7.

⁴⁰ Richard Nixon, “The Need for Leadership”, Greensboro, NC, 17 August 1960; Ibid.

Asia, Africa, and Latin America wanted to improve their lives but he failed to specify exactly what that improvement would entail. Therefore, “improvement” could have had two meanings: Either alignment with the United States in order to receive development assistance and security guarantees, or ending colonial rule so as to garner full independence and sovereignty. By not specifying his use of the term, Nixon’s improvement could have connoted both changes at the same time.

In these first two excerpts, Nixon’s balance maneuver was starting to take shape. Peoples in colonized and post-colonial states were looking for a better life, and as part of this effort the United States had to show them the travails of choosing the communist path. In fact, Nixon went on to codify this argument immediately after his anti-isolationist sentence: “But we cannot [turn into our shell] because someone else is concerned with them, and if they are confronted with the terrible choice of progress at the cost of freedom or staying where they are, they will take progress at the cost of freedom.”⁴¹ Here was Nixon’s argument in a nutshell: If the United States disengaged from the affairs of the post-colonial and colonized parts of the world, thus allowing the Soviet Union to offer material gains to these states, they would join the Soviet bloc. In the zero-sum game of the Cold War, and despite what Cabot Lodge would later claim, this was not an acceptable result. Yet the very fact that the question had turned to the Cold War showed that Nixon achieved the balance maneuver in an ostensibly ideals-based sense because he successfully tied a colonial issue, the spreading of “freedom” and “progress”, to communism.

In fact, Nixon then turned his balance maneuver to a discussion of development: “So America must face up to this. Our leaders must face up to it. Our people must face

⁴¹ Richard Nixon, “The Need for Leadership”, Greensboro, NC, 17 August 1960; Ibid.

up to it. We must provide the aid—but beyond that the assistance and the device—which will enable the peoples of the world to have progress which they want and should have, and to have it with and through freedom. It must not be at the cost of freedom as the Communists insist they take it.”⁴² Freedom was still invoked in this phrase and the contrast with communism was still present, just as in the ideals-based balance maneuver. However, in this case, Nixon’s balance maneuver rested on a policy recommendation: He wanted to give more aid to non-aligned states so as to woo them away from the Soviet bloc. He thus invoked the specter of communism in order to justify foreign aid programs to post-colonial states. Without the Cold War looming large on the politics of 1960, this argument would not have worked, but considering the circumstances it was perhaps the most efficacious manner for garnering public support for aid programs, especially considering the fact that the Marshall Plan had worked in Europe (with colonial metropolises) to much the same ends only a little over a decade earlier.

Intriguingly, though, Nixon claimed that this program could not exist at the cost of freedom. The overt sense of this warning was the Cold War interpretation, meaning that a failure to get people into the United States’ bloc would inherently mean membership in the Soviet bloc. However, this statement had a double meaning because, when reading just the first clause, it becomes anti-colonial. When read in this vein, it claimed that freedom, in all places, could not be subordinated to economic progress. Colonialism was present in this message because, even if there was a way to promote progress while states remained under colonial rule, this was unacceptable because freedom (in the first and third senses of the term) would be at risk. Conversely, the involvement of the United States was perfectly acceptable and desirable because of the

⁴² Richard Nixon, “The Need for Leadership”, Greensboro, NC, 17 August 1960, Ibid.

second sense of freedom: The United States would not infringe upon freedom but rather would act as its guarantor for all within its bloc.

Yet acting as a bulwark of freedom around the world required a certain amount of strength. Kennedy had recognized this when he asked for more individual participation in the effort to combat the Soviets. Nixon also recognized this necessity; his next sentence stated: “I am convinced that we do have the strength, and we will develop more, to win this struggle and win it without war.”⁴³ Nixon regularly described the United States as a strong nation with unprecedented prestige, making a contrast with Kennedy who claimed that the actions of the Eisenhower administration had severely diminished the prestige of the United States. However, in this case, Nixon was not arguing against Kennedy but rather was making the case that the United States, given the involvement of other states to build up its strength in the world, could eventually defeat the Soviet Union without having to fire a shot. The idea of containment was the backbone of this argument. George Kennan, the intellectual author of that crucial policy, had famously predicted that the Soviet Union would at some point collapse upon itself due to internal deficiencies in the communist system; it was the task of the United States to simply wait it out until that came about whilst not letting the USSR garner any more territories into the communist bloc. Nixon was accepting this concept here, implying that a successful new diplomacy with post-colonial, non-aligned states would allow for the success of containment without forcing the United States to assume a warmongering or even an aggressive posture.

