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College of the Holy Cross
Worcester, Massachusetts

The Thesis of Jake Mozeski

entitled Labor Unions in the United States,
Argentina, and the United Kingdom: A
Comparative Study

is submitted to the office of Scholar Programs in partial fulfillment of the requirements for graduation with College Honors at the College of the Holy Cross, and has been read and approved by the following:

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Labor Unions in the United States, Argentina, and the United Kingdom
A Comparative Study

Jake Mozeleski

College Honors Thesis

Department of Political Science

College of the Holy Cross

Advisor: Professor Maria Guadalupe Moog Rodrigues

16 May 2022

Abstract

Since major neoliberal financial reforms occurred during the 1980s and 1990s, labor unions' membership numbers and political influence have waned. While this is true of labor unions in most countries, these changes are incredibly notable in the United States. Scholars from a multitude of disciplines and with varying critical lenses have attempted to understand this phenomenon, but some arguments seem much more convincing than others. This thesis analyzes the validity of various proposed hypotheses, especially the influence of corporatist traditions, the formal and informal links between labor unions and political parties, and the fundraising sources of political parties, using the case studies of the United States, the United Kingdom, and Argentina. This thesis first analyzes the three previously mentioned variables in all states prior to the implementation of the neoliberal reforms of the 1980s and 1990s, second the process of reform, and finally the presence of the variables after the implementation of reforms. Differences in corporatist traditions, formal and informal links between labor unions and political parties, and the fundraising sources of political parties explain why unions overall have weakened in influence, and especially why labor unions in the United States have weakened more rapidly and dramatically than others.

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To the men and women of the labor movement, that their struggles not be in vain.

Introduction and Methodology

Scholars have offered a variety of reasons for why the United States has a relatively strong economy but weak unions, and while many of these explanations likely play a role in the weakness of *estadounidense*¹ labor unions, some seem to have much stronger effects than others. Upon performing a review of relevant literature and prior scholarship on this topic, the factors of corporatism, relations between labor unions and political parties, and the fundraising sources of political parties appear to be the most convincing arguments. This thesis will track these factors in three case studies (United Kingdom, United States, and Argentina) in two different time periods: both before and after the implementation of neoliberal reforms in the three case studies during the 1980s and 1990s. While neoliberal reforms certainly affect the power of labor unions in the political sphere, the manner in which the reforms affect the three aforementioned factors seems to have a more direct impact upon the power of organized labor.

These three case studies were chosen for specific reasons. First, all three countries embraced neoliberal reforms during the 1980s and 1990s. Second, all three have a robust history of labor union activism and influence in politics. Third, all three case studies are currently liberal democracies. While it is important to control certain aspects of the case studies, it is also necessary to have some variation in governmental structure and industrial status. Both the United States and Argentina utilize a presidential system, whereas the United Kingdom utilizes a parliamentary system. Further, Argentina has a long history of state intervention in the economy and can be characterized as “industrializing,” while the United States and United Kingdom have relatively strong market economies and are characterized as “industrialized.” The similarities and

¹ A note on language: As this thesis makes references to concepts relating to the United States, the Spanish term *estadounidense* will be used, as Argentina, a case study examined, can also be accurately described as an “American” country.

differences between the case studies analyzed allow for structural differences to be considered, both in how neoliberal reforms were implemented and how the power of organized labor has changed after the reforms.

Upon ascertaining that the factors of corporatism, relations between labor unions and political parties, and the fundraising sources of political parties were the most important factors to determining union power, it became clear that these three factors interact with one another, and the permutations of these three factors can be diverse. The permutations that one would expect to occur naturally, and how one would expect these combinations to impact the influence of labor unions can be described using **Table 1**:

Hypothesis	Corporatism	Relations between Party and Union	Financial Ties between Party and Union	Expected Relative Union Influence
1	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	Strong Influence
2	LOW	LOW	LOW	Weakest Influence
3	HIGH	LOW	LOW	Weak Influence
4	LOW	HIGH	LOW	Weak Influence

Utilizing this method of analysis, one would expect that *estadounidense* labor unions are weaker due to a lack of corporatist traditions, a lack of formal ties to a political party, and because the party traditionally associated with organized labor does not rely solely on organized labor for funding. Thus, this thesis will track these factors both before and after the period of reforms to test this hypothesis.

Chapter 1: Literature Review

I. Key Definitions

For this thesis, it is important to define what “power” means in reference to union organization. In her book, Maria Victoria Murillo defines union power as “the ability of unions to obtain concessions in their bargaining over market reforms.”² This definition of “power” will be used throughout this thesis, as it is concise, measurable, albeit qualitatively, and broad enough to be applicable to all three case studies which will be analyzed. This definition implies that the actions of a union must influence policy to be considered a use of “power.” This relation of cause-and-effect is crucial to how “power” is perceived in the scope of this thesis and Murillo’s definition of “power” will serve this mode of analysis best.

Following this definition of “power,” the inverse of power, or “weakness” can also be defined in a manner conducive to the analysis contained within this thesis. “Weakness” would be defined as “the [inability] of unions to obtain concessions in their bargaining over market reforms.”³ Therefore, a weak union would attempt to influence policy decisions and affect market reforms, yet would be unable to win such concessions. “Weakness” for the scope of this thesis can be viewed as the inability for a union to effectively wield its influence over market reforms — the inverse of “power.”

While strikes are often thought of as the most visible form of organized labor’s power, organized labor can demonstrate its power in a variety of ways. Scholars argue that in states with governments or administrations friendly to organized labor the inaction of labor unions can also

² Maria Victoria Murillo, *Labor Unions, Partisan Coalitions, and Market Reforms in Latin America* (Cambridge University Press, 2001): 6.

³ Ibid.

be viewed as power.⁴ When a government which is aligned with organized labor is in power, labor unions tend to show restraint in their tactics to gain concessions. Labor-based parties recognize that if they anger a labor union through their policies and initiatives, that labor union can harm the party's electoral chances.⁵ By quietly voicing concerns directly to the party, rather than by mounting an opposition, it is possible for labor unions in states with high degrees of corporatism to affect change when parties sympathetic to their concerns are in power.

By the definitions explained earlier of "strength" and "weakness," it is interesting to note that a weak labor union would tend to present much more visible and vocal opposition to the implementation of policies which it views as detrimental than a strong labor union. Strong labor unions are able to gain concessions merely by alerting governments to their strength. In this conception of power, only a weak labor union, or a labor union perceived as weak by a government, would need to enter into a strike, which would have negative effects for the general members of the labor union.⁶ Strong labor unions may have a much more measured and far less visible approach to their advocacy than one might expect, which can skew one's perception of relative labor union strength.

II. Suggested Hypotheses

Academics have proposed a variety of hypotheses of which factors affect the strength of labor unions. These arguments range from structural in nature, to cultural, to economic. A vast amount of research has been conducted regarding this issue, so one must have a clear vision of the prior research and hypotheses before making further analysis. In the following paragraphs,

⁴Walter Korpi, "Developments in the Theory of Power and Exchange," *Sociological Theory* 3, no. 2, (1985): 46-62.

⁵ Barbara Geddes, *Politician's Dilemma: Building State Capacity in Latin America* (University of California Press, 1994): 67.

⁶ John Kennan, "The Economics of Strike," *Handbook of Labor Economics* 2, (1986): 1091-1137.

these arguments will be analyzed and explored in a search for those which appear the most evidence-based and convincing. While many of the hypotheses offered by scholars likely influence the strength of unions, it is important to understand which arguments have the most evidence, and therefore appear to be important factors affecting relative union strength.

Scholars suggest that the influence of corporatism can have drastic effects on union membership and union power.⁷ Some discuss the difficulty of defining the concept of corporatism clearly and concisely.⁸ Some of this conceptual difficulty arises as corporatist analysis can be used to address an incredibly broad range of disciplines and topics.⁹ Most corporatist theorists, including those who have pioneered corporatist analysis have broadly defined corporatism as “a manner of organizing political and economic interests formally, through bodies dedicated to expression and negotiation of major social interests.”¹⁰ Corporatism includes not only the institutionalized process of how different interest groups express their interests, but also the institutional structure itself, which can be described as a “state-licensed monopoly” on the power which groups can exert on the policy-making process and outcome.¹¹ Corporatist analysis can be employed to address a diverse field of topics and corporatism as a term can be used to describe both the formalized processes and the peak-level organizations which allow interest groups to interact with the state.

Corporatism as a system has existed in some form since the medieval period. In its earliest conceptions, a society was seen as a body or *corpus*, from which the term derives its name, comprised of the various social strata of the period, in a hierarchical system; if one of the

⁷ Murillo, *Labor Unions, Partisan Coalitions, and Market Reforms in Latin America*, 6.

⁸ Peter J. Williamson, *Corporatism in Perspective: An Introductory Guide to Corporatist Theory* (SAGE Publications Ltd., 1989: xi.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Gladden Pappin, “Corporatism for the 21st Century,” *American Affairs* IV, no. 1 (2020): 4.

¹¹ Williamson, *Corporatism in Perspective: An Introductory Guide to Corporatist Theory*, 11.

sectors of society failed to fulfill its predetermined purpose, the *corpus* as a whole would fail.¹² This system reflected the values of fealty, such as that of a peasant to a lord which was common in Western Europe during the period.¹³ Corporatism began as a reflection of common societal values which existed in Western Europe during the medieval period.

Corporatism was further developed and evolved by Catholic social theorists and even the Roman Catholic Church itself during the end of the nineteenth century, with Pope Leo XIII penning *Rerum Novarum*, a papal encyclical which reaffirmed many of the central tenets of the earlier iterations of corporatism.¹⁴ The encyclical states that the faithful ought to accept the social hierarchy and the different levels within it, but that does not mean that those of the lower class ought to have no dignity or respect.¹⁵ Further, the Pope tells the faithful that “most important ... are workingmen's unions,” as a means to represent the interests of working people to the state.¹⁶ While Roman Catholic teaching certainly played a major role in further developing corporatism, corporatist ideals were also utilized in majority Protestant states, such as the United Kingdom, especially during the period of Cromwell’s Commonwealth.¹⁷ As the nineteenth century came to a close, the Roman Catholic Church embraced the ideals of corporatism and began to further develop them into a coherent catechism.

Other scholars have also discussed the importance of labor unions’ relationships with political parties as being an important factor to consider when addressing the power which unions possess. Scholars recognize that in many states, in a wide variety of regions across the

¹² Paul H. Lewis, *Authoritarian Regimes in Latin America: Dictators, Despots, and Tyrants* (Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc. 2005): 129.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid, 129-130.

¹⁵ Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum* [Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII on Capital and Labor], sec. 17.

¹⁶ Ibid, secs. 49-51.

¹⁷ Henry S. Turner, *The Corporate Commonwealth: Pluralism and Political Fictions in England, 1516-1651* (University of Chicago Press, 2016).

globe, labor unions are some of the largest political organizations.¹⁸ In fact, members of labor unions across the world, in a variety of regimes, are often more politically involved than their peers who do not belong to a labor union.¹⁹ In democratic regimes, this political influence is often manifested by working either alongside of or even inside of major political parties.²⁰

The relative strength or weakness of political parties can be a determining factor in how labor unions interact with the aforementioned parties, and therefore with the state. In the United Kingdom, labor unions came together to originally form the Labour Party, and continue to officially form the party, through their official affiliations with the party.²¹ In a state like Argentina, with different political institutions, labor unions and trade unions create a quasi-official structure for the Justicialist Party, a Peronist party.²² State and political institutions can greatly affect the way in which political parties and labor and trade unions interact with one another.

Labor unions' financial contributions to political parties are also viewed as a factor which impacts the power of labor unions. All three case studies are classified as states where the "public utility" model of fundraising laws regulations are employed.²³ This style of fundraising exists when the state imposes "heavy regulation of party income ... [,]public financing is made available [,] and private contributions are restricted in size and source."²⁴ This is an important factor to the analysis which will be performed in later chapters. These regulations and reporting

¹⁸ Jasmine Kerrisey and Evan Schofer, "Labor Unions and Political Participation in Comparative Perspective," *Social Forces* 97, no. 1 (2018): 428.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 451.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Arnold J Heidenheimer, "Major Modes of Raising, Spending and Controlling Political Funds During and Between Election Campaigns," in *Comparative Political Finance: The Financing of Party Organizations and Election Campaigns* (D.C. Heath and Company, 1970): 3-5.

²² Kerrisey and Schofer, "Labor Unions and Political Participation in Comparative Perspective," 428.

²³ David L Wilts, Raymond J La Raja, and Dorie E Appollonio, "Typologies of Party Finance Systems: A Comparative Study of How Countries Regulate Party Finance and Their Institutional Foundations," *Election Law Journal* 18, no. 3 (2019): 19.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

mechanisms allow for the donations to political parties to be quantified and analyzed. Labor unions' donations to parties can therefore be viewed alongside the totality of parties' revenue streams. All three states used as case studies in this thesis share the same style of election financing regulatory systems, laws, and regulations.

