NORTH DAKOTA NONINTERVENTIONISTS AND CORPORATE CULTURE

by David A. Horowitz

"It required four generations and two world wars for the Middle West to come to some understanding of what foreign policy is about," a political scientist blandly noted in the year 1960. The epoch between 1945 and 1965 witnessed a near-unanimous commitment by American scholars and intellectuals to the doctrines of internationalism, collective security, and presidential initiative in foreign affairs. Resistance to such notions, particularly among Great Plains Republicans, usually found description as an irrational remnant of a discredited isolationist past. Indeed, a persistent spirit of noninterventionism in North Dakota prompted one impatient scholar to dismiss the entire state as a "living fossil."

Two sets of circumstances since 1965 have modified such precipitous judgments. First, the Vietnam War brought respectability to the notion that overseas military commitments might easily be overextended. Second, professional historians continued to produce well-conceived analyses of the relationship of material concerns to ideology. Some of these efforts focused upon political culture—a concept which took into account the more immediate political and economic motives for social behavior as well as longstanding ideological and cultural roots of such activity. Scholarship of this nature reinforced the idea that dissident perspectives could be majority views in particular communities. It also pointed to the logical consistency within any given set of ideas. Furthermore, scholarship on political culture stressed the manner in which groups and movements tended to combine rational self-interest with more elusive sets of allegiances, emotions, and ideals.

This paper attempts to place the views of North Dakota opponents of Cold War interventionism in the framework of political culture: first, in the context of immediate political and economic exigencies within North Dakota itself; second, within the legacy of an ideological and cultural progressivism that was the product of the historical experience of the northern Great Plains.

North Dakota noninterventionism first surfaced with the growth of the Nonpartisan League during World War One. The NPL linked a program that sought to organize the marketing needs of independent farmers to a deep distrust of bankers, grain trade operators, eastern industrialists, and Wall Street diplomats. Both noninterventionist Senators Gerald P. Nye and Lynn Frazier emerged from the Nonpartisan movement. Both opposed United States membership in the League of Nations, participation in the World Court, cancellation of Allied war debts, and American military involvement in Latin America.
s and two world wars for the understanding of what foreign
entists blandly noted in the 3 and 1965 witnessed a near-
narrisonists and intellectuals to
intellectual and cultural
the views of North Dakotan
am first surfaced with the
 During World War One. The
First World War. Two
weakened collective security and
t peace. Governor William Langer,
elected with Nonpartisan support, removed the Reserve Officer
Training Corps from state campuses and openly promulgated a
federal constitutional amendment to require a vote of the
American people before any declaration of war arising from
overseas military difficulties. Meanwhile, Nye chaired the
influential Senate investigation of the munitions industry and
became a key architect of neutrality legislation passed in the
mid-1930s. Congressmen William Langer and Usher Burdick joined
Nye and Proesser in pressing for the abolition of private
production of munitions, enactment of stringent war profits
taxes, and the war referendum embodied in the Ludlow
Amendment. When Langer ran for President’s Senate seat in 1946
he joined Nye in opposing further modification of the
neutrality laws, expansion of Selective Service, and lend-
lease. 3

Both Langer and Burdick continued to espouse
noninterventionism through the Cold War years, frequently
voting with a group of Republican nationalists in opposing
the military and economic assistance programs of the Truman
and Eisenhower administrations. Langer was one of two Senators to
vote against United States membership in the United Nations.
He voted against the Bretton Woods Monetary Fund and
vehemently opposed the British Loan of 1946. Langer
consistently objected to economic aid to Europe, opposing
every single foreign aid bill from 1945 to his death in 1959.
He argued that Truman Doctrine aid to Greece and Turkey was
too costly, and called for an American recovery program as a
substitute for the Marshall Plan. Langer was one of six
Senators to oppose NATO, consistently fought against further
military security arrangements in Europe and Asia, and
terminously objected to universal military training. The
North Dakotan also called for withdrawal of American troops
from Korea in 1951, opposed President Eisenhower’s right to
use troops during the Formosa Crisis of 1955, and supported
the Bricker Amendment to provide congressional checks on the
treaty-making powers of the President. Usher Burdick assumed
a similar position in the House, distinguishing himself for
adamant opposition to the Marshall Plan, NATO, the draft, and
the Korean involvement.

