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William Randolph Hearst: Progress Through Racism and Imperialism

A relook at what was the basis behind Hearst's politics and worldview

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ABBREVIATIONS

WWI	World War One
WWII	World War Two
FDR	Franklin Delano Roosevelt

William Randolph Hearst was one of the most powerful and influential figures in American history. Countless books, articles, newspaper accounts, and films depict and interpret Hearst's public and private life and impact on American politics and media history. Hearst was born on April 23, 1863, in San Francisco, California. His political activities and newspapers transformed journalism and helped launch the Progressive Era. His early papers relied on investigative journalism to display the corruption and debauchery of the American political system. Over the years, however, historians have claimed his politics moved to the Right, and he became known for supporting fascism and attacking the New Deal. Historians and biographers have debated the nature of Hearst's politics and influence in the Progressive Era, and scholars of the media have debated the role of racism in Hearst's new journalism. However, this thesis argues that throughout his career as a journalist and a politician, Hearst was an imperialist who believed in white supremacy at home and abroad. Rather than see him as an isolationist, as most historians have done, I argue that Hearst believed in and argued for the United States to engage in colonization in both his younger and older years.

Many of his contemporaries considered Hearst a radical at the turn of the twentieth century. They pointed to his support for the right of workers to unionize, women's and public education, and limits on child labor. However, I will argue in this thesis that Hearst's progressive policies were deeply tied to his opinions on race and culture. Hearst has been described as an isolationist and a fighter for equality. However, this thesis will show that he tried to use his papers to divide Americans and categorize them by race and culture into superiors and inferiors. Through this paper, I will show that Hearst's isolationism was deeply tied to his view that white Europeans should not fight each other. While not favoring US involvement in European wars, Hearst advocated intervention in Latin America. Hearst

pushed anti-Asian sentiment and the superiority of Christian culture in his papers. Hearst used the idea of the White Man's Burden based on the superiority of the white race to justify imperialism and American intervention in Latin America. Hearst believed in and developed an ideal white working class in ways that show how racism was an element of Progressive politics as it would later be part of Conservative movements.

In this thesis I will focus on three topics split into three different chapters that all work together to argue that Hearst was an imperialist whose policies did not change over his life but were only seen as more conservative in his later life. The three overarching topics of my paper will be white supremacy, isolationism through racism, imperialism, and how Hearst pushed these topics in his papers. The first chapter will give the reader necessary biographical and political background information to understand Hearst's anti non-white and anti-Asian immigrant policies. Chapter I is crucial for understanding who William Randolph Hearst was and why he was considered a progressive for his time and will begin the argument of how his progressive policies were tied to white supremacy. This chapter will also show some early examples of Hearst's double standards of what he pushes for in his papers versus what he does. In Chapter II, I will argue how his policies were directly tied to racism and white supremacy by using his papers and his own words in editorials and letters to argue that Hearst directed his editors and media empire to push these pro-white anti-Asian/non-white minority policies in his paper. In Chapter III, I will argue that Hearst's racist and white supremacist beliefs were tied to the isolationist and imperialist policies that were pushed in his papers. I will argue that Hearst was a "European" isolationist but he was also imperialist who believed in the White Man's Burden. Hearst was only an isolationist because the Great war was a conflict between white Christians nations. In the chapter, I will define in

greater detail what Hearst meant by isolationism as it differs from our modern idea of economic protectionist policies. Finally, I will describe Hearst's Zionism and show how his ideas about the creation of a Jewish state were directly tied to imperialism, racism, and white supremacy. All of this will combine to make a clear argument that through Hearst, we can see how the Progressive Era was not that progressive in the grand scheme of racial equality and shows how progressive does not equate to anti-racism. This paper will also help us understand the modern political situation within the United States and will help explain Trumpism by showing how a wealthy businessman such as Hearst can use populism to take advantage of economic turmoil to appeal to workers by playing on racial tensions.

Historiography

Hearst played a prominent role in the development of New Journalism and Yellow Journalism, a style of news that sought to appeal to the masses by covering topics such as crime, sex, corruption, and poverty. These topics had been considered too taboo for newspaper owners to publish in their dailies consistently, leaving them relegated to the tabloids. That was until William Randolph Hearst. Hearst never feared talking about or participating in taboo topics, as he was one of the originators of Yellow Journalism. Yellow Journalism is a name given to a style of journalism that spun truth and fiction into something that the reader could not distinguish between facts and fiction by using sensationalistic, salacious and sometimes slanted stories that newspapers present as objective truth.¹ Hearst

¹ Cleveland Ferguson III, "Yellow Journalism", The Free Speech Center, (January 2009), <https://firstamendment.mtsu.edu/article/yellow->

also made the papers easier to read and more eye-catching. Hearst changed the industry standard of bland columns of text, added big bolded headings, and used more illustrations. This new product Hearst designed made his newspapers tantalizing to the audience and impossible not to turn the next page, "news stories designed to shock readers with graphic detail and satisfy an appetite for the obscene, erotic, or bizarre. Stories about sexual affairs, extensive coverage of minor criminal cases, and or speculation of impending doom are examples of sensationalism."² The Hearst papers and the new style of journalism became the industry standard for all Hearst papers and many others.³ The more taboo topics combined with the use of simple vernacular and the extensive introduction of the comic section made the Hearst papers extremely attractive to the immigrant population of New York and hated by other newspaper owners as they felt he was a monster of misrepresentation.⁴ Hearst's simple English was very welcoming to immigrants learning the language and made his papers immediately popular with the immigrant population. Just as the working man brought him wealth, they would come close to bringing him significant political power.

Hearst became especially popular among the working class and Progressives because he also used muckraking journalists who exposed corruption and pushed progressive policies in his papers. New Journalism, muckraking, and the fight for the rights of the man are well documented in his newspapers. Hearst's journalism, politics, and wealth made him a target for those trying to maintain the status quo. Historians and biographers have focused on his

[journalism/#:~:text=Yellow%20journalism%20refers%20to%20sensationalistic,newspapers%20present%20as%20objective%20truth.](#)

² Mark Bernhardt, "The Selling of Sex, Sleaze, Scuttlebutt, and other Shocking Sensations: The Evolution of New Journalism in San Francisco, 1887-1900," *American Journalism* no. 28 (June 2011), p. 113.

³ Kenneth Whyte, *The Uncrowned King: The Sensational Rise of William Randolph Hearst*, (Berkeley, CA, Counterpoint, 2008), p. 176.

⁴ W.A. Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst: A Biography of William Randolph Hearst*, (1961 reis., Lake Elsinore, CA, Collier Books, 1981), p. 70.

role in establishing the new journalism, but most also emphasize his shift towards rightwing politics. For example, David Nasaw, author of *The Chief*, (2001) describes how Hearst moved to the Right in his later life.⁵ As I will argue, Hearst held very racist and imperialist views his entire life.

One of the first depictions of Hearst's life was through his favorite mode of media, a movie. *Citizen Kane* (1941), directed by and starring Orson Welles, depicted the life of Hearst as the main character Kane. Kane is a ruthless businessman who only cares for his bottom line. The movie opens in what is supposed to be Hearst Castle in a dark, evil light.⁶ This foreshadows how Welles developed the evil businessman myth. With exaggerated elements, the movie nevertheless significantly impacted Hearst's public image. Historians have also contributed to this image. For example, the biography *Citizen Hearst*, written by Andrew Swanberg, also downplays Hearst's early progressivism.

Swanberg published *Citizen Hearst*, in 1961 and then republished it in 1981. downplays Hearst's progressive policies and blames Hearst for causing the Spanish-American War.⁷ However, Swanberg does not mention Hearst's imperialist and interventionist policies regarding Latin America. Most scholars played on the popular narrative that Hearst caused the Spanish-American war but do not see this as part of a broader imperialist agenda. However, James Allen Myatt's unpublished dissertation, *William Randolph Hearst and The Progressive Era*, (1960) one year before *Citizen Hearst*, claimed that Hearst was a reformer and deserves to be remembered as a muckraker.⁸ Myatt

⁵ Nasaw, *The Chief: The Life of William Randolph Hearst*, (Santa Barbara, CA, Mariner Books, 2001), p. 435.

⁶ *Citizen Kane*, Orson Welles, 1941, 05:45.

⁷ Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, p. 172.

⁸ James Allen Myatt, *William Randolph Hearst and the Progressive Era*, (PhD diss. University of Florida, 1960), p. 214.

emphasized how his papers consistently pushed for women's right to vote and more female higher education.⁹ Myatt believed the narrative of the time that Hearst created for himself as a warmaker was an "inadequate picture."¹⁰ Myatt asserted that Hearst made his image in politics and news as a muckraker, a man who, in this period, was genuinely fighting for the rights of the average citizen. This is clear from the support he received from immigrants of New York's East Side workingmen's groups, women's organizations, and reforming elements generally.¹¹ Myatt notes how many adversaries of the time tried to paint Hearst as a demagogue, including the famous intellectual of the Progressive Era, Herbert Croly, who believed Hearst was capable of full-scale purges in America:

In effect he treats his opponents very much as the French revolutionary leaders treated their opponents, so that in case the conflict should become still more embittered, his "reformed" democracy may resemble the purified republic which Robespierre and St. Just dreamed when they sent Desmoulins and Danton to the guillotine.¹²

Myatt believed this was overdrawn and argued that those who knew him personally did not think he was trying to gain power solely for his own desire. Alfred Henry Lewis, who knew Hearst, personally wrote that, "the editor was not in politics for his vanity or pockets, but for the public."¹³ Myatt argued that Hearst was a movement within a movement, an advocate of Hearstism, a body of principles that were borrowed mainly from the American milieu. Hearstism pushed policies such as workers' rights, women's rights, and other progressive measures of the day popular among the working class. Myatt also notes that many reformers, such as Samuel Seabury, William Ivins, and William Gaynor, believed that

⁹ Myatt, *W.R.H and the P.E.*, p. 17.

¹⁰ Myatt, *W.R.H and the P.E.*, p. 174.

¹¹ Myatt, *W.R.H and the P.E.*, p. 18.

¹² Myatt, *W.R.H and the P.E.*, p. 183.

¹³ Myatt, *W.R.H and the P.E.*, p 186.

Hearst was a genuine Democrat.¹⁴ Reform groups saw Hearst's presence in New York as a significant force for good. Myatt writes that Hearst forced "the City of New York to take a good look at itself and its social thinking."¹⁵ Hearstism was a large part of the early Progressive Era, which is why he is remembered today as a progressive of the era. However, as I will argue, these progressive policies were all deeply tied to white supremacy. You might be asking the question of if Myatt believed Hearst to be such a power for good, why didn't he write a counter piece on Swanberg? It is very simple why, because he died in 1961 of encephalitis.¹⁶ Like the other scholars, Myatt did not discuss Hearst's clearly racist and imperialist view of the world.

Like Myatt, Roy Everett Littlefield III in his dissertation which became a book titled, *William Randolph Hearst: His Role in American Progressivism*, (1980) sees Hearst as having a significant role in the Progressive Movement. Littlefield states that Hearst was like Jefferson, a man of privilege who wanted to help the common man and abolish special privilege, purify government from endemic corruption, and secure the passing of laws supporting social justice.¹⁷ However, like the other authors, Littlefield discusses very little about Hearst's white working-class bias and barely even mentions his imperialistic tendencies, though he writes that Hearst was an expansionist until Wilson's presidency, which I will argue is false as he continued push imperialist policies.¹⁸ Littlefield paints him as a true fighter for equal rights, stating that in the 1904 Democratic convention, Hearst

¹⁴ Myatt, *W.R.H and the P.E.*, p. 186.

¹⁵ Myatt, *W.R.H and the P.E.*, p. 18.

¹⁶ James Allen Myatt biography
https://viriniagleeclub.fandom.com/wiki/James_Myatt

¹⁷ Roy Everett Littlefield, *William Randolph Hearst: His Role in American Progressivism*, (Lanham, MD, 1980), p. 352.

¹⁸ Littlefield, *WRH's Role in American Progressivism*, p. 315.

refused to "allow his delegates even to consider a racist plank and threatened to pull them from the convention proceeding if one was adopted."¹⁹ However, Littlefield does not discuss how Hearst wanted the US to get militarily involved in Mexico or explore the reasons Hearst did not want the US to get involved in World War, as I will show.²⁰

David Nasaw, the author of *The Chief*, published in 2001 and considered the most accurate biography, challenged the "evil businessman" myth created in the movie *Citizen Kane* and the book *Citizen Hearst*. Nasaw has given a complete analysis of the entire life of William Randolph Hearst, from birth to death. Nasaw splits the book into nine different sections with thirty-six chapters. Nassau's first starts with Hearst's childhood, which shows where he got his beliefs from, mentioning his father as an enormous influence.²¹ Nassau writes that Hearst's father, a mining tycoon, was distant from the boy, with Hearst spending most of his childhood with his mother.²² Hearst spent a year and a half in Europe at ten years old with his mother.²³ Nasaw goes on to write about his formative years at Harvard, during which he revamped the *Harvard Lampoon*. Nassaw used a solid chunk of his book, nearly a third, to focus on Hearst's political career in the Progressive Era starting at his time in San Francisco in 1887. He then goes into his later life, including the construction of Hearst Castle and his time as a film director with his de facto wife, Marion Davies. There is no doubt among historians that Hearst made an impressive media empire that, to this day, is worth

¹⁹ Littlefield, *WRH's Role in American Progressivism*, p.315.

²⁰ Littlefield, *WRH's Role in American Progressivism* p. 316.

²¹ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 17.

²² Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 22.

²³ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 19.

over twenty billion dollars.²⁴ There is also no doubt among historians that without his father's immense wealth, Hearst would have never been able to create his empire.²⁵

In historical literature, authors have failed to mention Hearst's clear imperialist and white supremacist view of the world, which was deeply tied to the "progressive" policies he advocated. William Randolph Hearst was a progressive, but I will show how Hearst's isolationism was deeply tied to his racist view of the world. While he fought for the rights of European minorities, he was far from believing that all societies and cultures were equal. He had a white Christian bias and clearly had an ideal white working American class. I will show that his views on interventionism and isolationism were deeply tied to the idea of the "White Man's Burden" and that Hearst was only isolationist when it came to being involved in conflict with other whites. I will show how Hearst, who held deeply racist views of the world, is an example of the Progressive Era itself, and in effect, his racist beliefs show that the Progressive Era was an era of progress for white women and white workers. In effect, I will argue that through Hearst, we can see that the Progressive Era was not that progressive and that the labor movement was focused on giving more rights to people deemed to be white. Through Hearst, I will show how elements in the Progressive Era were rooted in the beliefs of pseudo-sciences that affirmed beliefs on the superiority of the white race.

²⁴ Forbes, The Hearst family

<https://www.forbes.com/profile/hearst/#:~:text=His%20son%2C%20William%20Randolph%20Hearst,billion%20in%20revenue%20in%202022.>

²⁵ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 476.

Chapter I: The Life of Hearst and Hearstism

In this first chapter, I will explore who William Randolph Hearst was, give an overview of his life, and go through some of the policies that made Hearst and Hearstism so popular for its brief stint in American politics. In the first part of the chapter, I will go through his life and explain how his upbringing on the West Coast in San Francisco influenced his thoughts about Asians and his belief in the superiority of white culture. I will explain how Hearst's progressive policies brought him great fame in New York and made his newspapers world-renowned. I will also begin to expand on how these progressive policies had a clear racial tone that appealed to his working-class base. I will then expand on how Hearst pushed racist policies in his papers more in Chapter II and then show in Chapter III how the racist policies Hearst expanded into his worldview and how he pushed a pro-imperialist and a White Man's Burden view of the world. To accomplish the goal of chapter I of explaining why Hearst was considered a progressive, I will use a variety of secondary biographical sources that try to explain Hearst and some primary sources I gathered from the online Library of Congress and the Bancroft Library archive at the University of California, Berkeley. This chapter will set up the rest of the thesis and give the reader the background knowledge they need to understand who Hearst was, why he was considered a progressive, why historians such as Nasaw and Swanberg have argued that Hearst became more conservative in his later life and how chapter II and III will challenge this narrative.