This style can be contrast with the three other competing systems: unregulated, in which there is little to no government regulation or state-financing of election campaigns, state-co-opted, in which the state regulates the finances of parties, but does not require parties to share their financial data with the public, and market-based, in which there are little to no fundraising limitations, but the state ensures that parties disclose their financial transactions to the public.²⁵ While all three case studies analyzed in this thesis are described as public utility in nature, it is important to note that other electoral finance regulation systems do exist. It is also important to note that most scholarship on this topic is relatively recent, and tends to be heavily focused on anglophone nations, particularly the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom.²⁶

The public utility descriptor, in regards to political parties and the regulations that surround them, was first used to describe political parties in the United States to define the relationships between political parties and the state more generally, not only encompassing electoral finance regulation, but also how elections, particularly primary elections, are administered.²⁷ These regulations were largely implemented beginning in the 1880s in the United States, to quell corruption which had been occurring in the electoral process.²⁸ Public utility,

²⁵ Ibid, 5-6.

²⁶ Susan E Scarrow, "Political Finance in Comparative Perspective," *Annual Review of Political Science* Vol. 10 (2007): 194.

²⁷ Leon Epstein, *Political Parties in the American World* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1986): 156-157.

²⁸ Ibid, 162.

within the scope of this thesis, will be used in reference to a specific set of financial regulations related to elections and the funding of political parties.

While it is important to understand the regulations surrounding how political parties fund campaigns and initiatives, it is also important to consider which sources are integral to funding political parties. These sources can differ based on party type, geographic location of states, and levels of development.^{29 30} In more industrialized countries, two classifications of fundraising styles can be identified: labor party style fundraising and middle class party style fundraising.³¹ In less developed states, a third classification can be identified: foreign funded parties.³² Three main classifications of fundraising strategies exist that are relevant to the analysis.

Labor party style fundraising is perhaps the most coordinated means of fundraising. This style of fundraising has origins in the practice of labor unions pooling funds to pay their elected members of parliaments, before the advent of parliamentary salaries.³³ Labor unions pay a per capita sum of money in dues to a party with which they are affiliated, so that their members are considered official members of the political party. Now that most elected positions, particularly parliamentary positions, are paid, parties have begun to use these membership dues in order to “build ... up a party organization which would maintain intense, continuous political activity.”³⁴ This style of fundraising is most common in socialist political parties in Western and Northern

²⁹ Heidenheimer, “Major Modes of Raising, Spending and Controlling Political Funds During and Between Election Campaigns,” 3-5.

³⁰ Christian Anglade, “Party Finance Models and the Classification of Latin American Parties,” in *Comparative Political Finance: The Financing of Party Organizations and Election Campaigns* (D.C. Heath and Company, 1970) 163.

³¹ Heidenheimer, “Major Modes of Raising, Spending and Controlling Political Funds During and Between Election Campaigns,” 5-7.

³² Anglade, “Party Finance Models and the Classification of Latin American Parties,” 169.

³³ Heidenheimer, “Major Modes of Raising, Spending and Controlling Political Funds During and Between Election Campaigns,” 5.

³⁴ Ibid.

Europe.³⁵ Labor party style fundraising sees labor union dues as the main means to fund party operations.

In contrast to labor party styles of fundraising, political parties which have their origin in the middle and upper classes have a different style of fundraising, referred to as a middle class party style of fundraising. This style of fundraising and these types of parties fail to generate sufficient funding through party membership dues alone; while they tend to have stronger organization, they simply tend to lack the robust membership numbers of socialist labor-based parties.³⁶ To compensate for this, they tend to turn to business donations as a source of income.³⁷ Middle class parties, such as traditional liberal and conservative parties in Europe, lack the extensive membership networks of labor-based parties affiliated with labor unions and therefore turn to the business sector as a major source of donations.

It would be remiss to not address that in industrializing countries an alternative system of party funding exists, in which foreign governments or foreign political parties fund political parties sympathetic to their cause. Such examples would include the USSR funding communist parties in Latin America and the United States funding right-wing parties in Latin America. While these foreign donations certainly did and do exist, it is important to note that they did and do not form the entirety of the revenues of most political parties in less developed states; other more traditional forms of fundraising coexist with foreign donations.³⁸ In states with industrializing economies, a third major fundraising style emerges which is not typically present in more developed states.

³⁵ Ibid, 6.

³⁶ Ibid, 7.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Anglade, "Party Finance Models and the Classification of Latin American Parties," 169.

While this author finds that prior research supports the hypothesis that levels of corporatism, relations between parties and unions, and parties' fundraising sources have important effects on union strength, it would be remiss to ignore what other researchers have proposed as explanations for why some states have weaker labor unions than others. For example, scholars have proposed that "a lack of traditions of solidarity" within the working class of some states has played a role in the failure for labor unions to maintain power and exert influence over market reforms..³⁹ They reference, for instance, union workers' inability to respect air traffic controllers' picket lines during President Ronald Reagan's tenure as an example of this "lack of class consciousness ... inherent in the ... American working class."⁴⁰

Certainly, one could make the argument that cultural values and norms can affect the power and membership of unions within a state. While this argument may at first appear convincing, other research contradicts the idea that class consciousness alone is the social factor which most impacts union power. Other scholars have noted that American workers "have been remarkably consistent in claiming a sense of identity from their jobs."⁴¹ These scholars argue that while group identity and solidarity remain strong, the American system of political representation, which lacks a strong corporatist ethos, makes collective bargaining much more difficult; the desire for solidarity exists, but political processes and systems make solidarity difficult to achieve.⁴²

Some have also argued that discrimination against labor unions, especially of particularly radical movements, using the judicial system has played a major role in the demise of the power

³⁹ Rick Fantasia, *Cultures of Solidarity: Consciousness, Action, and Contemporary American Workers* (University of California Press: 1989) 3.

⁴⁰ Ibid, 3-4.

⁴¹ Pappin, "Corporatism for the 21st Century," 6.

⁴² Ibid, 10-11.

of labor and trade unions. They note that during the developmental phases of labor movements, members of particularly radical labor unions and movements were frequently accused of crimes, oftentimes which they did not commit.⁴³ Judges particularly used injunctions in order to bar individuals from associating with such groups in the workplace.⁴⁴ Some scholars argue that such actions intimidated workers and resulted in workers fearing to associate with more radical labor organizations, such as the Industrial Workers of the World, also known as the I.W.W., an anarcho-syndicalist group.⁴⁵⁴⁶

Such arguments do at first seem convincing; it is logical that if one feared criminal charges for joining a labor organization, one would not join such an organization. While this argument may have been pertinent during the early days of the labor movement, it seems less so when the current status of labor law is addressed. The Labor Management Relations Act, which revolutionized labor law in the United States, states that the official policy of the United States is not just to allow for collective bargaining agreements to be formed between employers and labor unions, but to encourage such agreements.⁴⁷ Further case law derived from this document has prohibited many of the intimidatory tactics used by business owners in the past to halt labor union activity.⁴⁸ President Joseph R. Biden, of the United States of America, even noted that “in [his] White House [organized labor will] always be welcome.”⁴⁹ The current state of labor law in

⁴³ Ahmed White, "Law, Labor, and the Hard Edge of Progressivism: The Legal Repression of Radical Unionism and the American Labor Movement's Long Decline," *Berkeley Journal of Employment and Labor Law* vol. 42, no. 1 (2021): 165-236

⁴⁴ Ibid, 200-201.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid, 166-167.

⁴⁷ Steven I. Schlossberg, *Organizing and the Law: A Handbook for Union Organizers* (Bureau of National Affairs, 1967) 3.

⁴⁸ Ibid, 54-61.

⁴⁹ Joseph Biden, "Remarks by President Biden in Honor of Labor Unions," speech, Washington, D.C., September 08, 2021.

the United States is in fact quite accepting of labor organization, so this factor does not explain why *estadounidense* labor unions are much weaker than those in the other case studies.

It would be remiss to not offer the Marxist perspective on the power and purpose of labor unions. Marx argues that labor unions are necessary “to centralise the numerous local struggles ... into one national struggle between classes.”⁵⁰ While Marx viewed labor unions as a means to promote class consciousness and begin revolution, it is clear that not all members of labor unions share these ideas. Particularly, organizing on the shop-level rather than industry-level in the United States seems to negate the issue of centralizing struggle into one shared class struggle. Modern labor unions certainly work to improve the working and living conditions of their membership, but most mainstream labor unions do not appear to share this revolutionary spirit.

III. Conclusion

Considering all of these diverse factors aids in centering oneself in the multiple explanations for how and why labor unions have declined in power since the neoliberal reforms of the post-Cold War period. Corporatist traditions allow for a labor union to be viewed by a government as the natural entity through which working people would interact with the government. Close ties between labor unions and political parties allow for unions to gain concessions in market reforms without entering into a strike, which would be harmful to both the labor union’s general membership and the state. The presence of political parties which rely on labor party styles of fundraising grant labor unions an even greater say in the trajectory of political parties, and if those parties are in government, the policies which they advocate for and enact. Political culture certainly plays a role in union membership, but perhaps not as great a role

⁵⁰ Karl Marx, “Manifesto of the Communist Party,” in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, ed. Robert C. Tucker, (W.W. Norton and Co. Inc., 1972): 343.

as some would suggest. Labor law in the United States was once swayed in the favor of employers, but the current law and current executive actively promotes membership in a labor union, or other collective bargaining agreement.⁵¹ While many arguments can be made as to why union power has decreased worldwide since the post-Cold War era and much more markedly so in the United States, this author finds that the lack of a legacy of corporatism, a shift in partisan donor bases, and private sector unions willingness to withhold their support of the Democratic party in the United States to be the major reasons for the downfall of the power organized labor exerts over policy.

⁵¹ Schlossberg, *Organizing and the Law: A Handbook for Union Organizers*, 3.

Chapter 2: The State of Labor from the Second World War to the 1980s

I. Introduction

To fully understand the impacts of neoliberal reforms on the labor movements of the three countries analyzed in this thesis, one must first have a clear vision of the labor movements in the three states prior to the reforms that began in the 1980s. This chapter will focus specifically on the state of labor unions in the three states from the period of 1945 to 1980, from the end of the Second World War to the beginnings of their adoption of neoliberal reforms. As labor and trade unions do not constitute the whole of the broader labor movement, there will be cursory references to other aspects of the labor movement – such as labor education – in order to give proper context to the state of labor unions.⁵² The focus of the analysis is on the three variables outlined earlier in this thesis: relationships between labor unions and political parties, corporatist practices and institutions, and the type of financial contributions of labor unions to political parties.

One must also note that labor unions in each country were in different stages of development during the period studied. While Argentina had some semblance of labor organization beginning in the 1860s, led largely by immigrants, labor union membership did not become significant until the 1920s.⁵³ The labor movement, and thus labor unions, in the United Kingdom began much earlier, with important labor activists organizing as early as the early eighteenth century, while the first labor union in the United States, for printers, was formed in

⁵² Mary Beard, *A Short History of the American Labor Movement*, (George H. Doran Company, 1924) 1.

⁵³ David Tamarin, *The Argentina Labor Movement, 1930-1945: A Study in the Origins of Peronism*, (University of New Mexico Press, 1985) 49, 71.

1852.^{54 55} While it is important to note that the three states began the process of unionization at different time periods, for the scope of this study it is most important to understand the context in which labor unions emerged.

II. United Kingdom

The connections between the Labour Party in the United Kingdom and labor unions were quite formal and direct during the period being analyzed (1945-1980). Since at least the late 1890s, labor unions have affiliated themselves with the precursors to the modern Labour Party, when a local Trades Council in the Yorkshire region became affiliated with a local Labour Party.⁵⁶ This pattern continued as Labour became more prominent on the national scale in the United Kingdom; labor unions continued to vote to affiliate both politically and financially with the Labour Party, spurning the Liberal Party, which had been the previous major rival to the Conservative Party.⁵⁷

While labor unions overwhelmingly voted to affiliate with the Labour Party during the early twentieth century, that does not mean that all of a labor union's membership was in agreement to affiliate; many communists within the labor movement advocated for a strictly communist party, which the Labour Party was not.^{58 59} The Trade Union Congress, one of the largest labor groups affiliated with the Labour Party, has stated that rather than being affiliated with a specific ideology such as socialism or communism "we start as trade unionists, and we end as trade unionists," demonstrating their commitment to seeking multiple possible solutions

⁵⁴ Margaret Cole, *Makers of the Labour Movement*, (Longmans, Green, and Co., 1948) 9.

⁵⁵ John M. Farquhar, "Printers and Their Unions," in *The Labor Movement*, ed. George E. McNeill. (A.M. Bridgman and Co., 1887) 185.

⁵⁶ Keith Laybourn, *The Rise of Labour: The British Labour Party 1890-1979*, (Edward Arnold, 1988) 19.

⁵⁷ Ibid. 24.

⁵⁸ Fenley, Anthony. "Labour and the trade unions." In *The Labour Party: An Introduction to its history, structure and politics*, edited by Chris Cook and Ian Taylor, 50-83. (Longman Inc., 1980) 54.