Although the controversial Langer had a reputation as a
"lone ranger" and a "nonconformist," his Senate postures were
well suited to an agricultural and remote state with little
economic diversification. Langer closely identified with his
North Dakota constituency of small farmers and town laborers.
"I do not represent any gang, or group, or clique," he told
constituents in a state-wide radio hook-up in 1944, "but I
represent the people, the men in the field, the store, the
folks who labor." In an undelivered speech prepared in 1943,
Langer fantasized about forming a Producers and Consumers
Governmental League to work cooperatively and vote for the
interests of farmers, wage earners, and small business people.
Langer’s League would pit the wealth-producers against the
wealth-absorbers, the "shirt sleeve" toilers against the
"wealth-sucking vampires." Four years later Langer attempted
to realize the fantasy in a call for a national nonpartisan
grassroots effort in the 1948 presidential election.

By the 1930s the major issue of American foreign policy
had shifted to one of war and peace. Governor William Langer,
elected with Nonpartisan support, removed the Reserve Officer
Training Corps from state campuses and openly promoted a
federal constitutional amendment to require a vote of the
American people before any declaration of war arising from
overseas military difficulties. Meanwhile, Nye chaired the
influential Senate investigation of the munitions industry and
became a key architect of neutrality legislation passed in the
mid-1930s. Congressmen William Langer and Usher Burdick joined
Nye and Proesser in pressing for the abolition of private
production of munitions, enactment of stringent war profits
taxes, and the war referendum embodied in the Ludlow
Amendment. When Langer ran for President’s Senate seat in 1946
he joined Nye in opposing further modification of the
neutrality laws, expansion of Selective Service, and lend-
lease. 3
Although the movement never materialized, its aspirations reflected common views in a state whose resources were developed for outside consumption and profit.

Langer's farm policies demonstrated his sensitivity to the North Dakota economy. He favored high agricultural price supports, liberal farm credit, and rural electrification cooperatives. He fought the federal soil bank program in the 1950s because the operation proved of little value to family-sized farms. And it was Langer's desire to protect independent North Dakota farmers that prompted his skepticism toward the reciprocal trade agreements developed by the Roosevelt and Truman administrations.

Langer joined Senate progressives Robert LaFollette, Jr. and Henrik Shipstead in opposing wartime extension of the reciprocal trade program in 1943. He argued that lowered duties on foreign vegetables and other produce destroyed domestic producers. One example of the consequences was investment by American financial speculators in Cuban vegetable cultivation. Langer's discomfort with reciprocal trade continued during the postwar period. He agreed with Nevada Senator George W. Malone that tariffs offset the cheaper costs of production prevalent in countries not enjoying American-style wage scales. Indiscriminate tariff reduction would mean lower wages in America and transfer of jobs and industry to foreign soil. Langer supported Malone's proposal for a sliding tariff that would reward increased overseas wage standards with lowered American import fees. He also endorsed South Dakota Senator Karl Mundt's call for an investigation of the effect of reciprocal trade on the parity price of grain.

Like the reciprocal trade issue, the whole question of foreign aid had specific implications for North Dakota's independent businesses and farms. Langer opposed the extension of Lend-Lease in 1945, objecting to the program's transfer of 932 tractors and combines through North Dakota to Canada. Further incensed by the dispatch of badly needed farm machinery to the Soviet Union, Langer forced a Senate vote on an amendment which would have prohibited American manufacturers from sending agricultural machinery, implements, and equipment to foreign governments.