Early Life

William Randolph Hearst was born to George and Phoebe Hearst on April 23, 1863, in San Francisco, California. While many aspects of Hearst's life have been exaggerated and embellished by himself and others, William Randolph Hearst was raised as a prince, and he grew up to be the king of a media empire. While William Randolph Hearst liked to paint himself in his papers as a self-made man, neither he nor his immediate family were self-made. George Hearst, William's father, was a pioneer of the American Frontier, a man who taught himself geology and created some of the most prosperous mines of the American frontier.¹ However, George was not self-made either, as he was born into a wealthy family from Missouri. The Hearst family traces its lineage back to English or Scots-Irish immigrants depending on the source and George's father William Hearst I was the largest enslaver in Meramec Township.²

William's father, George, was distant, and the two spent little time together when William was young.³ Nevertheless, both father and son seem to have had a distaste for "proper society." At boarding school in New Hampshire, William recalled being uncomfortable with the children of the upper crust from the East Coast. Almost seventy years later, William remembered "how "thoroughly unhappy" he had been at St. Paul's, where they tried so hard to make him a gentleman, where instead of playing "baseball on a vacant lot," as he had in San Francisco, he was supposed to play cricket on a "spic-and-span and much-

¹ Whyte, *The Uncrowned King*, p. 8.

² Whyte, *The Uncrowned King*, p. 10.

³ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 476.

mowed lawn."⁴ The young Hearst did not like the school because he was homesick, like his father, Hearst did not like the boarding school because he had a distaste for the rituals of upper-class life.⁵

While distant from his father, Hearst was close to his mother, Phoebe. When he was nine, his mother took him on an eighteen-month-long trip through Europe. He visited every important museum, gallery, palace, and church in Western and Central Europe.⁶ During this time, the young Hearst would have a world-view-shaping experiences as he met the Pope and dined with US consuls.⁷ This trip no doubt helped shape his opinion of the superiority of Western Christian society. Phoebe was determined to make a gentleman out of her son and hoped European travel, boarding school, and attending the most prestigious American university, Harvard, would cultivate Hearst's status as an elite gentleman.

In 1885, Hearst began his college education at Harvard, where he developed a taste for journalism. Hearst took over the role of business manager of the *Harvard Lampoon*. In less than a year, Hearst turned a paper running a deficit into a success, increasing circulation by fifty-nine percent in one year and advertising revenue by three hundred percent.⁸ In his junior year, he disregarded his studies and focused on what he saw as his next goal, being editor of his father's paper, the *San Francisco Examiner*. Hearst also began a relationship with a working woman named Tessie. Hearst did not care that she was not from the proper social class and would interact with her in public, something no proper man from the upper class would ever do with their mistress. Hearst also began to be very interested in politics.

⁴ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 26.

⁵ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 26.

⁶ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 19.

⁷ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 19.

⁸ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 32.

His father, who was now a senator, was then emerging as a power among California Democrats. Hearst took up the party's cause on campus. He rallied "all the Democratic dudes in college," a mere twenty-eight in a class of over two hundred, to the polls on behalf of Grover Cleveland in 1884.⁹ Hearst clearly saw his future in publishing and convinced his father to put him as an editor of his newspaper. From his junior year until his departure from Harvard, Hearst would have copies of the *San Francisco Examiner* sent to Harvard for him to study and compare to the most popular newspapers of the time, such as Joseph Pulitzer's *New York World*.¹⁰

The Beginning of an Empire

After leaving Harvard, Hearst had a brief stint at the family's mines and their property in Mexico, where, according to Whyte, this gave Hearst a romanticized view of being a pioneer.¹¹ However, Hearst hated the mines, finding them dirty, grubby, dull, and the travel arduous.¹² Now running his father's newspaper, Hearst planned an excellent turnaround for the paper:

I have all my pipes laid, and it only remains to turn on the gas. One year from the day I take hold of the thing, our circulation will have increased.... We must be alarmingly enterprising, and we must be startlingly original. We must be honest and fearless. We must have greater variety than we have ever had.... There are some things that I intend to do new and striking, which will constitute a revolution in the sleepy journalism of the Pacific slope and the eyes of all that section on the Examiner."¹³

⁹ Whyte, *The Uncrowned King*, p. 21.

¹⁰ Whyte, *The Uncrowned King*, p. 24.

¹¹ Whyte, *The Uncrowned King*, p. 25.

¹² Whyte, *The Uncrowned King*, p. 26.

¹³ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 63.

It is clear from his letters to his father that Hearst planned to use the paper to fight the interests of the elite, warning his father that the *San Francisco Examiner* would henceforth be "honest and fearless" and would likely offend his friends in high places.¹⁴ It did not take long for Hearst to find his recipe for success in the sleepy Pacific newspaper business. Within weeks, he introduced New Journalism to California, for example, introducing crime stories on his front pages. Whyte states, "The pre-Hearst 1880 Examiner had devoted about 10% of its new space to crime stories; the Will Hearst version gave more space, 24%, to crime than any other news topic."¹⁵ Here, Hearst began cultivating his persona as the giver of justice to the common people. His papers would constantly remind its readers that the city's foulest criminals would have gone unpunished without "The Invincible Determination of the 'Examiner' to Bring them to Justice."¹⁶ However, this narrative of justice was also used to attack the Asian community, who were being painted as a threat to white society. This period of American politics, especially on the West Coast, was characterized by extreme anti-Asian sentiment. Hearst would go on to push these sentiments in his papers.

All of these changes, however, would have been of little importance without William's boldest move. Since San Francisco already had many established dailies, Hearst shipped his papers across Northern California. Hearst used train cars to ship his papers north to Sacramento and south to San Jose. To ensure everybody in the Bay Area knew what he was doing, he devoted half of his front page on May 23, 1887, to his gamble.¹⁷ No matter

¹⁴ Whyte, *The Uncrowned King*, p. 29.

¹⁵ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 77.

¹⁶ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 77.

¹⁷ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 73.

what major city in Northern California you visited in 1887, people talked about the young kid of the block, William Randolph Hearst.

According to Roy Littlefield, in 1886, Hearst combined forces with progressives such as H.C. Kinne representing the Knights of Labor, Frank Roney, Bennette Haskell, and Peter Roberts representing the plasterer's union, and State Senator Patrick Reddy to form a labor league ran a full slate of candidates for office.¹⁸ The Knights of Labor are a perfect example of how the labor movement was tied to white supremacy as they were synonymous with the Anti-Asian movement. In her book *America For Americans* by Erika Lee discussed how the Knights of Labor consistently advocated for Asian exclusion. For example, she writes, "In the fall of 1885, the Knights of Labor and white vigilante groups began shouting that "the Chinese must go."¹⁹ According to Lee, while the group was primarily made up of white workers whose occupations were threatened by Chinese labor, many were lawyers, judges, politicians, businessmen, and business owners.²⁰ Deeply tied to the labor movement, Hearst pushed anti-Asian and pro-white sentiments in his papers. Between taking over the operations at the *San Francisco Examiner* in 1885 and when he bought the *New York Journal* in 1895, Hearst became the newspaper king of California, coining the *San Francisco*

¹⁸ Roy Littlefield, *WHR's Role In American Progressivism*, p. 6.

¹⁹ Erika Lee, *America for Americans: A History of Xenophobia in United States*, (New York City, NY, Basic Books, 2019), p. 100.

²⁰ Lee, *America for Americans*, p. 100.

Examiner the monarch of the dailies[Fig.1.1].²¹



[Figure 1.1. Letter heading from San Francisco Examiner's 1892. Source: University of California Berkeley, Bancroft Library's Hearst Archive, Carton 4, folder 15:47 Bureau of Claims 1892-1894, BANC MSS 77/121 c.]

While Hearst used his papers to attack Asians, all papers did this at the time. What made the Hearst papers different was their brand of investigative journalism. The Hearst papers exposed corruption, and according to Nasaw, *The Examiner* was, "pro-labor, anti capital[sic], and anti-railroad[sic]. It defended labor's right to unionize and strike, and supported Sam Gompers's Call for the eight-hour day."²² As I have mentioned, being pro-labor in the West at this time often also meant being xenophobic. Hearst's papers pushed the argument that cheap "Mongolian" labor was taking white men's jobs.²³ While Progressives supported labor reform, women's suffrage, and better working conditions, many were xenophobic and pushed social Darwinist thinking that put the white man above all other races. Hearst's journalism and his politics reflected the race-based notion of progress, progress for the white working class.

²¹ Figure 1.1, Letter heading from *San Francisco Examiner's* Bureau of Claims December 19, 1892, University of California Berkeley Bancroft Library's Hearst Archive, Carton 4, folder 15:47 Bureau of Claims 1892-1894, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

²² Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 79.

²³ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 80.

For all of Hearst's success in California, he was well aware it did not matter until he completed the same feat in New York.²⁴ At this point, Hearst and his family were "new money," and his success was given an asterisk by old-money Easterners who saw the West as less prestigious than the East. In the 1890s, San Francisco had a population of less than half a million residents compared to the 3.5 million population of New York City. While Hearst was a rich man in San Francisco, New York was full of rich men and a history of rich men who failed. In 1895, William Randolph Hearst purchased the *New York Morning Journal*, and its German-language sister for \$150,000 dollars, equivalent to 5.6 million dollars in 2024.²⁵

Hearst Takes on New York

In New York, Hearst became a more ruthless businessman and used his racist West Coast labor tactics to sell papers. Though elements of his life have been exaggerated, he did buy the best editors and played a role in creating support for the Cuban rebels among the American working class. Other papers, especially *The World*, owned by Pulitzer, and others also engaged in these tactics and had a role in the Spanish-American War. Hearst has been credited with helping launch the Spanish-American war largely due to his own propaganda labeling the Journals war.²⁶ Swanberg wrote, "It was a newspaper's war. Above all, it was Hearst's war."²⁷ Swanberg claims that Hearst pulled *The World* and other papers into the pro-

²⁴ Whyte, *The Uncrowned King*, p. 7.

²⁵ Whyte, *The Uncrowned King*, p. 50.

²⁶ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 120.

²⁷ Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, p. 172.

war camp by sensationalizing the struggle for Cuban Independence.²⁸ However, Nasaw downplays Hearst's individual role writing, "had William Randolph Hearst never gone into publishing, the United States would nonetheless have declared war on Spain in April of 1898."²⁹ Nasaw acknowledges Hearst's claim that he "convinced the rest of the nation to go to war."³⁰ According to Nasaw, Hearst did not start the war, but he learned that stoking war sentiment was profitable.³¹

While this war was extremely profitable for Hearst, it also almost killed his political career before it started. In 1898, during the Spanish-American War, Hearst and Pulitzer raised the bulk price of their papers from fifty cents to sixty cents for one hundred. While the regular price of the papers was still a penny, this price raise was not forced onto the regular worker but on newsies. Newsies were mostly orphaned boys who lived on the streets and scraped by selling papers [Fig. 1.2].³² In theory, a newsie could make forty cents profit if they sold all the papers, totaling a dollar twenty if they sold all their morning, afternoon, and evening papers. However, many would not, leaving them with a stack of papers, no money, and no idea what to do.

²⁸ Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, p. 174.

²⁹ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p.125.

³⁰ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p.125.

³¹ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p.126.

³² Nasaw, *The Chief*, p.149.



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Figure 1.2 May 7, 1910, St. Louis Missouri, Paper Boy in distress.

For all of Hearst's talk about being the man of the people and fighting for the common man, his entire media empire and every other newspaper across the entire country relied on this vulnerable population. While Hearst would talk about the need for better public schools and more funding, fighting child labor was not a popular topic in newspapers of the time because they all relied on the newsies, the population who would be in school, to get their papers to the public. When the price raise occurred, the newsies thought it was temporary and would last only as long as the war. However, in July 1899, six months after the war ended, the price raise had failed to disperse. To protest, the newsies formed a union and organized a metropolitan boycott of the Hearst and Pulitzer newspapers, which expanded

³³ Figure 1.2, May 7, 1910, St. Louis Missouri, Paper Boy in distress.
<https://aaaa206060.getarchive.net/media/7th-and-olive-sts-saturday-pm-may-7th-1910-location-st-louis-missouri>.

across New York.³⁴ At first, Hearst did not concede and used strong-arm tactics.³⁵ In the end, the strike did force change. While Hearst conspired with Pulitzer to break up the strike, Hearst and Pulitzer agreed to repurchase unsold papers at fifty-five cents for one hundred, meaning the newsies did not have to stay out late trying to prevent a loss. While it is impossible to know for sure, Hearst likely agreed to this settlement because the working class who comprised a large segment of his readership supported the newsie's strike.

Hearst came to New York in the middle of a terrible recession. Between 1894 and 1898, the commercial sector had declined drastically. In this period, the unemployment rate in New York City at points was as high as thirty-five percent.³⁶ Combined with an influx of new immigrants, wages decreased as new immigrants from Italy, Ireland, and Eastern Europe were willing to work for less than natural-born Americans.³⁷ This poor working-class population and their problems would be the basis of Hearst's papers. Hearst would use a more modern sense of whiteness developed in the west to appeal to these new immigrants as he would push in his papers the idea that these Europeans should be accepted because they were much more assimilable than other races, such as Asians. More recent scholarship has focused on this point. As Erika Lee writes in *America is For Americans*, "anti-Chinese leaders promoted a new kind of American identity... What was significantly different in anti-Chinese rhetoric was the explicit grouping of all European immigrants as Americans."³⁸ This new American identity based around whiteness and European ethnicity would be pushed

³⁴ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 149.

³⁵ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 150.

³⁶ Littlefield, *WRH's Role in American Progressivism*, p. 9.

³⁷ Littlefield, *WRH's Role in American Progressivism*, p. 18.

³⁸ Lee, *America For Americans*, p. 78.

heavily in the Hearst papers in New York, just as it was in San Francisco, to appeal to the working class. This white supremacy was based on the idea that white Europeans assimilated better due to a shared culture based around Christianity.

Why Work for Hearst?

Hearst offered things that were unheard of at the time, such as job security and creative freedom, as long as they pushed the Hearst narrative. Hearst saw the industry practice of "hire and fire" as impractical, as he thought it caused writers not to publish anything controversial, as it could cost them their jobs.³⁹ In general, Hearst offered a better work-life balance than Pulitzer as a former Pulitzer employee said that his boss believed that his editors should, "live at his desk and sleep under it. He has no right to have family, relatives, friends nor social obligations, and if ever he attempted to go north of Park Row (street with most of the NY newspapers at the time), men should be stationed there with clubs to drive him back to his den."⁴⁰ Pulitzer would purposely assign overlapping responsibilities and were expected to report to the boss on their co-workers, "work habits, morale, and overall performance."⁴¹ It became customary for his managers to receive by wire "scorching criticisms of their efforts, including indictments of their work ethic and personal habits that their employer could not possibly have observed first hand."⁴²

³⁹ Whyte, *The Uncrowned King*, p. 81.

⁴⁰ Whyte, *The Uncrowned King*, p. 100.

⁴¹ Whyte, *The Uncrowned King*, p. 101.

⁴² Whyte, *The Uncrowned King*, p. 101.