⁵⁹ Carl F. Brand, *The British Labour Party: A Short History*, (Hoover Institution Press, 1974) 87.

to labor issues, which could explain the overwhelming support that affiliation with the Labour Party received.⁶⁰ The Labour Party was able to appeal to labor and trade unions as entities, but the party was not necessarily able to appeal to every individual labor union member.

After the Second World War, the United Kingdom was ripe for reinvestment in social services and redevelopment, both in terms of physically rebuilding the nation after bombing and in terms of rebuilding its welfare state.⁶¹ In Labour's *Immediate Programme*, published in 1937, the Labour Party outlines its plans for when it regains control of parliament; the issues contained within the policy outline were only exacerbated by the war, which likely led to Labour's dominant electoral position after the end of the Second World War.⁶² This period was the first time that Labour was able to form a majority government, not a coalition government.⁶³ Winston Churchill, former Conservative Prime Minister, even noted that "reconstruction was in the air" and that there was a "dangerous optimism ... about post-war conditions."⁶⁴ The period just after the Second World War was an instrumental time in the development of Labour's agenda, and allowed the party to enact policies which helped solidify the relationship between Labour, labor unions, and the British working classes.

Shortly after taking power, a Labour government implemented many policies which were seen as beneficial for labor unions and which labor unions and the Labour Party argued were beneficial for the British working class. For example, during the war, the necessity of energy independence was highlighted, resulting in the Labour government nationalizing coal, electricity, and natural gas extraction and distribution, a tenet of the large socialist faction within

⁶⁰ Ibid. 51.

⁶¹ Brand, *The British Labour Party: A Short History*, 237.

⁶² National Executive Committee of the British Labour Party, *Labour's Immediate Program*, 1937.

⁶³ Brand, *The British Labour Party: A Short History*, 237.

⁶⁴ Laybourn, *The Rise of Labour: The British Labour Party 1890-1979*, 102.

the party.⁶⁵ Further, due to the bombings of British cities, the United Kingdom faced a housing shortage which was remediated through the construction of public housing estates and council housing.⁶⁶ The party also used this time of upheaval to unveil the National Health Service, as promised in the *Immediate Programme*.⁶⁷ The Labour Party used the crises facing Britain after the Second World War as a means to implement policies that responded to the issues while furthering their pro-labor union and working class agenda.

Similarly, Labour used the energy crisis of the 1970s to implement policies which responded to the crisis while furthering pro-labor union policies. When Labour again controlled parliament in the 1970s, the oil industry being developed in the North Sea was largely nationalized, with the few private oil extraction corporations being heavily taxed.⁶⁸ Labour also used this government to further rid the National Health Service of private practitioners, in a progressive, rather than immediate manner.⁶⁹ When in power, the Labour Party implemented policies which were in line with the expectations of labor unions, thus strengthening the already strong mutually beneficial relationship which existed between them both.

Financial ties between the Labour Party and labor unions are quite clear. When trade unions voted to affiliate with the Labour Party, they were also voting to authorize the transfer of funds to the party in order to finance elections.⁷⁰ In the 1960s, the contributions of labor unions to the Labour Party contributed up to ninety percent of the budget of the Labour Party.⁷¹ This pattern continues to the year 1980, where eighty percent of the budget of the Labour Party came

⁶⁵ David Steel, "Labour in office: the post-war experience," in *The Labour Party: An Introduction to its history, structure and politics*, ed. Chris Cook and Ian Taylor, (Longman Inc., 1980) 131.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ National Executive Committee of the British Labour Party, *Labour's Immediate Program*, 7.

⁶⁸ Steel, "Labour in office: the post-war experience," 141.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Laybourn, *The Rise of Labour: The British Labour Party 1890-1979*, 24.

⁷¹ Heidenheimer, "Major Modes of Raising, Spending and Controlling Political Funds During and Between Election Campaigns," 6.

from the contributions of labor unions.⁷² This style of fundraising is aptly known as the “labor party style” of political fundraising, in which a labor union collects funds from its members in order to pay for the membership of the labor union as a whole in a political party.⁷³ The Labour Party and British labor unions have not only a strong political relationship during this period from the post-war to the 1980s, but also a strong financial connection.

This relationship between the Labour Party and labor unions in the United Kingdom has also been influenced by corporatist traditions within the state. While corporatist influences are typically seen in majority Roman Catholic states due to the influence of the Church on corporatist theory, the United Kingdom has also had a long corporatist influence, dating back to the period of the Commonwealth, from 1653 to 1659.⁷⁴ ⁷⁵ For instance, dating back to the time of the Protestant Reformation the English monarch has had specific privileges, which linger to the present day, with the current Queen being the official head of the Anglican Communion.⁷⁶ Corporatism has a long legacy in the United Kingdom and was emphasized during the period of the Commonwealth.

Due to this corporatist influence on government, labor unions had long failed to gain political representation and consideration of their views in the British parliament, as the Liberal Party, the closest party in ideology to the major labor unions before the rise of the Labour Party, appealed to a middle class electorate.⁷⁷ Labor leaders and labor unions managed to advocate for moderate changes in policy favorable to their membership, but failed to extract major

⁷² Leopold, John W., “Trade Unions, Political Fund Ballots and the Labour Party,” *British Journal of Industrial Relations* 35, no. 1, (1997) 34.

⁷³ Ibid, 35.

⁷⁴ Williamson, *Corporatism in Perspective: An Introductory Guide to Corporatist Theory*, 11.

⁷⁵ Turner, Henry S. *The Corporate Commonwealth: Pluralism and Political Fictions in England, 1516-1651*.

⁷⁶ Ibid, 74.

⁷⁷ Brand, *The British Labour Party: A Short History*, 3.

concessions from parliament.⁷⁸ Similarly to the situation in Argentina, labor unions only began to see major policy changes favorable to them when they organized into recognized peak-level institutions.^{79 80}

The ability of trades to organize into labor unions and then into the Labour Party in the United Kingdom was likely facilitated by the legacy of trade guilds from the early industrial period which “mediated between members with market power and negotiated with more powerful merchants.”⁸¹ This role appears incredibly similar to that of a modern labor union. Further, in response to issues of competitiveness during the period of the Second World War, British industries were organized into a “national industrial council.”⁸² As business interests created formal structures to advocate for their interests, workers recognized that through creating a formal means to access political power, through the Labour Party, they could do the same. Corporatist influence in the United Kingdom meant that the best means for labor unions to create more favorable conditions for their members was affiliating with the Labour Party.

III. United States

The United States during this period also saw a relationship between the Democratic Party and major labor unions, mostly within the AFL-CIO, or American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations. Originally, labor unions, particularly the Knights of Labor, had attempted to create their own political party, the Greenback-Labor party, which saw some success during the end of the nineteenth century.⁸³ In many cities across the United States,

⁷⁸ Ibid, 7.

⁷⁹ Steel, “Labour in office: the post-war experience,” 131.

⁸⁰ Ibid, 141.

⁸¹ S.R. Epstein, “Craft guilds in the pre-modern economy: a discussion,” *Economic History Review* 61, no. 1 (2008): 155.

⁸² L.P. Carpenter, “Corporatism in Britain, 1930-1945,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 11 (1976):

⁸³ Ellis W. Roberts, *The breaker whistle blows: Mining disasters and labor leaders in the anthracite region*, (Anthracite Museum Press, 1984) 25-26.

local branches of the Democratic Party managed to create what are referred to as “machines,” often with the involvement of labor unions and labor union leaders, which provided kickbacks to those who were loyal to the party, often in the form of a patronage system for distributing jobs in the public sector.⁸⁴ In states which utilize caucus systems, which can be cumbersome for voters to attend, labor unions during this period often mandated that their members attend Democratic caucuses in order to hold a greater sway in determining the party’s candidates for general election, famously doing so in the 1980 Iowa caucus.⁸⁵ While the Democratic Party and labor unions did not foster a formal bond such as that between the Trade Union Congress and the Labor Party, *estadounidense* labor unions participated heavily in the political sphere, particularly with the Democratic Party.

The Democratic party also implemented policy favorable to labor unions just prior to the Second World War, under the direction of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, specifically the Labor Management Relations Act, more commonly referred to as the Taft-Hartley Act. This act of Congress states that “protection by law of the right of employees to organize and bargain collectively” is essential to a functional economy.⁸⁶ This declaration of the right for workers to collectively bargain cannot be understated in importance; the official policy of the United States is to permit and protect the rights of workers to form labor unions. When in power, the Democratic party implemented policies which allowed for the labor unions which helped comprise the party’s voter bloc to gain more influence.

While there are no formal financial ties between the Democratic Party and labor unions, the AFL-CIO during the period discussed was heavily financially active in Democratic politics. In 1968, it is estimated that labor unions invested nearly \$7.1 million in campaigning, largely for

⁸⁴ Epstein, *Political Parties in the American World*, 142.

⁸⁵ Ibid. 106.

⁸⁶ Schlossberg, *Organizing and the Law: A Handbook for Union Organizers*, 3.

Democratic candidates.⁸⁷ While this level of financial support alone is impressive, labor unions also supported Democratic candidates through mobilizing their members to do campaign work on a volunteer basis.⁸⁸ From the beginning days of the labor movement in the United States, major labor unions in the United States have made clear that their political strategy is to “reward [their] friends... [and] punish [their] enemies,” making clear that as long as the Democratic party continued to support the policy preferences of the labor unions, the funds that labor unions provided would be made available to them.⁸⁹

Another major difference between political fundraising and electioneering in the United States and the other states analyzed within this thesis is that campaigning in the United States is typically focused on specific candidates rather than a party line ticket. This is reflected in labor unions’ involvement in caucuses for the Democratic nominees to presidential elections; unions do not just campaign and fundraise for the Democratic party, they do so for specific pro-labor candidates.⁹⁰ This is dissimilar to Argentina, where it is clear that labor unions and their working class constituents only seek political representation through the JP, and the United Kingdom where labor unions make mass contributions to the Labour party as a whole.^{91 92} The United States features more emphasis on supporting a candidate through campaigning and fundraising than Argentina and Great Britain.

While labor unions in the United States did have close relationships with the Democratic Party during this period, unlike in the United Kingdom and Argentina, this relationship was out

⁸⁷ Herbert E. Alexander, “Links and Contrasts Among American Parties and Party Subsystems,” in *Comparative Political Finance: The Financing of Party Organizations and Election Campaigns*, ed. Arnold J. Heidenheimer, (D.C. Heath and Company, 1970) 102.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Joshua M. Jansa and Michele M. Hoyman, “Do Unions Punish Democrats? Free-Trade Votes and Labor PAC Contributions, 1999–2012,” *Political Research Quarterly* 71, no. 2 (2018) 425.

⁹⁰ Epstein, *Political Parties in the American World*, 106.

⁹¹ Auyero, “Clientelismo político en Argentina: doble vida y negociación colectiva,” 47.

⁹² Leopold, Trade Unions, Political Fund Ballots and the Labour Party,” 34.

of convenience rather than necessity; due to the lack of corporatist tradition in the United States, labor unions could effectively organize and create change on their own. Legitimization through a political party was not necessary as in the other cases. As labor unions in the United States organize and bargain at the shop level rather than the sectoral level, they can wield great power over the benefits that their members enjoy, without the involvement of the United States government, except in the role of arbitrator.⁹³ While in Argentina and the United Kingdom major benefits for members of labor unions were mostly gained through governmental action, many benefits for labor union members were gained at the shop level, without the assistance of political parties.

IV. Argentina

It is impossible for one to discuss the role of labor unions in Argentine society without discussing the roles of Eva and Juan Perón, first lady and president of Argentina from 1946 to 1955. Both president and first lady Perón completely reinvigorated and reshaped the Argentine labor movement and the labor unions of Argentina into a system of labor unionism which was expedient to their personal political goals, an ideology described as *peronismo*.⁹⁴ The Peróns managed to build an incredibly direct connection with the Argentine people and the labor unions of Argentina, forming a bond between labor unions and political parties which continue to advocate *peronismo* even today.⁹⁵ ⁹⁶ Juan and Eva Perón turned to labor unions as a means to consolidate their political power, with marked success, utilizing a combination of corporatism

⁹³ Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*. (Princeton University Press, 1996) 158.

⁹⁴ Victor Alba, *Historia del movimiento obrero en América Latina*, (Editorial Limusa Wiley, S.A., 1964) 359.

⁹⁵ Ibid. 360.

⁹⁶ Charles Bergquist, *Labor in Latin America: Comparative Essays on Chile, Argentina, Venezuela, and Colombia*, (Stanford University Press, 1986) 190.

and both Peróns' ability to connect personally with the working class of Argentina, particularly members of labor unions.^{97 98}

Labor unions, Perón, and parties inspired by his ideology built a relationship out of mutual convenience. Scholars argue that labor unions were quick to support Perón, as they saw him as a means to gain institutional power, which was denied to them by the political system or power structures prior to Perón's involvement in Argentine politics.⁹⁹ Divided by ideological differences between Marxists, syndicalists, anarchists, and socialists within their ranks, labor unions had failed to unite under one party's ticket to elect a government sympathetic to workers' issues, until united by Perón.^{100 101} Perón viewed labor unions, when deprived of socialist, Marxist, and anarchist influences, as a means to promote a sense of Argentine nationalism. If he created an intense nationalist sentiment in Argentina, he could harness this sentiment into a populist political party loyal to him and his policy preferences.¹⁰² Argentina had long been stripped of any nationalist sentiment, as governments of the 1930s had promoted an antinationalist liberal economic agenda.¹⁰³ Perón, sensing that the middle classes would not support a nationalist populist movement, instead turned to the working classes to create an Argentine nationalism based upon labor unions and admiration for Perón as a self-styled hero of the working class, *los descamisados de la Argentina* [the shirtless ones of Argentina].¹⁰⁴ Perón

⁹⁷ Tamarin, *The Argentina Labor Movement, 1930-1945: A Study in the Origins of Peronism*, 201.