In a similar vein, Langer's opposition to the British Loans of 1946 and 1948 corresponded in part to the Senator's estimation of the economic needs of his own state. North Dakota did not host major industrial conglomerates seeking mass markets overseas. Objecting to the 1946 spending of $4 billion to bolster British purchasing power, Langer quoted a Brookings Institute study that showed that overseas markets were unnecessary if purchasing power in the United States were sufficiently distributed. Langer preferred to spend the money on medical research, old age pensions, cancellation of all seed and feed loans, farm to market roads, rural electrification, and retirement of the inflation-inducing national debt. Constituent mail seemed to support the Senator's position. "If they can loan billions to Britain why can't they take better care of the dependents of the fallen heroes?" asked an impoverished couple whose two sons had died...
eralized, its aspirations state whose resources were and profit, illustrated his sensitivity to high agricultural price and rural electrification soil bank program in the of little value to family- tate whose resources were the profit. stimated his sensitivity to high agricultural price also one bank program in the al of little value to family-ger's desire to protect that prompted his skepticism reports developed by the vase Robert LaFollette, Jr. timex 60's, of the 3. He argued that lowered other produce destroyed e of the consequences was lal speculators in Cuban discomfort with reciprocal period. He agreed with e that tariffs offset the alient in countries not dis. Indiscriminate tariff in America and transfers of Langer supported Malone's at would reward increased ad American import fees. He t Karl Mundt's call for an iprocal trade on the parity alue, the whole question of alions for North Dakota's Langer opposed the objecting to the program's ne through North Dakota to asch of badly needed farm er forced a Senate vote on prohibited American onr machinery, implements, or opposition to the Britihe part to the Senator's of his own state. North al conglomerates seeking to the 1946 spending of 34 ling power, Langer quoted a owed that overseas markets in the United States were referred to spend the money ons, cancellation of all o market roads. Rural of the inflation-inducing 1 seemed to support the tan billions to Britain why dependents of the fallen people whose two sons had died in the war. If North Dakotans had survived the severe winter of 1946 without being dependent on anyone else, a Burlington constituent complained to Langer, "why in h--- can't England do the same?"

Similar arguments surfaced in regard to the European Recovery Bill of 1948—the Marshall Plan. Langer told the Senate that raw materials, finished goods, and machinery essential for American food production would be diverted to Europe at a time when western farmers still were unable to secure an adequate supply. The concern was well-grounded. "This is the heaviest tax burden in the history of the world," Burdick complained, "and the least this government can do is to make essential materials available to those who produce." Langer quoted a Senate report on independent business which suggested that shortages arising from foreign commitments in the imposition of controls at home. "The American economy now had to fit into "this new international pattern of Government-controlled cartel allocation of raw materials and markets." Trade policy and domestic allocation of scarce raw materials, the report noted, were forcing more investment in the development of foreign sources of materials and products."

The Marshall Plan also raised complex issues of inflation at home. Foreign spending, Burdick insisted, was the principal cause of high prices and excessive taxation, problems which plagued North Dakota small property holders in the postwar era. Increased European purchasing power, Burdick argued, raised the prices of commodities such as lumber and beef in the United States. In a resolution sent directly to Langer, the National Association of Retail Grocers contended that the nation was dissipating its resources in a futile attempt to bring about economic recovery in Western Europe. The grocers worried about the inflationary effect on food prices and the possible re-imposition of price controls and rationing. Both Burdick and Langer also pointed out that foreign aid spending forced the federal government to borrow to finance its European subsidies. The resulting exodus of dollars and ballooning of the national debt further aggravated inflation, they contended. At the same time, Langer believed that foreign aid cut into the selling price of grain and other farm commodities by enabling European producers to capture American markets once held by domestic farmers. Foreign subsidy programs were siphoning off money that might be going to North Dakota farmers, Langer thundered.

Langer's constituent mail on the Marshall Plan focused on the fear that the Truman administration placed the needs of Europeans above Americans. The concern was well-grounded. North Dakota's heavily taxed farmers and independent entrepreneurs sold to domestic markets instead of European consumers. Foreign aid, which subsidized European consumers at the expense of American taxpayers, may have served the needs of corporate manufacturers and labor in the urban-industrial sector. But it simply worked against North Dakota interests by requiring its taxpayers to subsidize foreign competition. When foreign aid was tied to a reciprocal trade policy, Langer argued, Americans found themselves paying billions of dollars to develop competitive forces overseas.
which then were allowed to sell below cost-of-production prices in the beleaguered American market. Americans were using billions in subsidies to keep the domestic price structure sound, Langer proclaimed, while continuing to subsidize foreign competition which undermined the American standard of living, "It simply does not make sense," he concluded. Langer's answer to the dilemma was that of the traditional isolationist: it was time for the United States to get out of Europe. Yet his reasoning was partly economic and tied to the needs of North Dakota constituents. Somewhere, the Senator noted in 1954, "we will have to get these people off our necks, and their hands out of our pockets."  