This type of toxic work environment, plus an increase in salary, is exactly what made it possible for Hearst to convince so many of Pulitzer's best editors to jump ship. Hearst also didn't come up with the idea of buying out competitors' best workers, as Pulitzer used the same tactic of overpaying workers to win his own newspaper war against Charles A. Dana, paying Walt McDougall fifty dollars a week to draw cartoons.⁴³ Buying talent doesn't make a paper run either. To make sure his *New York Journal* stood up to the same criteria as the *San Francisco Examiner*, Hearst brought his best executives with him to New York.⁴⁴ Hearst created mass market newspapers by using more images and sensationalization, including crime and scandal stories, promoting war and stoking anti-Asian sentiment. These were the same elements of "the so-called "New Journalism" that Pulitzer and Dana had begun in New York. One element of the new journalism that Hearst relished was the exposure of corruption, which again made him appear to fight for the common man of New York.⁴⁵

Through his papers, and in other ways, Hearst came to see the white working class as consumers who were critical to the American economy. In a 1904 interview in rival newspapers, the *Chicago Daily Tribune* and the *New York Herald*, Hearst argued that

The prosperity of the merchant, manufacturer, farmer, book publisher, theater owner, and actor depended on the purchasing power of the mass of people. Poverty-stricken people do not eat beef or mutton; they do not buy woolen clothes in profusion. They have not enough for life's real necessities; nothing at all for the books, travel, the pleasures that should accompany genuine national prosperity. Wide and equitable distribution of wealth is essential to a nation's prosperity and growth [of] intellectual development, and the distribution is brought about by the labor union more than any other agency of our civilization.⁴⁶

⁴³ Whyte, *The Uncrowned King*, p.68.

⁴⁴ Whyte, *The Uncrowned King*, p.78.

⁴⁵ Whyte, *The Uncrowned King*, p.53.

⁴⁶ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 172.

It is clear that from his earliest days, Hearst saw a need to put some guardrails on the economy to prevent businesses from exploiting the working class. Hearst would always claim in interviews that he was not a socialist and that he was a proponent of the free market. He believed in increasing the spending power of workers in order to help the American economy, but he did not support Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal as he saw it as overregulating the market.

Hearstism

Hearstism is the term coined by James Allen Myatt, which described the populist movement Hearst led based around himself and pro-worker and anti-trust policies. Hearst used his stance as a fighter for the common man to launch his political career. During his time in New York, Hearst became a donor and advocate for the Democratic party and a staunch ally of William Jennings Bryan. To gain favor, Hearst bought a newspaper in Chicago to help the Democrats have a friendly voice in the Midwest.⁴⁷ In 1904, Hearst ran for the House of Representatives and won, officially starting his career as a politician. Hearst was elected to Congress twice, in 1902 and 1904. In 1905, he ran the closest race in New York City's mayoral election history until 1965. He also nearly obtained the Democratic nomination for president, aided by the support of labor leaders all over the country and "radical" democrats.

⁴⁷ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 150.

While much is made of Hearst's lack of Congressional appearances, being absent for more than 90% of roll calls, Hearst put forth many additions to bills that were focused on helping the working class. These bills included harsher sentencing for railroad officials who took part in secret rebates, an eight-hour work day for a naval appropriation bill, and the ability for the government to buy telegraph lines, but all these bills failed to garner support from Hearst's own party.⁴⁸ According to James Creelman a reporter for the *New York Herald*, "So intense is the distrust of his Congressional colleagues that it is doubtful whether he could secure an endorsement of the Ten Commandments by the House."⁴⁹ While the political parties would end up using his platform of workers' rights to secure their own position, conservative Democrats who controlled the party knew that any success by Hearst in Congress would be used in his political ambitions for president, something they feared more than anything.

After an interview with Hearst, Joseph Steffens, reporter for the *New York Evening Post*, wrote, "If Hearst wasn't a radical and didn't believe in socialism, as he assured Steffens he didn't, then why, Steffens asked, was he so feared by the "plutocrats." The answer was obvious: if Hearst did "literally the things he says he will do, it means that this child of the privileged class will really try to abolish privilege in the United States." This quote is why many other historians, such as Nasaw, agree that the party elite feared Hearst gaining power. While there surely was an attempt by the party elite to keep Hearst from gaining real political power, Hearst failed in politics because of multiple reasons. One reason is he refused to play the political long game of working patiently with his colleagues, waiting his turn for higher

⁴⁸ Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, pp. 267.

⁴⁹ Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, p. 267.

office, acquire favor with the party elite, and accept a "reasonable amount of horse trading."⁵⁰ Whether this would've even worked is debatable, as the party elite hated Hearst for using his papers to pull back the curtain and reveal the corruption that was endemic in American politics. Growing up in California, he saw how the Republican party was owned by the railroads and the Democrats were for sale to his father, leaving Hearst with no illusions about how political parties worked in America and he was determined to fix it.⁵¹

With the great amount of support Hearst had given William Jennings Bryan, the de facto party leader in the 1896 and the 1900 presidential elections, he was hoping Bryan would return the favor in 1904. This would not be the case, as Bryan decided not to endorse him. According to Swanberg, Bryan didn't like Alton B. Parker, but "more disturbing to Bryan was the buzz of rumor about Hearst's moral failing."⁵² This is one of the first examples in the career of his scandalous lifestyle directly impacting his political desires. However, Nasaw believes that the conservatives would never have given Hearst the nomination. According to Nasaw, the conservatives already had the votes lined up for Parker, but Hearst's "appeal to class divisions, his support of the unions, and his attempt to bring together rural populists with the urban working class was too incendiary to ignore."⁵³ Without a party establishment favorite to back him, his presidential bid was dead.

After what Hearst saw as a betrayal from the conservative Democrats in 1904, Hearst believed the Democrats made it clear they did not want to be associated with the working class.⁵⁴ This led him to declare his independence and run for mayor of New York. The New

⁵⁰ Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, p. 267.

⁵¹ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 41.

⁵² Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, p. 260.

⁵³ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 181.

⁵⁴ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 185.

York 1905 mayoral election is one of the most scandalous in New York's history, with many accounts of Hearst poll watchers being roughed up.⁵⁵ There were stories that Tammany had employed repeat voters and that thousands of votes for Hearst were dumped into the East River.⁵⁶ Swanberg, who is not a hidden critic of Hearst in his book, acknowledges that many contemporaries believe Hearst was defrauded and should have been New York's next mayor.⁵⁷ Even Joseph Pulitzer, a man with every reason to try and paint Hearst as a sore loser, didn't with his paper writing almost a week after the election:

Hearst men were being held up in the Fourth Assembly District and a report from the Eighteenth Charles F. Murphy's district, stated that an attempt had been made to bribe the Republican election inspector to let things go easy for Tammany. There was no confirmation of this story, and the Hearst men who were sent to investigate said they found everything going all right, save that there were Tammany men all around the polling places and that they were openly buying votes.⁵⁸

This was the closest Hearst ever got to holding a state office.

In 1906, Hearst ran but failed to win the governorship of New York. Running with both the Independence League and Democrats nomination, the Republicans did everything they could to prevent Hearst from taking office. In 1906, Teddy Roosevelt feared Hearst's popularity and did everything he could to prevent his election. According to Nasaw, Teddy Roosevelt intervened in New York's politics to make sure they elected attorney Charles Evan Hughes, a man whom the Hearst papers had applauded for fighting the insurance trusts.⁵⁹ Roosevelt was worried about Hearst's popularity with the "have-nots," leading him to

⁵⁵ Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, p. 282.

⁵⁶ Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, p. 283.

⁵⁷ Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, p. 283.

⁵⁸ Library of Congress, *The New York World*, Evening Edition, November 7, 1905

<https://www.loc.gov/resource/sn83030193/1905-11-07/ed-1/?sp=6&q=Hearst&r=-0.001,0.329,0.299,0.217,0.>

⁵⁹ Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, p. 291.

campaign with and endorse Hughes openly and plan every step of the campaign.⁶⁰ He gave speeches about the danger of Hearst and said the Hearst papers were complicit in the assassination of President William McKinley, which was a scandal for Hearst at the time.⁶¹ This again killed Hearst's political ambitions.

The Archbold letter scandal killed any future hopes of Hearst in politics. These were letters written between Standard Oil and many prominent US senators and congressmen from the early 1900's. However, Hearst, who obtained these letters in 1904, waited until 1908 to talk about them in a speech on September 17, 1908, in Columbus, Ohio.⁶² By the time Hearst began to use these letters, his image was far too tarnished to be considered a legitimate candidate. Hearst waiting to publish the letters only made this worse as people question his legitimacy as a figure for change since he clearly held onto the letters for political gain. With Hearst losing in 1910, his dream of becoming president was officially dead.

While Hearst didn't rule out running for office again, fate would rule it out for him. In December of 1912, Hearst was called to Congress to answer a scandal that included Archbold letters and accusations of fraud in his papers. While no suits for libel were ever filed, readers realized that five recently released letters allegedly written to Senators Quay, Hanna, Penrose, and Congressman Charles Grosvenor, all dated between 1898 and 1904, had been written on a smith machine with elite type, something that had not been invented till 1906.⁶³ Hearst, for the entire committee session, answered unusually unsure for himself and, "To the most trivial questions he gave prolonged thought before answering and seemed

⁶⁰ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 208.

⁶¹ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 210.

⁶² Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, p. 309.

⁶³ Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, p. 337.

reluctant to discuss in any way how the correspondence had come into his possession."⁶⁴

According to Swanberg, this was a tactical use of uncertainty by Hearst because "he was under oath and knew the penalty of untruth."⁶⁵ Even after his stories were poked full of holes by future subpoenas, the committee did not call him back for clarification, with Swanberg writing, "The committee acted like a group of men avoiding a showdown that would have aroused the ire of Hearst and his press."⁶⁶ While he hoped for the rest of his life that his name would come up as a dark horse candidate in some future stalemated convention, this was the end of Hearst's political career.

While many historians, such as Nasaw, have claimed Hearst became more conservative in his later life, Hearst pushed the same racist policies against non-white minorities his entire life. During the early nineteenth hundreds and nineteen-teens, Hearst pushed blatant Anti-Asian racism in his papers, called for intervention in non-white nations, and yet loudly called for the breaking up of monopolies. In a news article from January 15 in either 1912 or 1913, Hearst restates his many calls for regulation of monopolies, "There are stringent laws against trust coercion and oppression, and these laws should be enforced to the limit of their criminal penalties."⁶⁷ The article starts with how some trusts form naturally from the advantages of combination, and some are formed through coercion. Hearst makes it clear that he believes all should be broken up no matter how they form.⁶⁸ Hearst's reasoning is very simple and is an example of why he was considered a progressive. According to

⁶⁴ Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, p. 322.

⁶⁵ Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, p. 334.

⁶⁶ Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, p. 340.

⁶⁷ News editorial by Hearst, January 15, year not stated, HA (University of California Berkeley Bancroft Library's Hearst Archive), Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

⁶⁸ January 15, year not stated, News editorial by Hearst, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

Hearst, "The law of supply and demand does not control [the] monopoly. On the contrary, [the] monopoly controls the supply, modifies the demand, and regulates the demand to suit its own requirements."⁶⁹ Hearst sees it as clear as day that monopolies are not beneficial to the American economy as they strip hard-working Americans of money they should not have to pay. This makes it harder for the working class to be consumers and, in effect, depresses the economy.

While Hearst was an originator of Yellow Journalism and was famous for exaggerating certain stories, and he made many political enemies, others appreciated his support. Hearst's fight for the right of the people to send their children to public schools is one of the most honorable and undeniable examples of Hearst fighting for policies that did not benefit him or his family in any way. William Randolph Hearst grew up in a wealthy family and did not spend a single day of his life in the public school system, nor did any of his children. Yet he wrote in the early 1900s that the children of New York deserve the best public schools.⁷⁰ Decades later, Hearst wrote one of his executives, Mr. Richard, on November 30, 1926, "I am glad to see this cartoon and little editorial about the schools. Please take every opportunity to urge the necessity of improving the schools and increasing the number, especially in States like New York, where the schools are entirely insufficient."⁷¹ Hearst also supported Lincoln Memorial University, which was famous for providing education to working-class students.⁷² To this day, the Hearst Foundation has a scholarship at the university named after William Randolph Hearst.

⁶⁹ January 15, year not stated, News editorial by Hearst, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

⁷⁰ Littlefield, *WRH's Role in American Progressivism* p. 164.

⁷¹ Telegram Hearst to Richard Dec 9, 1926, HA, Carton 1, Folder 1:3, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

⁷² Letter Lincoln Memorial University to Hearst, Dec 17, 1927, HA, Carton 1, Folder 1:3, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

In addition to supporting the education of working-class children, Hearst also was a supporter of women's suffrage, equal employment of women, and pro-women organizations. In a letter sent to Hearst from the Girls Friendly Society of the Diocese of New York in November of 1926, the pro-women's association was asking for a large donation from Hearst. The donations being asked are to contribute to, "Besides \$9,000 for running expense, we need: \$23,000 to pay off the Interlochen mortgage; \$25,000 for enlarging the house; \$100,000 for Endowment."⁷³ These are huge sums of money, yet the society hoped that Hearst would help their cause. Compared to the G.F.S of New York who wrote to Hearst on how much is still needed to cover expenses.

By the 1920s, Hearst realized the even greater power he could have without even being involved directly in politics. For all of his battles with the party leaders, they still welcomed him back, not out of love but out of fear. He took up the role of string-puller.⁷⁴ At times, that even meant supporting Republicans. For example, in November of 1926, the Republican Governor of Illinois thanked Hearst for his papers' fairness.⁷⁵ Yet, by this time, Hearst was a powerful influence on democratic policies and, in effect, held control of the democratic delegates of the state of Illinois. Nevertheless, Governor Lee wrote, "Your papers have constantly stood by me and assisted me in the accomplishment of the greatest public improvements... in the state of Illinois."⁷⁶ Hearst would go on to have a role in Democratic politics well into his seventies as he played a crucial part in getting FDR enough delegates

⁷³ Letter Girls Friendly Society of NY to Hearst asking for donation, Nov 27, 1926, HA, Carton 1, Folder 1:2, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

⁷⁴ Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, p. 327.

⁷⁵ Letter Chicago Republican governor Lennington Small to Hearst, Nov 6, 1926, HA, Carton 1, Folder 1:3, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

⁷⁶ Letter Chicago Republican governor Lennington Small to Hearst, Nov 6, 1926, HA, Carton 1, Folder 1:3, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

for the Democratic party nomination for president in 1932. In a way, Hearst became the special interest lobbyist he fought to rid of in American politics.

During the 1920s, Hearst's reputation changed. He began seeing a young actress named Marion Davis, whom he propelled into stardom and ended up leaving but never divorcing his wife in 1926.⁷⁷ During the start of the Great Depression, Hearst called for action from the federal government and supported elements of the New Deal.⁷⁸ However, Hearst feared FDR's Wilsonian tendencies and bashed his attempts to get the US into the League of Nations.⁷⁹ Hearst changed his stance on FDR after Joe Kennedy convinced him that if Hearst did not release the delegates he promised to John Nance Garner, the conservatives would force the party to look elsewhere.⁸⁰ Hearst continued to criticize FDR largely because regulations enacted by the New Deal gave oversight to the newspaper industry. Hearst's attacks on FDR continued until the start of WWII, a decision that tanked the circulation of his papers and left a stain on his life as a progressive. During the 1920s and 30s, he also began to support the rise of fascism in Europe.

Hearst paid for and published articles by Benito Mussolini and Adolf Hitler.⁸¹ Hearst later claimed, like many, that he was fooled into believing Hitler would not act on his word in *Mein Kampf*, saying, "The whole policy of...anti-Semitism is such an obvious mistake that I am sure it must soon be abandoned. In fact, I think it is already well on the way to

⁷⁷ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 353.

⁷⁸ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 434.

⁷⁹ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 453.

⁸⁰ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 455.

⁸¹ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 474.

abandonment."⁸² Unfortunately for the Jews of Europe, Nazi anti-Semitism was not on the way out.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I have shown the specific policies that made Hearst popular among the working classes of the United States. I have also started the argument that these policies were deeply tied to racism and white supremacy. I have also begun the argument that Hearst did not become more conservative later in life and that his beliefs, especially on race and culture, were consistent his entire life. While Hearst was a progressive in many ways, in the next two chapters, I will argue that his Progressive policies were deeply tied to race and that race was crucial to his opinions of the world.