⁹⁸ Thomas E. Skidmore, "The Politics of Economic Stabilization in Postwar Latin America," in *Authoritarianism and Corporatism in Latin America*, ed. James M. Malloy (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977) 163.

⁹⁹ Murillo, *Labor Unions, Partisan Coalitions, and Market Reforms in Latin America*, 46.

¹⁰⁰ Bergquist, *Labor in Latin America: Comparative Essays on Chile, Argentina, Venezuela, and Colombia*, 143.

¹⁰¹ Tamarin, *The Argentina Labor Movement, 1930-1945: A Study in the Origins of Peronism*, 205.

¹⁰² Ibid, 209.

¹⁰³ Bergquist, *Labor in Latin America: Comparative Essays on Chile, Argentina, Venezuela, and Colombia*, 143.

¹⁰⁴ Tamarin, *The Argentina Labor Movement, 1930-1945: A Study in the Origins of Peronism*, 209.

managed to create a political party, the *Partido justicialista*, which essentially fused organized labor, *peronismo*, and Perón as one.^{105 106}

During his time in power, Perón benefited from a corporatist structure within the Argentine government, much to the chagrin of both socialists and Marxists within the Argentine labor movement. Generally, Marxists, socialists, and other left-wing individuals resisted Perón's influence in peak associations of labor unions, such as the *Confederación general de trabajadores* (General Confederation of Laborers) or the CGT for short.¹⁰⁷ Communist, socialist, and other left wing unions and their leaders were banned by the government and leaders within such circles were targeted by the state.^{108 109} Because of this alienation and repression of more radical members of the labor movement, Peronist parties never appealed to the entirety of the Argentine working class.¹¹⁰

A question naturally arises: how did Peronist parties maintain power and appeal to voters if they did not appeal to socialists, communists, and anarchists who were plentiful within the Argentine working class? Simply, Perón embraced corporatism, in which only Peronist labor unions were able to gain concessions from the state and from the private sector.¹¹¹ Perón further increased the standard of living for the working class of Argentina by placing pressure on private employers to agree to hourly wage increases that labor unions loyal to Perón and his *partido laborista*, with real wages increasing for the average Argentinian by almost twenty-five percent

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, 201.

¹⁰⁶ Robert R. Kaufman, "Corporatism, Clientelism, and Partisan Conflict: A Study of Seven Latin American Countries," in *Authoritarianism and Corporatism in Latin America*, ed. James M. Malloy (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977) 127.

¹⁰⁷ Alba, *Historia del movimiento obrero en América Latina*, 359.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Bergquist, *Labor in Latin America: Comparative Essays on Chile, Argentina, Venezuela, and Colombia*, 160.

¹¹⁰ Alba, *Historia del movimiento obrero en América Latina*, 119.

¹¹¹ Tamarin, *The Argentina Labor Movement, 1930-1945: A Study in the Origins of Peronism*, 204.

each of his first two years in office as president.¹¹² Argentínians in labor unions which supported Perón saw material gains during his first term as president and recognized that if they acted through the “proper” channels within the corporatist system, Peronist unions, they could continue to be rewarded by Perón’s government.

Perón and the *Partido justicialista*, or JP for short, after his death have also capitalized electorally on creating strong, yet informal connections with the Argentina working classes. Scholars of Argentine political systems have coined the term “playing Evita,” a reference to Eva Duarte de Perón’s appeal to the *descamisados* of Argentina, to describe the performative relationships between JP party leadership and prospective JP voters.¹¹³ This process of “playing Evita” includes the giving of benefits, such as trips to the city center of Buenos Aires, to prospective voters by *referentes* or *dirigentes*, representatives of the JP who live in working class communities.¹¹⁴ These informal yet powerful connections between members of the JP and working class Argentínians create a political culture in which individuals seek representation only within the JP. Individuals note that they “[do not seek other forms of participating in politics, rather they change loyalties amongst representatives within the JP].”¹¹⁵ Often, the working classes view the JP as their means to interact with the Argentine state and make requests for aid through the party, rather than through the formalized channels of the Argentine state.¹¹⁶ The ability of Perón, and the JP after his death, to create and foster a culture of *peronismo* within

¹¹² Skidmore, “The Politics of Economic Stabilization in Postwar Latin America,” in *Authoritarianism and Corporatism in Latin America*, 160.

¹¹³ Auyero, Javier, “Evita como performance: Mediación y resolución de problemas entre los pobres urbanos del Gran Buenos Aires,” in *¿Favores por votos?: Estudios sobre clientelismo político contemporáneo*, ed. Javier Auyero (Editorial Losada S.A., 1997) 207.

¹¹⁴ Javier Auyero, “Clientelismo político en Argentina: doble vida y negación colectiva,” *Perfiles Latinoamericanos* 20, (2002) 42-43.

¹¹⁵ Ibid, 47. (Translated from Spanish)

¹¹⁶ Steven J. Levitsky, “An ‘Organised Disorganisation’: Informal Organisation and the Persistence of Local Party Structures in Argentine Peronism,” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 33, no. 1, (2001) 55.

the working classes has been instrumental in the JP's ability to consolidate the vote of the Argentine working class.

While the JP has fostered incredibly strong community relationships, it has a relatively underdeveloped internal party structure and hierarchy. Scholars argue that the strong community relationships paired with an underdeveloped internal hierarchy have created a party in which radical policy shifts can be tolerated.¹¹⁷ In fact, some acknowledge that there is a bit of a gap in the literature regarding the JP, as most political science studies focus only on "formal institutions and organizations."¹¹⁸ While formal structures and policies within the party are not exactly robust, informal but typically respected norms and expectations form the basis of internal JP policy and organization. Two largely informal systems governed organized labor's interactions with the JP: the '62 Organizations and the *tercio* system. The '62 Organization is the informal organization that bridges the gap between labor unions and the JP. While it is an informal connection, it is viewed by the JP as the legitimate means of interaction between labor unions and the party.¹¹⁹ Similarly, the *tercio* system refers to an informal agreement between labor unions and the JP which states that labor unions, through the '62 Organization, have the right to name a third of party leaders within the JP as well as a third of all candidates running for the JP.¹²⁰ While these links are informal, they are generally accepted social conventions amongst party members and emphasize that "parties continue to be the predominant means of structuring electoral competition" in the Argentine state.¹²¹

¹¹⁷ Steven J. Levitsky, "Crisis, Party Adaptation, and Regime Stability in Argentina: The Case of Peronism, 1989-1995," *Party Politics* 4, no. 4, (1998) 446.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 452.

¹¹⁹ Levitsky, "An 'Organised Disorganisation': Informal Organisation and the Persistence of Local Party Structures in Argentine Peronism," 456.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 446.

While not much research has been conducted regarding the fundraising sources of Peronist parties during the time period between 1945 and 1980, some sources offer insight into the financial connections between labor union members and the parties. While it does not appear that in Argentina there is a mass contribution of funds from unions to the JP, it appears that many union members and individuals living in working class neighborhoods are mobilized to raise funds. Ethnographers describe the “effective networks” of party officials in working class communities which they are able to mobilize both for electioneering and fundraising purposes.¹²² It is an unspoken societal expectation in these communities that party officials will provide resources and material gains to individuals in exchange for their vote and occasionally electioneering and fundraising action.¹²³ Further, labor unions in Argentina collect mandatory dues from their members which they use to donate to the JP.¹²⁴ The financial ties between the JP and Argentina labor unions strengthened the relations between the two during the post-World War II era.

V. Conclusion

When one analyzes the presence of the three factors considered in this thesis (the presence of a close relationship between labor unions and a political party, labor unions being a large financial source for the political party, and levels of corporatism) one can see that these three factors are not consistent within all three states during the time period from 1945 to 1980. All three states have a political party which has close ties to labor unions, whether formally as in the case studies of Argentina and the United Kingdom, or informally as in the case study of the

¹²² Auyero, “Clientelismo político en Argentina: doble vida y negación colectiva,” 38-39.

¹²³ Ibid, 33.

¹²⁴ Graciela Bensúsán, “Organizing Workers in Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Mexico: The Authoritarian-Corporatist Legacy and Old Institutional Designs in a New Context,” *Theoretical Inquiries in Law* 16, no. 131 (2016): 140.

United States. In all three states, labor unions provided financial support to the political parties which advocated for their interests.

One factor where the three states diverge is that of levels of corporatism. In the United Kingdom and Argentina, labor unions sought out connections with political parties in order to gain a legitimate means to effect governmental policy and gain benefits for their members. In the United States, with a low level of corporatism, while a relationship with the Democratic Party was certainly beneficial to labor unions, it was not necessary, as they were able to gain many benefits merely by bargaining on the shop level. Rather than organizing at an industry-wide level, labor unions in the United States focused on creating material gains for workers in businesses with union contracts, not for all workers across an industry. During the period of 1945 to 1980, in all three states analyzed within this thesis, labor unions maintained relationships with political parties and provided financial assistance to the aforementioned parties, but strong levels of corporatism only existed in Argentina and the United Kingdom.

Chapter 3: Neoliberal Reforms of the 1980s and 1990s

I. Defining “Reform”

As the United States has long had an economy that can be characterized as classically liberal, it is important to note what this thesis is referring to when the term “neoliberal reforms” is used. This phrase, in the scope of this thesis, refers to the economic reforms of the Reagan, Thatcher, and Menem administrations during the 1980s and 1990s, or the Washington Consensus, as coined by economist John Williamson.¹²⁵ The Washington Consensus is characterized by the further liberalization of trade, privatization of nationalized and public industries, broad deregulation, and a rethinking of public expenditures.¹²⁶ As was discussed in the previous chapter, many policies implemented by pro-labor union political parties prior to the 1980s go against this economic consensus. As the United States and the United Kingdom have arguably had liberal economic policies, it is important to note that the term “neoliberal reforms,” when used in this thesis, refers to the deepening of the liberal or free market policies of the Washington Consensus from the 1980s to 1990s.

One of the most important aspects of the policies which were enacted in the three case studies is the privatization of nationalized and public industries. This thesis will use the definition of privatization outlined in a report which was produced by the Commission on Privatization, an executive commission which was created by former United States President Ronald Reagan. This report not only outlines instances where assets of the United States could be privatized, but also presents a definition of privatization. This definition seems most

¹²⁵John Williamson, “A Short History of the Washington Consensus,” *Law and Business Review of the Americas* 15, no. 1 (2009): 7.

¹²⁶*Ibid*, 9-10.

appropriate as it presents privatization in the manner in which politicians and parties presented privatization to voters.

The document describes privatization as “arrangements between the government and the private sector [which] might improve efficiency while offering new opportunities and greater satisfaction for the people served.”¹²⁷ It further describes three manners in which this may be achieved: the direct sale of assets and industries to private sector investors, the contracting of services to private sector corporations, and the usage of vouchers, redeemable at private sector corporations, instead of state provided services.¹²⁸ All three methods of privatization involve the dissolution of state-owned industry or service providers, but through different means.

Another important neoliberal policy which is seen in all three cases is the liberalization of trade. Advocates of trade liberalization and the concept of free trade define free trade as the elimination of tariffs and import quotas as well as the further globalization of supply chains.¹²⁹ Such proponents argue that the competition which free or “freer” trade generates allows for greater innovation in industry and allows countries to develop “competitive advantages” in industries which fit the economy and resources of the country.¹³⁰ Economists, including John Williamson, who popularized the concept of the Washington Consensus, further argue that the liberalization of trade ought to be pursued through an immediate shift from quantitative import quotas, followed by a carefully planned and gradual lowering of tariffs to a standardized low rate.¹³¹ Trade liberalization as defined in this thesis refers to the entrance into agreements, such as NAFTA, in order to lower tariffs and other barriers to trade.

¹²⁷ President’s Commission on Privatization, *Privatization: Toward More Effective Government*, (1988): 1.

¹²⁸ Ibid. 1-2.

¹²⁹ Denise H. Froning, “The Benefits of Free Trade: A Guide for Policymakers,” *The Heritage Foundation Backgrounder* no. 1391 (2000): 3.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ John Williamson, “Differing Interpretations of the Washington Consensus,” (lecture, Leon Koźmiński Academy of Entrepreneurship and Management, Warsaw, Poland, April 12, 2005.)