North Dakota resistance to universal military training also reflected political and economic realities in the state. Langer was famous for his amendments to draft legislation. In 1948 he attempted to embarrass draft advocates with a series of civil rights amendments which would have desegregated the Army and public accommodations in any state training draftees. During 1951 and 1955 Langer introduced amendments to conscript all corporate profits as well as personal income over $25,000 during a draft emergency. Langer equated conscription with autocracy and feared the consequences of militaristic government at home and abroad. But he also realized that many North Dakotans were of families that had fled from Germany, Norway, or Russia to escape heavy taxation and military service requirements. These Americans had little use for European power politics or dynastic rivalries. The people of the northwest, Langer explained in 1945, "had come to America to escape the continuous struggle between peoples who hated each other; to live in peace and security and to find some measure of opportunity and contentment."  

Yet North Dakotans had an even more specific reason for hostility to universal military training. In a region with a sparse population, harsh winters, and an unstable agricultural economy, it was hard to maintain an adequate supply of farm labor. The draft took young men just when they were most helpful to a farm operation. As Burdick pointed out, it was the younger men, not the older men used to horse-drawn machinery, who were most experienced in running and servicing power tractors. These young mechanics were precisely the men the Army needed. Many farmers had to cease operations when their sons were drafted, Burdick explained. "There is no hope for us," a middle-aged couple confided to the congressman during the Korean War. "We know we are not able to do all our farm work alone any more." Langer introduced a bill providing for the temporary deferment of farmers just before the outbreak of the Korean War but withdrew it with the start of hostilities. Nevertheless, he and Burdick continued to insist that food production was more important than ammunition or standing armies in preserving peace and world security.  

The roots of North Dakota noninterventionism also may be found within a political culture that first found expression in the Nonpartisan League and the progressive politics of LaFollette, Hiram Johnson, and William Borah. One facet of that ideology was a strong American nationalism, one which contrasted the republican virtues of the New World with the corrupt and tyrannical politics of Europe. Langer approvingly
In market. Americans were the domestic price structure continuing to subsidize the American standard of life, he concluded. As that of the traditional United States to get out of the economic and tied to the empire. Somehow, the Senator just got these people off our pockets. 13

Universal military training to draft legislation. In 1945, had come to America between peoples who hated security and to find some same. 14

A more specific reason for mining. In a region with an unstable agricultural an adequate supply of farm just when they were most urdic pointed out, it was more to cease operations when claimed. "There is no hope to the congressmen be not able to do all our introduced a bill providing farmers just before the drew it with the start of urdic continued to insist important than ammunition or world security. 15

Interventionism also may be the first found expression progressive politics of Liam Borah. One facet of nationalism, one which of the New World with the euro. Langer approvingly quoted Michigan Senator Arthur Vandenberg's tribute to nationalism years after Vandenberg had converted to the internationalism cause. "America has separate and different standards of life and government," the Michigan Republican had written, "and it refuses either to merge these advantages in a general averaging of the standards of other lands, or to expose them by any untoward degree, to the mandate of massed foreign pressure or duress." Langer spared no language in condemnation of State Department internationalists. "No one fought Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Truman on their foreign policies more than Bill Langer of North Dakota," the Senator explained to a constituent in 1953:

I voted against Stettinius of the Internationalists who gave us Alger His. I voted against Dean Acheson, a great friend of Great Britain who sent them billions more. I also voted against Dean Acheson, Secretary of State, who we just got rid of, and I did that with the leading Republicans, Vandenberg, Taft, and others supporting them. 16

Like his progressive predecessors, Langer viewed the United States as a virile republic that historically shunned the imperialism and colonialism practiced by European superpowers. Although 90% of Langer's mail expressed support of the United Nations in 1945, the North Dakotan voted against American membership. Like the progressives of the early 1920s, Langer opposed any international organization that would use force to maintain the territorial status quo. "The United States will be dedicated to back up Great Britain in her frankly predatory and imperialist schemes all over the world," he proclaimed. Langer believed that the British were using the United Nations alliance to drag the United States into a third world war, this time with the Soviet Union. We were being "sucked into a power bloc on the side of colonial imperialism against Communist imperialism," he noted, a struggle which had nothing to do with American security. Langer warned that the State Department was backing a corrupt system of European colonial exploitation already on its last legs. Communist success in Asia and Africa, he predicted in 1946 and 1948, would be a direct result of the oppressive European presence. The United States should not assume the impossible task of defending the imperial possessions of bankrupt Western Europe against civil and guerrilla warfare. 17