In fact, later in the speech, Nixon made it clear that the future of the United States was tied to that of the states not yet aligned in the Cold War struggle: “Millions of

⁴³ Richard Nixon, “The Need for Leadership,” Greensboro, NC, 17 August 1960; Ibid.

people tonight are trying to determine which way they will go...Their decisions will determine our future, their future, and the world's future. These people are looking at the United States. They are looking at it to see how freedom works.”⁴⁴ Yet again Nixon mixed the alignment-based and ideals-based rhetoric with an argument of mutual benefits to both sides. According to Nixon, the United States needed allies to successfully combat the Soviets while the smaller states needed the fruits of their newfound freedom in terms of material goods and development.

⁴⁴ Richard Nixon, “The Need for Leadership,” Greensboro, NC, 17 August 1960; Ibid.

Conclusion

On the wintry day of January 20th, 1961, President John Fitzgerald Kennedy stepped up to the podium in front of the Capitol Building and delivered an address that he had been toiling over for months. In his inaugural he told millions and millions of listeners and onlookers, “Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country. My fellow citizens of the world: ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man.”¹ These two lines are often singled out of this most famous speech as the epitome of hopeful eloquence, yet these ideas were the same that Kennedy had uttered during the campaign at a speech in Mansfield, Ohio delivered on September 27th, 1960. The first line of the inauguration excerpt is a direct echo of Kennedy’s asking during the campaign for contributions to the “cause of freedom” within the United States; this idea represented a new solidarity between all Americans geared toward a common goal at home. The second line of the inaugural excerpt is a modification of the second thought in the campaign statement, which asked for contributions to the “cause of freedom around the world.”² While the Mansfield campaign speech did ask for contributions from Americans, it did not go so far as to claim that all peoples, being “citizens of the world,” should take part in this collective effort. That aspect of the inaugural, however, can be seen as a manifestation of the anti-colonial ideal of equality. Everyone around the world, in Kennedy’s formulation, was a citizen, implying that each individual possessed certain rights, one of which was “freedom.” Furthermore, asking all peoples to not think about what the

¹ John F. Kennedy, Inaugural Address, quoted in Thurston Clarke, *Ask Not: The Inauguration of John F. Kennedy and the Speech That Changed America* (New York City: Owl Books, 2005), xvi.

² John Kennedy, Remarks, Mansfield, OH, 27 September 1960; United States, John F. Kennedy, and Richard M. Nixon. 1961. *Freedom of communications. Final report of the Committee on Commerce, United States Senate*. Washington: U.S. Govt. Printing Office, Part I, 371.

United States could do for them was another aspect of equality because, if all peoples were reliant upon the United States for their well-being, then their actual “freedom” in geopolitical terms would be a trope for American domination and a new form of colonial rule.

When looking at this inaugural excerpt in the colonial vein, therefore, Kennedy was not denying that the United States could help other states; after all, one of his campaign’s main ideas, shared with Nixon, was the promotion of development and an active American stake in that process. Rather, this statement was a warning against American domination and an idealistic call for the guarantee of civil liberties to all peoples. Given the Cold War context of bipolarization, the inherent implication of this interpretation was that the Soviet Union would offer domination and a lack of civil liberties to all peoples living under its sphere of influence. Thus, even as colonial rhetoric transitioned from the campaign into a budding administration, the Cold War continued to be a major factor in how the colonialism came to the fore. Creating an environment for “citizens of the world” was not, therefore, solely a statement of equality. Rather, it was the realization of the alignment rhetoric of the campaign. Everyone would have equal rights under the system of the United States as made real throughout the world by development and opposition to neutrality and Soviet colonialism. In fact, through invoking this notion of global freedom in the same address wherein he addressed global communism and the need to “meet any burden,” Kennedy completed an ideological balance maneuver.

But did all of these rhetorical machinations work? Did the non-aligned post-colonial states ally with the United States as a refutation of the Soviet Union and as a way

of garnering development assistance? A later event, of September 1-6 1961, shows that Kennedy and Nixon were not particularly effective in achieving their diplomatic goals. At that time, the First Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries convened in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, the home of the famously non-aligned communist leader Josif Tito. In their published remarks, the conference stridently maintained a neutral ground: “The participants in the Conference reaffirm their conviction that...All nations have the right of unity, self-determination, and independence by virtue of which right they can determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development without intimidation or hindrance.”³ This statement rejected at once both the alignment plans of the United States and of the Soviet Union. In fact, the entire statement used language that specifically separated the United States and the Soviet Union, referred to collectively as the “Great Powers”, from the non-aligned Nations. The group of nations went so far as to address a letter to both President Kennedy and Premier Khrushchev that called for negotiations to lead to disarmament. The concern of these nations was not the Cold War’s war of ideals or conflict of systems; they simply wanted to ensure that they were not obliterated as collateral in a nuclear winter.