II. United Kingdom

During the 1980s, the government of former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher signaled that it was interested in furthering the common market aspect of the European Union and began to actively pursue the further implementation of the European common market. Thatcher argued that only by allowing corporations to do business freely amongst members of the European Community could European corporations effectively challenge the power of *estadounidense* and Japanese corporations; she argued that the creation of a European economy of scale was the best method to promote not just Britain's interests, but all of Europe's interests.¹³² ¹³³ Supranational elements were accepted as Thatcher believed that the economic benefits outweighed the drawbacks of ceding some power to the European Union.¹³⁴ Margaret Thatcher and the Conservative party's desire to enter into a common market with states on the European continent demonstrate a shift from Great Britain's previous desire to maintain independence from supranational European institutions.

Great Britain has a long history of participating in trade liberalization discussions with its neighbors on the European continent. After the Second World War, a supranational European Coal and Steel Community was proposed, to allow for the free trade of coal and steel amongst members in order to facilitate the rebuilding of the continent after the war.¹³⁵ Great Britain was included in the discussions for the implementation of such a community, but ultimately decided to not enter into this agreement, as both the Labour and Conservative parties feared ceding power away from the state itself to a supranational organization and other countries involved in the

¹³² Margaret Thatcher, "Speech to the College of Europe ("The Bruges Speech")," speech, Bruges, September 20, 1988.

¹³³ David Ramiro Troitiño and Tanel Kerkimäe, "Margaret Thatcher: ¿Precursora del *Brexit* o europeísta ambigua?," *Historia y política* 42, (2019): 340.

¹³⁴ Ibid, 344.

¹³⁵ Henry L. Mason, *The European Coal And Steel Community: Experiment in Supranationalism*. (Springer Science+Business Media Dordrecht, 1955): VII.

process refused to remove the supranational aspects of the Community.¹³⁶ While the UK ultimately did not join the European Coal and Steel Community, it did give the state experience with the negotiations that are necessary to enter into common markets.

In a White Paper published by the Commission of the European Communities, it is stated that the goal of a common European market is to transform Europe into “an area without internal frontiers in which the free movement of goods, persons, services, and capital is ensured.”¹³⁷ Lord Arthur Cockfield, a Conservative party leader, served as an Internal Market Commissioner, and in this role was able to exert the influence of Conservative policy preferences over the process, and temper the policy preferences of other left-leaning governments in the European Communities, such as the Socialist government of France.¹³⁸ Great Britain’s role in the development of the European common market during the 1980s and 1990s likely tempered concerns of ceding power to a supranational organization which were present during the negotiations over the European Coal and Steel Community.

While many in the United States would likely believe that privatization of industry in the United States under the presidency of Ronald Reagan inspired the privatization of industry in Britain during the Conservative government of Margaret Thatcher, the privatization of British state-owned enterprises actually predates the privatization of certain industries in the United States. A study on the effects of privatization, performed by the Reagan administration, cites the privatization of key industries in Britain during Margaret Thatcher’s government, such as British Petroleum, British Gas, and a variety of other industries, including car manufacturing, as

¹³⁶ Ibid, 9.

¹³⁷ Commission to the European Council, *Completing the Internal Market*, 1985.

¹³⁸ Andrew Moravcsik, “Negotiating the Single European Act: National Interests and Conventional Statecraft in the European Community,” *International Organization* 45, no. 1 (1991): 21.

successful implementations of privatization.^{139 140} The privatization which occurred during the Conservative governments of Margaret Thatcher (1979-1990) and John Major (1990-1997) marked a critical shift in British industrial policy.

The nationalization of industry, which prior to the post-war period in Britain was viewed just as a tool to respond to economic and logistical needs, was now viewed in the country as a staple of Labour governments, associated with the socialist factions within the party.¹⁴¹ While the Conservative party did not release an official policy paper outlining their desire to privatize industry, one can ascertain that the party at large did not support the nationalization of industries which occurred under Labour governments. Former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher notes that “[privatization] takes time and it takes a lot of money. That is the price of the folly of public ownership.”¹⁴² During the Thatcher and Major governments, privatization was seen as an ideological response to the nationalization which occurred during prior Labour governments.

One prime example of privatization in Britain is the privatization of the British coal industry. This thesis will analyze the privatization of the British coal industry as it follows the privatization of two other similar industries, electricity and natural gas, meaning that Conservative governments had prior experience which guided their privatization of the coal industry.¹⁴³ The privatization of the natural gas industry essentially converted a state owned monopoly to a privately held monopoly, as the industry was sold in its entirety to private investors. Similarly the electricity production industry was sold in regional groupings, creating

¹³⁹ President’s Commission on Privatization, *Privatization: Toward More Effective Government*, 4.

¹⁴⁰ Alan N. Miller “Ideological Motivations of Privatization in Great Britain Versus Developing Countries,” *Journal of International Affairs* 50, no. 2 (1997): 392.

¹⁴¹ Pradip Baijal, “From Nationalisation to Privatisation: UK and Japan.” *Economic and Political Weekly* 35, no. 13, (2000): 1101.

¹⁴² Ibid. 1104.

¹⁴³ Richard Green and Catherine Waddams Price, “Liberalisation and Divestiture in the UK Energy Sector,” *Fiscal Studies* 16, no. 1 (1995): 75.

local privately held monopolies.¹⁴⁴ The Conservative governments of Thatcher and Major had experience with privatizing energy related industries which allowed them to further develop their strategies of privatization.

The privatization of the British coal mining industry had long been discussed by the Conservative party. In fact, the discussions and implementation of its privatization spanned the governments of two separate Conservative prime ministers, Margaret Thatcher and John Major, largely due to the protests of mineworkers.¹⁴⁵ Former Prime Minister Thatcher and the Conservative party as an organization explicitly argued that private corporations would make more financially sound and productive decisions than state bureaucrats who controlled nationalized industries.¹⁴⁶ It is also important to note that the Conservative party viewed the influence of labor unions within these publicly owned corporations as “corrupting,” arguing that labor unions sought excessive benefits for their members and were attempting to utilize their members in publicly owned industries in a political manner.¹⁴⁷ The Conservative party made both economic and political arguments for the privatization of British Coal.

The Conservative party created a plan which would restructure and gradually privatize British Coal. Learning from the mistake of privatizing British Gas as one entity, the party decided that British Coal would be privatized individually by location; individual collieries would be sold, rather than selling the company in its entirety or in regional monopolies.¹⁴⁸ Michael Heseltine, a cabinet member in both the Thatcher and Major governments, was charged with auctioning these collieries and mines, with the successful bidders being announced at a

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ The London Times Staff, “Miners' lives may be at risk - Privatization of British Coal,” *The Times*, June 25, 1988.

¹⁴⁶ Miller, “Ideological Motivations of Privatization in Great Britain Versus Developing Countries,” 399.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Green and Price, “Liberalisation and Divestiture in the UK Energy Sector,” 76.

Conservative party conference in 1995.¹⁴⁹ This form of privatization can be characterized as the simple sale of formerly state-owned assets, as outlined in the Commission on Privatization described earlier in this chapter.¹⁵⁰ The Conservative governments of the United Kingdom during the 1980s and 1990s learned from their prior mistakes in privatization and adapted a new strategy to privatize British Coal, much to the chagrin of labor unions in the mining sector.

III. United States

Similarly to the United Kingdom, the United States experimented with neoliberal reforms due in part to worries over inflation and competition from burgeoning newly industrialized countries, such as Japan. Scholars note that during the first two years of former President Carter's term (1977-1981) "inflation ha[d] been ... creating conflicts within the body politic."¹⁵¹ Inflation had been further exacerbated by the Energy Crisis of the 1970s.¹⁵² Japan's success in the industrial sector caused concern for the competitiveness of the United States going forward.¹⁵³ Similarly to the case study of Great Britain, concerns about competitiveness in the global market and lingering issues of inflation led the United States to begin to experiment with neoliberal reforms in the 1980s.

Former President Ronald Reagan's plans for privatizing aspects of the *estadounidense* federal government have clear connections to the privatization that took place in the United Kingdom during the Conservative governments of Margaret Thatcher and John Major. The

¹⁴⁹ R. Hudson, "The changing geography of the British coal industry: nationalization, privatization and the political economy of energy supply, 1947-97," *Mining Technology* 111, no. 3 (2002): 185.

¹⁵⁰ President's Commission on Privatization, *Privatization: Toward More Effective Government*, 1.

¹⁵¹ Jerry J. Jasinowski, "The First Two Years of the Carter Administration: An Appraisal," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 9, no. 1 (1979): 11-12

¹⁵² Helen Thomson, "Comment: The energy crisis and the spectre of the 1970s," *New Statesman* 150, no. 5640 (2021): 11-12.

¹⁵³ Yoshihide Soeya and Robert D. Eldridge, "The 1970s: Stresses on the Relationship," in *The History Of US-Japan Relations: From Perry to the Present*, ed. Makoto Iokibe, (Springer Nature, 2017): 189.

president's commission on privatization even states that the United Kingdom, under Thatcher's leadership, was the "unquestioned champion" in regards to the implementation of privatization.¹⁵⁴ As the United States lacked a robust series of nationalized industries, the Reagan administration, as opposed to selling state-owned assets, contracted out services provided by the federal government.¹⁵⁵ The Reagan administration, influenced by privatization in the United Kingdom, attempted to recreate similar policies and practices in the United States.

The Reagan administration made use of an ambiguous circular published by the Office Of Management and Budget (OMB) in 1966 in order to further the contracting out of services provided and performed by the federal government. OMB Circular A-76 was revised by the Reagan administration to state that "it [is] ... the general policy of the Government to rely on commercial sources to supply the products and services the Government needs."¹⁵⁶ It is important to note that while the content of this circular is the official policy of the *estadounidense* federal government, it is not law. Whether or not this policy is adhered to is largely controlled by who the president appoints to oversee federal agencies, which is a major difference between parliamentary and presidential systems.

President Reagan and his administration utilized this circular to implement their policy preferences when privatizing government services; the administration's interpretation of this circular was much more rigid than prior administrations.¹⁵⁷ When describing his agenda for his final year in office, former President Reagan argued that the United States ought to contract out services when "opportunities exist to provide better services at lower cost."¹⁵⁸ Similarly to former

¹⁵⁴ Ibid, 4.

¹⁵⁵ Michal Laurie Tingle, "Privatization and the Reagan Administration: Ideology and Application," *Yale Law and Policy Review* 6, no. 1 (1988): 231.

¹⁵⁶ Office of Management and Budget, *Circular No. A-76*, Washington D.C., 1983.

¹⁵⁷ Tingle, "Privatization and the Reagan Administration: Ideology and Application," 233.

¹⁵⁸ Judith Havemann, "Leave Hatch Act Alone, Reagan Tells Congress; Agenda Endorses Drug Tests, Contracting Out," *Washington Post*, January 27, 1988.

Prime Minister Thatcher, former President Reagan also suggests that the power of labor unions in publicly owned corporations and in the civil service has a negative effect on services provided by the *estadounidense* federal government, saying that power had been “usurped from [the people] by the [organized] bureaucrats.”¹⁵⁹

In 1981, the Professional Air Traffic Controllers’ Organization (PATCO) began a strike seeking a new work contract.¹⁶⁰ During the strike, air traffic controllers were quickly replaced by non-union workers, which was made possible due to the system of shop-level, rather than industry-level bargaining in the United States.¹⁶¹ Explaining this decision to replace the workers, former President Reagan stated “the government cannot close down the assembly line. It has to provide without interruption the protective services which are government's reason for being.”¹⁶² In this statement, the former president creates a division between workers in the public and private sectors. He essentially states that if workers wish to unionize in the private sector, that is between the employer and employee, but in the public sector, a third individual is included in the relationship: the taxpayer.

The strike culminated with former President Reagan firing nearly 75 percent of all *estadounidense* air traffic controllers for their involvement in the strike, which was deemed illegal. These fired workers were also barred indefinitely from seeking employment with the federal government. The size and scope of air traffic control in the United States was diminished going forward, with the Federal Aviation Association (FAA) arguing that no new investments in equipment or hiring of additional personnel is necessary.¹⁶³ Some air traffic controllers argued

¹⁵⁹ Michael Round, *Grounded: Reagan and the PATCO Crash*, (Garland Publishing Inc., 1999): 89.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid, 28.

¹⁶¹ Arthur B. Shostak, "PATCO's 1981 Strike: Leadership Coordinates - A Unionist's Perspective," *Labor Studies Journal* 34, no. 2 (2009): 151.

¹⁶² Joseph A. McMartin, *Collision Course : Ronald Reagan, the Air Traffic Controllers, and the Strike That Changed America*, (Oxford University Press, 2011): 290.

¹⁶³ Shostak, "PATCO's 1981 Strike: Leadership Coordinates - A Unionist's Perspective," 152.

that there is a need to hire more personnel, but in response to the PATCO strike of 1981, former President Reagan and the FAA continued to shrink the role of government in the providing of services.¹⁶⁴

The Reagan administration did not just attempt to privatize through the contracting out of government services, it also attempted to sell assets to the private sector. One such asset it sold was federal loans. Towards the end of the former president's tenure, the Reagan administration sold over seven thousand loans which were originally payable to the *estadounidense* federal government to the private sector to be collected, as a means to lessen the budget deficit. These loans included loans for rural development to municipal governments in all states and Puerto Rico.¹⁶⁵ This sale led to increased interest rates for those who utilized these previously federal loans, and allowed the federal government to quickly obtain over a billion dollars.¹⁶⁶ As the United States did not have large nationalized industries like Great Britain, privatization was largely promoted through the contracting out of government services, shrinking of government agencies, and the sale of individual assets, such as loans.