⁸² Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 498.

Chapter II: Hearst's Ideal American

In this chapter, I will argue that Hearst pushed a clear and blatant pro-white agenda in his papers and politics based on the pseudoscience of the hierarchy of race and culture.

Hearst believed white-Christian American/European society was at the top of the social and racial hierarchy. In the early 1900s and late 1800s, “white” Americans often regarded immigrants from Europe with disdain, and there was also a significant ethnic and religious animosity among all classes of Americans. For example, in the 1880s, many Americans would have seen a German Protestant as more white than a Jewish Eastern European immigrant. Seeing the term “white” as encompassing all European cultures, including Jews, Catholics, and Protestants, would have been highly contested at the time. Yet William Randolph Hearst pushed this narrative that all Europeans were white and superior to other “less developed” and “less enlightened” races such as Blacks, Hispanics, and Asians. In this chapter, I will show how Hearst used his papers to stoke racial tensions, to divide and categorize Americans by race, and appeal to his ideal white working class. I will show how Hearst saw the world through the lens of white supremacy. I will show how Hearst pushed a deep hatred for the immigration of Asians to the United States and saw them as incapable of assimilating into American society and culture.

While many have debated his Yellow Journalism, Hearst's racism has not been thoroughly studied. Even biographers such as David Nasaw and W.A. Swanberg have emphasized that Hearst only became “conservative” in his later life. However, I will argue that Hearst's early ideas during the Progressive Era promoted white supremacy. I will show

how these ideas and policies he pushed for in the Progressive Era were very consistent with his later ideas and show how his racism was consistent his entire life. In this chapter, I will show how Hearst held a deep hatred for Asians, specifically the Japanese, and in the next chapter, I will show how his notion of whiteness shaped his international policies and worldview he pushed in his papers.

In this chapter, I will use archival material such as newspaper clippings, personal letters, telegrams, and editorials available from the Hearst collection at the University of California Berkeley's Bancroft Library archive, supplemented with a mixture of secondary sources that discuss racism of the era. I will use Executive Meeting notes from the late 1920s that show Hearst was still very involved in his media empire's editorials, news policies, and that he directly shaped his newspapers' treatment of racial groups. As I will show, Hearst's racism and imperialist worldview did not just develop in old age but was something Hearst believed his entire life. I will tie this to my third chapter to show how Hearst's racist and white supremacist beliefs and the idea of the White Man's Burden were the basis of Hearst's imperialist tendencies. This will all add to the greater modern literature on the era and show through Hearst, who was considered a progressive and radical by the elite at the time, that the Progressive Era was far from progressive in a modern sense and was only one step on the long path of progress still being fought in the United States today. My research on Hearst supports the findings of recent research on racial politics of the Progressive movement, specifically the labor movement. Although Hearst was considered a radical progressive by the elites of the time, he helped promote deeply racist and imperialist views and policies.

This will all work together to then argue in Chapter III that Hearst's isolationism was not driven by anti-global politics or other factors but was instead a consequence of Hearst's

worldview that was deeply connected to his white supremacy and imperialism. For the last 100 years, Hearst has been written about as an isolationist who fought US involvement in WWI and WWII. In reality, Hearst believed these European wars were destroying “white” European society and civilization. The contrast with his Latin American politics is especially striking. Hearst repeatedly called for intervention in Latin America. His pro-expansionist views of the US in Latin America reveal a racism similar to the racist views that were promoted in Hearst’s papers of the superiority of the white race.

Racism in The Hearst Comic Section

For all of the progressive labor and women’s rights issues that Hearst fought for and which I discussed in Chapter I, Hearst appealed to his ideal white working class by pushing racist stereotypes that were popular in the Progressive Era in his papers and especially in his comic section. In New York, Hearst dealt with a predominantly white immigrant, non-English literate population that comprised his reading base. This large non-English competent population led Hearst to use the comic section more than any newspaper. Hearst created “The Yellow Boy,” which is no relation to the Yellow Peril, as a comic character with the goal of, for the first time, depicting the reality of daily life for the working class of New York in the papers. The Yellow Boy was a young kid with a bald head, big ears, and wore a burlap sack to show the struggles of urban life[Fig. 2.1].¹

¹ Figure 2.1, “McFadden’s Row of Flats,” Oct 18 1896, HA, Carton 1, Folder 20:35 New York Evening Journal Photos of Early Pages 1897-98, BANC MSS 77/121 c.



Figure 2.1, “McFadden’s Row of Flats,” Oct 18 1896, HA, Carton 1, Folder 20:35 New York Evening Journal Photos of Early Pages 1897-98, BANC MSS 77/121 c

This tactic of the comic strip grew his *New York Journal*’s reading base as while it depicted the struggles of urban life, it also appealed to the popular racist beliefs his ideal white working class held. These comics were far from just a depiction of the working class’s strife but perpetuated racist stereotypes that appealed to his ideal white working class. For example, in the first issue of “The Yellow Boy,” drawn in 1895, the cartoon depicts two African Americans just as most Americans would recognize them, dark as a night without a moon and with the stereotypical huge lips and noses.² Such stereotypes were typical in American popular culture and not just in the profoundly segregated society of Jim Crow states. The comics perpetuated racist stereotypes, categorizing people by race, and they helped sell papers.

While Hearst’s papers used many racist depictions of Jews, Asians, and African Americans, the racist caricature of the “The Pickaninnies” in this cartoon in the *New York*

² Figure 2.1, “McFadden’s Row of Flats,” Oct 18 1896, HA, Carton 1, Folder 20:35 New York Evening Journal Photos of Early Pages 1897-98, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

Journal shows a Black child dreaming of abundance at Christmas. The carriers of that abundance, though, were the stereotypical mischievous pickaninnies. Stereotypes that were common across the United States.³

This article was published on December 5, 1897, and is a clear example of the racial stereotypes that Hearst pushed in his papers. The image is of a little boy dreaming of all the classic racial stereotypes associated with African Americans, such as watermelon, chicken, and, while not familiar anymore, the black lawn jockey. You can also clearly see raccoons by the side of some of the little black children, which is clearly to demean the children as

³ Jim Crow Museum, <https://jimcrowmuseum.ferris.edu/antiblack/picaninny/homepage.htm>

“coons” a racial slur referring to African Americans[Fig 2.2].



Figure 2.2 “The Pickaninny’s Christmas Dream,” Dec 5, 1897, HA, Carton 1, Folder 20:35 New York Evening Journal Photos of Early Pages 1897-98, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

Hearst and the Hearst papers, who would later claim they had always fought for equal rights, did nothing to fight these racist stereotypes during the moment it was most

⁴ Figure 2.2 “The Pickaninny’s Christmas Dream,” Dec 5, 1897, HA, Carton 1, Folder 20:35 New York Evening Journal Photos of Early Pages 1897-98, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

needed.⁵ Instead, they were utterly complacent and culpable in pushing exaggerated racist depictions of African Americans that caused and exacerbated racial tensions in the United States.⁶ These racial stereotypes were far from uncommon in the comic sections of the time, and the Hearst papers were far from the most racist. Hearst's papers did more to support African Americans than many other leading papers, for example, putting the blame for the 1900 New York race riots on whites for antagonizing African Americans.⁷ However, the Hearst papers perpetuated the same racist stereotypes as other papers that kept society segregated, allowed whites to see blacks and other minorities as lesser than, and led to the riots.

These racial attacks on minorities allowed newly immigrated Europeans to try and fit in better with the naturalized white Americans. The more modern idea of whiteness was developing rapidly around this time, especially in the West due to Asian immigration, and Hearst's papers helped bring these idea to the East. Erika Lee wrote about this transforming idea of whiteness in her book *American For Americans*, as she wrote, "What was significantly different in anti-Chinese rhetoric was the explicit grouping of all European immigrants as full Americans."⁸ Hearst contributed to this development across the country. Hearst would continue to push white supremacy and anti-minority sentiments in his papers because he believed in the superiority of his ideal white working class. Hearst would continue to use his papers to attack minorities throughout his career. Hearst would more than

⁵ "The Honor of being an American," 1949 exact date unknown, HA, Oversize Folder 1, *The Hearst Newspapers on The Rights of Minorities* March 4 1940, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

⁶ Figure 2.2, "The Pickaninny's Christmas Dream," Dec 5, 1897, HA, Carton 1, Folder 20:35 New York Evening Journal Photos of Early Pages 1897-98, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

⁷ Littlefield, p. 277.

⁸ Lee, *America for Americans*, p. 78.

exacerbate tensions but attempt to create them as his papers were crucial in the coining of the racist term “The Yellow Peril,” as Hearst attacked Asians with more ferocity than any other ethnic group.

Hearst’s Double Standard on Immigrants

When William Randolph Hearst began his career in newspapers, Americans were still heavily divided on race, physically and mentally. Hearst exacerbated these feelings, and he pushed deeply racist beliefs, primarily targeted Asians and Hispanics, in his papers. Growing up in California, Hearst was surrounded by anti-Asian sentiment. Like others drawn West, the Gold Rush and the prospect of owning land convinced many Asians, specifically Chinese from the Guangdong province, to migrate to the Western United States.⁹ Indians, Japanese, and Filipinos would accompany this Chinese immigration in the latter half of the 19th century to take the perilous journey across the Pacific Ocean in hopes of a better life. This led to conflict as many white Americans felt that Asians were taking their jobs and taking land that was rightfully theirs, given to them by God through Manifest Destiny. These Asian immigrants received the same, if not worse, treatment than earlier Irish immigrants and later Mexican immigrants. Each of these groups were accused of undercutting white labor and, in effect, threatening the stability of American society. For example, the Cigar Makers International Union wrote, “You cannot work a man who must have beef and bread alongside a man who can live on rice. In all such conflicts, in all such struggles, the result is not to

⁹ Naya Shah, *Contagious Divides: Epidemics and Race in San Francisco's Chinatown*, (Los Angeles, CA, University of California Press, 2001), p. 20.

bring up the man who lives on rice to beef-and-bread standard, but it is to bring down the beef-and-bread man to the rice standard.”¹⁰

These racial tensions were only made worse during the economic panics of the late 1800s, which increased social unrest and caused anti-Chinese sentiment to grow. Asian immigration seemed to threaten white society, as Shah explained in their book *Contagious Divides: Epidemics and Race in San Francisco's Chinatown*, American workers feared that if white men were forced out of the factory for cheaper “coolie” labor, then white women would be forced into prostitution to sustain a living.¹¹ In effect, Asians became a threat to white society as they threatened a man’s role in providing for their family and protecting their women, two aspects crucial to the white masculine identity of the time. Asians and Hispanics quickly became scapegoats for politicians who sought the working-class vote. They were a convenient group to blame for the economic downturn on the West Coast.

Hearst stoked such xenophobic feelings in his papers. When Hearst took control of the *San Francisco Examiner* in 1885, only three years had passed since the Chinese Exclusion Act. Hearst, who tailored his papers to the working class, began to use his papers to attack Asians and specifically Japanese with more consistency than any other race, country, or politician in his papers until he died in 1951. Hearst attacked the Japanese because of racial tensions but also specifically because he saw Japan as the United States’ most significant threat to dominance of the Pacific.

¹⁰ Shah, *Contagious Divides*, p. 167.

¹¹ Shah, *Contagious Divides*, p. 170.

While cultivating racist stereotypes in cartoons in his papers, he also published articles that shaped racist policies and legislation.¹² On April 22, 1911, in an editorial titled “California’s Fight is the Entire Nation’s,” Hearst supported a bill that became the California Alien Land Law of 1913, that would ban non-naturalized citizens from owning land in California. This law would, in effect, ban Asians from owning land because they could not be citizens at this point due to the Asian Exclusion Act of 1882. Hearst argued that this law was in the best interest of California because “the Japanese would not make good citizens and do not make good residents.”¹³ Hearst further asserted that Japanese are “never on good terms with Caucasian neighbors,” and they “never employ a Caucasian when they can employ a Japanese.”¹⁴ He thus argued that the Japanese kept to themselves and that the white man’s superior culture and society made him a more qualified candidate for jobs, land, and other opportunities. Hearst wrote in the same article that the Japanese have been and always will be aliens at heart, writing, “They have never been American in spirit. They have never been able to assimilate the American system, to appreciate the American point of view.”¹⁵ Hearst wrote that they, referring to the Japanese, were “incapable of being Americans or understanding Americans.”¹⁶ Ironically, however, right after this, Hearst wrote that “In most case[s] the immigrants who just landed [has] a better understanding of American principles and policy

¹² Editorial “California’s Fight Is The Entire Nation’s Fight,” April 22 1911, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

¹³ Editorial “California’s Fight Is The Entire Nation’s Fight,” April 22 1911, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

¹⁴ Editorial “California’s Fight Is The Entire Nation’s Fight,” April 22 1911, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

¹⁵ Editorial “California’s Fight Is The Entire Nation’s Fight,” April 22 1911, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

¹⁶ Editorial “California’s Fight Is The Entire Nation’s Fight,” April 22 1911, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

and a greater loyalty to American ideals than these congenital aliens.”¹⁷ Congenital, in this context, refers to those who were born in America. Hearst is, in effect, stating that no matter how long Asians are in America or how many generations they have been born in the United States, they will always be alien to the ways of the United States.

This article shows the clear white bias that Hearst pushed in his papers, as he does not mention how whites fought to keep minorities marginalized and segregated. Instead, Hearst placed the blame on the Japanese for not assimilating. As I mentioned, Hearst weaponized his papers to make his readers fear the “Yellow Peril,” which, in his article, defined Japanese immigration as an invasion of not just Japanese citizens but Japanese soldiers.¹⁸ Hearst was painting the immigration of Asians in a war with the white working class. As he wrote, the Japanese population will grow and “may at any time become a Japanese army, directed definitely, positively and powerfully against the Government and the people of this country.”¹⁹ This was a classic anti-immigrant point used throughout American history, that in war, these “foreigners” would be loyal to their old country. At this time, labor unions, especially on the West Coast, were, in effect, pro-white anti-Asian organizations. We can see this from the white labels that the unions began to put on their products to signify to buyers that they were supporting white labor.²⁰ Hearst, who tailor-made his papers to appeal to the white working class, pushed anti-Asian sentiment as he constantly argued that they were taking jobs from his ideal white-working class.

¹⁷ Editorial “California’s Fight Is The Entire Nation’s Fight,” April 22 1911, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

¹⁸ Editorial “California’s Fight Is The Entire Nation’s Fight,” April 22 1911, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

¹⁹ Editorial “California’s Fight Is The Entire Nation’s Fight,” April 22 1911, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

²⁰ Shah, *Contagious Divides*, p. 164.

The editorial continued, “These Japanese are not, and never want to be, Americans. Worse than that, they are actively and essentially antagonistic to American ideas and to the welfare of the American nation.”²¹ It is clear that the Hearst papers are trying to convince the average American worker that Asians are a threat to the American way of life. Thus California, and by extension, the United States should “ limit this Japanese invasion and prevent widespread possession of American territory by the Japanese.”²² It is clear the Hearst papers are not just saying that whites are superior, but that Asians threaten the society of white America.

This editorial is just one example of how Hearst used his papers to alienate and categorize races into superior and inferior and stoked anti-Asian sentiments that were popular with the American public at this time. Asians were an easy ethnic group to convince the American public of their difference and inferiority as they looked drastically different than white Europeans, spoke a different language with a different alphabet, and had a drastically different culture that was not based around Christianity.²³ This type of anti-Asian sentiment would work in his papers because this type of Anti-Asian sentiment was extremely popular in San Francisco’s labor movement and among the poor white working class that made up the basis of Hearst’s readers in every city. Hearst did not come up with these attacks on Asians but regurgitated the same attacks he had likely heard as a young boy growing up in San Francisco.