Who signed on to this accord? Included in the list of signatories were the heads of state of Egypt (Nasser), India (Nehru), Algeria (Ben Youssef), and Tito, amongst many others. Thus, using this statement as a bellwether, Kennedy’s and Nixon’s rhetoric failed to achieve its end. These states were neither scared nor enticed into alignment.

Despite the continual refrain of anti-colonial ideals, these states refused to take a position

³ First Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, Belgrade, September 1-6, 1961. *The Five Summit Conferences of the Non-Aligned Countries: Documents* (Havana, Cuba: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1979), 15.

anywhere except in a neutral stance that Kennedy and Nixon had markedly rejected. All of the political machinations, all of the diplomatic nuance, all of the underlining messages, it all was not enough to create a system where the end of colonialism would play into the cards of the United States in the geopolitical chess game of the Cold War.

Thus, considering that Nixon and Kennedy were not able to break the appeal of non-alignment for post-colonial states, what was the legacy of the balance maneuver and the other devices of the 1960 campaign? Perhaps the fact that colonialism became an issue as a result of Khrushchev's visit, and the subsequent merging of colonialism into the Cold War paradigm, is one lasting effect. Subsuming colonialism into communism was the most efficacious manner for colonialism to find a place in the rhetoric of the campaign and it thusly could become important for voters obsessed with fighting the USSR. However, this strategy would ultimately backfire if for no other reason than it would later surface in a much more gruesome way in the rice paddies of Vietnam. In that conflict, as in others, the United States perceived a war for communism in what was, in essence, a war of liberation; this misperception was the precursor to so much bloodshed over the next twenty years after 1960. Therein the significance of this election's rhetoric can be found; the unique *mélange* of factors in this campaign required a certain rhetorical technique to deal with colonialism amidst the Cold War and the result, which was tenuous during the campaign and ineffective immediately afterward, turned out to be disastrous in the long term.

Both Nixon and Kennedy shared this common rhetoric. In fact, despite expectations that a Republican and a Democrat would inherently disagree, there was very little difference in how the two candidates handled the question of western colonialism in

their public rhetoric. Yet what does this thesis suggest about the relationship of U.S. foreign policy to public rhetoric at the highest level across party divides? A return to the three core concepts of U.S. foreign policy laid out by Michael Hunt, the diplomatic historian whose defense of public rhetoric as historical evidence influenced the methodology of this thesis, places the 1960 presidential campaign into its national historic context.

In fact, the rhetoric that Kennedy and Nixon used corroborates Hunt's predictions for the most part. The first core concept, that the United States perceives itself as the harbinger of liberty, infused the anti-colonial message expressed by Nixon and Kennedy. Yet Hunt's second core concept, the abiding sense of superiority over others based on race, was not directly present in the campaign rhetoric. Yet the very fact that colonialism was not a major issue until it became irrevocably linked with the Cold War could be taken to demonstrate the low priority given to colonized peoples who were, for the most part, of a different race than the citizens of the United States. Furthermore, abiding superiority may be a theoretical rationale for why Nixon and Kennedy provided the United States as an example for other nations to follow, but certainly, in an election in the United States, any candidate is likely to present the United States as a shining example of certain idealistic notions such as freedom, democracy, and independence. The third core concept, the acceptance of positive social change and the abhorrence of revolution, speaks to the heart of the colonial issue circa 1960 insofar as one fear of fast decolonization was the emergence of revolutionary, i.e. communist, movements. As part of their rhetorical efforts to dissuade this sort of process from occurring, Kennedy and Nixon offered policies of development to states aligning with the United States. Of

course, this development included provisos that the recipient would create institutions mirroring those of the United States, thus solving the problem of dicey revolutions.

Therefore, at this historical moment when colonial peoples and non-aligned states were both on the "razor edge of decision", Kennedy and Nixon only modified the pre-existing paradigms of U.S. foreign policy rhetoric; what was needed, and what did not occur, was a new paradigm wherein colonialism and communism could have been addressed on their own terms as distinct phenomena.

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