Langer's tirades against colonialism were replicas of those of the twenties progressives. Most of the earlier insurgents had represented Plains and Mountain states in which agriculture and mining were dominated by outside interests. The historical experience of North Dakota provided continuity for that model, for millers, commodity speculators, farm machinery manufacturers, railroads, and banks continued to profit from the labor of the independent farmer. "In many respects," Glenn Smith suggested, "North Dakotans looked upon themselves as colonials, the victims of exploitation by alien interests. 18

If Great Plains farmers were colonial subjects who procured real material wealth for "foreign corporations," Great Britain appeared as a huge non-productive middleman which exploited the labor and resources of its colonies.
Midwestern antipathy to Britain stemmed partly from the ethnic hostilities of the region's numerous people of German, Irish, and Scandinavian origin. But it also had roots in the Populist suspicion of the late nineteenth century that English bankers were part of a network which controlled the processing, transportation, and financing of American agricultural production. When Langer or Burdick condemned Britain's "antiquated machinery of imperialism," they were striking a rich chord in Plains political culture. It made no sense to grant billions in foreign aid to the British when portions of the funds only found their way to Britain's efforts to maintain its colonies through military power. As late as 1954 Langer was denouncing Britain's combination of socialism at home and imperialism abroad as National Socialism without racial ideology.

Noninterventionists saw Great Britain as the most flagrant example of decaying European culture. Langer referred to the "age-long hatreds, the social neurotics, deep-rooted suspicions, the bloody tyrannies, egotisms, and exploitations which had always characterized the life of Europe," Europe meant militarism, large standing armies, and the "curse" of conscription. No wonder Langer was adamant in his opposition to NATO. President Truman's commitment was the product of secret diplomacy, it constituted a permanent military alliance, and it inextricably involved the United States in the tangled web of European affairs. The Marshall Plan, Langer wrote to a constituent, was ill-advised because the money would fall into the hands of unreliable European governments instead of the poor people who really needed it.

Langer's noninterventionism was closely tied to the suspicion of Europe long a part of traditional American republican ideology. Another facet of this progressive political culture was a deep-seated hostility toward aristocratic pretension at home. Langer was a master at detecting such tendencies in the Foreign Service and Department of State. He protested the nomination of James Bruce as ambassador to Argentina in 1947 because Bruce was a millionaire and a former officer of a dairy monopoly. Langer cast the only negative vote against the confirmation of Secretary of State Edward Stettinius in 1944 because the nominee was associated with the House of Morgan. In a speech on the United Nations Langer questioned the relationship of banking power to diplomacy:

Look at the head of the American delegation, the wealthy scion of the Morgan family,—Mr. Edward R. Stettinius, Jr.—he of the flashing eyes, the shiny teeth and the silver hair and the charming smile. Stettinius comes from a long line of men who have manipulated the destiny of this nation to their own end. These are the mighty men of Wall Street. The men who ride two horses on two sides of the street. They never lose but the public loses no matter what happens.

Langer's objections to upper-class diplomacy went beyond the facets of wealth to a sociological critique of the nation's ruling families. The State Department, he insisted,
passed partly from the ethnic US people of German, Irish, so had roots in the Populist century that English bankers, at the time, condemned Britain's "national Socialism without American agricultural interests," they were striking a balance. It made no sense to be British when portions of Britain's efforts to control the processing, distribution, and market power. As late as 1954, the British allies were still dependent on Britain's efforts to control the interests of their European friends. Langer hoped that the Marshall Plan would be more representative of the average American, particularly those from the West.