²¹ Editorial “California’s Fight Is The Entire Nation’s Fight,” April 22 1911, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

²² Editorial “California’s Fight Is The Entire Nation’s Fight,” April 22 1911, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

²³ Lee, *America For Americans*, p. 76.

The narrative Hearst pushed was the same narrative that California politicians used from the 1870s. In 1876, there was a meeting in Washington D.C. where Western and specifically California politicians tried to convince the party leaders to ban Asian immigration. Erika Lee abbreviated the words of former attorney general Frank Morrison Pixley from an 1876 meeting, writing, “They(Asians) could perform light labor but were far inferior to white workers and were “not strong or as brave” as them.”²⁴ In, “California’s Fight is the Entire Nation’s,” Hearst had compared those who are against Asian exclusion to those who oppose a strong Navy, comparing the influx of Asians to the weakening of the country.²⁵ Both the labor movement and the Hearst papers oppose diversity on the grounds that it would make the United States weaker. In “California’s Fight is the Entire Nation’s,” Hearst added that these people (Asians) have “traitorously caused the Pacific coast of our great country to be left almost defenseless against an Asiatic enemy.”²⁶ This appeared at a time when Hearst was considered a radical for the time, and the elite worried he would destroy the Democratic party if elected.²⁷ The same man who was a radical progressive who at the same time fought for women’s rights, public schools, workers’ rights, and fighting the trusts held deeply xenophobic and white supremacist beliefs.

Hearst’s white Christian and imperialist beliefs became extremely clear during First World War when Hearst was considered an isolationist. However, his belief that America should not enter Europe’s war stemmed from his notion that European white nations should

²⁴ Lee, *America for American’s*, p.89.

²⁵ Editorial “California’s Fight Is The Entire Nation’s Fight,” April 22 1911, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

²⁶ Editorial “California’s Fight Is The Entire Nation’s Fight,” April 22 1911, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

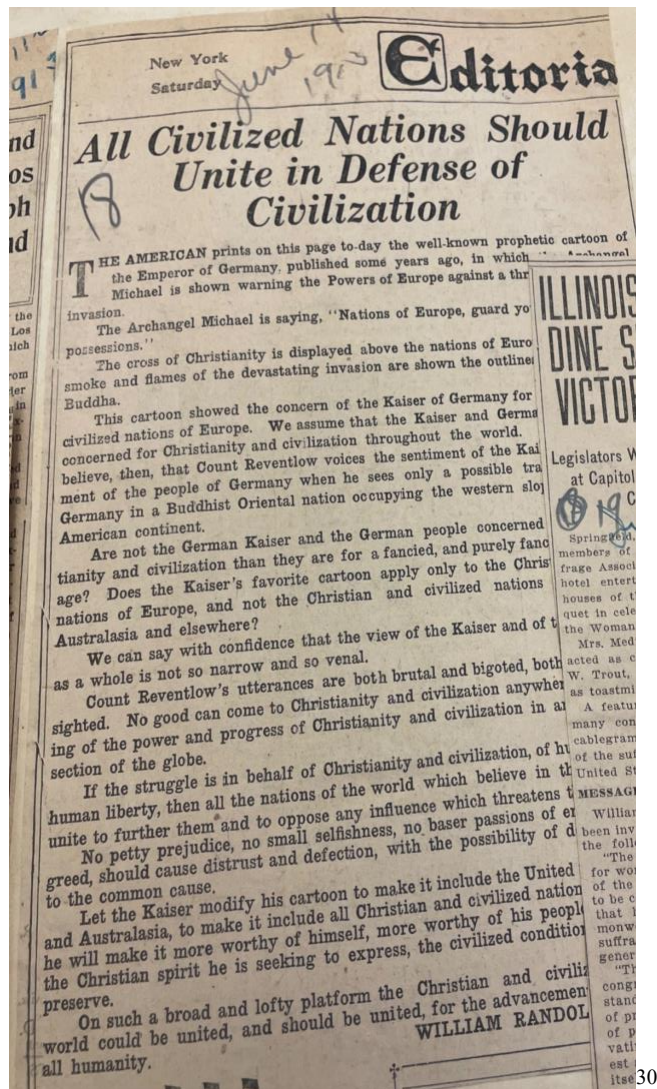
²⁷ *New York Tribune*, September 22, 1906.

<https://www.loc.gov/resource/sn83030214/1906-09-22/ed-1/?sp=6&q=Hearst+socialism&r=-0.026.1.115.0.286.0.174.0.>

not fight each other, and that doing so would weaken Western Civilization, and make it impossible for the West to civilize the “uncivilized” parts of the world. For example, on June 13, 1913, as tensions in Europe began to rise, Hearst called for peace in an article titled “All Civilized Nations Should Unite in Defense of Civilization.” In this article, Hearst asks whether or not the German Kaiser cares about all Christians regardless of their country of origin and then argues that Christians should not fight each other.²⁸ This article is also the first example of Hearst calling for all Christians to unite, saying, “If the struggle is in behalf of Christianity and civilization, of hu[covered text] human liberty, then all the nations of the world which believe in th[covered text] unite to further them and to oppose any influence that threatens [covered text].”²⁹ It is clear that Hearst holds Christian society at the top of the societal hierarchy and cares more about Christians than any other religious group.

²⁸ “All Civilized Nations Should Unite in Defense of Civilization,” June 13 1913, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

²⁹ “All Civilized Nations Should Unite in Defense of Civilization,” June 13 1913, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.



[Fig 2.3] Figure 2.3 “All Civilized Nations Should Unite in Defense of Civilization,” June 13 1913, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

This only became more clear once the Great War began. In September of 1914, Hearst published an article titled “Let Us Have Peace.” In this editorial, Hearst accurately blames WWI on the monarchies of Europe.³¹ This type of statement made William Randolph Hearst appear as an isolationist. However, he does not deplores all war, but rather he explains

³⁰ Figure 2.3 “All Civilized Nations Should Unite in Defense of Civilization,” June 13 1913, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c. I added this here so the reader was not confused on what I meant by [covered text] as the text was covered by another editorial glued on top.

³¹ “Let Us Have Peace,” September 1914 unknown date, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

that, “The civilized nations of Europe are destroying each other and the civilization which they have laboriously constructed through centuries.”³² Hearst warns that this war is more than destroying society, it is weakening countries such as Germany, which will be needed to fight an imagined future “Oriental assault.”³³ William Randolph Hearst was only against this war because he saw it as benefiting Oriental society and weakening European global supremacy. He asked, “Why should Europe decimate its forces and destroy its power, when at any time its whole force and its full power and its united effort may be needed in a supreme struggle to rescue civilization of Europe from submersion in an overwhelming flood of barbarism.” Hearst did not hate war because he was a German sympathizer or an isolationist but because he held a racist view of Asia being the greatest threat to civilized society.

Hearst and Fascism

As I stated, William Randolph Hearst clearly supported his ideal White American working class and Western European heritage and culture. Another example of this is Hearst’s fascination with Fascism, a movement built around nationalism and racial hierarchies. Hearst did not support Nazism’s approach towards Jewish people, but he did agree with European Fascist movements, especially before the beginning of the Second World War. Hearst's papers supported Mussolini’s regime in the early 1920s, and he had direct contact with the Italian ambassador of Fascist Italy. This did not always mean he

³² “Let Us Have Peace,” September 1914 unknown date, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

³³ “Let Us Have Peace,” September 1914 unknown date, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

agreed with everything the state was doing, but as the ambassador put it in a letter in 1924, for example, Hearst showed “a constant friendly attitude towards Italy.” This relationship meant that the ambassador felt comfortable pressing him to correct an article in his paper, which the ambassador claimed had “false statements and misleading headlines has done real harm to [the] Italian situation.”³⁴ Hearst received another letter a year later acknowledging a “telegram that confirms your amity towards my country.” While we do not know the exact change that Hearst made, it is clear Italy was happy with the more favorable coverage, which would “not only benefit Italy but also fasten the tradition [of] good understanding and friendship between our countries. Best thanks and kind regards Gaetani.”³⁵

While the Bancroft archive did not have Hearst's letter, the ambassador clearly appreciated his support and coverage of Italian politics in his papers. Hearst's readership included Italians and other Catholic immigrants, and it is likely that Hearst thought that this coverage would maintain this audience. According to Philip V. Cannistraro, a historian of modern Italy and the Italian American experience, pro-Fascist sentiments among Italian Americans resulted from the stress and difficulties associated with assimilation, a process that Italian Americans were undertaking in the 1920s and 30s.³⁶ When Mussolini gained power in a coup in 1921, Italy was still a very young country with the peninsula unifying barely eighty years prior. Mussolini, like other leaders, was undertaking a process to create a strong sense of nationalism within Italians, something that was not there when most Italians immigrated to the United States. This created a romantic image for many Italian Americans,

³⁴ letter from Italian ambassador to Hearst, Jan 17 1925, HA, Carton 1, Folder 1:1, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

³⁵ letter from Italian ambassador to Hearst, Jan 17 1925, HA, Carton 1, Folder 1:1, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

³⁶ Philip V. Cannistraro, “The Duce and the prominenti: Fascism and the crisis of Italian American Leadership,” *Altreitalie* no. 31 (July-December 2005): p. 78. <https://www.altreitalie.it/kdocs/78448/84099.pdf>.

according to Cannistrano, who quotes Giuseppe Prezzolini, then the head of the Casa Italiana at Columbia University, who in 1931 wrote, “Italy now seemed to them no longer a land from which they had been forced to leave in search of a less distressing life. Italy became in their minds a land from which they felt exiled, of whose past glories they felt proud, and for whose present fortunes or misfortunes they felt glad or miserable.”³⁷ In effect, Mussolini was creating a sense of Italian unity which allowed Italians, “for the first time to claim their national identity with pride.”³⁸ This pro-Mussolini opinion and sense of national pride from Italian Americans is a possible answer to why Hearst pushed Italian Fascist propaganda in the form of editorials from Mussolini in his papers and took so much care in not offending his Italian readers; a population that made up a sizable portion of the American working class. However, these Fascist sentiments did not develop through chance. According to Cannistrano, pro-fascist leaders in the United States deliberately played up Italian-American ethnic identity to maintain and reinforce, “cultural, nostalgic, economic, political, and emotional ties with Italy”³⁹ In effect, Hearst played a prominent role in allowing his papers to be a venue for Fascist propaganda to spread to the American public.

Hearst notoriously also had Mussolini and Hitler write opinion pieces in his newspapers. Nasaw has multiple examples of this in his book *The Chief*, as he writes that Hearst paid Mussolini \$1,200 per article for eighteen articles in 1932.⁴⁰ After the Nazi Party performed exceptionally well in the 1930 elections and became the second largest party in the German parliament, Hearst paid Hitler \$240 per article, with the first article titled, “Adolf

³⁷ Cannistrano, “The Duce and the prominenti,” p. 78. <https://www.altreitalie.it/kdocs/78448/84099.pdf>.

³⁸ Cannistrano, “The Duce and the prominenti,” p. 78. <https://www.altreitalie.it/kdocs/78448/84099.pdf>.

³⁹ Cannistrano, “The Duce and the prominenti,” p. 77. <https://www.altreitalie.it/kdocs/78448/84099.pdf>.

⁴⁰ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 471.

Hitler's Own Story; He Tells What Is the Matter with Germany and How he Proposes to Remedy It.”⁴¹ It is clear that Hearst wanted to give these Fascists a platform to spew their propaganda to the American people.

Old Hearst, Same Hearst

During the Great Depression, many American politicians tried to find a scapegoat to explain the state of the economy. While many, such as Herbert Hoover, blamed low-wage Mexican labor, Hearst used the economic crisis to continue his attacks on Asians. Hearst published three articles based on Congressional debates from Congressman Karl Stefan, which Hearst titled “We Must Buy American.” These articles were scathing attacks on Asians that ring familiar to his early life and the labor movement, writing that America cannot compete with the slave labor wages of Asia.⁴² The first editorial blames Asia, but specifically the Japanese, Hearst's favorite target, for America's depressed economy, writing, “Keeping the factories or foreign lands open with our money at this time is suicide to the factory workers at home.”⁴³ This article is an example of protectionist ideas similar to today's. Hearst wrote: “We as Americans who believe in upholding the American standard of living, know that American labor, both skilled and unskilled, can never compete with the slave wages paid in those countries.”⁴⁴ This shows Hearst's beliefs and hatred for Asians was

⁴¹ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 474.

⁴² “We Must Buy American.”, date unknown, HA, Carton 21, Folder 21:37 New York American Correspondence, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

⁴³ “We Must Buy American.”, date unknown, HA, Carton 21, Folder 21:37 New York American Correspondence, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

⁴⁴ “We Must Buy American.”, date unknown, HA, Carton 21, Folder 21:37 New York American Correspondence, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

deeply rooted in him and was not something that developed later in life, an idea that other historians have pushed. This shows how Hearst used every opportunity in his life to try and divide and categorize people by race from his first day to his last.

Before I continue, I want to address a debate that has raged for much of the literature on Hearst. This debate concerns the number of Hearst papers reflecting Hearst's beliefs. Evidence suggests that Hearst's papers promoted his privately held opinions. For example, in executive meeting notes from 1927, we see that every final decision in what was now a vast media empire was run by Hearst.⁴⁵ On December 28, 1927, a special meeting was held "for the purpose of carrying out orders received from Mr. Hearst through Mr. Polachek."⁴⁶ This alone shows Hearst's significant role in his papers, as this meeting was solely about appointing a new general manager for the International News Service. This is not the actions of a man who does not have a direct role in what is put on his papers. These meetings were also held in 1927, at the peak of Hearst's newspaper empire. Such meetings show the degree to which Hearst was aware of and involved in his papers. Nasaw stated this as well writing that Hearst would read his papers for quality control well into his 70s.⁴⁷ Through these meeting notes, we can come to the conclusion that if Hearst still played a prominent role in his media empire at its peak, articles printed earlier would have only had more of his finger prints on them.

⁴⁵ Executive Meeting Minutes, Jan 1927, HA, Carton 11, Folder 11:3, Executive Committee Meeting Minutes Jan 1927, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

⁴⁶ Executive Meeting Minutes, Jan 1927, HA, Carton 11, Folder 11:3, Executive Committee Meeting Minutes Jan 1927, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

⁴⁷ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 434.

Hearst used his papers to push the threat of the Yellow Peril throughout his life. In an article 1949 article titled “The Honor of Being American, 50 Fighting Years,” written by James R Young, praised Hearst for his progressive fight for the people. Young also praised Hearst’s constant attacks on Asians and foresight about the Japanese threat. Young writes that Hearst had warned of the Japanese threat for “two decades before events took place.”⁴⁸ This shows how Hearst categorized groups of people as threats and non-threats and continues to prove how Hearst used racism to categorize and divide people into his ideal and non-ideal working class. Whether Hearst thought a race was suitable for assimilation came down to their culture and society. White immigrants who came from white societies he saw as easier candidates for assimilation. This is because their culture already matched many aspects of American culture and ties to his thought that white society was superior. He also saw that one day Japan would in fact attack the US and it was a major competitor in the Pacific. World War II this confirmed in retrospect Hearst’s clear white bias with regard to immigrants and nations

Conclusion

As I have shown, William Randolph Hearst believed in the supremacy of white Christian culture throughout the first half of the twentieth century. Hearst used his papers to divide Americans into categories of superior and inferior based on race and religion. Hearst placed Asians at the bottom of his racial hierarchy due to their lack of Christianity. Hearst

⁴⁸ “The Honor of being an American, 50 Fighting Years” 1949 exact date unknown, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

pushed extreme anti-Asian rhetoric in his papers, likely because of growing up in California, where the labor movement used similar anti-Asian sentiment to appeal to “white” workers. Nevertheless, his papers also displayed anti-Black beliefs, and before the US entered World War I, Hearst worried that war in Europe would weaken white Christian civilization. After the war, he began to support fascist regimes, which historians have seen as a sign of Hearst’s move to the political right. I have shown that from Hearst’s early support for the white working class during the Progressive Era through his early attitudes towards Fascism, Hearst supported white supremacy. In Chapter III, I will argue that Hearst used these pseudo-sciences as the basis for his imperialist and isolationist policies. I will further explore Hearst’s global and imperialist worldview and argue that he believed in the expansion of the US both for economic and racial reasons.