When one thinks of trade liberalization in the context of the United States of America and other North American countries, one most likely first recalls the North American Free Trade Agreement, or NAFTA for short. While negotiations of NAFTA had been ongoing since the 1980s, former Democratic President William Clinton signed the treaty into effect in 1993.¹⁶⁷ Clinton recognized that the agreement would likely not be accepted by key constituencies of his party, such as labor unions and environmentalists, and attempted to frame NAFTA as not only a means to promote higher environmental and labor standards in participating countries, but

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Ron Scherer, "US selling loans to cut '88 deficit," *Christian Science Monitor*, August 28, 1987.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Karen Hansen-Kuhn, "Clinton, NAFTA and the Politics of U.S. Trade," *NACLA Report on the Americas* 31, no. 2 (1997): 22.

support for the agreement was largely due to its ability to liberalize trade on the continent.¹⁶⁸ The neoliberal economic policies of the Reagan administration seemed to be non-negotiable for even Democratic presidents following Reagan's tenure as president.

The push to liberalize the trade policies of the United States began under the presidency of Ronald Reagan. The former president was a proponent of free trade, even stating that "the freer the flow of trade, the stronger the tides for human progress and peace among nations."¹⁶⁹ In the same speech, Reagan further argued that the United States ought to utilize its influence in the IMF and World Bank to promote the liberalization of trade in what he deemed "lesser developed countries" in order to increase the United States's competitiveness in global markets.¹⁷⁰ Liberalized trade practices had been supported by politicians in the United States since the Reagan administration, demonstrating that support for free trade as an official policy of the *estadounidense* federal government had been developing for years prior to the signing of NAFTA.

NAFTA is the clearest example of the liberalization of trade on the North American continent. The free trade agreement states that it seeks to "eliminate barriers to trade in, and facilitate the cross-border movement of goods and services between the territories of the Parties," which include the United States, Mexico and Canada.¹⁷¹ ¹⁷² The parties of the agreement further agree to progressively lower current tariffs and duties on goods originating in other countries which are party to the agreement, until tariffs and duties are eliminated altogether amongst the parties.¹⁷³ The agreement does give the parties the right to exempt some products from the

¹⁶⁸ Ibid, 22-23.

¹⁶⁹ Ronald Reagan "Remarks at a White House Meeting With Business and Trade Leaders," speech, Washington DC, September 23, 1985.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ NAFTA, Article 102, Section 1a.

¹⁷² It is interesting to note that the agreement does not include the free movement of people amongst the parties, as the agreement for a European common market did.

¹⁷³ NAFTA, Article 302.

agreement, which are outlined at the end of the agreement.¹⁷⁴ While NAFTA greatly liberalized the movement of trade in North America, it was not as far-reaching as the European common market.

IV. Argentina

While the United States and Great Britain began to privatize largely due to their own policy and ideological preferences, neoliberal reforms were largely imposed on Argentina as a condition imposed during negotiations by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB). Argentina was greatly affected by what is now known as the Latin American Debt Crisis, wherein Latin American countries were loaned large sums of money by foreign investors in an attempt to spur economic growth and development in Latin America.^{175 176} These foreign investors overextended their lines of credit to what they termed as “lesser developed countries” and suffered large losses when the borrowing states could not promptly repay their debts.¹⁷⁷ As a result, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the United States became the “lenders of last resort” to many Latin American countries.¹⁷⁸ The inability of Latin American countries, such as Argentina, to repay the overextended loans of foreign investors and corporations contributed to the Latin American Debt Crisis of the 1980s, which in turn contributed to the extended influence of the United States and nongovernmental organizations, such as the IMF, over fiscal policy in Latin American countries.

¹⁷⁴ NAFTA, Annexes I-VII.

¹⁷⁵ Jessica W. Miller, “Solving the Latin American Debt Crisis,” *University of Pennsylvania Journal of International Economic Law* 22, no. 3, (2001): 677.

¹⁷⁶ One must also note that “developed” nations also loaned money in order to have influence in Latin American affairs.

¹⁷⁷ Theodore Allegaert, “Recalcitrant Creditors against Debtor Nations, or How to Play Dart,” *Minnesota Journal of Global Trade* 6, no. 2 (1997): 429.

¹⁷⁸ James L. Dietz, “The Latin American Economies and Debt: Institutional and Structural Response to Crisis,” *Journal of Economic Issues* 21, no. 2, (1987): 827.

As mentioned earlier in this thesis, the United States and other multilateral organizations agreed to many conditions for continuing to provide assistance to Latin American countries; these conditions have been referred to as the Washington Consensus by economists and political scientists.¹⁷⁹ This set of economic reforms, such as privatization and the liberalization of trade, was seen as a condition for NGOs and countries such as the United States to continue to loan money to Latin American countries; while the debt crisis affected the global economy, economists have also noted that it would be strange for those who continue to loan money to not expect financial reforms from their debtors in this context.¹⁸⁰ Unlike in Great Britain and the United States, neoliberal reforms were imposed on the Argentine federal government's fiscal policy.

While privatization was not necessarily in alignment with the Justicialist Party's ideals, the party had little choice but to accept privatization as a term of doing business with the United States and financing their government. Prior to the privatization efforts during the Menem administration, Argentina had a vast network of state-owned enterprises, ranging from telecommunications, to film and television, to resource extraction and energy production.^{181 182} This massive network of state-owned corporations was expanded by not only governments controlled by the JP, but also by governments controlled by more economically right-wing Argentine parties.¹⁸³ Nationalization and state-owned enterprises were accepted by all major Argentine parties as the industrial framework of the country from the early 1900s until the 1990s,

¹⁷⁹ John Williamson, "The Strange History of the Washington Consensus," *Journal of Post Keynesian Economics* 27, no. 2 (2004): 195.

¹⁸⁰ Williamson, "Differing Interpretations of the Washington Consensus," (lecture).

¹⁸¹ Carolina Rocha, *Argentine Cinema and National Identity (1966-1976)*, (Liverpool University Press, 2018): 27.

¹⁸² Leslie Elliott Armijo, "Menem's Mania: The Timing of Privatization in Argentina," *Southwestern Journal of Law and Trade in the Americas* 1 (1994): 2

¹⁸³ *Ibid*, 3.

and the privatizations of Menem's administration.¹⁸⁴ The network of state-owned industries to be privatized in Argentina was vast and included many major industries.

While some state-owned corporations managed to survive attempts of privatization (largely due to pressure from labor unions), many others were successfully privatized during the Menem administration, particularly those in the resource extraction industry.¹⁸⁵ Large state-owned enterprises which had once been some of the largest employers in Argentina, were sold to private investors, including *Aerolineas argentinas*, a state-owned airline, as well as energy production firms, particularly those servicing Buenos Aires, Argentina's largest city.¹⁸⁶ These sales were incredibly lucrative for the Argentine government, which gained \$4.6 billion US dollars in revenues from the privatization process, as well as converted \$7.1 billion US dollars of debt.^{187 188} While the process of privatization was certainly not an ideal policy for the JP, it allowed for the Argentine economy to become more productive and for the Argentine government to begin to manage its prior debts.

It is also important to note that the government which imposed this privatization was not conservative in nature. The Justicialist party, under the leadership of Carlos Menem, was described as going through a "neoliberal revolution" from the top down during the 1990s; neoliberalism was being promoted by party leadership in a party that had long been characterized as a populist labor-based party.¹⁸⁹ In fact, Menem had to carefully balance implementation of

¹⁸⁴ Julio C. Cueto-Rua, "Privatization in Argentina," *Southwestern Journal of Law and Trade in the Americas* 1 (1994): 64

¹⁸⁵ Isabella Alcañiz, "Defeating Welfare Retrenchment: Privatization and Conflict in the Argentine Nuclear Energy Sector," *New Political Science* 27, no. 3 (2005): 331.

¹⁸⁶ Elliott Armijo, "Menem's Mania: The Timing of Privatization in Argentina," *Southwestern Journal of Law and Trade in the Americas*, 3-4, 17.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid*, 17.

¹⁸⁸ Alongside these immediate investments in the Argentine government, private investors promised up to an additional \$11 billion in future investments in Argentine industry. See cit. 40.

¹⁸⁹ Levitsky, "An 'Organised Disorganisation': Informal Organisation and the Persistence of Local Party Structures in Argentine Peronism," 32.

neoliberal reforms with his party's relationship with Argentine labor unions and the Argentine working class, which led to his party's meddling in union affairs to promote labor leaders who promoted the reforms his administration put forward.¹⁹⁰ Privatization in Argentina occurred during the administration of a populist, rather than conservative party leader, which affected how privatization was implemented.

The liberalization of trade in Argentina faced many internal challenges, from authoritarian regimes to pressures from the Justicialist party's key constituency, organized labor.¹⁹¹ From the 1950s to 1980s, Argentina faced intense internal power struggles, which resulted in three separate military juntas being formed between 1955 and 1976.¹⁹² ¹⁹³ During periods of military dictatorship, economic experts who supported the liberalization of trade in Argentina failed to effectively implement policy changes that would promote such practices, as they feared the political instability and recurring political violence which plagued the country.¹⁹⁴ While there was the appetite amongst those in government positions during the later military dictatorships in Argentina for the liberalization of trade in Argentina, such changes in policy never came to fruition.

After the fall of the military dictatorship and the transition to democracy in 1983, Raul Alfonsín, a member of the Radical Civil Union party, a socialist, but not Peronist political party, was elected president and sought to enact policies which would liberalize trade in Argentina.¹⁹⁵ Alfonsín faced immense backlash from Peronist trade unions for pursuing such policies,

¹⁹⁰ Bensusán, "Organizing Workers in Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Mexico: The Authoritarian-Corporatist Legacy and Old Institutional Designs in a New Context," 140.

¹⁹¹ Judith A. Teichman, *The Politics of Freeing Markets in Latin America: Chile, Argentina, and Mexico*, (University of North Carolina Press, 2001): 97.

¹⁹² Jerry Dávila, *Dictatorship in South America*. (John Wiley & Sons Ltd., 2013): 112-113.

¹⁹³ It would be remiss to not mention the role of the United States in promoting and legitimizing such political violence not just in Argentina, but in Latin America at large. For further reading on this topic, see cit. 56.

¹⁹⁴ Teichman, *The Politics of Freeing Markets in Latin America: Chile, Argentina, and Mexico*, 98.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid, 102.

particularly in his attempt at privatizing the Argentine banking industry.¹⁹⁶ Non-peronist political officials faced immense pushback and challenges from peronist labor unions and labor leaders when they attempted to implement neoliberal policies, which labor unions viewed as inconsistent with their policy preferences.

One can see a shift, however, in the reaction of labor unions when Justicialist president Carlos Menem instituted policies which favored free trade. While labor leaders did not necessarily agree with the neoliberal policies of Menem, and often did temper the implementation of such reforms, organized labor still remained a loyal base for the Justicialist party during the Menem years, likely due to the practice of patronage relationships within the party.¹⁹⁷ Argentine reactions to neoliberal reforms largely were reliant on the political party of the politician who attempted to enact them.

The most concrete example of trade liberalization in the 1980s and 1990s in Argentina is the creation of MERCOSUR, a free trade agreement between several South American countries, in the Southern Cone region of the continent.¹⁹⁸ While the agreement was first discussed between Argentina and neighboring Brazil during the Alfonsín administration, it was further expanded upon during the Menem administration.¹⁹⁹ Scholars argue that Menem, similarly to Thatcher, viewed a free trade agreement in the Southern Cone as a means to make Argentina, and the region as a whole, competitive in a global economy dominated by the United States.²⁰⁰ While in the past, some have proposed transforming the Southern Cone into a common market like that of

¹⁹⁶ Ibid, 108-110.

¹⁹⁷ Levitsky, "An 'Organised Disorganisation': Informal Organisation and the Persistence of Local Party Structures in Argentine Peronism," 68-69.

¹⁹⁸ Monica Hirst, "Mercosur's Complex Political Agenda," in *Mercosur: Regional Integration, World Markets*, ed. Riordan Roett, (Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1999): 35.

¹⁹⁹ Edward C. Snyder, "The Menem Revolution in Argentina: Progress toward a Hemispheric Free Trade Area," *Texas International Law Journal* 29, no. 1 (1994): 115.