The class and regional animosities expressed by Langer were dominated by "a clique of appeasement-minded cookie pushers," sons of the rich who did not understand the problems of the masses. Furthermore, the Department was dominated by "a clique of appeasement-minded cookie pushers," sons of the rich who did not understand the problems of the masses. Furthermore, the Department employed "diplomatic circumlocution" to distance itself from the American people. The problem, Langer suggested in a 1954 report on the Mutual Security Act, was that the Department was "a refuge for career people of the social register." These people, he contended, saw their "highest destiny in the acceptance provided by the British and French social circles." Corrupted by "Europeanism" and "shop-worn social theories," they were more intent on social superiority than diplomacy. They were "cosmopolites and less American than internationalists toward the interests of their European friends." Langer hoped that ambassadors and diplomats might be more representative of the average American, particularly those from the West.

Langer distrusted career diplomats in the permanent bureaucracy who were removed from the voters. The Department placed too much emphasis on expertise and not enough on common sense, he believed. Likewise, the North Dakotan had little tolerance for academic and technical experts in the federal bureaucracy. During World War Two, Langer concluded that Acheson "believes in secret diplomacy, government by indiscretion and a commitment of the United States to internationalist schemes which cannot help but destroy our form of government and our way of life."22

The administrative bureaucracy, Langer continued, wanted to "rule the Nation by directive, decrees, regulations, and dictatorial practices." He dismissed them as "wastrels of the people's money who have wormed their way into high places of power."
non-elective government policy-making positions." But in a
passage which anticipated the anti-subversion crusades of the
postwar period, Langer linked upper-class privilege,
internationalism, and violation of the national interest:

They have loaded the various divisions of the
Federal Government with their sixth columnists,
represented by the young callow college graduate
fledglings, most of whom never worked a day with
their hands, and who do not know what it means to
earn an honest dollar by the sweat of your brow. I
call upon every farmer to . . . see how many tax
dollars he has had to pay for being deceived by
these sixth columnist internationalists into
thinking he is being benefitted. 24

Langer's distrust of the "Economic One Worlders" in the
administrative bureaucracy carried over into a concern for the
power of the Presidency. Both Burdick and Langer feared that
the all-important power over war-making had been usurped
through collective security agreements, foreign aid programs,
and presidential control over troop deployments. Truman has
stated that "he will send troops anywhere in this world, where
he thinks it is necessary to send them, regardless of
Congress," Burdick complained in 1951. Discomfort with
presidential power figured strongly in the opposition both
North Dakotans expressed over NATO, the Korean War, "secret"
presidential treaty making, mutual security agreements, and
SEATO. "Who sent our boys to fight in Korea?" Langer asked in
exasperation. "Was any Senator in this body consulted about
having a war in Korea?" North Dakotans appeared to agree.
Stung by the costly draft and an unpopular war, the North
Dakota Senate passed two resolutions in early 1951 which urged
Congress to withdraw all troops from Korea and to insist on
conscription of wealth and time it was necessary to draft men
for a military emergency. 25

The noninterventionism of Burdick and Langer during the
Cold War era was based on both the constituent needs of North
Dakotans and adherence to an historical legacy of Great Plains
populism and progressivism. Animosity toward internationalism, Old World colonialism, aristocracy, expert
bureaucracy, presidential prerogative, and military
collectivism shaped the noninterventionist view toward the
events of the Cold War. This was a viewpoint consistent with
the world view of independent farmers and business people
threatened by external centers of power. Instead of
perceiving these developments as the by-products of an
emerging corporate society, Burdick and Langer tended to
portray them as the extension of the historical privileges of
the east coast aristocracy. The vacillation which
noninterventionists and Republican nationalists attributed to
Cold War policy under Truman and Acheson was in their minds a
natural outgrowth of upper-class subversion of the State
Department. The diseases of internationalism and
collectivism, they suggested, were responsible for America's
inability to protect its national interests in the Cold War.
"Our whole foreign policy," Langer cried in 1948, "is crumbling around our heads, our most vital interests are being
sacrificed, our prestige is being irreparably undermined, our
making positions." But in a subversion crusades of the upper-class privilege, the national interest: divisions of the six columnists,allow college graduate who worked a day with know what it means to sweat of your brow. I see how many tax being deceived by educationalists into economic One Worlders" in the over into a concern for theick and Langer feared that making had been usurpedents, foreign aid programs, lp deployments. Truman has nowhere in this world, where and them, regardless of in 1951. Discomfort with gly in the opposition O, the Korean War, "secret" security agreements, and Langer asked in this body consulted about Dakotans appeared to agree. unpopular war, the North in early 1951 which urged from Korea and to insist on was necessary to draft menick and Langer during the constituent needs of North ical legacy of Great Plains. Animosity toward alism, aristocracy, expert negativism toward view toward the viewpoint consistent with men and business people of power. Instead of the by-product of Lick and Langer tended to historical privileges of the vacillation which nationalists attributed to the cause was in their minds a subversion of the State internationalism and responsible for America's interests in the Cold War. Langer cried in 1949 that vital interests are being se narrow under foot. At fault was a "superinternationalism" that in the case of SEATO, Langer later warned, "would immediately drag us into a jungle war 10,000 miles away."28