Chapter III: Hearst The Imperialist

This chapter, I focus primarily on Hearst's Imperialism. As I showed in chapters one and two, Hearst pushed the superiority of what he saw as white Christian culture. In this chapter, I will explore how Hearst used scientific racism, the hierarchy of races, the superiority of white society, and the protection of his and American business interests to call for intervention in Latin America, specifically in Mexico and Panama. In this chapter, I will argue that Hearst used white supremacy to call for the isolationism of the United States in major global conflicts such as World War I. Hearst believed the war would civilize Latin America, but World War I would destroy European civilization. Hearst believed whites had a right to colonize and that the United States had a right to control imperialist possessions such as the Panama Canal. This chapter will explore Hearst's interventionism by looking at his arguments about Latin America, expand on my previous discussion of the First World War, and Hearst's calls for the formation of a Jewish State in Africa. Archival material such as newspaper clippings, personal letters, telegrams, and editorials written by Hearst corroborate my argument of how Hearst's early radicalism quickly turned into racial supremacy and Imperialism and show a clear continuity between Hearst in the Progressive Era, and Hearst in the 1930's when many historians have argued he became more conservative. This will show how Hearst's racism and imperialist tendencies were not developed later in life but were key components of his entire life. This is not to say he was not a progressive, but that race and Empire were at the center of the Progressive movement in the early 20th century.

Hearst's Imperialism

As I have mentioned, William Randolph Hearst saw the Japanese as the main competitor of the United States for dominance of the Pacific Ocean, and he believed war with Japan was inevitable as both empires expanded. Hearst also had an apparent and irrational fear of the Japanese. This is clearly shown again during WWI because when the Japanese declared war on Germany in an article written on September 30, 1914, "Neutral To-day, Our People Must Be Alert and Alive to Their Future Needs." Hearst suspected they had a secret alliance with Great Britain that would force Great Britain to fight the United States if a war between Japan and the United States occurred, "An alliance which compels Japan to support England in a war which England is prosecuting against Germany very obviously would compel Great Britain to support Japan in a war which Japan might prosecute against the United States."¹ This is just clear and blatant xenophobia and the type of sensationalism that Hearst consistently pushed in his papers that told the public that the greatest threat to the United States was not segregation nor corruption but the Japanese Empire. Holding the Japanese in contempt, he called Japan's declaration of war an intrusion into Europe.² The Japanese, Hearst believed, were a real military and cultural threat. Hearst claimed that he was an isolationist during the Wilson administration. He criticized FDR for being too much like Woodrow Wilson and claimed that FDR believed in Wilsonian Interventionism.³ Wilsonian Interventionism was an idea based on the White Man's Burden, which stated that Americans

¹ "Neutral To-day, Our People Must Be Alert and Alive to Their Future Needs," Sep 14 1914, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

² "Neutral To-day, Our People Must Be Alert and Alive to Their Future Needs," Sep 14 1914, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

³ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 423.

and Europeans had a duty as whites to make the rest of the world ready for democracy. Historians such as David Nasaw and Andre Swanberg agree with this definition and Hearst as an isolationist, focusing on Hearst's wariness of US involvement in World War I.⁴ However, Hearst simply did not believe that European nations should not fight each other and was outraged that an Asian nation was involved in a European war, which he thought ultimately hurt the United States. Hearst's concern during World War I was not due to a general wariness of foreign interventions but instead a specific concern that World War I was destroying white society and the system that allowed whites to dominate the rest of the world.

Hearst and Occupation of the Panama Canal

If we turn from Europe to the Americas, instead of isolationism, we see a blatant imperialism. In the 1912 election, Hearst wrote that it was the "popular opinion" of the American citizens for the United States to occupy Panama.⁵ American involvement in Panama was a clear imperialist action as the United States funded and armed an independence movement so they could then annex the Panamanian Canal zone for our financial and geopolitical benefit. Hearst saw the occupation of Panama by the United States as a justifiable and moral act, while he saw involvement in WWI as the opposite. Hearst saw this because, like Mexico, Panama was a non-white country and crucial to American commerce, and US involvement was justified and necessary.

⁴ Littlefield, *WRH's Role in American Progressivism*, p. 320.

⁵ "W.R. Hearst on Thinks Americans Won't Permit It Wilson's Views Theoretical," September 13, unknown year likely 1912, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

These imperialistic tendencies become more apparent when you dive deeper into Hearst's opinions on Panama. On April 15, 1914, Hearst published an editorial about President Wilson, in which he praised Wilson's imperialist actions in Latin America but bemoaned his policies towards the Panama Canal. We know from Wilson's supported US control of the Panama Canal from an executive order on January 27, 1914, stating, "I hereby enact the following order, creating a permanent organization for the Panama Canal, under the Act of Congress "To provide for the opening, maintenance, protection, and operation of the Panama Canal and the sanitation and government of the Canal Zone," approved August 24, 1912."⁶ What Hearst is praising Wilson for is standing firm against Mexico when they captured US soldiers and whalers who were docked in the port of Tampico, Mexico, and that he called for what could be interpreted as the first steps to US intervention in Mexico,

I, therefore, come to ask your approval that I should use the armed forces of the United States in such ways and to such an extent as may be necessary to obtain from General Huerta and his adherents the fullest recognition of the rights and dignity of the United States, even amidst the distressing conditions now unhappily obtaining in Mexico.⁷

On April 15, 1914, Hearst wrote, "The President's action at Tampico is exceedingly praiseworthy and intensely gratifying sentimentally to all citizens, but it will not, of course, compensate the nation for the great sentimental and material loss involving abandoning its rights in the Panama Canal."⁸ The Tampico Affair was in Mexico, and Woodrow Wilson did not refer to Panama once in their speech to Congress, but Hearst sees both as US foreign

⁶ University of California Santa Barbara, The American President Project, Woodrow Wilson January 27 1914, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/executive-order-1885-establish-permanent-organization-for-the-operation-and-government-the>.

⁷ University of California Santa Barbara, The American President Project, Woodrow Wilson April 20, 1914, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/address-joint-session-congress-the-tampico-incident>.

⁸ "The People Will Support the President in Mexico; Let US Hope He Will Support the People in Panama," April 15 1914, HA, Oversized Folder 6, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

policy, and hopes that the US will be aggressive in both regions. While the United States did not abandon their occupation of Panama in 1914, Hearst, who attacked Woodrow Wilson during his entire candidacy, now supported Wilson “in every rightful act, regardless of what we may think of his general policy.”⁹ It is clear that one of the only things that Wilson and Hearst agreed on was taking land that was not rightfully theirs. Hearst believed the occupation of Panama was just because he wrote in his papers that the American people should “as strongly, or more strongly, support every individual action which we believe to be right.”¹⁰ Hearst believed Imperialism could do more than benefit the United States economically, and would help Wilson’s popularity. He explained, “If President Wilson desires to regain the full measure of his patriotic prestige and public favor, he should demand respect for the American flag wherever it floats and can be made to float.”¹¹ This shows Hearst's clear desire to expand the imperialist actions of the United States.

We know that Hearst believed that Panama was a legitimate part of the United States. On August 22, 1914, he wrote, “Everywhere from Alaska to the Panama Canal are wonders that transcend anything to be seen in Europe, Asia, or Africa.”¹² This article was about how World War I would force Americans to visit more of the United States instead of Europe. This single article shows a clear belief from Hearst’s hopes that Panama would be part of the United States and that he hoped to expand the American Empire.

⁹ “The People Will Support the President in Mexico; Let US Hope He Will Support the People in Panama,” April 15 1914, HA, Oversized Folder 6, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

¹⁰ “The People Will Support the President in Mexico; Let US Hope He Will Support the People in Panama,” April 15 1914, HA, Oversized Folder 6, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

¹¹ “The People Will Support the President in Mexico; Let US Hope He Will Support the People in Panama,” April 15 1914, HA, Oversized Folder 6, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

¹² “The War Will Help Us, And We Shall Help the Nations That Suffer in It,” Aug 22 1914, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

Hearst justified intervention in Panama and Mexico mainly through the dual lens of the White Man's Burden and the Monroe Doctrine. Hearst wrote that the Monroe Doctrine made the US politically responsible for stability in Latin America. On April 27, 1914, Hearst wrote:

We are anxious to perform our full obligation to society and to civilization as the guardian of this Western Hemisphere...To do our full duty to our own murdered fellow citizens, to our own nation, and to the nations of the world, we should invade Mexico and occupy and pacify it and annex it. To make it like the United States, we should make it part of the United States.¹³

Many of Hearst's biographers have used such statements to show how Hearst became more conservative over his life. However, here we can see that his thoughts on the Monroe Doctrine and American Imperialism remained remarkably stable from the 1910s through the 1940s. The Monroe Doctrine was inherently an imperialist document that was created after the mass independence of Latin American countries from Spain in the early 1800's. The document, in effect, told European powers that the Americas were off limits to their imperialist incursions and was the United States' domain to rule. These articles show Hearst imperialist tendencies and will combine with those of the future sections that show Hearst's deep-rooted belief that white society had a duty to civilize the world. Hearst believed whites had the duty to do this because "our liberal and enlightened government the same intelligent, progressive people who have made the United States the greatest country in the world would throng into Mexico and make the United States of Mexico equally great, equally prosperous and equally progressive."¹⁴ This was far from uncommon as many progressives believed they

¹³ "W.R. Hearst's Message on Mediation and President Wilson's Attitude," April 27 1914, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

¹⁴ "W.R. Hearst's Message on Mediation and President Wilson's Attitude," April 22 1914, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

had a right to colonize because of this exact thinking, that they were the most morally righteous people and had a duty to bring this morality to the rest of the world.

Hearst and Mexico

Hearst's Imperialism is also very clear when we examine his opinion on intervention in Mexico. The Hearst family had direct financial ties to Mexico, owning one of the world's largest silver mines, the San Luis mine located near San Luis Cordero, Mexico.¹⁵ The family also had one of the largest cattle ranches in Mexico. Estimates differ, but the Babicora Ranch was between 1 and 1.625 million acres.^{16/17} The Hearst family also had a direct relationship with the former president/dictator of Mexico Porfirio Díaz.¹⁸ When the Mexican Civil War began in 1910, Hearst feared losing his family's property and investments, so he advocated direct intervention in Mexico. While Hearst had financial reasons for the United States to get militarily involved in Mexico, he obviously could not tell his readers that the actual reason he wanted to spill American blood in Mexico was for his own bottom line. Instead, he used the racist theory of the White Man's Burden as his basis for US intervention.

For example, on April 27, 1914, Hearst announced in an article titled "Mexican Murder and Rapine Not Matters For Mediation. Only By War can Mexico Be Saved for

¹⁵ George Hearst—Father of Mining and Publishing Empire, <https://www.legendsofamerica.com/we-georgehearst/>.

¹⁶ MEXICO: End of An Empire, *Time*, September 7 1953, <https://time.com/archive/6621150/mexico-end-of-an-empire/>.

¹⁷ Hearst Castle's bio of William Randolph Hearst, <https://hearstcastle.org/history-behind-hearst-castle/historic-people/profiles/william-randolph-hearst/>.

¹⁸ Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, p. 246.

Civilization” that multiple Americans had been murdered in Mexico.¹⁹ Hearst does not ask why Americans were in Mexico. Instead, he calls the events an insult to the United States.²⁰ Hearst uses this episode to argue for the United States to invade and occupy Mexico. As I mentioned, while Hearst had financially-based reasons for intervention, he never used this as his reasoning in his papers. Instead, Hearst wrote that his reason for war was to defend the rights and liberties of American citizens.²¹ The fact is that war with Mexico and its occupation would benefit only the microscopically small group of ultra-wealthy Americans such as Hearst who had the capital to invest in a foreign nation such as Mexico. This is the same class of people that Hearst made a career in newspapers, saying to the American people he was fighting against for their benefit.

While this was prior to the outbreak of war in Europe, Hearst would go on to call for isolation and peace in Europe because it was destroying society. However, here we can see Hearst’s clear double standard for intervention in non-white countries as he argues the opposite for Mexico. Hearst argued that the war in Mexico would be “a war for progress, for civilization, for advancement and enlightenment, for protection of our people and of the honest, peaceful part of the Mexican people, and for the welfare of the world.”²² This shows

¹⁹ “Mexican Murder and Rapine Not Matters For Mediation. Only By War can Mexico Be Saved for Civilization” that multiple Americans had been murdered in Mexico,” April 27 1914, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

²⁰ “Mexican Murder and Rapine Not Matters For Mediation. Only By War can Mexico Be Saved for Civilization” that multiple Americans had been murdered in Mexico,” April 27 1914, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

²¹ “Mexican Murder and Rapine Not Matters For Mediation. Only By War can Mexico Be Saved for Civilization” that multiple Americans had been murdered in Mexico,” April 27 1914, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

²² “Mexican Murder and Rapine Not Matters For Mediation. Only By War can Mexico Be Saved for Civilization” that multiple Americans had been murdered in Mexico,” April 27 1914, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

a clear double standard that Hearst held where war with Mexico was for civilization, while war in Europe was destroying civilization

Writing about white settlers in Mexico, Hearst described the settler as “doing his part towards the advancement of the human race and the progress of civilization. Tangled forests must be cleared, and savage nations must be civilized.”²³ Hearst believed the white settlers had a right to shape the land as they saw fit and that it was their duty to clear the “tangled forests” of Mexico. Hearst wrote, “It is our duty and our destiny to end anarchy in Mexico and to dedicate and devote Mexican territory to the cause of enlightenment and civilized community.”²⁴ This is the argument behind the White Man’s Burden: since European society and white people are so much more enlightened and advanced, they had a duty to make the rest of the world like them, and the only way to do that is through Imperialism and colonization.

Similarly, Hearst writes about the white colonization of Mexico in an article in which he calls the death of American citizens on foreign soil, not followed by military action, an insult to American citizens.²⁵ While Hearst blames Wilson for not acting, he demonizes Pancho Villa and José Venustiano Carranza de la Garza. According to Hearst, “nine-tenths of the murders of American men, the outrages upon American women, the slaughter of American children and destruction of American property have occurred in the sections which

²³ “Mexican Murder and Rapine Not Matters For Mediation. Only By War can Mexico Be Saved for Civilization” that multiple Americans had been murdered in Mexico,” April 27 1914, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

²⁴ “Mexican Murder and Rapine Not Matters For Mediation. Only By War can Mexico Be Saved for Civilization” that multiple Americans had been murdered in Mexico,” April 27 1914, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

²⁵ “Mexican Murder and Rapine Not Matters For Mediation. Only By War can Mexico Be Saved for Civilization” that multiple Americans had been murdered in Mexico,” April 27 1914, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

Villa and Carranza control.”²⁶ This characterization of Mexicans as murderers and threats to white society was a common racial stereotype of the time. Erika Lee writes about this characterization in her book *America for Americans* writing:

Even more common was the charge that Mexicans, especially men, were innate criminals who brought border violence and crime into the United States. The Mexican “bandit,” typically a poor, working-class immigrant male who engaged in both small and enormous crimes, had long been a stock character in American pop culture, and the trope was extrapolated to apply to all working-class Mexicans.²⁷

He doesn’t care that it is likely these whites who were killed likely were exploiting Mexican labor for decades during the Porfiriato (name used to describe the era of Mexico from the late 1870s to early 1910s in which Porfirio Díaz ruled with the era being characterized by extreme exploitation of the common Mexican by foreign investors), he cares about the lives of his ideal white race showing Hearst’s clear white bias. It is clear that Hearst used his papers to push this racist narrative of Mexicans being a threat to white society just as he did for Asians. Hearst here made his goal in Mexico clear. He does not just want to “dispose [of] Huerta and put a worse murder in his place” but to have the United States and, in effect, whites run the country.²⁸ “Our people,” Hearst wrote, are “anxious to end the state of anarchy in Mexico and to end it for the benefit of the citizens of all nations and civilization as a whole.”²⁹ Hearst called for intervention to benefit American industry, but he justified such calls by appeals to the White Man’s Burden.