²⁰⁰ Lia Valls Pereira, "Toward the Common Market of the South: Mercosur's Origins, Evolution, and Challenges," in *Mercosur: Regional Integration, World Markets*, ed. Riordan Roett, (Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1999): 9.

the European Community, such proposals did not come to fruition, with MERCOSUR remaining a trade agreement similar to NAFTA.^{201 202}

V. Conclusion

When analyzing how privatization reforms in the three case studies were implemented, one notices a recurring pattern; reforms are similar in all three case studies, but evolve to fit the political and economic context of the state. While in Great Britain and the United States economic and ideological arguments were made by Conservative prime ministers and Republican presidents for privatization, such reforms were largely imposed on Argentina as a condition for loans by the United States and NGOs such as the IMF and World Bank. While Great Britain and Argentina had nationalized industries and services they could easily sell to the private sector, the United States lacked nationalized industry and instead privatized by contracting out work and services provided by executive level departments, utilizing an ambiguous Circular created by the OMB. While privatization was promoted in all three case studies, it was enacted through different means and for different purposes.

More similarities can be found in how and why the three states pursued the liberalization of trade. Both Great Britain and Argentina viewed entering free trade and common market agreements as means to gain a competitive advantage in a globalized market dominated by large economies, such as that of the United States or China. Both the United States and Argentina chose to enter free trade agreements rather than create a common market, unlike Great Britain which entered a common market with a variety of countries on the European continent. While the European common market and MERCOSUR allow for not only the free movement of goods

²⁰¹ Ibid. 17.

²⁰² Snyder, "The Menem Revolution in Argentina: Progress toward a Hemispheric Free Trade Area," 116.

but also the free movement of people, NAFTA makes no such provision for the movement of people with the states which are party to the agreement.²⁰³ All three case studies liberalized trade through trade agreements with neighboring countries, but for different reasons and to different extents.

²⁰³ Diego Acosta,. “Free Movement in South America: The Emergence of an Alternative Model?,” *Migration Policy Institute*, Migration Policy Institute, August 23, 2016.
<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/free-movement-south-america-emergence-alternative-model>

Chapter 4: Labor after Reform: Decline and Realignment

I. Introduction

This chapter seeks to demonstrate the response of both labor unions and their traditional allies of the Justicialist, Labour, and Democratic parties to the changing economic conditions that followed the implementation of neoliberal reforms. The three factors that determine, as I have argued, the relative strength of labor unions, relationship between party and labor unions, fundraising relationships between party and labor unions, and levels of corporatism will guide the analysis. Further, this chapter analyzes a period in which all the parties which traditionally supported labor unions were in power, after the neoliberal reforms of conservative parties in the 1980s and 1990s.²⁰⁴ The response of the parties to the reforms once in power can be beneficial to understand as it demonstrates whether the parties accepted the neoliberal frameworks of prior governments, or whether they sought to do away with the prior framework and create a pro-labor union framework.

II. United Kingdom

While in Argentina the steps of implementing neoliberal reforms began under a government controlled by the traditionally labor-based JP, in the United Kingdom this process began under the Conservative party. While the Conservative Party began this process, the Labour Party began to implement similar reforms during the governments of former Prime Minister Anthony “Tony” Blair. Labour during this period became to be known as “New Labour,” in reference to the party’s shift to the economic right.²⁰⁵ The Conservative governments of Thatcher

²⁰⁴ While the Justicialist Party was in power during the period of reform in Argentina, one must remember these reforms were implemented at the urging of conservative governments in other countries. See footnote 158.

²⁰⁵ Anthony F. Heath, Roger M. Jowell, and John K. Curtice, *The Rise of New Labour Party Policies and Voter Choices* (Oxford University Press, 2001): 2.

and Major marked the longest continuous period of one party maintaining governments in Britain, which many in the Labour party viewed as a sign that the party had to rethink its electoral and economic strategies.²⁰⁶ Many within the country and within the Labour Party “accepted some elements of Thatcherism as a regulatory framework.”²⁰⁷ The Labour Party, which traditionally pursued policies beneficial to labor unions, began to also implement neoliberal reforms upon seeing the success of Thatcher and Major’s Conservative governments.

The Labour Party benefited from labor unions’ membership providing a stable and robust voting bloc for most of the twentieth century, but some questioned the power which organized labor had over the party’s official policies and goals. Beginning in the 1970s, some questioned whether labor leaders were “immune to the democratic control of their members” and that this perceived unchecked power, in conjunction with leaders’ ability to affect the Labour Party’s agenda, was creating an untenable and unstable atmosphere within the party.²⁰⁸ During the 1980s, some Labour politicians further questioned the role of labor unions within the political, particularly electoral, sphere. While members of labor unions and residents of council housing, two loyal Labour constituencies, used to form a large enough plurality for Labour to win parliamentary elections, former Prime Minister Thatcher’s policies reduced the number of voters within this group.²⁰⁹ These constituencies did continue to overwhelmingly support the Labour Party, but did not provide the party with a majority or plurality of the vote.²¹⁰ Simply, Labour’s

²⁰⁶ Ibid, 1.

²⁰⁷ Ralf Hoffrogge, “Engineering New Labour: Trade unions, social partnership, and the stabilization of British neoliberalism, 1985–2000,” *Journal of Labor and Society* 21 (2018): 310.

²⁰⁸ Stephen Meredith, *Labours old and new: The parliamentary right of the British Labour Party 1970-1979 and the roots of New Labour*, ed. John Callaghan, Steven Fielding, and Steve Ludlam, (Manchester University Press, 2008): 116-117.

²⁰⁹ Heath, Jowell, and Curtice, *The Rise of New Labour Party Policies and Voter Choices*, 10-11.

²¹⁰ Andrew Russell “New Labour and the electorate,” in *New Labour in power*, ed. David Coates and Peter Lawler, (Manchester University Press, 2000): 26, 29.

former base had been greatly reduced by the neoliberal reforms of the Conservative party, and Labour had to begin to experiment with new means to attract prospective voters.

Labour's rightward shift under former Prime Minister Blair proved successful as an electoral strategy. This shift allowed Labour to form a majority government following the 1997 parliamentary elections.²¹¹ The party, which during the governments of Thatcher had been written off as the "party ... of innercities and the old industrial North," became competitive even in traditionally Conservative regions, such as suburban and rural areas in the South of England.²¹² While this strategy managed to attract new voters to Labour's ranks, it left many earlier supporters of the party confused, with some even stating that the shift to neoliberal policies was "heretical," given the party's history and prior agendas.²¹³ Labour's rightward shift allowed the party to become competitive for national elections, but alienated many members of its former base, particularly members of labor unions.

New Labour adopted many pro-business stances, rather than the traditional pro-worker and socialist stances the party had taken in the past. It sought to court traditionally Conservative voters while maintaining its traditional base by attempting to forge a middle ground between the nationalization policies of "Old Labour" and the Thatcherite desire of total privatization. Former Prime Minister Blair is quoted as saying "[Old Labour] would have sought state control of the industry. The Conservative right is content to leave all to the market."²¹⁴ The party simultaneously promoted the private sector, by supporting and subsidizing high-tech startups, while also promoting labor unions by allowing for union recognition by simple majority vote

²¹¹ Anthony King, "The Night Itself," in *New Labour Triumphs: Britain at the Polls*, (Chatham House Publishers, 1998): 4.

²¹² Ibid, 4-5.

²¹³ Colin Hay, *The political economy of New Labour*, (Manchester University Press, 1999): 183.

²¹⁴ David Coates, "New Labour's industrial and employment policy," in *New Labour in power*, ed. David Coates and Peter Lawler, (Manchester University Press, 2000): 123.

across an industry.²¹⁵ Labour continued to support labor unions, but also began to implement and advocate for pro-business policies.

Even as Labour began to accept and implement further neoliberal reforms, some unions continued to unequivocally support the party, as they viewed the party as the best means to access political power within the corporatist system. The Amalgamated Engineering Union (AEU) and Electrical, Electronic, Telecommunications and Plumbing Union (EETPU) were two unions affiliated with Labour which embraced and quickly adapted to the changes which had been made.²¹⁶ Such unions of course did not wholeheartedly support many of the neoliberal reforms implemented during Blair's governments, but viewed the Labour Party and former Prime Minister Blair as much more amenable to their goals than former Prime Ministers Thatcher and Major, whom the unions viewed as wholly antagonistic.²¹⁷ One could say that such unions viewed the Labour Party as the proverbial "lesser of two evils" amongst the two largest major English political parties. Even though the Blair government did not necessarily enact many of the policy preferences of labor unions, a government controlled by the Labour Party allowed labor unions some access to political power.

Under the leadership of former Prime Minister Blair, Labour also began to seek new fundraising sources. While labor unions continue to make contributions to the party, some in the party began to believe that the business sector could prove to be a successful fundraising partner.²¹⁸ The party appointed a "business relations unit" head and began to entertain lobbyists and donors from the private business sector, a shift from the party's prior fundraising habits.²¹⁹ In

²¹⁵ Ibid, 125.

²¹⁶ Hoffrogge, "Engineering New Labour: Trade unions, social partnership, and the stabilization of British neoliberalism, 1985–2000," 301.

²¹⁷ Ibid. 313.

²¹⁸ Heidenheimer, "Major Modes of Raising, Spending and Controlling Political Funds During and Between Election Campaigns," 5.

²¹⁹ Phil Harris, "Who Pays the Piper?: The Funding of Political Campaigning in the UK, US and the Consequences for Political Marketing and Public Affairs," *Journal of Political Marketing* 1, no 2-3 (2002): 96.

the past, the Conservative Party gained much more money than Labour utilizing a similar strategy, so some in the Labour Party viewed this method as a more effective means of raising funds.²²⁰ Organized labor remained a major portion of Labour's fundraising sources, but during the governments of former Prime Minister Blair, Labour sought new donors, particularly those in the business sector.

One could argue that this shift in donor base also accounts for New Labour's policy shift as well. In order to maintain its financial relations with both labor unions and the business community, the party had to appeal to both constituencies, while ensuring they alienated neither. This, of course, could be quite difficult, as the interests of workers and their employers can and do often conflict.²²¹ The new financial relations between Labour and the business community affected the traditional relationship between the Labour party and organized labor in Great Britain.

III. United States

Many similarities exist between how the relationships and fundraising patterns of the Labour and Democratic parties shifted following neoliberal reforms enacted by the Conservative and Republican parties. Scholars have noted that former President William "Bill" Clinton of the United States and former Prime Minister Blair of the United Kingdom shared political consultants as they both attempted to revitalize their respective parties.²²² Both parties had been in the minority in government throughout the 1980s and both leaders viewed their role in the party as that of a transformer; in order to make their parties competitive, strategy and agendas

²²⁰ Ibid, 95-96.

²²¹ Coates, "New Labour's industrial and employment policy," 123.

²²² Colin Campbell and Bert A. Rockman, "Third Way leadership, old way government: Blair, Clinton and the power to govern," *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 3, no. 1 (2001): 36.

had to be rethought.²²³ Further, both parties attempted to define a “third way” between the neoliberal route of Thatcher and Reagan and the older Keynesian policies of the Labour and Democratic parties.²²⁴ The Democratic Party’s shift to the right is in many ways similar to the rightward shift of the Labour Party.

While most within the party agreed that changes had to be made in order to become more competitive, there were vast differences in opinions on how that goal ought to be achieved. Some argued that the party ought to only focus on learning from its electoral mistakes during the Reagan era, while others, including former President Clinton, argued that the Democratic Party had to be reinvented so as to not “[go] out of existence.”²²⁵ These divisions were exacerbated by the party’s choice to pursue pro-business policies, such as public investment in private enterprises, a remarkably pro-business policy. The party also implemented policies which were favorable to labor unions and workers to maintain a delicate balance in appealing to both constituencies, such as a promise for the implementation of a progressive tax code.²²⁶ Just as Labour in the United Kingdom attempted to balance pro-worker legislation with pro-business legislation, so did the Democratic Party.

As mentioned in the prior chapter, the ratification of NAFTA under former President Clinton can be seen as the cornerstone of neoliberal reforms in the United States. Many union members saw the promise of entering NAFTA by a Democratic presidential candidate as a betrayal and a sign that the party had shifted from viewing organized labor as its key constituency to viewing the business sector as crucial.²²⁷ Further, many members of labor unions,

²²³ Ibid, 36-37.

²²⁴ Grazia Ietto-Gillies, “Clinton and Blair: The Political Economy of the Third Way,” *Review of Social Economy* 68, no.3 (2010): 371.

²²⁵ Jon F. Hale, “The Making of the New Democrats,” *Political Science Quarterly* 110, no. 2 (1995): 219.

²²⁶ Ibid, 223.

²²⁷ Garrett Glasgow, “Evidence of Group-Based Economic Voting: NAFTA and Union Households in the 1992 U.S. Presidential Election,” *Political Research Quarterly* 58, no. 3 (2005): 431.

particularly white members of labor unions, voted for Independent candidate Ross Perot over Democratic candidate Bill Clinton in the 1992 presidential election. Nearly sixty percent of members of labor unions who were concerned about job loss due to NAFTA voted for Perot.²²⁸ Union members viewed the Democratic acceptance of NAFTA as a betrayal of their loyalty to the Democratic party.