During 1948 Langer was the Republican Senator most often voting against his own party (52%). Yet, as he wrote a constituent in 1955, "I have never voted with the Democrats on foreign policy in my life." Langer's explanation was simple: "I usually try to vote the way the people who elected me three times would want me to vote. And I have followed that policy for now."29 The noninterventionism expressed by both Langer and Burdick suggests that both were able to express the constituent needs and ideological affinities of North Dakotans in the Cold War era. For North Dakotans as well as other Americans of the period, however, the roots of these affiliations were not always clear.

NOTES


9. Ibid., 109, 119; Smith, Langer of North Dakota, 154-55.


12. Burdick to Mrs. C.H. Frissell, 17 July 1951, Folder 44; Economics: Price Stabilization, 1945-52, Box 6 Burdick Papers; Burdick, "The Marshall Plan," 2; Langer to R.M. Kiefer and attachments, 6 February 1945; Folder 1: Marshall Plan/Maternity Bill, 1949-50, Box 262, Langer Papers; Smith, 177-90. The question of exports, inflation, and agriculture is a complex one. While Langer complained that European competition depressed domestic grain prices, Senator Robert Taft of Ohio told Nebraska livestock dealers that the Marshall Plan export program had raised the price of grain so that it was impossible to feed livestock and provide an adequate supply of meat. Both the National Grange and the Farmers Union supported the European Recovery Program, lending credence to the theory that Marshall Plan subsidies improved farm commodity selling prices. Yet the staff director of the Republican Policy Committee told Senate Majority Leader Kenneth Wherry that export demand played only a small part in raising domestic prices. The true culprit was the domestic demand for products by people with spendable cash. See Taft Press Release, 13 February 1945, T. Agriculture-Branham, 1948, Box 484, Taft Papers, Library of Congress; A.S. Ross to Langer, 2 May 1950, Folder 1; Marshall Plan/Maternity Bill, 1949-50, Box 262, Langer Papers; Memo, George H.E. Smith to Wherry, 8 June 1947, attached to Smith to Taft, 10 June 1947, Marshall Plan, 1947, Box 714, Taft Papers.

13. Langer constituent mail, Folder 6; Marshall Plan, 1947-48, Box 218, Langer Papers; Doenecke, Not To the Swift, 156; Langer, Committee on Foreign Relations, Report on H.R. 9678, the Mutual Security Act of 1954,

15. Langer to R.A. Stenson, 2 January 1955, Folder 1: Foreign Policy, 1953-54, Box 508, Langer Papers.


17. Smith, Langer of North Dakota, 129. Langer's virulent anti-colonialism bears out the contention of Robert Wilkins that the Senator "was a carbon copy of the isolationist of World War I and the years leading up to Pearl Harbor." See Wilkins, "Senator William Langer," 52-59.


25. Burdick Press Release, 12 April 1951, Folder 43: Truman's Refusal to Consult Congress on Sending Troops Overseas--UMT, Box 31, Burdick Papers; Langer, Congressional Record, 81st Cong., 2d sess., 96, 23 September 1950, 15056-7. For a discussion of economic one-worlders and the reciprocal trade issue, see Langer to Malone and attachments, Folder 18: Trade/Truman Doctrine, 1949-50, Box 275, Langer Papers. For Langer's view on presidential power and military commitments, see Smith, Langer of North Dakota, 1v, 189. For North Dakotan congressional and constituent response to the Korean War, see Sponberg, 30, 115, 117, 228.