²⁶ “W.R. Hearst’s Message on Mediation and President Wilson’s Attitude,” April 27 1914, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

²⁷ Lee, *America for Americans*, p. 159.

²⁸ “Francisco Villa, the One Man Able to Execute Law and Preserve Order, Should be Made President of Mexico,” July 30 unknown year, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

²⁹ “W.R. Hearst’s Message on Mediation and President Wilson’s Attitude,” April 22 1914, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

Ironically, Hearst was aware of his bias but wanted to make sure his readers were not. On October 4, 1915, Hearst wrote a letter to one of his executives, Mr. Abbott, explaining how “Editorials can not go in a way which will antagonize every reader and convince him of our prejudice. You never can make effective editorials unless you appear to be unbiased and impartial.”³⁰ This shows a clear desire to appear unbiased while still holding ulterior motives.

While Hearst’s beliefs about Mexico were clearly based on economics, racism, and the Monroe Doctrine, those who opposed intervention or annexation were even more racist. Some, for example, argued that the US should not annex large parts of Northern and Central Mexico because if they did, this would allow many Spanish-speaking Hispanics to become US citizens.

Hearst is also famous for flip-flopping his positions on political leaders. He did this about Wilson but also changed his position on Pancho Villa. Francisco “Pancho” Villa was the most infamous guerrilla fighter in the Mexican Civil War, who took part in ousting the former president Porfirio Díaz from power in 1911, fought the new dictator of General José Victoriano Huerta in 1913, and helped create a coalition government with the other rebel leaders in 1914. He is the most famous rebel leader among Americans as he took part in the execution of US citizens and took part in raids into modern-day New Mexico.³¹ On July 30, 1915, Hearst titled an editorial, “Francisco Villa, the One Man Able to Execute Law and Preserve Order, Should be Made President of Mexico.” Here, Hearst suggested that if the US government intends to interfere in Mexican politics, they should “select a President of power

³⁰ Letter Hearst to Dent H. Robert, Jan 15 1915, HA, Carton 4, Folder 15:49, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

³¹ Pancho Villa, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Pancho-Villa-Mexican-revolutionary>.

and capacity.”³² This is the same man who, the year before, the United States should, in effect, annex Mexico. He is now meddling with the internal presidential politics. Hearst wrote that Pancho Villa was the only person in Mexico with “sufficient ability, sufficient force of character and sufficient popular following to maintain himself in office, to repress revolution, to protect life and property, domestic and foreign, and to re-establish law and order in that stricken land.”³³ This shows that Hearst, above all of his pandering for the “saving of civilization,” clearly has the ulterior motive of saving his very valuable property in Mexico. This is clear in nearly every article where Hearst writes about the lives of Americans in Mexico; he also writes about the American property in Mexico. In the same article that calls for Villa to be president, he reminds readers that the American administration is neglecting American property in Mexico.³⁴ This shows how Hearst was not significantly different from many imperialists of the time. He cared far more about American industry and property in Mexico than civilization.

Hearst’s blindness to his own bias is so apparent that he calls Woodrow Wilson a dictator of Mexico and the United States, but then he states that he should “name a president who is capable of being President. Let him create a government which is able to govern. Let him restore order which will remain orderly, and establish civilized conditions which will continue civilized.”³⁵ In effect, Hearst calls Wilson a dictator and then tells him to use his

³² “Francisco Villa, the One Man Able to Execute Law and Preserve Order, Should be Made President of Mexico,” July 30 unknown year, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

³³ “Francisco Villa, the One Man Able to Execute Law and Preserve Order, Should be Made President of Mexico,” July 30 unknown year, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

³⁴ “Francisco Villa, the One Man Able to Execute Law and Preserve Order, Should be Made President of Mexico,” July 30 unknown year, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

³⁵ “Francisco Villa, the One Man Able to Execute Law and Preserve Order, Should be Made President of Mexico,” July 30 unknown year, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

power to create the exact word “civilized conditions.”³⁶ What are civilized conditions? Are civilized conditions a society that sees different races as not equal to whites? Is civilized conditions a country that segregates its population based on race? Is civilized conditions a country that sees its culture as superior because of the pseudoscience of racial hierarchy? It is clear that when Hearst argues for civilized conditions, he means conditions that allow the status quo of white foreigners having the ability to exploit minorities just as his family had for decades in their San Luis silver mine. This all tells the story of a man who sees the world in clearly racial tones that should allow the white man and Christian/white society to dominate and subjugate non-white populations for their own benefit.

Hearst had immense wealth tied up in property within Mexico and the instability that plagued Mexico at the time made his properties and American economic imperialism in Mexico nearly impossible, especially since foreigners would be killed by warring factions who saw American businessmen as the source of their problems. However, this was the quiet reason that Hearst did not push heavily in his papers; it would not be convincing to the American people to intervene in Mexico to save the international investments of the 1%, such as Hearst. He therefore pushed the notion that Mexico was in anarchy and only through the intervention of our more enlightened country could it be saved for civilization. While he had ulterior economic motives, his reasoning for intervention that he spewed to the American people shows his blatant white-supremacy worldview and a clear belief that whites were superior and had a duty to civilize the world.

³⁶“Francisco Villa, the One Man Able to Execute Law and Preserve Order, Should be Made President of Mexico,” July 30 year unknown, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

Hearst's Racist Reasoning for Isolationism in WWI

As the drumbeat of war grew louder in Europe and while the horrors of World War I and modern war began to become clear, Hearst wrote that it was in the United States' best interest to stay out of the European conflict. While Hearst would call for peace in Europe, he did admit that the war would benefit the United States' economy. On August 22, 1914, as Germany was rolling over Belgium, Hearst predicted that the war would benefit the United States' industry³⁷. In an editorial titled "The War Will Help Us, and We Shall Help the Nations That Suffer in It," Hearst wrote that the war would allow American industry to advance past the great European powers. Hearst wrote, "When they (European powers) are weakened by loss of blood, destruction of factories, lack of labor and capital, we shall be able to supply them and help them."³⁸ This shows Hearst's duality and almost two-faced nature of Hearst and tells the story of a man who knew how to take advantage of turmoil and always saw how distress and instability causes opportunity.

Like his argument for intervention in Mexico, Hearst's European isolationism was partly the result of his notions of White Supremacy. Instead of seeing the war as bringing civilization, destruction in Europe would have the opposite effect since, for him, Western Europe was the center of "civilization." On August 22, 1914, Hearst wrote, "The American

³⁷ "The War Will Help Us, and We Shall Help the Nations That Suffer in It," Aug 22 1914, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

³⁸ "The War Will Help Us, and We Shall Help the Nations That Suffer in It," Aug 22 1914, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

people deplore this war; it is a crime against civilization; it is a reversion to barbarism.”³⁹ In part of the article, Hearst writes about the natural spectacles that the United States holds, saying that the war will allow Americans to travel to these places instead of Europe, but also argues that the war will “give them the impulse to develop trade with South America.”⁴⁰ This was always the reason behind American Imperialism, as it gave new markets to expand into. Like Hearst’s calls for intervention in Mexico, American Imperialism always had ulterior motives that benefited the big business.

Hearst saw war in Europe as threatening the control of the global power of white nations. While Hearst is correct in calling World War I needless and a war of the old world order of “the Middle Ages, caused by those conditions of the Middle ages, monarchic and aristocratic, which still persist in Europe,” he does this from a very racist worldview.⁴¹ In an editorial published on September 3, 1914, titled “The Cost of Kings,” Hearst writes that World War I is weakening “the power in the world of the white nations—of the Occidental nations which we are one.”⁴² Hearst feared that this war would weaken European powers and make them less able to control their colonial possessions. He is terrified that the white world order is collapsing and believes that all white nations should unite and prepare to fight the Yellow Peril, which he sees as the true threat to civilization. In an article titled, “Let Us Have Peace,” he stated, “What good will it do England and France and Belgium to weaken Germany and Austria, and thereby weaken their first and chief protection against the

³⁹ “The War Will Help Us, and We Shall Help the Nations That Suffer in It,” Aug 22 1914, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

⁴⁰ “The War Will Help Us, and We Shall Help the Nations That Suffer in It,” Aug 22 1914, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

⁴¹ “The War Will Help Us, and We Shall Help the Nations That Suffer in It,” Aug 22 1914, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

⁴² “The War Will Help Us, and We Shall Help the Nations That Suffer in It,” Aug 22 1914, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

invading hordes of Asia?”⁴³ This is extremely racist and shows that Hearst’s isolationism was based on a racist fear of Asians and a belief that all whites should unite and prepare for their invasion. Hearst hated the old monarchical system and saw these imperial wars as pointless for the typical worker. He was especially worried about Europeans fighting and destroying each other.

Hearst saw intervention in non-white countries as different from that in white countries as his papers. Not even a month after the previous article, “The Cost of Kings,” Hearst published an article that clearly shows how he saw intervention in Mexico and mediation in Europe as serving the same goals. On the September 27, 1914, editorial titled “To Promote Peace and Prosperity, Happiness and Security, Was and Is Our Object and Obligation, Both in Europe and Mexico, Hearst states that the goals for Mexico and Europe are the same: “The American favors mediation in Europe for exactly the same reason that it favored intervention in Mexico—TO ESTABLISHED PEACE AND CIVILIZED CONDITIONS.”⁴⁴ By Hearst’s own logic of why the United States should be involved in Mexico, the United States should have been involved in Europe earlier. He writes that the war in Europe created a condition of murder and anarchy with no opportunity for prosperity. This is the same reason he argued that we should intervene in Mexico.⁴⁵ Hearst writes that in Mexico, there is “no end to this murder and anarchy, no limit to this devastation and destruction.”⁴⁶ In September of 1914, the first battle of the Marne began. In this battle, which

⁴³ “Let Us Have Peace,” Sept 4 1914, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

⁴⁴ “Let Us Have Peace,” Sept 4 1914, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

⁴⁵ “Mexican Murder and Rapine Not Matters For Mediation. Only By War can Mexico Be Saved for Civilization” that multiple Americans had been murdered in Mexico,” April 27 1914, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

⁴⁶ “Mexican Murder and Rapine Not Matters For Mediation. Only By War can Mexico Be Saved for Civilization” that multiple Americans had been murdered in Mexico,” April 27 1914, HA, Oversized-Box 8, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

lasted for less than 10 days, over half a million men were killed.⁴⁷ It is clear that the conflict that had no end to suffering and devastation was WWI, not the Mexican Civil War. The difference is that one is a war of whites between whites for the benefit of kings, something Hearst hated, and one is a civil war of Mexicans versus Mexicans in a country where Hearst held financial ties. Hearst clearly sees the world in a racist White Man's Burden view. That whites should not fight and unite against the threat of Asians, that non-white countries need help to be civilized, and that it is the whites who have a duty to intervene and civilize the uncivilized parts of the world.

Hearst and the Jewish State

While historians have devoted much space to the growth of Hearst's media empire and its politics, few have focused on his Zionism. However, Hearst's support of the search for a Jewish homeland is vital for understanding his racial view of the world and illuminates his imperialist ideology. In this section, I will use a mix of letters, telegrams, and articles written by and to Hearst and the Hearst papers to trace Hearst's search for a Jewish homeland.

As I have noted, Hearst supported Fascism in the 1920s and early 1930s, but he condemned extreme anti-Semitism. By the late 1930s, he became a well-known Zionist within the Jewish community. Hearst's vision of a Jewish state was based upon the same extremely racial view of the world. He wrote about European Jews as potential white settlers who could colonize spaces inhabited by black and brown people and give them culture.

⁴⁷ Common Wealth War Graves Commission, <https://www.cwgc.org/our-work/blog/turning-point-110-years-since-the-first-battle-of-the-marne/>.

American Zionists and readers of his papers believed he was supporting their claims to land in Palestine, but it appears that he favored that state to be in Africa. In this next section, I will argue that Hearst's stance and justification for a Jewish state was extraordinarily racist and imperialist. The primary sources I have will be the most evident example so far in this paper that concludes my argument that Hearst's worldview was clearly from a white supremacist and a White Man's burden view of the world. To accomplish this, I will use secondary sources to restate points made by other historians, such as his belief that the Nazis were not serious about their anti-Semitism and personal letters from readers that thank him for his support for a Jewish state that show his support for the Jews. To accomplish the second aspect of completing my argument that Hearst had a blatantly white supremacist view of the world, I will use a speech he gave ten days after the infamous Kristallnacht, where he called for a Jewish state within Africa. This will complete my argument that through Hearst, we can see how the values of the progressive era were not that progressive, and Hearst himself did not become more conservative in old age but held the same white supremacist worldview his entire life.

Though supporting some elements of Fascism, Hearst criticized the extreme anti-septic rhetoric by the Nazi party and believed that the Nazis would not follow through with their actions. In 1933, after Hitler took power, Hearst said in an interview, "The whole policy of...anti-Semitism is such an obvious mistake that I am sure it must soon be abandoned. In fact, I think it is already well on the way to abandonment."⁴⁸ In a letter from the late 1930s, Hearst wrote about WWII and how, to him, the world was "plunging back into the Dark Ages

⁴⁸ Nasaw, *The Chief*, p. 498.

of bigotry and cruelty, of prejudice and persecution.”⁴⁹ While this sounds very progressive and most certainly was for the time, we know from the other sections that Hearst is only talking about the prejudices held among whites against whites. By the end of WWII, Hearst became a well-known supporter of a Jewish home state, and his archives were filled with letters from individuals and Zionist organizations thanking Hearst for his support of their claims. In 1944 Hearst wrote, “We are doing the utmost in support of the various protests against the massacre of Innocent Jews, or of any innocent people in this terrible war.”⁵⁰ Hearst wrote in a letter on June 17, 1947, to the American League for a Free Palestine president, “I am sincerely interested in a homeland for the displaced Hebrews and am giving the project all the help I can in my newspapers.”⁵¹ Richard Brown, the organizational director of the Greater New York Council American League for a Free Palestine, thanked Hearst for “the work of the Hearst newspapers in securing justice for the Hebrews of Palestine.”⁵² This letter was referring to how the “ancient Passover festival [was] birth of Jewish nationality,” which Hearst wrote about in his *American Journal*, called this festival the “most powerful justification for a militant attitude in combating British oppression in Palestine.”⁵³ Many letters from his readers similarly thanked him for his support. One, for example, wrote on

⁴⁹ Letter Hearst to *The Jewish Press*, unknown date, HA, Carton 31, Folder 31:37 Jews 1927-1937, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

⁵⁰ Letter from Hearst to American League for a Free Palestine, June 17 1947, HA, Carton 31, Folder 31:37 Jews 1927-1937, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

⁵¹ Letter Hearst to American League for a Free Palestine, Aug 10 1944, HA, Carton 31, Folder 31:37 Jews 1927-1937, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

⁵² Letter Hearst to from Richard Brown, unknown date, HA, Bancroft Library, Carton 31, Folder 31:37 Jews 1927-1937, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

⁵³ Letter to Hearst from unknown reader, April 16 1947, HA, Carton 31, Folder 31:37 Jews 1927-1937, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

April 16, 1947, to thank him for his “efforts to aid the hapless and helpless Jews of Palestine.”⁵⁴

Hearst’s Zionism did not grow from his sense that Jews were equal to Christians, but rather, it stemmed from his belief that European Jews were racially superior to Palestinian Arabs and Africans and thus could serve as a force of white European colonization. Hearst’s pro-white bias determined his attitude towards the Jewish homeland, as seen in the speech he gave on November 19, 1938, titled, “A Homeland for Dispossessed of Persecuted Jews.” It was not uncommon for people to see European Jews as different from Christian Europeans. However, Hearst still regarded them as racially superior to those living in Africa and the Middle East.