Many labor unions in the United States did not just voice concerns over the ratification of NAFTA, many actively organized opposition to the agreement. Approximately seventy two percent of the membership of the United Auto Workers (UAW), an estadounidense labor union which organizes in the automobile manufacturing industry, stated that they would be willing to volunteer their time to fight against NAFTA and for what they perceived as “better trade policy.”²²⁹ Concerned workers and other individuals in the United States formed organizations such as the Citizen's Trade Campaign (CTC) and the Alliance for Responsible Trade (ART), which had the unitary goal of preventing the ratification of NAFTA.²³⁰ While many members of labor unions campaigned against NAFTA, the AFL-CIO merely officially opposed the agreement, but did not actively engage in the opposition to the agreement.²³¹ Workers in the United States did not have to consolidate political power through established channels, such as the AFL-CIO or Democratic Party in order to oppose neoliberal reforms, due to the lack of corporatist traditions within the country.

Further, the *estadounidense* pluralist tradition in combination with its presidential system creates an environment in which loyalty to political parties is not often valued; voters tend to vote for candidates as individuals, not necessarily based on their party affiliation. As of April of

²²⁸Ibid, 433.

²²⁹Michael Dreiling and Ian Robinson. “Union Responses to NAFTA in the US and Canada: Explaining Intra- and International Variation,” *Mobilization: An International Journal* 3, no. 2 (1998): 74.

²³⁰ Ibid. 176.

²³¹ Ibid. 179.

2022, only about 56 percent of registered voters identify themselves as a member of one of the two major parties: Democratic and Republican. About 42 percent of registered voters consider themselves Independent.²³² It is important to note that this date merely asks which party voters most identify with, not whether they are a member of the party. The pluralist traditions of the United States have led to a system where voters are averse to identifying with a particular party.

Primary sources from the period before the 1992 presidential election demonstrate that Democratic Party candidates had begun to court the business world for donations. Articles mention Democratic candidates' attempts to woo financial support from wealthy business people, from supermarket chain owners to Hollywood producers.²³³ Articles also mention how Democrats were attempting to manage a delicate balance between donations from those in the business world and "small contributions from labor ... and farm groups."²³⁴ Just as the Democratic Party under the leadership of former President Clinton attempted to balance its policy preferences amongst the desires of what it viewed as key constituencies, so did the party attempt to maintain balance in its financial contributions from those key constituencies.

IV. Argentina

In Argentina, nationalization and state-owned enterprises were accepted by all major Argentine parties from the early 1900s until the 1990s as the industrial framework of the country, so the privatization which occurred under Menem was quite a radical change.²³⁵ Some of the largest employers in the Argentine economy suddenly shifted from being state-owned to owned

²³² "Party Affiliation," *Gallup*, April 19, 2022. <https://news.gallup.com/poll/15370/party-affiliation.aspx>

²³³ Douglas A. Harbrecht and Paula Dwyer, "Guess What Else the Democrats Don't Have Yet: Money," *BusinessWeek*, September 23 1991.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*

²³⁵ Cueto-Rua, "Privatization in Argentina," 64

by private investors.²³⁶ Clearly, this shift from relying on the public sector had great effects on the economy and labor market of Argentina, and in fact was a major revenue source for the government.²³⁷ Menem's decision to attempt privatization was a major departure from prior Argentine industrial policy.

Therefore, just as one cannot understand the origins of the Justicialist party without understanding the influence of Juan and Eva Perón over it, one cannot understand the state of the modern Justicialist party without understanding the legacy of Carlos Menem, president of the Argentine republic from 1989 to 1999.²³⁸ As outlined in the chapter, Menem instituted a variety of neoliberal economic reforms, which would come to have drastic effects on the ways in which labor unions interact with the JP, and on the strength of labor unions. These reforms challenged the traditional role of the JP as the party of organized labor in Argentina, as many went against the interests of labor unions' membership. Neoliberal reforms have altered the strength of labor unions even in Argentina, where labor unions, since the 1940s have held significant power over the political process.

Argentina's presidential system impacted the manner in which neoliberal reforms were implemented. The Argentine constitution grants vast executive powers to the office of the presidency, which can allow for legislation to be made without the consultation of the legislature.²³⁹ To implement many of the neoliberal reforms, which many members of Menem's party did not support, former President Menem utilized this tool to his advantage. From the implementation of the current Argentina constitution in 1835 to the Menem administration,

²³⁶ Elliott Armijo, "Menem's Mania: The Timing of Privatization in Argentina," 17.

²³⁷ Ibid, 17.

²³⁸ John Otis, "Carlos Menem, flamboyant Argentine president who tried to tame inflation, dies at 90," 2021.

²³⁹ Tanya Kapoor, "Cycling to Economic Freedom: An Analysis of Privatization, Nationalization, and Expropriation in Argentina, Mexico, and the United Kingdom," *Michigan State International Law Review* 24, no. 1 (2015): 12.

presidents of the republic had only issued thirty five executive decrees. Menem utilized executive decree extensively, having issued 336 during his terms as president.²⁴⁰ This unique power of the Argentine executive branch allowed for policy, including some of the neoliberal reforms of the Menem presidency, that may not have passed a vote in the legislature, to be enacted.

Under Menem, the basic ways in which labor unions interacted with the JP were vastly altered. As many of the mechanisms linking the JP and organized labor were informally, it was quite easy for Menem to revoke these means of access when labor unions did not support neoliberal reforms.²⁴¹ One such system is the *tercio*, in which labor unions were allowed to name one third of all JP candidates running for office each election. Some argue that the *tercio* has been facilitated by the corporatist system which has existed in Argentina, giving organized labor a legitimized means to access political power. As this system was not formalized and lacked an enforcing mechanism other than tradition, the JP, led by Menem, simply did not utilize the system when they recognized that labor unions did not support their proposals.²⁴² While organized labor had long been a major constituent within the JP, the abolition of the *tercio* system altered the special relationship that had existed between the two.

These changes in the JP's attitude towards labor unions had measurable effects on the influence of labor unions within the party. A study which polled major Argentine labor unions about their influence in the party during the 1990s shows that about sixty percent of national labor unions polled stated that their involvement in the PJ's affairs declined since the early 1980s.²⁴³ Almost all unions polled, however, stated that they intended to continue to support the

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ Levitsky, "Crisis, Party Adaptation, and Regime Stability in Argentina: The Case of Peronism, 1989-1995," 446.

²⁴² Levitsky, "An 'Organised Disorganisation': Informal Organisation and the Persistence of Local Party Structures in Argentine Peronism," 456.

²⁴³ Ibid, 2003, 23.

JP in the future, despite this change in the relationship between labor unions and the party.²⁴⁴

This demonstrates a commitment to the party which does not seem to have been reciprocated by the party. Many largely attribute this loyalty to the personality of Menem, who is described by scholars as a “charismatic” leader.²⁴⁵ While the JP is less willing to meet labor unions’ demands than in the past, labor unions still view the party as their means to institutional power in a highly corporatist society.

Menem’s reforms even led to schisms within the Confederación general del trabajo, or CGT, one of Argentina’s largest confederations of labor unions, led particularly by workers in the state sector.^{246 247} State sector workers were largely against the measures enacted by Menem, as the effects of privatization were largely concentrated in state-owned enterprises.²⁴⁸ Workers in other sectors were more likely to simply accept such reforms as they were less affected by the consequences of privatization. The schisms between different factions within the union led to arguments over internal structure and representation within the labor union. These issues were largely handled in internal organizational review sessions.²⁴⁹ Union members and union leaders who supported the reforms of Menem were victorious in maintaining power, as they viewed accepting the neoliberal reforms of the Menem administration as painful, but necessary concessions if labor unions in Argentina were determined to maintain a close proximity to political power, in the form of the JP.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

²⁴⁵ Murillo, *Labor Unions, Partisan Coalitions, and Market Reforms in Latin America*, 137.

²⁴⁶ Raúl L. Madrid, “Labouring against Neoliberalism: Unions and Patterns of Reform in Latin America,” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 35, no. 1 (2003): 72.

²⁴⁷ Juan Montes Cató and Patricia Ventrìci, “Labor Union Renewal in Argentina: Democratic Revitalization from the Base,” *Latin American Perspectives* 38, no. 6 (2011): 39.

²⁴⁸ Ibid, 70.

²⁴⁹ Mónica B. Gordillo, “Normalización y democratización sindical: Repensando los ‘80,” *Desarrollo económico* 53 no. 209/210 (2013): 162-163.

²⁵⁰ Murillo, *Labor Unions, Partisan Coalitions, and Market Reforms in Latin America*, 183.

Changes have been made since the 1990s to Argentina's federal campaign finance law, which have affected organized labor's fundraising for the JP. While the working relationship between labor unions and the JP has certainly been altered by the evolution of the party, labor unions continue to support the party financially. Mandatory union dues, collected from workers' pay by their local union, are used to make contributions to the JP.²⁵¹ After a formerly rather obscure and unknown candidate self-funded a deluge of advertisements in mass media, the Argentine legislature promoted and passed measures which shifted federal election financing to a more publicly funded system.²⁵² While the system prioritizes public funding for election campaigns, it does allow for some contributions from natural persons or legal persons, such as a labor union.²⁵³ While this campaign finance reform was meant to prevent individuals from mounting expensive self-funded campaigns, it also prevents labor unions from exerting overwhelming financial influence in the funding of election campaigns.

V. Conclusions

All three case studies saw traditionally pro-labor parties accept the framework of neoliberalism. The PJ accepted this framework as a condition for loans, while the Democratic and Labour parties accepted this framework as a possible means to evade total political irrelevancy, following devastating electoral losses. All three parties attempted to accept the framework in a calculated way; they attempted to alienate neither their old constituency of organized labor nor the new constituency of business to which they wanted to appeal. Similarly, all three parties attempted to maintain a balance between the contributions of these two

²⁵¹ Bensusán, "Organizing Workers in Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Mexico: The Authoritarian-Corporatist Legacy and Old Institutional Designs in a New Context," 159.

²⁵² Maria Page and Julia Pomares, "The Move Toward State-Run Mass Media Electoral Campaigns in Latin America: An Evaluation of the First Implementation in the 2011 Argentine Presidential Elections." *Election Law Journal* 11, no. 4 (2012): 534.

²⁵³ Ibid.

constituencies, erasing organized labor's prior role as main fundraising source. Labor unions in Argentina and the United Kingdom largely accepted these changes, as the corporatist systems within those countries made the JP and Labour Party their most viable means to wield political power. Labor unions in the United States however, were able to create organizations which attempted to counter the economic policy changes of the Democratic party and even supported independent candidates, likely due to the lack of corporatism in the United States political system. All three parties accepted a neoliberal framework, but labor unions' responses in the three case studies differed, likely due to the influence of corporatism.

Chapter 5: Conclusions

The three factors which are analyzed within this thesis (corporatism, relations between labor unions and political parties, and the fundraising sources of political parties) can be described both before and after the reforms of the 1980s and 1990s in qualitative terms, using **Tables 2 and 3**:

Post WWII to 1980s

	Corporatism	Relations between Union and Party	Financial Ties between Union and Party	Union Strength
United Kingdom	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	Strong
United States	LOW	HIGH (Informal)	HIGH	Less Strong
Argentina	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	Strong

Post 1980s-1990s

	Corporatism	Relations between Union and Party	Financial Ties between Union and Party	Union Strength
United Kingdom	LOW	HIGH	LOW	Weak
United States	LOW	LOW	LOW	Very Weak
Argentina	HIGH	LOW	LOW	Weak

It appears that the United States lacking corporatist traditions prior to the reforms has had an impact on the strength of *estadounidense* unions. While unions in Argentina and the United Kingdom are certainly weaker in the period after reform, it appears that possessing all three characteristics prior to reform allowed unions there to maintain a relatively more powerful

standing. Simply, labor unions in the other case studies had more defensive barriers than *estadounidense* unions, as they existed in contexts in which all three factors were present.

It is of course necessary to recognize some of the limitations of this study. While some literature regarding the financing of Argentine elections and political parties exists, it is not as robust as it could be. Further research in this regard is certainly necessary. Further, this study focuses on labor unions in the private sector. More research on whether these factors impact the strength of public sector unions, particularly those unions in industries unimpacted or less impacted by the neoliberal reforms of the 1980s and 1990s would be interesting and offer a more complete understanding of the factors which influence union power.

If *estadounidense* labor unions seek to rebuild their strength, the analysis contained within this thesis would suggest that they ought to foster deeper and much more formal relations with a political party, presumably the Democratic Party, as well as increase their donations to the aforementioned party. These two paths seem the most realistic means to regain power, as shifts between corporatist and pluralist systems tend to occur in a more top-down manner, often through structural changes to government and election systems. Fostering specifically formal rather than informal relations with the Democratic Party appears to be the most stable means to regain power, as formal relations are less easy to abolish. As seen in Argentina, informal systems, such as the *tercio*, can simply be disregarded if they are no longer deemed necessary or beneficial by the political party.²⁵⁴ *Estadounidense* labor unions can attempt to regain and rebuild their power by focusing on their ties, both formally and financially, with the Democratic Party.

²⁵⁴ Levitsky, "An 'Organised Disorganisation': Informal Organisation and the Persistence of Local Party Structures in Argentine Peronism," 456.

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