Hearst’s reasoning for giving the Jews a state was the same as that used for intervention in Mexico, European Jews would help civilize the uncivilized people of the world. These views were not wholly different from some in Germany, who also called for a Zionist solution to remove Jews from their nation—moving Jews out of Europe, but yet seeing Jews as colonizers was not inconsistent. In a radio speech on November 19, 1938, just ten days after the infamous Kristallnacht, Hearst theorized about moving Jewish Europeans to a homeland outside of Europe. In “A Homeland for Dispossessed of Persecuted Jews,” Hearst called on other nations to find a solution for the “great problem” of the Jews.⁵⁵ Hearst writes in this article that the violence Jews are facing in Europe from the German’s Anti-Semitic policies seen through Kristallnacht is “Oriental barbarism.”⁵⁶ In effect, Hearst is

⁵⁴ Bancroft Library, Carton 31, HA, Folder 31:37 Jews 1927-1937, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

⁵⁵ Bancroft Library, Carton 31, HA, Folder 31:37 Jews 1927-1937, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

⁵⁶ Radio Speech “A Homeland for Dispossessed Or Persecuted Jews, Nov 19 1939, HA, Carton 4, Folder 4:48, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

saying that when Europeans are barbaric, they are acting like non-whites, again showing Hearst's clear white bias that they are inherently the most developed and enlightened as only when they act that non-whites are Europeans violent

However, Hearst did not feel that the Jewish homeland should not be in Palestine because it would increase tensions with Arabs, though he cared more about the suffering of Jews than that of Arabs. In the radio speech, he stated, "The Jews of Palestine are subject to even greater suffering and outrage than the Jews in Central Europe."⁵⁷ In Hearst's opinion, the Jews should be given the former German, Belgian, and Portuguese colonies in Africa.⁵⁸ Hearst wrote that Africa is rapidly becoming the next America due to it being "Colonized by the most highly civilized European powers."⁵⁹ He believed in white colonization in Africa, which he felt was leading to progress and civilization.⁶⁰ In effect, what Hearst is arguing is that Africa is suited for colonization because there is no culture, a blatantly racist and white supremacist view of Africans. The world had been dismantling the German Empire as the German African colonies had been taken during the Treaty of Versailles in WWI. Hearst envisions a huge Jewish state in Africa comprising the former Central and South African German, Belgian, and Portuguese colonies.⁶¹ This is the country Hearst suggests, outlined in

⁵⁷Radio Speech "A Homeland for Dispossessed Or Persecuted Jews, Nov 19 1939, HA, Carton 4, Folder 4:48, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

⁵⁸ Radio Speech "A Homeland for Dispossessed Or Persecuted Jews, Nov 19 1939, HA, Carton 4, Folder 4:48, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

⁵⁹ Radio Speech "A Homeland for Dispossessed Or Persecuted Jews, Nov 19 1939, HA, Carton 4, Folder 4:48, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

⁶⁰ Radio Speech "A Homeland for Dispossessed Or Persecuted Jews, Nov 19 1939, HA, Carton 4, Folder 4:48, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

⁶¹ Radio Speech "A Homeland for Dispossessed Or Persecuted Jews, Nov 19 1939, HA, Carton 4, Folder 4:48, BANC MSS 77/121 c.

black, encompassing five modern African nations[Fig. 3.1].

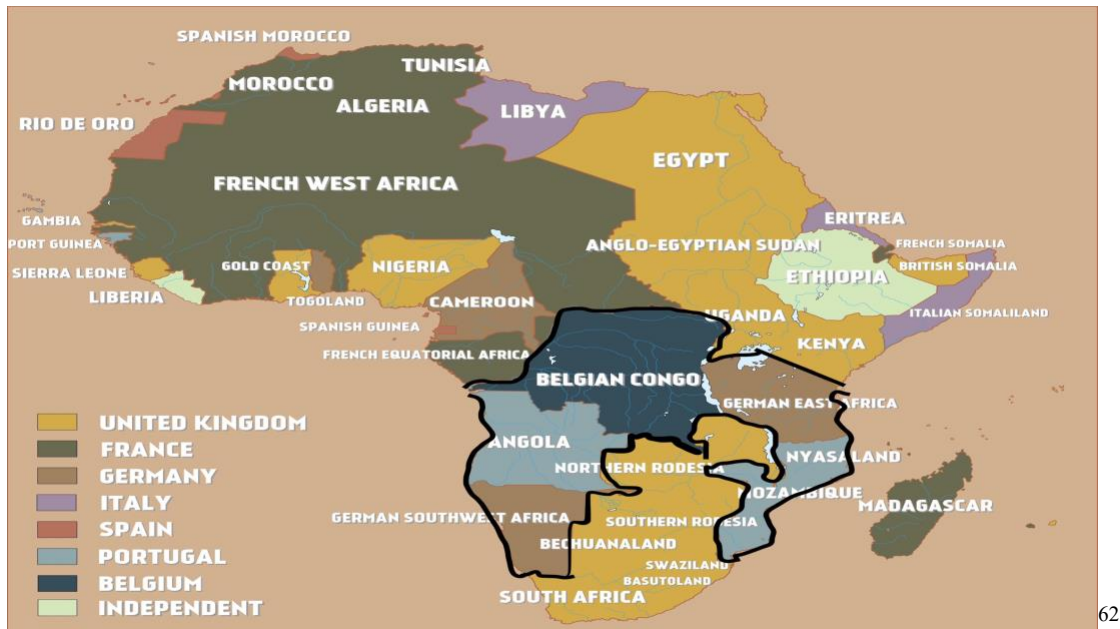


Figure 3.1 Outlined in black is the proposed Jewish state that Hearst calls for in the radio speech

This country would be an enormous 2,380,212 square miles, making it the seventh largest country in the world today.

Hearst wrote that European Jews would harness African labor to develop this country's

immense natural resources in land, oil, and minerals, in addition to the resourceful and creative faculties of the Jewish people. The manual labor in these territories would be performed by natives, and the management and direction contributed by the Jewish colonists with their conspicuous qualifications in executive work of such character.⁶³

In effect, Hearst imagines this Jewish state to be a South Africa-style apartheid nation where the White Jewish Europeans, who were superior in his eyes, would rule and govern the

⁶² Figure 3.1 Outlined in black is the proposed Jewish state that Hearst calls for in the radio speech, Original map from <https://brilliantmaps.com/africa-1914/>.

⁶³ Radio Speech "A Homeland for Dispossessed Or Persecuted Jews, Nov 19 1939, HA, Carton 4, Folder 4:48, BANC MSS 77/121 c

country, while the native Africans would do the heavy lifting to create this society. This article is finished with “Let America Lead the Way,” showing a clear desire from Hearst for the United States to have a larger role in imperial politics. Whether trying to keep the US or Germany “white” or colonizing Panama and Southwest Africa, Hearst demonstrated his belief in the White Man’s Burden. No man can say that their country is a country of “tolerance and freedom” but also be complacent with a country that has an embedded system of segregation and inequality based on racism without believing it is the way of the world and believing the hierarchy of the pseudoscience of the superiority of a certain race, the whites race. It is clear that Hearst’s inherent view of the world is that colonization was a great good because it was the White Man’s Burden to help civilize these uncivilized lands to give them culture through clearing of the “tangled forest.”⁶⁴ The same man who called for the Jews to run an apartheid-style state in Africa, who constantly warned of the Yellow Peril and the threat of Asians to American society, who consistently called for more foreign intervention in non-white lands based on helping to civilize them, was a champion of the white working class in the United States.

⁶⁴ Radio Speech “A Homeland for Dispossessed Or Persecuted Jews, Nov 19 1939, HA, Carton 4, Folder 4:48, BANC MSS 77/121 c

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter and the previous chapters, I have shown that William Randolph Hearst believed in white supremacy and Imperialism. Hearst's basis for intervention in Latin America, his stance on World War One, and his Zionism reveal his white bias and belief that civilization was a white society. The idea of the White Man's Burden culminated in his calls for the former German, Belgian, and Portuguese African colonies to be used to create a Jewish apartheid-style state where the Jews would rule as the white minority and have the manual labor done by the native Africans. This was based on a racial tone as, in Hearst's opinion, Africa was a perfect area for Jewish and, in effect, white colonization because of the "lack of culture" the native Africans had. This together shows the obvious pro-white society bias that Hearst held and how, through Hearst's papers and his own words, we can see that the Progressive Era was far from progressive.

Epilogue

This strand of American geopolitics seen through Hearst helps us understand the larger context of how American Imperialism has led to the present day and why we are seeing re-expanding imperialist tendencies today within the Trump administration, which, in its rhetoric about occupying Greenland, Panama, and Gaza are shockingly similar to those of William Randolph Hearst. Hearstism did not come out of thin air, nor did Trumpism. Hearstism was born out of economic distress for the working class, as high rent and low wages made daily life in the United States extremely difficult for the average worker: unsafe working conditions, grueling days, and no job security added stress to an already stressful industrial world. There was an overall general feeling from the working class that the system was broken and corrupt, controlled by the trusts who paid politicians to reject all measures of pro-labor reform and label it as socialism and those who pushed for reform as socialists.

Hearst was from an eccentrically wealthy family and a member of the privileged class who called for these reforms, shattering the claim that reform would destroy the American economy as what millionaire would try and destroy his own wealth. In a way, Hearst was one of the first American political figures to push the idea of the modern consumer economy as he knew people needed money to buy the goods of the Industrial Revolution for progress to happen, just as he knew workers needed money to buy his newspapers. Hearst pulled back the curtain through his papers and showed the American public the endemic corruption within Congress. Through all of this, he used his papers to appeal to the white working class that they were superior and played on classic racial lines to try and divide Americans by using racism and white supremacy as the basis for many of his pro-labor policies.

Trumpism had a very similar path. Trump won the American Midwest and Appalachian region, excluding Illinois and North Carolina, in 2016, 2020, and 2024. This same region voted for Obama in 2008 and 2012, and Michigan hadn't gone to a Republican since Bush Sr. in 1988. Ohio has been historically a swing state and has not had a winner with a plurality greater than five percent since 1988 until 2016. Ronald Reagan is the only politician who has outperformed Trump in Ohio in the last fifty years. So what made Trump, who, like Hearst, had many personal flaws attacked on the campaign, so beloved? Trump, like Hearst, has used the media and racism to give poorer Americans something they had not felt in a long time: hope for a better life. What do I mean by this? As many of us in academia don't see Trump as a sign of hope but a threat to stability. Since the 1960s, American companies have outsourced and offshored their factories to cheaper parts of the world. This has devastated the former industrial industries and states of the Rust Belt and Appalachians, which were built off of industries such as steel production, automotive, and coal, areas in which Trump over-performed. The factory jobs that once made up a third of all workers in America that, through union labor, provided strong wages and good benefits that allowed our grandparents to thrive are no longer there. This has left a generation of Americans feeling left behind and unheard, with the 2008 financial crisis only making this worse. This has made many Americans feel like they have been sold out for the benefit of corporate profit. Trump made these people feel heard for the first time in decades. Trump also, while not paying his taxes, did his version of revealing the broken nature of the system by telling the American people on the 2016 debate stage that there are loopholes in the tax code that allow billionaires such as himself to avoid paying taxes; a tax code which Hillary Clinton or the many other

politicians on both sides of the aisle could have changed but won't because their donors do not want them too.

There are also the geopolitical concerns of China, which Trump brought to the forefront of them manipulating their currency, the threat of what will likely be our greatest adversary of the 21st century being the source of the majority of our cheap goods, and the worry that in the case of war whether we could compete in manufacturing of arms needed for war. This is a reality that we have dealt with now with Putin's war in Ukraine as we realize our manufacturing base is not up to par for a major war. Like Hearst, Trump has also pushed deep into long-standing racial tensions to appeal to his white base, claiming that illegal immigrants are destroying the country and undercutting American wages. This racism is not only used at home but abroad as Trump has attacked the international order of free trade, claiming it hinders the United States, especially targeting the same groups as Hearst and Asians in the form of China and Mexico. Unlike the promises Hearst made for labor reform, Trump cannot bring back the coal jobs and many of the manufacturing jobs, just as he cannot bring down inflation. While manufacturing is returning to America slowly, it is largely in the form of automation as Trump relies on his base from those former industrial cities, not realizing how globalization and economic innovation make the prospect of bringing these jobs back impossible as the only way is forward, not backward. More than just the former industrial sectors, Trump uses populism to paint himself as the savior, saying that we are a nation in decline and without him, America is doomed. Like Hearst, Trump uses fear-mongering tied to race that unless we do something our way of life, our standard of life will decline, and it is the fault of the elite who let illegal immigrants in to take your jobs and make you poor. This is extremely similar to Hearst's own words about the threat Asians brought to

the American standard of life over one hundred years ago. In the end, what Hearstism shows us is how powerful anti-establishment sentiments can be and how they can be used to gain political power as Trump, like Hearst, while being a part of the establishment were able to paint themselves as a man of the people and capture this anti-establishment sentiment, that was extremely strong then as it is now and propel themselves into political power.

Hearst reminds us of the long history of businessmen going into politics and making broad promises that likely cannot be kept. He also reminds us how easy it is to divide people and convince them that some other race is the reason for their economic turmoil. Hearst reminds us that we must never forget the dangers of populism and how political unrest can be captured by the most unlikely folks. While many historians believe Hearst would have genuinely acted in a proper manner if elected, it is much rarer for populist acts like Hearst than to act like Trump. Populism is a slippery slope and can quickly turn into Fascism or Communism as it is based on the idea that only this one person can save us; an idea Trump has put forward many times. While we are living in tumultuous times right now, we are not the first, and we must take the lessons from today and use them in the future.

The Progressive Era was unquestionably progressive for the time as the idea that women should be able to go to school, we should fund public schools with taxes, workers should be able to unionize and fight for a livable wage, companies should have regulations to make sure the food and products they sell are not killing people was progressive for the time and were all policies that Hearst fought for in his papers. However, we must remember as historians to learn from past mistakes and be careful to lean the entire era progressive because we can see Through Hearst's beliefs of the world and the superiority of the white race that the Progressive era was not as progressive as Hearst, the leaders of labor, and the

suffragettes fought for the rights of white workers and white women. Through Hearst and Hearstism, we can see the ways the labor movement was tied to white supremacy and Imperialism and better understand Trumpism, its origins, and how it has gained so much power. While the Progressive Era was not that progressive in the grand scheme of equality, and through Hearst, we can see the flaws in the movement, the rights gained in the movement have allowed future progressives to fight for even more equality in search of a more level playing field for all Americans, a process still ongoing.

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Oversized-Box 8, Call Number BANC MSS 77/121 c

Image 4: Hearst proposed Jewish State, Original map from <https://brilliantmaps.com/africa-1914/>

Figure B.2 PICRYL - Public Domain Media Search Engine. "7th & Olive Sts. Saturday p.m. May 7th, 1910. Location: St. Louis, Missouri. - Picryl - Public Domain Media Search Engine Public Domain Search." PICRYL - Public Domain Media Search Engine, January 1, 1910. <https://aaaa206060.getarchive.net/media/7th-and-olive-sts-saturday-pm-may-7th-1910-location-st-louis-missouri>.

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